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Press Release

June 5, 2019

Metro-North

IMMEDIATE

Metro-North Railroad and AvalonBay Communities Hold Groundbreaking Ceremony to Mark Start of Construction of Transit-Oriented Development at Harrison Station

Environmentally Friendly Development to Feature New Housing, Retail Space and Expanded Parking for Commuters and Residents

MTA Metro-North Railroad and AvalonBay Communities, one of the nation's leading multifamily builders, held a groundbreaking ceremony at the Harrison station today to mark the start of construction of a mixed-use development project on the south side of the station.

This transit oriented development project will be the first of its kind in the railroad's system, and it will include a garage for commuters and the public, housing complex with 143 apartment units (7 of which are affordable units), 27,000 square feet of retail space, as well as two pedestrian plazas at the station. The garage will increase commuter parking by at least 218 spaces. Metro-North reached an agreement on the sale of the parcel of property to AvalonBay in April, allowing construction to begin.

Housed on a 3.28-acre site on the south side of the station along Halstead Avenue, the development intends to spark a downtown rebirth, serving as a catalyst for the revitalization of the Town/Village of Harrison. This previously underutilized parcel of property presently contains a surface parking lot that is too small to meet current commuter demand.

Under the design completed by the developer, and approved by the Town/Village with input from Metro-North and MTA, the surface parking lot will be replaced by a series of pedestrian-oriented, four-story buildings lined with retail stores on the ground floor and apartments on the upper floors, including seven affordable apartments that will be subsidized by Westchester County.

A mixed-use building at the eastern end of the site will create a vibrant streetscape with direct entry for several town home units and residential amenities at street level. Its interior and upper stories would provide 598 spaces of structured parking, of which at least 475 would be reserved for the public and commuters, an 85% increase over the 257 Metro-North-owned parking spaces that exist today.

An additional 187 parking spaces for residents and 96 for retail customers will be located in another parking structure behind the first floor of the mixed retail/residential buildings on the western end of the site. The existing parking spaces owned by the Town/Village of Harrison on the north side of the station are preserved for customers and will not be affected by construction or the project.

There will be closures of part of the parking lot during the construction process. Alternate will be provided, and customers will be diverted to the other lots within walking distance from the station.

The start of construction of the transit oriented development is the culmination of an extensive public process that involved meeting with community stakeholders, a request for proposals to build on the site, a review of construction plans, an environmental review, as well as a series of approvals from the MTA Board.

"Transit oriented development is a quadruple win: it's a win for downtown revitalization and economic progress, it's a win for the environment, it provides a new choice in housing opportunities, and it reinforces the MTA's bottom line, which is a win for the public," said MTA Chief Development Officer Janno Lieber. "I'm pleased that the MTA and AvalonBay are moving forward on this marquee project that we hope will set the bar for future transit-oriented development efforts in our region."

"We are delighted to be proceeding with what promises to be a transformative project for Metro-North commuters and for the Town and Village of Harrison," said Catherine Rinaldi, President of Metro-North Railroad. "When it's fully realized, this green project will create a vibrant, walkable community, both reducing a reliance on cars and enhancing the existing village hub. Our customers will have a much easier time finding parking at the station, and Harrison residents can enjoy new shopping options and an enlivened downtown. We hope this type of suburban transit-oriented development becomes a model for communities throughout the MTA region."

Matthew Whalen, AvalonBay Senior Vice President for Development, spoke at the reception, saying: "It took a great deal of persistence and patience to arrive at this day. I want to thank Mayor Belmont and the executives at Metro-North for their support and encouragement throughout the process. We understand the importance of genuine partnership not only during the pre-construction and construction phases but going forward as well. AvalonBay intends to be a good corporate citizen here in Harrison, as we have been everywhere else in the New York metro area."

