

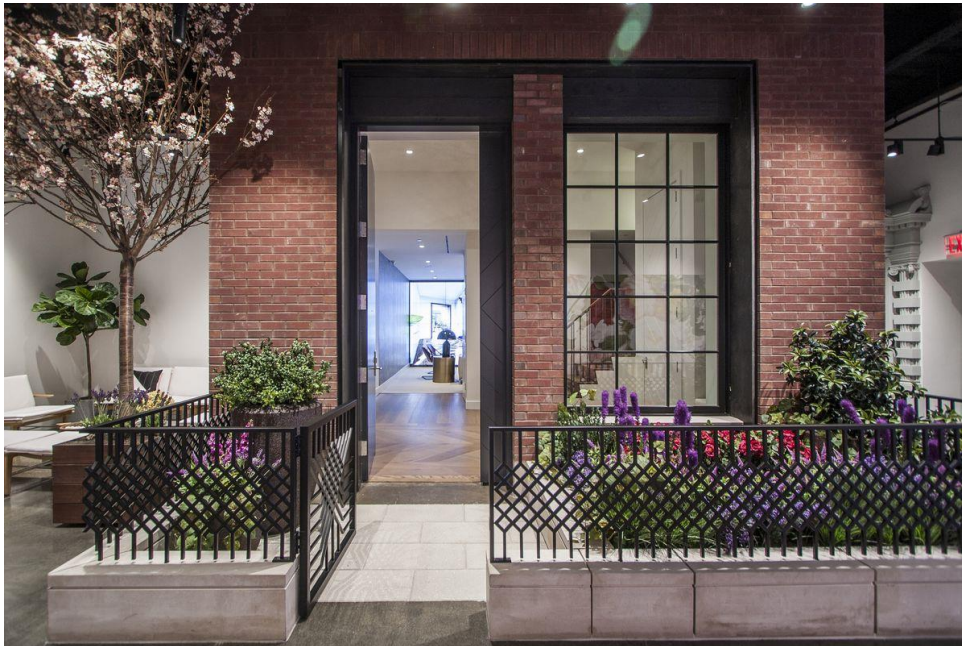


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At Brooklyn's former LICH site, a sales gallery for its future as 'River Park'

The Cobble Hill megaproject has unveiled a sales gallery for its first pricey residences

BY [AMY PLITT](#)



Brooklyn's [Long Island College Hospital](#) has been closed since 2014, but there's been no shortage of activity on the medical center's former Cobble Hill campus since then. Fortis Property Group, which secured the site in 2015, has been busy since last year, when it officially [decided to proceed](#) without a controversial rezoning of the site.

That would have brought taller buildings, along with affordable housing, to the forthcoming megaproject; now, the development—[recently dubbed River Park](#)—will have market-rate condos, along with a new NYU Langone medical center.

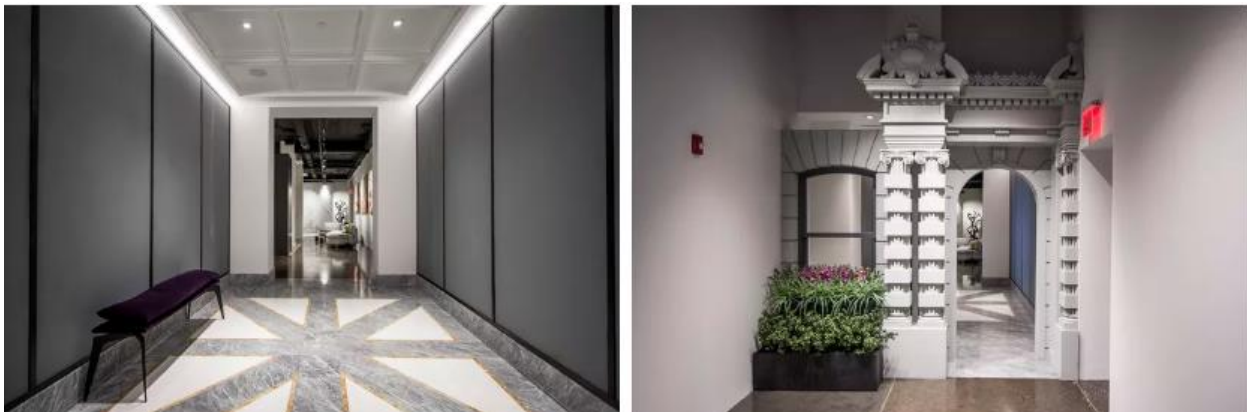
The project reached a milestone earlier this year when the first listings for its residences—several condos within the landmarked Polhemus Building, along with two townhouses on Amity Street—[hit the market](#). And now, Fortis has unveiled a sales gallery (located within one of the old LICH buildings) that offers prospective buyers a peek at what to expect from the contentious megaproject. Curbed recently toured the space with Fortis principal Jonathan Landau.





