



## Proposed Development in South Bronx Finally Moving Ahead After Being on Drawing Board for Years

By Erin Clarke

Friday, January 13, 2017 at 09:46 PM EST



*A proposed development on the drawing board for years in the south Bronx is finally moving ahead. Bronx Commons will bring hundreds of homes, retail space and a music venue. NY1's Erin Clarke filed the following report.*

A rubble-strewn lot will be transformed into a symbol of the renaissance taking hold in the south Bronx.

"They'll be hundreds of people who live in this building," said Nancy Biberman, founder and president of WHEDco.

From janitors and teachers to young lawyers and doctors, even families who've been living in shelters. Bronx Commons will have 305 apartments meant to be truly be affordable for a wide range of New Yorkers, families earning from \$4,000 to more than \$100,000 a year.

"The idea of broad affordability, so that nobody who applies will be ineligible," Biberman said.

"A lot of people in this neighborhood make under \$21,000 a year. It means that there are going to be families that finally can apply and will qualify," said Ed Garcia Conde, a blogger and community activist.

The more than \$150 million development is being financed partly by city programs supporting mixed-income housing and apartments for the homeless.

It also will have retail space and a 300-seat concert venue called the Bronx Music Hall, a nod to the area's rich cultural and musical history.

"It will be a living, breathing museum because people will be able to come here do research in the electronic digital, archives etc. They'll get to meet a lot of the great artists that are still alive today," said Bobby Sanabria, co-artistic director of the Bronx Music Hall.

It's a project the community organization WHEDco first proposed eight years ago. But the idea of Bronx Commons was envisioned by the community decades before that. Community activists came up with the idea of Melrose Commons in the 1990s as an alternative to a massive urban renewal plan that critics said would drive out longtime residents.

"This is, I think, the crowning jewel of a series of different developments and projects in this area," said Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.

What will occupy this space was developed closely with the community.

Melrose Commons is expected to be completed in 2019.

<http://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2017/01/13/proposed-development-in-south-bronx-finally-moving-ahead-after-being-on-drawing-board-for-years.html>