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**nyc Project of the Month**

**NEW FACILITY WILL ALSO HOUSE AM&G WATERPROOFING, ENABLING THE COMPANY TO EXPAND AND BETTER SERVE CLIENTS**  
**Rivera to open \$12 million, 132,000 s/f location for Park Ave. Building and Roofing Supplies at 2074 Atlantic Ave.**

**BROOKLYN, NY** Five years ago, Gilbert Rivera was confronting a challenge that many commercial and industrial firms in New York City face—how to expand his business while remaining in the city. Rather than move to the suburbs, however, Rivera decided to move his operation just a few miles from its Bedford Stuyvesant location to the Ocean Hill-Brownsville section of Brooklyn, in large part because of the support he received from New York City officials.

“There is a good business climate in New York City and the Bloomberg administration is willing to help with economic development throughout the city,” Rivera said. “We were fortunate to be able to walk in and talk to someone who could help us in Ocean Hill-Brownsville. The city officials were always accessible.”

The result is on October 16th, he will kick off a week of grand opening events to celebrate the opening of his newly constructed 132,000 s/f, multi-block complex at 2074 Atlantic Ave. The \$12 million facility will double the capacity of the businesses he founded, Park Avenue Building and Roofing Supplies and AM&G Waterproofing, enabling them to expand and better serve their customers.

The new complex features a 15,000 s/f showroom for Park Ave. Building and Roofing Supplies. The store will cater to the construction industry and commercial contractors. Administrative offices above the showroom will serve as headquarters for both companies, with underground parking available for employees.



Shown (from left) are: Gilbert Rivera, Gilbert Rivera, Jr. and Jon Benguiat, director of Planning and Development for Brooklyn borough president Markowitz. Benguiat presented a proclamation from the borough president honoring Rivera Sr.



The new Park Ave. complex features a 15,000 s/f showroom that will cater to the construction industry and comm'l. contractors.

The facility boasts an over 40,000 s/f warehouse that will stock dry-wall, lumber, plywood, roofing materials, insulation, moldings, metal studs and metal decking on 20-ft. high racks accessible by fork lifts. The site also features 30 spaces of above-ground parking for custom-

ers, and an off-street truck loading area that will enable Park Ave. to efficiently load trucks and get customers on their way faster.

The journey to Atlantic Ave. began in 2001, when Rivera bought lots totaling 45,000 s/f from the city at an auction. He later purchased other lots from private individuals, a lot from HUD, and additional parcels from the city's Economic Development Corporation. Along the way, he received approval to rezone the lots from a residential to commercial designation, in addition to other forms of support from the Bloomberg administration, borough president Marty Markowitz, the Brooklyn Office of City Planning, City Planning Commission, Board of Standards and Appeals, and City Council.

“We're expanding our operation in Ocean Hill-Brownsville because we were able to put together a num-



The warehouse features an off-street truck loading area that will enable Park Ave. to efficiently load trucks and get customers on their way faster.

ber of lots in a neighborhood we think is a prime area for economic development,” Rivera said. “We were very fortunate because it's hard to find commercial space, and the space available is so expensive that it's difficult to do this type of development.”

Rivera believes his new project will serve as an anchor for future development in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville area and complement

the other changes in the community, which include new housing, rising property values, and an influx of new residents with higher incomes. He has already added 50 jobs to his two companies' staff of 250, thanks to the Atlantic Ave. development.

Rivera cited a study about Ocean Hill-Brownsville, which the Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) released at an economic development breakfast he

hosted last May, as an indication of the potential of the area. The study, Meeting the Needs of a Growing Ocean Hill/Brownsville, found that the neighborhood's population is rising faster than the population of Brooklyn as a whole due to the construction of 1,000 new homes in recent years. The study suggests that additional retail services are needed to serve the growing population.

“We looked at Ocean Hill-Brownsville and recognized an opportunity,” Rivera said. “This is a growing neighborhood and we want to be part of it, just like we were on Park Ave. in Bedford Stuyvesant. Twenty-five years ago when we started our business in Bedford Stuyvesant, we were surrounded by vacant lots and abandoned property and we worked to change that. We hope to do the same thing in Ocean Hill-Brownsville.”

The BEDC study also found that the community has many characteristics that make the area ideal for new business development:

- An aggregate income of \$340 million, distributed among the area's 31,000 relatively young residents.
- A high proportion of vacant lots.
- A high number of newly constructed homes.

Local religious institutions that own and lease out many properties. To gather data for this study, BEDC distributed surveys to residents and retail businesses in an area bordered by Fulton St., Rockaway Ave., Eastern Pkwy. Extension, and Buffalo Ave. A copy of the full report and the survey results are available on BEDC's website at www.bedc.org.

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