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## **Construction Begins on Affordable Passive House Development for Seniors at former Rheingold Brewery Site**

*City officials and project partners break ground on Rheingold Senior Residences, a \$67 million, green senior living community in Broadway Triangle*

Brooklyn, NY (November 19, 2021)—A groundbreaking ceremony today marked the start of construction for Rheingold Senior Residences, a new affordable housing development in the Bushwick neighborhood of Brooklyn. Located at 15 Montieth Street on a site that was once part of the Rheingold Brewery, the project is being developed jointly by Southside United HDFC—better known as “Los Sures”—and Churches United for Fair Housing (CUFFH).

Supported by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development’s (HPD) Senior Affordable Rental Apartments (SARA) program, Rheingold Senior Residences aims to set a new standard for deeply affordable housing for seniors and is designed to be age-friendly, both inside and out.

The eight story, 94-unit building consists of one-bedroom and studio apartments, which feature angled “sleeping alcoves” to provide a sense of privacy and dignity, along with separate sitting and dining areas within the overall studio space. To promote social interaction, each floor includes a day-lit lounge where residents can gather and connect to the outdoors. Additionally, apartment entrances are recessed from the corridor with a shelf for convenience and to encourage individualization so that seniors can easily identify their own and others’ units. Los Sures will manage the property and offer activities such as gardening, art, poetry and healthy cooking classes, as well as more traditional social services.

Outdoor space for residents includes a large landscaped rear yard, an accessible rooftop with raised beds for gardening, and a seating area at the building’s entrance where seniors can rest and engage with the neighborhood. Amenities for the wider public include a separately accessible multipurpose room with a warming kitchen that will be open for use by local community groups, as well as several classrooms and an adjacent office space for programming. First floor apartments will be elevated to ensure privacy and a green, planted strip will provide an additional buffer.

The total development cost for the project is approximately \$67 million.

**Richard M. Brown, Principal, Rockabill** said: "Rockabill is proud to serve as financial advisor for the project and to support Los Sures and CUFFH’s comprehensive vision for senior housing with low environmental impact. Members of this community fought tirelessly to bring more affordable housing to the former Rheingold Brewery sites and it’s amazing to see their dream become a reality. We wish to thank our partners, both public and private, for helping us deliver this win for Bushwick.”

**Juan Ramos, Executive Director of Los Sures**, said: “Southside United HDFC – Los Sures commitment to seniors in our community remains a priority for our organization. This development will provide affordability and direct services needed to protect the aging and vulnerable population in our city and its energy saving design will help preserve the planet for their grandchildren.”

**Rob Solano, Executive Director and Co-Founder of CUFFH**, said: “Rheingold Senior Residences will provide much needed deeply affordable housing and direct services for our seniors in Bushwick. Churches United for Fair Housing is proud to have played its part in bringing about these age-friendly



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apartments alongside project partners. Our hope is that these residences, with their sustainable design, will remain a standard in the continuation of providing affordable supportive housing for our aging communities.”

**HPD Commissioner Louise Carroll** said: “This Administration has aggressively pushed to put the dwindling supply of vacant sites to work for affordable housing. Through this initiative, the old Rheingold brewery site will soon give way to more than 90 new affordable and sustainable homes for low-income seniors. I want to thank Los Sures and CUFFH for their creativity and commitment to pushing this important project forward.”

**Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez** said: “Too often, expensive prices at senior residences put an unnecessary strain on seniors looking for new and affordable housing. The Rheingold Senior Residences will set a new standard of affordable housing for seniors inside and out. I’d like to especially recognize Los Sures and Churches United for Fair Housing (CUFFH) for their leadership in developing this new senior residence. Seniors are a vital part of our community and with construction beginning today, this project will help to ensure that they can continue to live in the neighborhood.”

