

MEDIA RELEASE



340 Thomas Boulevard, Orange, New Jersey

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RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY DR. WALTER G. ALEXANDER VILLAGE In The City of Orange

On Wednesday, July 11, 2012 at 11:00 am, 105 Wilson Place, Orange, New Jersey, the Orange Housing Development Corporation will host a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Grand Opening of the Dr. Walter G. Alexander Village. The ceremony will recognize the project partners and officials who helped to complete Phase I & II of the redevelopment project. Invited guests, include newly elected Mayor Dwayne Warren, City of Orange Council, Commissioner of the NJ Department of Community Affairs, HUD, Congressman Payne, the Orange Housing Authority Commissioners, Orange Housing Development Corporation Board Members, Development Partners: TD Bank, Enterprise, AJD, The Alpert Group, Kitchen Associates, and Metro Company.

After the ceremony, a media tour of the development will follow. The Orange Housing Development Corporation plans in conjunction with the City of Orange Housing Authority seek to redevelop the Walter G. Alexander public housing complex by providing safe and affordable homes for seniors and neighborhood families, while attracting new mixed income renters.

The Dr. Walter G. Alexander Village was originally a public housing complex built in 1952. This site is 3.8-acres, bounded by Central Place, Parrow Street, Wilson Place and Oakwood Avenue. The site now consists of 48 affordable housing units for seniors and 66 affordable housing family developments.

After the ceremony, a tour of the Dr. Walter G. Alexander Village will follow.



The Dr. Walter G. Alexander Village

FACT SHEET

Current Stats & Status: The Orange Housing Development Corporation plans in conjunction with the Orange Housing Authority seek to redevelop the Walter G. Alexander public housing complex by providing safe and affordable homes for seniors and neighborhood families, while attracting new mixed income renters.

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Resident Relocation: All of the eligible former residents received Section 8 Housing Vouchers to facilitate their move. The Section 8 Department of the Housing Authority facilitated the relocation of all the former residing families. A total of 105 families have relocated in the City of Orange.

The surrounding area: The site is immediately adjacent to Oakwood Elementary School. The surrounding neighborhood is predominantly small single-family homes with a sprinkle of small scale commercial properties and civic organizations/churches.

The site has been declared an “area in need of redevelopment” under NJ’s redevelopment statute which is part of redevelopment plan that was adopted in 2003. The site is designated as a “residential transit village district” that permits a variety of housing types, from single-family to mid-rise buildings (4 stories), neighborhood commercial uses and others.

Dr. Walter G. Alexander : The former high rise family development and the new construction honors the life and legacy of Dr. Walter G. Alexander, a long-time resident of Orange, New Jersey who in 1903, opened a medical practice in this city where he resided for the rest of his life. Alexander was a President of the National Medical Association and the first African American to serve in the New Jersey Legislature. He died in 1953 at his home in Orange at the age of 72.

Professionals working on the project:

AJD, General Contractor

The Alpert Group, Partner

HUD

Enterprise, Syndicator

Kitchen and Associates, Architectural Services, PA

The Metro Company, LLC, Development Consultants

McManimon and Scotland, General Counsel

New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency

TD Bank, Investor



RECOMMENDATIONS BY ORANGE HOUSING AUTHORITY & CITY ADMINISTRATION

Making the area safe for residents and children going to school:

The removal of the two high rise public housing buildings is an important first step towards creating a safer environment for the Oakwood Elementary School population. New housing have a clear distinction between public, semi-public and private spaces, including stoops, granny lofts and front lawns that put more eyes on the street, increase informal surveillance and encourage people to take ownership of both private and public spaces.

Creating “safe routes to school” will help children and their families feel safe, once again, walking around the neighborhood.

Designed new housing blends with the rest of the neighborhood:

Given the location, redevelopment of the site creates an effortless transition in terms of scale, building height and architectural character. A variety of smaller housing, designed townhouses will start the transition, scaling down towards a predominantly small-lot single-family neighborhood.

Streetscape improvements will help bring life back to the neighborhood:

Visible streetscape improvements have enhanced the neighborhoods appearance, while providing a sense of security. The site is very close to Orange Park. It enhances the intended development's location and will create a safer pedestrian environment and further encourage residents to patronize local retail and services.

Enhanced real estate values and potential park space:

A major opportunity to enhance real estate value on this site exists along the Parrow Street Frontage.

Transit connections / values for both renters and owners:

The site's biggest asset is its proximity to regional transit. There is resurgence in the desire to live in areas with increased transit options. More people are choosing to live in dense centers close to transit like the City of Orange.

Located roughly halfway between two stops on the Morris and Essex line, one with express service to Manhattan, this area is ripe to attract young professionals looking for an affordable place to live. The Brick Church train station is located just over the border in neighboring East Orange. Another strength of the area is the fact that housing prices in Orange are significantly lower than those in other towns along the Morris and Essex Line. Orange's cost advantage is a great asset and marketing tool for the proposed new development.

History of Dr. Walter G. Alexander

Dr. Walter Gilbert Alexander, MD (1880-1953) was the first African-American elected to the New Jersey Legislature, serving two terms in the Assembly, 1921-1922. Born in Lynchburg, VA on December 3, 1880, he entered Lincoln University at age 14, receiving his B.A. degree in 1899, the youngest person to matriculate and graduate in that college history. In 1903, Alexander was awarded his M.D. degree from the Boston College of Physicians and Surgeons, and in 1904 settled in Orange, NJ where he practiced medicine for the remainder of his life. Affiliated with the National Medical Association throughout his career, he held several offices including President, 1924-26. Because the Medical Society of New Jersey did not admit African-American physicians, Dr. Alexander founded the North Jersey Medical Society in 1907, the State's first organization of African-American health professionals.

With the goal of advancing the health care and civil rights of African American, Dr. Alexander ran as a Progressive candidate for the Assembly in 1912, and as a Republican in 1919, before elected to the Assembly in 1921. During his two terms, he sponsored eight bills, two of which were enacted into law. One of his bills strengthened the New Jersey Civil Rights Act that became law on April 7, 1921. This was the most significant civil rights legislation passed in New Jersey since 1884, which laid the foundation for the State's future civil rights statues. Throughout his professional and political careers, Dr. Alexander was a leading advocate for improved health care access for African Americans. His strenuous objection to restrictions from hospitals placed on African American physicians, his tireless efforts to modernize the State's reporting requirements for communicable diseases, and his opposition to racial discrimination in all its forms, improved the lives of countless New Jersey residents. Dr. Alexander died at his home in Orange, New Jersey on February 5, 1953 at the age of 72.