The sales gallery includes several different spaces: There's a to-scale facade of one of the Amity Street townhouses, along with models of some of its rooms—a double-height foyer, a master bath room, and a living room. In another part of the gallery, there are spaces meant to replicate the condos and the lobby of the historic Polhemus Building. Though the Beaux Arts building is a New York City landmark, the interiors have been totally revamped, and will be transformed into 17 high-end condos, along with amenities like a roof deck, a gym, and a residents' lounge.

Landau says that even though the inside was gutted, the developer (working with BSKS Architects, which will oversee the building's transformation) has tried to keep some of the 19th-century structure's character. The roof of the lobby has been preserved, and the color scheme found in its marble floor (gold, gray, and cream) has been replicated in a more modern design. It is, Landau notes, "an ode to what would have existed."



The development will have two types of [townhouses](#): six 16-foot "garden houses," which are slightly smaller in scale and spread out over five floors; and two 20-foot "terrace houses" that will come with a huge master suite, a

mezzanine overlooking the “great room,” and a an entire penthouse level with two terraces.

Though the sales gallery doesn’t replicate those exactly, it does offer a peek at the sense of scale and the “materiality” of the homes, according to Landau. The high ceilings, custom mill work, and brickwork found in the faux-house will remain largely the same on the actual townhouses, which Landau says are “about as gracious as a huge apartment that you’d buy in Manhattan.”



Fortis sees a very different clientele for the two properties: The buyer in the Polhemus Building is a “pure neighborhood buyer,” as Landau puts it, who “wants to buy into the fabric” of Cobble Hill. The townhouses, however, are intended for families—those who would actually *need*, for example, a 4,300-square-foot home with a “private sky terrace” and an abundance of space.

But there is one thing that Fortis thinks will be a big draw for potential residents—and the development’s new name, River Park, is the key. According to Landau, the East River and the neighborhood’s green spaces inspired the new moniker, which Fortis debuted earlier this year. “River views are prominent, and they’re a significant piece of what people are buying,” explains Landau. “Every single experience of a purchaser going into the the next phase

is that they'll open up their door, and they see the river in front of them.” Simple as that.

The rebranding came at a time when work on the former Long Island College Hospital campus is gaining steam. According to Landau, the next phase of the development—buildings one, two, and five, which collectively will bring hundreds of units to the area—is moving right along, with construction on those beginning in the next few months.



“What we don’t want this River Park project to feel like is a single, cohesive design that’s just a large mass plopped down,” explains Landau. To that end, each of the buildings will be designed by a different architect, working within the framework of the original master plan. “We’re very advanced in the design of those buildings,” says Landau, though Fortis has yet to reveal renderings or other details for the forthcoming structures. (Hill West and FXFOWLE are currently attached [on DOB records](#) for the new buildings.)

Sales, which are being handled by Fredrik Eklund and John Gomes of [Douglas Elliman](#), have been brisk—20 percent of the units that [have been released](#) are already in contract.

“Anything you would have done to change the status quo of this neighborhood was going to be met by some people with resistance,” Landau notes. “But a lot of people are really positive about it, and feel that what we’re doing here is really going to enhance the community at the end of the day.”

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