

On the Waterfront

JMH Development's rental conversion of 184 Kent Avenue promises an exciting future for the rapidly growing Williamsburg neighborhood

There are few neighborhoods in New York that have garnered as much recent attention as Williamsburg in Brooklyn. The area has gone from an industrial district comprised of dilapidated warehouses to a destination for avant-garde artists and hip college students. Now, with the development of new buildings such as 184 Kent Avenue, the revitalization of the Williamsburg waterfront promises yet another chapter for the culturally rich neighborhood. The new residential conversion of the historic Cass Gilbert building at 184 Kent by JMH Development promises to inject new life into the area while safeguarding one of its most beloved architectural treasures.

The building at 184 Kent will offer a modern lifestyle, waterfront views and unparalleled architecture—all in a vibrant, eclectic neighborhood located just minutes from Union Square. Housing approximately 353 residential units, the development will feature 14,000 square feet of amenities, including a health club and a rooftop with views of the Manhattan skyline. In addition to the nearby subway stop, residents will find another convenient means of transportation in the form of a water taxi located just outside the building.

It comes as no surprise that JMH Development is the company behind the preservation and conversion of 184 Kent. Headed by Jason Halpern, JMH boasts an innovative approach to real estate, as well as principals who possess more than 80 years of combined experience. By utilizing green design concepts, for instance, the developers are able to build in a responsible, sustainable way and improve the overall quality of life for those in the neighborhood. "We are proactive in moving forward with our future developments and working on environmentally correct projects," says Halpern. "We're definitely not just looking at the bottom line of profitability. We want to build correctly."

One example of that bigger-picture thinking is 184 Kent. JMH, along with many of the other developers along the waterfront, plans on building a promenade that will extend along the East River, leading north to a 20-acre park. The project promises to provide the neighborhood with the tight-knit community feel characteristic of places like Greenwich Village and Soho.

JMH's investment in urban renewal and refurbishing historic structures is epitomized by the company's efforts to preserve 184 Kent's original architecture. Created by Cass Gilbert in 1913, the building was formerly the Austin, Nichols and Company warehouse. JMH's interest in the project stems from the building's rich history and the unique energy of the surrounding neighborhood. "We felt we

Jason Halpern,
principal of
JMH Development



HALPERN: SYLVIA HODIE



could serve the community by restoring the building," says Josh Schuster of JMH. "We are working to add value to an area that could really benefit from development and beautification." And unlike the

numerous glass-box condo developments in the area, 184 Kent's exterior serves as a tribute to the Williamsburg's storied past.

"With its high-ceilings and loft-like spaces, 184 Kent is unique because it possesses the integrity of the original building," adds Halpern. "In contrast to all the other new developments in Williamsburg, 184 Kent is the only significant project that is a conversion." Not only is JMH maintaining the architectural integrity of the building, but also creating a development that celebrates and supports a vibrant part of Brooklyn. Halpern, who visits the Williamsburg weekly, is clearly drawn by all that the area has to offer, and he sees 184 Kent as a chance to provide countless others with the opportunity to experience the neighborhood's youthful, artistic spirit. ♦