



LIVING SPACE, REDESIGNED

LOCAL ARCHITECTS REINVENT
THE SAILBOAT BEND APARTMENTS
COMPLEX, WHICH HAS OFFERED
AFFORDABLE HOUSING TO
SENIORS SINCE 1971

WRITER CLARISSA BUCH • PHOTOGRAPHY JASON LEIDY



The Sailboat Bend Apartments complex on the south side of the New River is getting a new look as the \$8 million renovation nears completion. The seven-story, 105-unit overhaul in the historical Sailboat Bend in downtown Fort Lauderdale has evolved from an outdated, mid-1970s complex into a high-end and modern, multifaceted living space.

Architect Angelo P. Lucio of Hecky/Yee Consulting Architects built the space in 1971 for senior citizens in need of affordable housing. As years went by the complex severely aged, prompting the city to apply for funds for the renovation.

According to Tam English, CEO of the Housing Authority of the City of Fort Lauderdale, most former public housing projects are torn down instead of redeveloped, but in this case the city made it a priority to protect the project as it houses seniors who don't have other residential options.

"The space has always been here in somewhat of a dilapidated condition," said English. "Because we are able to renovate it, we're able to upgrade the total facility and give it a 2015 look that will carry far into the future and fit into the community better." The redesign will include efficiency units, one and two bedroom units, and a community room to comply with Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Architects Margi Nothard and Terence O'Connor of Glavovic Studios Inc. explained that though it was a challenge to take on a building of this magnitude and renovate it, they both feel they made a true contribution to the city and are anxious to see the finished product.

From using recycled content as building material to installing energy efficient fixtures and appliances, eco-friendliness was high on the list of priorities for the renovation. "It's very important to reduce our carbon footprint on earth," said Nothard. "By using renewable materials, we ultimately are less impactful on the world."

English explained that between the Florida housing requirements for energy efficiency and Fort Lauderdale's desire to surpass the state's set criteria, it "only made sense to build stronger and become more energy efficient."

As part of the infrastructure renovations, Nothard and O'Connor transformed the ground floor of the space into a gathering place for residents with multiple seating areas and benches – a way to merge community and connectivity. Plans for a public garden and park areas are also in the works.

While Sailboat Bend sounds like an ideal residential community for any Fort Lauderdale resident, a potential owner must be 62 years old or older and considered within the low income bracket or below to qualify.

To Nothard, providing senior residents with quality, affordable housing within a prime real estate area is vital to perpetuating a strong social fabric in a dynamic community. "This project really connects to the city at large, especially downtown," Nothard said. "There will now be at least 105 seniors who will become active participants in bringing people to the Riverwalk and [continuing] to make it an active place."

Sailboat Bend Apartment renovations are expected to be completed in the beginning of summer 2015. 