

Spotlight on Health-Care Construction

HHC Expansion

Projects Rework Jacobi and Queens Hospitals

by Jason Fargo

For decades, most of New York City's public hospitals were woefully outdated, with patients often required to share barracks-style rooms with strangers or to walk down the hall to use a bathroom.

But in the last few years, the New York City Health and Hospitals Corp. has undertaken renovations of old facilities and invested heavily in new construction. This year, activity has been on a strong pace, with new buildings inaugurated at several hospitals, including Manhattan's Bellevue Hospital Center and Brooklyn's Coney Island and Kings County hospitals.

Meanwhile, two of the biggest projects are ongoing at Queens Hospital and at the Bronx's Jacobi Medical Center.

"Most of our buildings are vintage," with some dating to the 1930s, said Vincent James, senior director in HHC's Office of Facilities Development. "A lot of them didn't have central air, high-powered tech equipment, or infrastructure for the Internet."

At Queens Hospital, a new, 142,000-sq.-ft. ambulatory care pavilion is taking shape. Designed by Perkins Eastman Architects of New York, the project's construction manager is the New York-based Velez Organization. The \$53 million building will have a structural steel frame with an exterior of precast concrete.

The new structure will have seven floors, including a basement and a two-story entrance hall. Two sides of the entry foyer will be made of glass curtain wall to allow light to penetrate the building and create a welcoming environment for patients.

Two enclosed glass walkways, each measuring about 100 ft. in length, will connect the pavilion to the main hospital building, which itself was constructed in 2002 to replace a badly outdated facility,

said Anita O'Brien, Queens Hospital's associate executive director for facilities management.

She said one of the walkways connecting the new buildings will be designated principally for patients and visitors, while the other will be primarily a service bridge for hospital staff. "That service bridge lines up with the existing service corridor in the hospital, so you don't have to turn any corners to get from one building to the next," O'Brien added.

The project team completed structural steel work in the spring, and the building should be totally enclosed by August, O'Brien said. The general contractor for the exterior work is Calcedo Construction of Port Chester, N.Y. The contract for the building's interior is to be awarded later this year.

Upon its completion next summer, the pavilion will house the hospital's pediatrics, psychiatry, ophthalmology, and dentistry clinics as well as a specialized center for diabetes care.

Meanwhile, in the Bronx, the second phase of a major rebuilding effort at Jacobi got underway earlier this year. The project team broke ground on a new ambulatory care facility, which will house outpatient surgery units as well as pediatric and women's health facilities. HHC expects construction of the 120,000-sq.-ft., four-story building to be finished in 2008. The total price tag is budgeted at \$67 million.

TDX Construction of New York is project manager for the new Jacobi facility, which will have a brick and concrete exterior and a glass-enclosed entry galleria.

The galleria will serve as the new facility's main feature, said Xenia Urban, senior project manager at Jacobi. It has a quarter-sphere shape and will measure about 70 ft. across by 40 ft. high at its largest extent. It will connect the new pavilion to Jacobi's existing buildings, including a new, \$173 million, 399,000-sq.-ft. acute-care facility that formally opened in March.

While the galleria will be the new building's showpiece, it also makes the project more complicated, said Ray Leu, project manager at TDX Construction. The glass "creates a little bit of a challenge because it's curved," he said. "It's like a barrel-type roof."

Leu said foundation work at the Jacobi site is almost finished. He said the team was slated to start erecting structural steel this month.

"The steel will probably be done in October," and the concrete work by early November, he added. Work on the glass galleria likely will start next spring.

In addition to the current projects, the HHC's recently completed jobs capped a busy construction drive. The agency inaugurated a \$115 million, 207,000-sq.-ft. ambulatory care center at Manhattan's Bellevue Hospital in February. In the spring, Coney Island Hospital cut the ribbon on a new seven-story tower containing 212 private and semiprivate beds, along with a maternity unit, all part of a \$91 million rehabilitation.

And even more big projects are on the way. Later this year at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn, HHC expects to complete a new building and a major renovation to an existing structure as part of a \$195 million overhaul. Also this year, HHC plans to break ground on a major modernization of Harlem Hospital in Manhattan.

Key Players

Jacobi Medical Center Ambulatory Care Pavilion

Owner: New York City Health and Hospitals Corp.

Project Manager: Dormitory Authority of the State of New York

Construction Manager: TDX Construction, New York

Architect: Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, New York

Structural Engineer: Ysrael A. Seinuk P.C., New York

Excavation: Urban Foundation/Engineering, East Elmhurst, N.Y.

Concrete: Calcedo Construction, Port Chester, N.Y.

Glass Curtain Wall: Whitestone Construction, Woodside, N.Y.

Steel: Imperial Iron Works, Bronx

Key Players**Queens Hospital Ambulatory Care Pavilion**

Owner: New York City Health and Hospitals Corp.

Project Manager: Dormitory Authority of the State of New York

Construction Manager: Velez Organization, New York

Architect: Perkins Eastman, New York

General Contractor: Calcedo Construction, Port Chester, N.Y.