

Northeastern Towers Annex Apartments – Jamaica, Queens

Northeastern Towers Annex in Jamaica, Queens has won the [2022 Big Apple Brownfield Award](#) as the best new development in New York City for Community Outreach. This new 10-story apartment building with 159 units for formerly homeless and very low-income seniors is connected to the existing Northeast Towers senior housing development.

The project's nonprofit developer, Fifth Avenue Committee (FAC), engaged local senior center directors, seniors at local churches, and neighborhood constituents to design living and amenity space for disadvantaged seniors. Throughout the planning process, FAC also met with and gained insight from United Neighbors Civic Association of Jamaica (UNCA), an association of Jamaica homeowners and residents.

Feedback from community members contributed to the development's "for seniors, by seniors" design. The new building includes a windowed area on the ground floor to enhance warmth and natural light, a gated outdoor deck that allows seniors to enjoy fresh air and safely remain on the premises, bright lighting throughout amenity areas, and laundry rooms and lounges on the same floors as apartments. Other amenities include a community room with audio-visual equipment to accommodate the visually and hearing impaired, social services office, exercise room, and a fenced roof garden. In addition, the building provides one-bedroom apartments and alcove studios that enable residents to maintain privacy from live-in caregivers. Incorporating input from UNCA, FAC reserved five parking spaces for a nearby school.

FAC also received support from the community board and elected officials. Queens Community Board 12 discussed construction job training and placement programs with FAC's general contractor and guided FAC in selecting a property management company. FAC received Reso A funding for a solar canopy, furniture and planting on the roof deck, a front desk, and pedestrian pathways in landscaped areas. During the pandemic, the City Council's office arranged daily food deliveries to residents and referrals to local health clinics.



Before FAC could start construction, it needed to address the property's E-Designation environmental requirements including soil contamination. The development team sought the benefits of a government cleanup program, but the property's low levels of contamination meant it likely would not qualify for the state Brownfield Cleanup Program. Instead, it chose to address the site's E-Designations by enrolling in [OER's City Voluntary Cleanup Program](#). FAC excavated and disposed of over 12,000 tons of contaminated soil under OER's oversight and transformed the paved parking lot into affordable

housing for seniors. In 2020, OER issued a Notice of Completion for the project's Track 2 residential cleanup, and the new building began accepting applications for housing. Based on the cleanup achieved, the site's E-Designations were removed.