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2015 MFE Awards

High-Rise, Merit: The Pearson Court Square

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Working with a blighted industrial lot in Queens, L+M Development Partners took inspiration from recently renovated warehouses in the area. The result, The Pearson Court Square apartments, blends traditional and contemporary styles, starting with a façade of red brick and metal paneling. L+M also incorporated expansive windows that evoke the style of 20th-century factories.

Built to the standard of the Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star Multifamily High Rise Program, the apartment community achieved LEED Silver certification. Additionally, three vertical axis wind turbines

PROJECT STATS

Location: Queens, N.Y.

Developer: L+M Development Partners

Architect: SLCE Architects

Builder: Congress Builders

Opened: May 2014

Number of units: 197

Unit mix: Studios, one- and two-bedrooms

Rent: \$2,370-\$4,185

on the rooftop—incorporated as part of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority’s On-Site Wind Turbine Incentive Program—provide both a modern design accent and a visible energy-efficient component to the complex.

The property site is adjacent to the Sunnyside rail yards, used by Amtrak and the Long Island Railroad, which developers initially feared might detract from the quality of living in the community. However, the yards also provided assurance that new buildings wouldn’t be raised around The Pearson Court Square, preserving the community’s unobstructed wind access—ideal for the wind turbines—and expansive views of the New York City skyline, which residents can enjoy from a rooftop terrace lounge.

The building’s ample amenities include a fitness center and yoga studio, outdoor basketball and bocce courts, landscaped garden terraces with grills, and Zipcar rentals. The lobby also features 24-hour concierge service, bike storage, and cold storage with a commercial refrigerator that allows for perishable deliveries. The individual units are complete with wide-plank oak floors, stainless steel appliances, and private terraces for select residences.

L+M acquired the site in 2012 when it bought the mortgage on an uncompleted foundation in a foreclosure sale. The previous owner had acquired the site in 2005 and poured concrete for the foundation after acquiring a new-building permit in 2008, just before the housing market crash. When the previous owner couldn’t continue the development during the recession, L+M took over the mortgage and reactivated the previously issued building permit through the New York City Department of Buildings’ Stalled Sites Program (now ended), which ensured the safe maintenance of construction sites that had remained vacant for long periods of time.