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## Bronx Commons, Melrose's all-affordable housing complex, breaks ground

*The 426,000-square-foot project will bring 305 apartments to the neighborhood*

BY [TANAY WARERKAR](#) JAN 13, 2017, 11:00AM EST



Bronx Commons *Courtesy of Danois Architects and WXY*

A highly anticipated affordable housing project is set to break ground in the Bronx today and will eventually bring 305 apartments to Melrose. The project is a partnership between The Women's Housing and Economic Development Corp. (WHEDco.) and affordable housing developer, BFC Partners, and has been funded almost entirely through city and state funds.

What's unique about the project however is the fact that it has a large cultural component. Apart from the residential section, Bronx Commons, as the project is known, will also be home to the Bronx Music Hall, a 300-seat music and arts-focused venue that tips its hat to the "deeply rooted history of cutting edge Bronx music," and seeks to explore and understand "its lasting legacy and contributions to today's popular music."

The overall project is being built at a cost of \$165 million with the project spanning 426,000 square feet. The Music Hall will take up 14,000 square feet of that space and be built for \$11.4 million.

The apartments here will be available to a diverse range of incomes going from 30 percent to 110 percent of the area median income. That means eligible families' annual income will range from anywhere between \$4,000 to \$115,600. About five percent of the homes here have also been set aside for families currently living in the city's homeless shelters.

The residential part of the building is being designed by Danois Architects with WXY Architecture + Urban Design, and Local Projects working on the Bronx Music Hall. It's been a couple of years since the project was first announced, and it is one of WHEDco.'s most ambitious projects yet. When the organization's co-founder and president Nancy Biberman [spoke with Curbed in 2015](#), she stressed the importance of holistic development in the borough—construction that doesn't just focus on new apartments.

"We want developers to know that development on its own does not build strong communities," She told Curbed at the time. "Developers should pay attention to adequate lighting on the streets, better transportation options, if a school is nearby."

This project marks construction on the last undeveloped parcel of land in the [Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area](#). Bronx Commons is expected to be complete sometime in 2019 and aside from the music hall and the apartments, will also bring with it a landscaped public plaza, and retail.



*Courtesy of WXY and Local Projects*



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<http://ny.curbed.com/2017/1/13/14263544/bronx-commons-melrose-affordable-housing-music-hall-groundbreaking>