

These apartments were designed for New York City commuters

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BNE Real Estate Group

By Steve Strunsky | NJ Advance Media

Developers, local elected officials and executives of NJ Transit gathered by the tracks Tuesday to announced completion of the final phase of the Link at Aberdeen Station, a 227-unit rental apartment complex that is among the growing number of transit village projects in New Jersey being built near rail hubs to appeal to commuters.

The Link complex, developed by Livingston-based BNE Real Estate Group and Highview Homes of Middletown, is within a 20-acre area on the Aberdeen side of the Matawan-Aberdeen Station along NJ Transit's North Jersey Coast Line, where the township is encouraging residential and other development that takes advantage of the station.

The project meets guidelines under the state Department of Transportation's Transit Village Program, administered by the Transit Village Task Force.



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The project includes a total of five buildings with 227 units of one-bedroom apartments, with rents starting at \$1,835 a month, and two-bedroom units going for \$2,045 and up.

NJ Transit representatives said it assisted the project by selling Aberdeen 1.7 acres of land near the station for \$500,000, though the agency retained certain rights of way to allow access to its tracks.

A spokesman for BNE could not immediately provide a cost figure for the project.

NJ Transit's executive director, Kevin Corbett, said in a statement that the agency was happy to help.

"NJ Transit is committed not just to provide transportation for the people of New Jersey, but also to help local communities build their economies and enhance their quality of life with transit-oriented development," Corbett's said in the statement.



The project was designed by Thomas Brennan Architects of Plano, Texas, with interiors curated by Newark-based Minno and Wasko Architects.

The developer describes the apartments as luxury units, with amenities that include large windows and stainless steel kitchen appliances.

Officials say the commute to New York Penn Station is about an hour each way, without delays.



BNE partner Jonathan Schwarz said in a statement that the company was "delighted to have delivered on our promise to help this well-located-but-underutilized property reach its full potential as a vibrant, modern rental community in a commuter-friendly location."

In an interview Wednesday, Tagliari said he was told by Schwarz that 60-percent of the units had been leased, and that 50-percent of those new residents were taking the train to work.



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Tagliarini said the project had a long and complex history that predates his nine years as mayor. He said the site surrounding the station had long been a warren of aging and abandoned industrial buildings, some of them contaminated, that were demolished after officials declared the area in need of development and turned the site over to a designated developer.

Construction began about two years ago.

"It entailed public property, it entailed private property, it entailed NJ Transit property, and of course, you can't build in New Jersey without (addressing) contamination," Tagliarini said. "From the township's perspective, it was just an incredible eyesore."