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Affordable housing development breaks ground in North San Pedro area

/ April 22, 2019 by Elisabeth Handler



Keynote speaker, Joshua Marantz, Major, U.S. Army (Ret.)

The City, Santa Clara County and the state of California were among the many partners represented at the celebratory groundbreaking for North San Pedro Apartments in April. North San Pedro Apartments, located on Basset and Terraine Streets, is the affordable housing component of the large North San Pedro Residential Project bounded by West Saint James Street and the 87 Freeway in Downtown San Jose. In development for more than a decade, this area saw a significant City investment in infrastructure that included straightening a portion of Julian Street, re-alignment of much utility infrastructure, creating a new park and streetscapes, and even relocating a massive equestrian sculpture to improve traffic flow.

The groundbreaking ceremony featured retired U.S. Army Major Joshua Mantz, a San Jose resident who shared his story of being shot while deployed in Iraq and actually flat-lining for 15 minutes before resuscitation efforts succeeded. His message was that a second chance is a precious gift, not a guarantee of success or peace, but one that requires the loving support of a whole community. As subsequent speakers noted, the history of development in the North San Pedro area, and the affordable housing component in particular, show just how much community support and love can achieve, after a long and harrowing process. First Community Housing's President and CEO, Geoff Morgan, himself a veteran, emceed the event, and received formal commendations from California Sen. Jim Beall and Assemblymember Ash Kalra. Mayor Peralez and District 3 City Councilmember Raul Peralez both told of their involvement over the years. Director of Housing Jacky Morales-Ferrand, Richard Keit, former director of the Successor Agency to the Redevelopment Agency, and Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez also shared their experiences working to find the right combination of partners, funding sources and motivation for this critical project. At the close of the ceremony, First Community Housing's Director of Development, Regina Celestin Williams led a long series of "one-clap" recognitions of the multitude of lenders, investors, architects, planners, construction companies and others whose efforts over the past 10 years made this day a reality.



From left: Regina Williams, Richard Keit, Jacky Morales-Ferrand, Raul Peralez, Sam Liccardo, Jim Beall, Geoff Morgan, Cindy Chavez, Josh Marantz, and Johnny Khamis (City Councilmember/D10) break ground at North San Pedro Apartments

North San Pedro Apartments includes 135 units: 118 studios and 16 one-bedroom units for those earning 30-50% of area median income, plus one unrestricted manager's unit, with a set-aside of permanent supportive housing for 55 chronically homeless veterans and 60 chronically homeless individuals. The project will incorporate community-centered wellness principles including a landscaped podium courtyard with fitness park, property management and social service coordination adjacent to laundry, computer lab, multipurpose room, and outdoor gathering space Award-winning architectural firm OJK Architecture and Planning designed the project. Construction begins this month and completion of the project is planned for early 2021.

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