**Mayor-Elect Eric Adams** said: "The new Rheingold Senior Residences will provide much-needed affordable housing for seniors in our borough, and I applaud its creative use of age-friendly and sustainable features. I was proud to allocate \$1.5 million in funding to the development, and look forward to partnering with Los Sures and CUFFH to advance affordability for our seniors"

Designed to passive house standards, Rheingold Senior Residences will be constructed from materials with low embodied energy and long-term durability. A 39-kwh solar panel system will occupy the roof of the building with centralized heating and cooling powered entirely by an electric heat pump system. This eliminates the need for residents to buy AC units, a unique amenity for the population served and one that will help to mitigate the health impacts of the warming climate. Energy recovery ventilation will also be used to provide dedicated, filtered fresh air throughout the building.

Overall, the project anticipates a 44 percent energy-cost savings. The architect for the project is Magnusson Architecture and Planning PC.

Financing was secured by Rockabill Consulting and includes a \$29.5 million construction loan from Chase, a subsidy loan for \$11.2 million through HPD’s SARA program and an allocation of \$1.6 million in Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), also awarded by HPD. CREA LLC and Bellwether Real Estate Capital are providing \$16.3 million in tax credit equity, which is facilitating the permanent loan to be held by Freddie Mac for \$17.4 million.

In addition to the above sources, Mayor-Elect Eric Adams and Brooklyn Borough President-Elect Antonio Reynoso have contributed a combined total of \$7 million in Reso A funds for the construction of the project.

Additional participants in the financing are Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), which provided a predevelopment loan; the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), which provided a Buildings of Excellence Competition Award of \$750,000 and an additional commitment of \$300,000 through the Multifamily New Construction Program; and the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), which awarded Rheingold a Project Based Section 8 award for all 93 residential units (exclusive of the superintendent’s unit).



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**Doreen M Harris, President and CEO of NYSERDA**, said, “NYSERDA is pleased to provide support for the Rheingold Senior housing project, one of our Buildings of Excellence Competition winners, as construction begins to create safe, healthy, and affordable green living spaces for Brooklyn’s senior residents. I look forward to watching the progress of the project as it incorporates renewable solar energy, heat pump technology and other energy efficient features in support of the State’s goals to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions and ensure all New Yorkers benefit from clean energy investments.”

**Sharmi Sobhan, Executive Director, Community Development Banking, Chase**, said: “We’re proud to play a role in financing the development of the Rheingold Senior Residences, which promises to enhance the Brooklyn community with affordable and sustainable housing for seniors. With the pervasive need for affordable housing, we remain committed to working with industry leaders, like Los Sures, Rockabill, and HPD, to help close the gap by supporting the creation of safe and stable places for people to live.”

**Jim Gillespie, EVP, Bellwether Enterprise Real Estate Capital LLC**, said: “Bellwether is honored to be a part of this fantastic team and to finance the development of 94 units of affordable housing in Brooklyn. Having a strong partner in Freddie Mac allowed us to provide a 36-month forward commitment for 30-year permanent financing with very competitive terms and extended (35 year) amortization.”

**Neala Martin, SVP, Originator at CREA**, said: “CREA is pleased to provide financial support to Rheingold Senior Residences with Los Sures and CUFFH. While this is a new relationship, joining Los Sures’ history in LIHTC, alongside partner Rockabill, gives us fresh perspective and renewed energy toward the importance of affordable housing for all people, in all places. As we continue in the belief that opportunity starts with a safe place to call home, we are encouraged by the possibilities afforded to future residents of Rheingold.”

**Janet Lorn, Community Development Officer for Housing, LISC NYC**, said: “We applaud Los Sures for its commitment and persistence to bringing new deeply affordable housing to the former Rheingold Brewery Site. LISC NYC has long been proud to partner with Los Sures in serving the Brooklyn community, and we’re thrilled to have provided pre-development financing for the 94 units of affordable housing at the Rheingold Senior Residences in Bushwick.”

Per SARA requirements, 30 percent of the units will be reserved for formerly homeless persons. The remaining units will be for older adults with incomes up to 60 percent of AMI. All of the residential units will be covered through a project-based Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract.

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