

BRONX NEWS

Marriott checks in

Hotel chain to open rooms in East Bronx

EXCLUSIVE

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STAY in the Bronx? Yes, thonx!

Visitors to the East Bronx attend weddings in Throgs Neck, visit relatives at Calvary Hospital, hear lectures at Albert Einstein College of Medicine — and sleep in the suburbs.

They stay in Westchester County, where modern, affordable, brand-name hotels are plentiful.

But that could change now that local developers have struck a deal with the Marriott chain for a 125-room Residence Inn at the Hutchinson Metro Center, the Daily News has learned.

"The location is strategic," said Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. "We have Einstein there. We have Calvary. We have people coming here to see family and we have students, but they stay in Westchester and Manhattan. We want to keep them in the Bronx."

The seven-story extended-stay hotel will occupy the upper tier of a new 300,000-square-foot building at the sprawling 42-acre complex.

Located off the Hutchinson River Parkway between the neighborhoods of Pelham Bay and Morris Park, the Hutch Metro Center is home to Mercy College and various government, medical



Rendering of Marriott Residence Inn to be built at Hutchinson Metro Center. Construction slated to start this fall.

and retail tenants. It features two large office buildings.

The new building — dubbed The Atrium — will also include office space and will house an L.A. Fitness club and a family-style restaurant in addition to the hotel, said Joseph Simone, president of Simone Development.

Construction on the building and a 1,000-vehicle parking garage is slated to start this fall.

Simone expects the hotel to attract zoologists and horticulturalists in town for work at the Bronx Zoo and New York Botanical Garden, he said. The rooms will offer views of nearby parkland.

"This is going to be a beautiful hotel," Simone said. "The Bronx has nothing like this right now."

Diaz said the hotel could accommodate golfers when the Donald Trump golf course under construction at Ferry Point Park in Throgs Neck is complete.

Brooklyn and Queens have recently undergone a hotel boom, with boutique and value hotels sprouting in Williamsburg and Long Island City to cater to adventurous, thrifty tourists.

But the Bronx has lagged behind. By 2015, Queens will boast 41 more hotels than it did in 2005 and Brooklyn will boast 35 more,

according to NYC & Company, the tourism organization.

The Bronx will have added just two hotels over the same span.

But the Boogie Down could be poised to catch up. Manhattan hotel proprietor Jay Domb plans to open a boutique hotel in the South Bronx soon.

The \$10 million Bronx Opera House Hotel, located in a restored theater on E. 149th St. in The Hub shopping district, will attract European tourists, he said.

Meanwhile, Diaz is trying to drum up support for a first-class hotel near Yankee Stadium.

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