

NORTHTOWN PHASE I (RIVERCROSS, ISLAND HOUSE, EASTWOOD, & WESTVIEW)

You are walking north through Northtown Phase I, as this portion of Roosevelt Island was called during its residential development stages. (Northtown Phase II is the Manhattan Park complex, further north.) Northtown I consists of four buildings totaling over 2,100 units, catering to a mix of income levels:

- ◆ The southernmost residential complex is **RIVERCROSS, 531 MAIN STREET** (1976, Johansen and Bhavnani), which contains 375 cooperative units.
- ◆ North of Rivercross, **ISLAND HOUSE, 555/575 MAIN ST.** (1975, Johansen and Bhavnani), was the first of Roosevelt Island's residential buildings to open. Island House contains 400 market-rate rental units.
- ◆ Across the street from Rivercross and Island House is **EASTWOOD, 510-580 MAIN ST.** (1976, Sert, Jackson, & Assocs.), a ten-building complex of 1,003 federally subsidized rental units, 283 of which are set aside for the elderly and disabled.
- ◆ The northernmost building is **WESTVIEW, 595/625 MAIN ST.** (1976, Sert, Jackson, & Assocs.), another market-rate rental building, with 371 units.

Each building is a variation on a U-shaped plan, with the open portion containing a river-facing courtyard. In addition, each complex was designed to "step down" to the river, taking advantage of river views and preserving the open-aired feeling of the river promenades. Around and among these buildings are numerous spots for relaxation. The most popular of these are the wooden



Northtown I under construction, 1974. Rivercross is on the left, Eastwood the right.

Roosevelt Island Historical Society

www.rooseveltisland.org/rihs

Meditation Steps along the river just south of Rivercross.

The artery through all these buildings is appropriately named Main Street. Architects Philip Johnson and John Burgee designed the street with a gently zig-zagged route, both to lend curiosity to the path and to make it seem shorter than it already is. Each building has its own array of storefronts, giving Roosevelt Island "one of everything." Here's just a partial list of the island's many commercial establishments: deli, stationery store, library, bank, diner, laundromat, pizzeria, Chinese restaurant, flower shop, thrift store, fish store, credit union, liquor store, and bakery.

To continue the tour, follow the white and green "Roosevelt Island Historical Walk" signs.

Roosevelt Island Historical Walk

Boy Scout Troop 59

Neil Tandon



Clockwise from upper-left, Rivercross, Island House, Eastwood, and Westview



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Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation

www.rioc.com