

THE REAL DEAL

NEW YORK CITY REAL ESTATE NEWS

March 29, 2013

Brooklyn Navy Yard Redevelopment Sparks Off Wallabout About-turn



Aerial shot of the Brooklyn Navy Yard

Invigorated by the redevelopment at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, the Wallabout neighborhood on Washington Avenue is experiencing a commercial renaissance, the Wall Street Journal reported.

Once known as the second-largest producer of chocolate in the neighborhood (after Hershey Co.), Wallabout slipped into decline following the decommissioning of the Navy yard in 1966 and the subsequent closing of the area's last candy factory a year later. But the new Navy yard development – which will act as an incubator to 300 businesses as well as provide affordable housing– is set to transform the neighborhood. Recent deals such as the \$26.25 million contract to purchase a warehouse at 29 Ryerson Street – with tentative plans to develop a 200-room hotel possibly as the site of a 200-room hotel, further accelerate the transformation.

“We’ve now come full circle,” Richard Perris, district manager of Community Board 2, told the Journal.

New stores such as 3,500-square-foot organic grocery Fresh Fanatic and the Body by Brooklyn day spa, are sprouting up in the area, which is close to the more established residential enclaves of Fort Greene and Clinton Hill.

Indeed, Doug Bowen, executive vice president at CORE and a longtime Wallabout resident, told the Journal that roughly 18 townhouses in the area changed hands last year. “Myrtle Avenue has become such a desirable and friendly commercial corridor, the housing stock on either side has really risen and come onto the map,” Bowen said, adding that townhouses in Fort Greene and Clinton Hill can sell for as much as \$3 million.

“In Wallabout you’re not seeing those prices, but you’re seeing people attracted to that housing because of its access to services,” he said.

Perris stressed that despite the flurry of projects, preservationists were ensuring that the industrial heritage of the area would be maintained. Last summer, the National Register of Historic Places listed an area between Grand and Clinton avenues as an industrial historic district, a relatively rare designation that would protect 40 buildings including the Rockwood Chocolate and Mergenthaler Linotype companies. [WSJ]

http://online.wsj.com/public/page/new-york-realestate.html?mod=WSJ_topnav_na_newyork

– Hiten Samtani