

Downeaster, TANTUM break ground on 78-unit rental project in downtown Long Branch – Real Estate NJ

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The Elbie, a planned 78-unit luxury apartment building at 305 Broadway in Long Branch, is slated to open in late spring 2027 with a mix of one- and two-bedroom homes. — Rendering by Rotwein + Blake (via Downeaster Development and TANTUM Real Estate)

By Joshua Burd

A new 78-unit luxury apartment building will soon rise in downtown Long Branch, in a project that will transform a key stretch of the corridor leading to its booming coastline.

Its developers, Downeaster Development and TANTUM Real Estate, joined Mayor John Pallone and other local officials on Tuesday to mark the start of construction at 305 Broadway. The rental property known as The Elbie is now set to rise across from the city’s municipal complex and its recently renovated library, with plans also calling for some 4,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space and both covered podium and surface parking.

Initial occupancy is slated for late spring 2027.

“The growth that we’re seeing in the city of Long Branch is not an accident,” said James Taylor, founder and CEO of Downeaster Development. “It is the result of strong leadership, clear vision and devotion to the future of this city. Mayor Pallone, your efforts and your belief

in the potential of this community are revitalizing downtown Long Branch. We're grateful for your continued commitment and proud to play a small role in the city's success."

Designed by Rotwein+Blake, the building will reach four stories but transition to three along Sixth Avenue, complementing the surrounding residential neighborhood, according to the project team. Renters will choose from a mix of one- and two-bedroom homes, including some one-bedroom-plus-den layouts and some with private terraces or balconies, along with roughly 8,000 square feet of interior amenity and social spaces.



Importantly, those residents will be within walking distance of NJ Transit's Long Branch station, the Atlantic shoreline and Broadway's growing collection of shops and restaurants. That means The Elbie is poised to activate a key section of the Lower Broadway corridor, transforming a long-vacant parcel while helping meet one of the city's top objectives.

"As a developer, you're seen as an outsider when you come into communities," said Debra Tantleff, TANTUM's founding principal. "I was never once treated that way here ... but what I was always able to convey is that there's a gravitas and a cachet to saying that you're in Long Branch.

“And while it has historically, to the outsider, been associated with the shore, this project gets to help redefine that. This project is the definition of what this administration has been working on in making that connectivity.”

The Elbie’s amenities will include a ground-floor lobby lounge, a library and work-from-home areas, with individual pods for privacy alongside open collaborative spaces, as well as second-floor spaces such as a fitness center, a clubroom and a recording and podcast studio, the developers said. An outdoor terrace designed by Melillo Bauer Carman | Landscape Architects will offer a grilling station, a fireplace and multiple seating areas complemented by a lawn and raised built-in planters, creating a relaxed outdoor gathering environment.

As part of the project, Downeaster and TANTUM will deliver streetscape enhancements to reinforce the connection between The Elbie, Slocum Park and surrounding civic spaces, the firms said. Those plans include an enhanced crosswalk featuring the city seal, new landscaping and a distinctive clock tower element at the park corner, all designed to create a stronger sense of place along the corridor.



“Most people don’t really care what the outside of their building looks like, but this is a gorgeous-looking building that is stately and has a presence and a strength in anchoring the downtown,” Tantleff said. “And we have the opportunity to expand upon that and include community benefits and common improvements that are going to brand this component of downtown and this section of the corridor.”

TriCon Construction & Management Services is the general contractor for The Elbie, which Tantleff said “occupies a middle ground that’s rare today — a boutique-scale community large enough to offer meaningful amenities but still intimate in feel.” That figures to attract a broad mix of residents, she said, from professionals and established households to those looking to downsize at the shore.

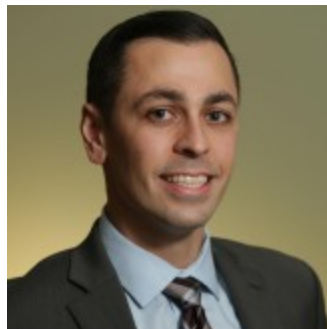
And while the project will soon come to fruition, the developers celebrated Tuesday’s milestone with the help of an extensive professional team, including:

- John Taikina of All Things Planning & Development LLC
- Michael Bruno, Anthony Recchia and Michael Gross of Giordano Halleran & Ciesla PC
- Lance Blake and Cammy Hardison of Rotwein+Blake
- Tom Carman and Tori Frydrych of Melillo Bauer Carman
- Robert P. Freud and Joseph Bachi of Dynamic Engineering
- Bank of Princeton

Pallone, meantime, highlighted other projects and components of the downtown that are contributing to its recent momentum. They include the historic and newly renovated Long Branch Public Library, one of just 11 so-called Carnegie libraries built with funds awarded by Andrew Carnegie and the Carnegie Foundation, as well as a \$600,000 grant that the city secured recently to update a park adjacent to its municipal building.

He also pointed to enhancements that Downeaster and TANTUM have included in the project at the city’s request, including a distinctive clock tower atop the building, the improved landscaping at Slocum Park across the street and extra wide, café-style sidewalks.

“I think that we’re together creating what’s going to be a transformative neighborhood here with new public spaces and amenities, and this project is an important part of that process,” Pallone said, before later praising the developers: “They’ve been very special partners to work with.”



[Joshua Burd](#)

Joshua Burd, an award-winning reporter and editor, has been covering New Jersey commercial real estate for 13 years. Many industry leaders view him as the go-to real estate reporter in the state, a role he is eager to continue as the editor of Real Estate NJ. He is a

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