

**For Immediate Release**  
(March 17, 2008)

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**QUAKER GREEN CONDOMINIUMS GIVE BOOST  
TO WEST HARTFORD'S ELMWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD**

*Nearby store renovations, restaurant openings signs of new investments: Mayor Slifka*

**VALHALLA, N.Y.** (March 17) – Only about a dozen people have moved into Quaker Green, a new townhouse and condo neighborhood in West Hartford, Conn., but it already is having a positive impact on the surrounding area, according to local officials and business leaders.

A wave of revitalization has started along nearby New Britain Avenue, where a number of “upscale” stores and restaurants have opened during the past year, supplementing the wide array of neighborhood businesses already lining the road. Perhaps most notably, a shopping center adjacent to Quaker Green is undergoing its biggest renovation project in decades. This flurry of investment has given local leaders cause to believe the Elmwood neighborhood where Quaker Green is located soon will share the luster and nightlife of nearby West Hartford Center, one of the region’s prime retail and dining districts.

“I would say Quaker Green has been a driving force behind a lot of the upgrades along New Britain Avenue,” said Edward Pilkington, president and CEO of the West Hartford Chamber of Commerce.

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Pilkington said he is particularly pleased GDC renovated a park at the corner of New Britain Avenue and South Quaker Lane, the crossroads at the heart of Elmwood: “I think the fact that Elmwood will have its own ‘green’ and park as a result also is a very positive impact and probably will lead to similar improvements in the area.”

Martin Ginsburg, founder and principal of Ginsburg Development Companies, the Valhalla, N.Y.-based firm building Quaker Green, said there was a clear effort to connect the new neighborhood with the rest of Elmwood. “Quaker Green is seamlessly tied to the surrounding area by footpaths and sidewalks that encourage people to walk instead of using their car,” said Ginsburg. “There are so many shops and restaurants within walking distance of Quaker Green that you don’t even need a car to take care of many day-to-day tasks.”

Quaker Green will have 64 three-bedroom townhouses and 80 one- and two-bedroom condominium flats. The neighborhood has a central “village green” area highlighted by a clubhouse with an outdoor heated pool, gathering room, fitness center and a tot lot. Prices for condos start in the \$200,000s, townhouses start in the \$300,000s.

West Hartford Mayor Scott Slifka said Quaker Green will give a boost to nearby businesses and represents a step towards the town’s long-term goal of creating a walkable community center with homes and shops in close proximity.

“The GDC development has brought a permanent population that will be pedestrians who frequent the local businesses,” said Slifka. “What rounded it out and made it a pedestrian-friendly, full-service community is the presence of more residential development right in the heart of Elmwood. Investment begets investment. That was a goal of the town’s.”

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Quaker Green is located near the intersection of two of West Hartford's main thoroughfares and adjoins two parks, including Beachland Park, one of the town's prized gems. This visible, central location – and residents' fondness for the beautiful old schoolhouse there – meant Quaker Green received close attention from local officials wishing to create a showcase development.

“For the community to get behind this, it could not be an isolated development. It had to be very integrated into the neighborhood and part of the surrounding commercial neighborhood. I think GDC certainly tried to accommodate that. They worked hand in hand with our planning staff,” Slifka said. “They were very responsive to our suggestions.”

Pilkington noted that the former Talcott Junior High School building GDC is renovating into condominiums had been vacant for decades, making the long anticipated construction on the site that much more noteworthy.

“Over the years there have been many, many ideas for that area and nothing came to fruition,” said Pilkington. “I'm glad that a project of the quality of what Ginsburg plans is being built. The high quality of the development will attract desired consumers, which is resulting in the upgrades of the current businesses that are there and will add to more businesses wanting to be there.”

Ginsburg, whose company is one of the Northeast's largest luxury home builders, noted that GDC previously renovated a number of former schoolhouses and convents. That experience proved helpful when considering how to best rehabilitate the Talcott School.

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“The schoolhouse is a landmark with large windows and tall ceilings, so it made sense to preserve the building and give it a new life as condominiums,” said Ginsburg. “Then we used the rest of the property to build townhouses and a clubhouse clustered around a parklike inner green area. Quaker Green will be a beautiful new enclave of homes.”

Quaker Green’s townhomes range from 1,700 square feet to more than 2,000 square feet, plus optional areas for expansion, and have one- and two-car garages. The one-level condominiums are 1,030 square feet to 1,880 square feet.

Ginsburg Development Companies has become a key sponsor of a drive to “Bring the Elms Back to Elmwood,” an effort to re-establish the trees that gave the neighborhood its name before they were wiped out by Dutch Elm Disease. GDC has pledged to plant at least four disease-resistant elms at prominent locations in Elmwood. The company’s first elm tree was planted last year in the park at the intersection of New Britain Avenue and South Quaker Lane. It was among 13 trees planted last fall.

“That elm will have its own green and be a very positive influence on the area,” said Pilkington.

Mayor Slifka summed it up by saying: “Things are dropping into place and we’ve got more interest in Elmwood than we’ve ever had before.”

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Current GDC communities include AVANT Chelsea (New York City); Riverwatch at Greystone (Yonkers, N.Y.); Christie Place (Scarsdale, N.Y.); Harbors at Haverstraw (N.Y.); Hudson Pointe (Poughkeepsie, N.Y.); The Fairways at Wallkill (N.Y.); Ridgewood at Middlebury (Conn.), The Greens at Gillette Ridge (Bloomfield, Conn.) and Quaker Green (West Hartford, Conn.) To place your name on GDC's priority list for future communities, log on to [www.gdc-homes.com](http://www.gdc-homes.com), click on to "future communities" and then "name of development" or call 1-866-GDC-4466.

Ginsburg Development Companies (GDC), established in 1964 and based in Valhalla, N.Y., is one of the nation's premier full-service real estate design, development and management companies. Martin Ginsburg is the president and chief executive officer. GDC has developed more than 10,000 residential units during its 40-plus year corporate history. GDC's residential sales Web sites are [www.gdc-homes.com](http://www.gdc-homes.com) and [www.gdcmetro.com](http://www.gdcmetro.com). Information about GDC's commercial ventures, corporate activities and charitable foundation is available at [www.gdcllc.com](http://www.gdcllc.com).