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NEWS

Redevelopment of former factory into 150 apartments in New Haven's Hill section begins

By **Mark Zaretsky**, Staff Writer

Nov 10, 2025



New Haven and state officials join developers for a groundbreaking for a 150-unit affordable apartment complex at 10 Liberty St. in New Haven on November 10, 2025.

Arnold Gold/Hearst Connecticut Media



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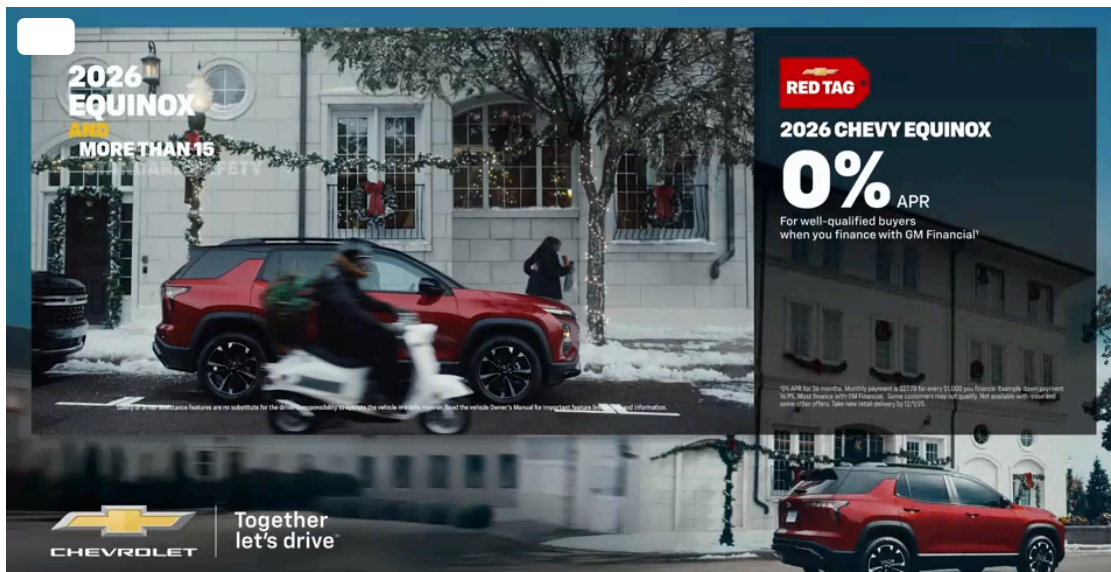
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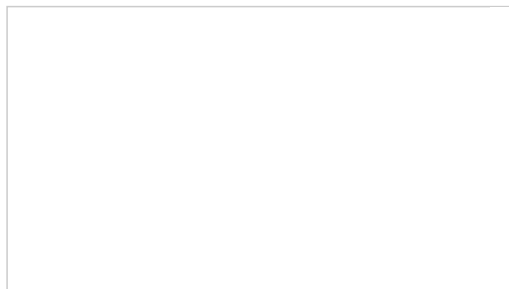
NEW HAVEN — In a city that currently has new housing rising all over, much of it classified as "affordable" to various degrees, the new 150-unit, \$73 million apartment complex going up at 10 Liberty St. where Liberty meets Spring Street and Union Avenue stands out.



It brings brand new, much-needed housing to The Hill section — one of the New Haven neighborhoods with the oldest housing stock and the least investment over the years — and it's bringing housing to what had been a long-closed factory.

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The project, on the former [Electrix Illumination](#) factory site, also is about a quarter-mile from Union Station, the city's transportation hub, making it a perfect example of "transit-oriented development," officials said Monday.

Of those 150 units, 149 are affordable or deeply affordable housing, ranging from 30% to 80% of the Area Median Income, or AMI, averaging out to 60% of AMI, officials said.

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And the project, designed to be green, will make use of both geothermal heating and cooling and solar energy for electricity to lessen impact on the environment and help keep utilities affordable for residents, officials said.

The developer [received City Plan Commission approval in 2022 to build a five-story apartment building at 10 Liberty St.](#)

All of that adds up to a reason to celebrate, and that's just what about 50 people, including the developers, lenders and city and state officials, did Monday as they broke ground for the project, which had been in the works since the world and New Haven were in the midst of the COVID pandemic.

"The process of groundbreaking today is a wonderful opportunity to pause (and) acknowledge all of the collective effort that has gone into this," said Jonathan Cortell, president of Cortell Development Group, which is leading the effort — but has plenty of partners.

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"We can't say we would be here today without all of those who are involved," Cortell said, adding that he is looking forward to a ribbon-cutting to open the complex "as soon as the construction folks will allow."

