



City of Rochester, NY
Robert J. Duffy, Mayor

30 Church Street
Rochester, New York 14614-1290



400 Andrews St.
Rochester, New York 14604

NEWS RELEASE

Note to Editors: To view the City12 broadcast of this story, visit www.cityofrochester.gov/midtownworkers

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2009

MIDTOWN RISING PROJECT TOPS 200 WORKERS

Nearly half are minorities or women

Rochester Mayor Robert J. Duffy and Empire State Development Chairman and CEO Designate Dennis M. Mullen announced today that the contractor performing the asbestos-abatement service at the former Midtown Plaza site has hired more than 200 workers, crossing a significant milestone in the demolition project. Almost half, 44 percent, of those workers are minorities or women.

“I am absolutely thrilled to see local workers performing these good-paying jobs,” said Mayor Duffy. “Men and women who remember the proud vibrancy of Midtown Plaza and witnessed its decline are now helping us write the next chapter in the history of downtown Rochester. Gov. Paterson’s investment in our city is clearly paying dividends.”

“Reaching the 200-worker benchmark at the former Midtown Plaza site is a significant indicator of how well the redevelopment effort is progressing,” said Chairman Mullen. “The Midtown redevelopment partners have been committed since day one to ensure that this effort moves forward as quickly and effectively as possible and I am pleased that we continue to deliver on that promise.”

The Empire State Development (ESD) Board of Directors awarded the asbestos-abatement contract in May to Cambria Contracting, Inc. of Lockport. The contract is funded by ESD through a \$55 million Upstate City-by-City grant that was awarded to the Midtown Rising development effort.

Cambria is a highly experienced, full-service demolition, dismantlement, asbestos abatement, recovery, salvage, environmental remediation, recycling and site-preparation services company. Cambria has followed through on its promise to hire local labor for this project.

-more-

Midtown Rising Project Tops 200 Workers, page 2 of 2

Warren Mahones of Rochester is among the Cambria workers who remembers the heyday of Midtown Plaza and feels he is part of a dramatic change for Rochester. He remembers meeting friends there after school and going to the Plaza each year at Christmas to see Santa Claus and ride the Monorail.

“It was a lot of fun and excitement. Something to look forward to every year,” he said of the holiday season at Midtown. “It was just a good place to be.”

Now, he said, he feels honored to be among the workers who are making way for something new to stand in the former Midtown site. “It’s just something wonderful to work on because you are a part of history being made. You’re watching the change come.”

Mahones said he expects to one day tell his grandchildren about the work he’s doing now. “I’ll tell them I was part of doing that and making change here in Rochester,” he said.

He also said he’s just glad to be working. “With the economy the way it is, it’s just wonderful to have a job,” he said.

Courtney Booker is another Cambria worker and member of Laborers Local 435 from Rochester who is also happy for the work the contract is providing. “With the economy not being so good, having a paycheck at the end of the week, and a good one at that, it feels great,” she said. “Just keeping your bills steady and on time is a great feeling.”

She too remembers shopping in Midtown, especially at the stores NYC Clothing and All Day Sunday. “It feels good to be part of something different and helping tear down something (that will make room to) build something new for Rochester.”

Cambria worker Mark Williams’ first job was on the second floor of Midtown Plaza at the Foot Locker store. Now he’s working alongside some of his former customers and realizes his work experience has taken him from “trying to keep Midtown afloat, to a matter of keeping the area afloat for Rochester to prosper.”

He said he and his co-workers often talk about the significance of their work in the history of Rochester. But more often the conversation is much more practical. “Mainly we talk about having a job in this economy,” said Williams, also of Rochester. “We talk about having a job and being able to work.”

-30-

News Media: For more information, Contact City Deputy Director of Communications Michael Keane at 585-428-6064 or ESD Upstate Director of Public Affairs Katie Krawczyk at 716-846-8247.

Midtown Rising is a redevelopment partnership that will position Rochester for its future by significantly shaping the rebirth of the downtown core through major public and private investment, job creation and infrastructure development. For more information on this development effort, visit midtownrochesterrising.com.