Cortell, onetime vice president and director of development at the New York State Housing Finance Agency, offered praise to New Haven and Mayor Justin Elicker for the way they have welcomed more affordable housing in the city.

"I don't know that communities across the country are embracing the opportunity and potential of affordable housing as this city has," Cortell said. "We can't wait for what is next."

Both Cortell and Elicker talked about how close the project is to Union Station, as well as to downtown New Haven.

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Elicker offered "huge thanks to the state" for "the incredible amount of resources" it invested to help make the project happen, and said there will be additional opportunities around the city in the future.

The state was represented at the ground-breaking by Seila Mosquera-Bruno, commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Housing; Matthew Pugliese, deputy commissioner of the state Department of Economic and Community Development, and Nandini Natarajan, CEO of the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, or CHFA among others.

Resources to clean up the site and build the apartments included \$37 from the CHFA and \$16.5 million from the state Department of Housing, along with private financing from the Bank of America.

"Thank you, Jon, for investing in our city," Elicker said. "We love putting shovels in the ground and getting these projects going." New Haven has "set an ambitious goal of building 10,000 new housing units in the next 10 years," with a goal of having at least 30 percent of those be affordable, he said.

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"We're committed to not only affordability, but walkability," Elicker said.

Alder Carmen Rodriguez, D-6, whose sprawling ward includes parts of The Hill, City Point, Long Wharf and downtown, welcomed the 10 Liberty St. development to her ward.

"This is important. We're in The Hill," Rodriguez said. "...This is a community that is thriving," and "this is going to enhance it even more," she said.

"We want to make sure that this is done right," Rodriguez said.

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The CHFA's Natarajan said it was a long road to get to this point, "but that's no problem for us." She thanked the mayor and the Board of Alders for their support.

"Housing is where jobs go to sleep at night," Natarajan said, highlighting the importance of this type of housing, which allows people to live close to one another and to jobs.

"We're proud to support this new development with almost \$37 million in new financing," Natarajan said.

Pugliese of DECD said that "housing is economic development, and DECD is proud to be here, which provided millions of dollars in brownfields funds to help clean the site up and prepare it for development."

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"The contamination makes reusing these sites a challenge," Pugliese said, but "for every dollar that DECD invests, we get almost \$20 in private investment."

Erin Galligan, senior vice president of Bank of America, who grew up in North Haven and now lives in Fairfield, said the bank invested \$75 million in debt and equity in the project.

"We're very grateful and proud to be part of 10 Liberty," she said.

Housing Commissioner Mosquera-Bruno, who lived in The Hill years ago — her first home when she first arrived as an immigrant from Ecuador and worked in a factory in Branford — also was happy to be part of the project, to which her department contributed \$16.5 million.

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"My first home in New Haven was on Kimberly Avenue and the Boulevard," she said. She used to walk 10 blocks in the winter past the site with her daughter, she said.

John Bainlardi, vice president of WBP Development, one of the partners in the project, said he was "so excited to be involved with the State of Connecticut" and the city.

The project, "steps away from Union Station ... will transform the long-vacant and contaminated industrial site into a new five-story development of deed-restricted housing with nearly all affordable, below-market rate rental units for households between 30% and 80% of the area median income," the city said in a release.

"The project will also include the development of adjacent streets and sidewalks, 136 on-site residential parking spaces and outside storage for 45 bikes on the 1.73-acre site," it said. "The new complex will utilize geothermal-powered heating and cooling and a solar array for electricity to leverage renewable energy sources and enhance energy efficiency among its residents."

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"In total, the project represents a \$73 million investment — funded and financed with support from the Connecticut Department of Housing, Connecticut Department of Community and Economic Development,

Connecticut Housing Finance Authority and Bank of America — and is expected to be completed in approximately two years," the release said.

The shuttered Electrix Illumination factory went out of business in December 2020.

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Nov 10, 2025



Mark Zaretsky
REPORTER



Mark Zaretsky is a reporter with the New Haven Register. Zaretsky is a Chicago native and longtime New Haven resident and an award-winning reporter and music writer for the New Haven Register and Hearst Connecticut Media Group. His beats include East Haven and Branford, regional issues and occasional blues and roots music stories. He also makes a point of knowing where all the good ethnic and hole-in-the-wall restaurants, bars and bakeries are -- and is an unapologetic Cubs, Bears, Blackhawks and Bulls fan. In addition to his work as a journalist, Zaretsky is a front man for The Cobalt Rhythm Kings and The Chicago Dawgs and occasionally performs with Rock & Roll Hall of Famer Mark Naftalin and the Paul Butterfield Blues Band.

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