Using the Arts to Raise a Village

The Long Island Village of Patchogue began a renaissance in the 1990s when artists and creative businesses leased many of the vacant Main Street storefronts and the beautiful Patchogue Theatre for the Performing Arts was renovated. Housing for artists was the missing piece of this renaissance, so in 2006 Patchogue engaged Artspace to conduct development work that led to the Artspace Patchogue Lofts, a new mixed-use project in the heart of downtown.

Completed in 2011, Artspace Patchogue Lofts includes 45 units of affordable live/work housing for artists and their families plus nearly 2,500 square feet of retail space on the street level.

Civic leaders view Terry Street as a bridge between the commercial district along Main Street and the growing community of market-rate and affordable multi-family housing nearby. For Patchogue, the Artspace project represents both economic development and the opportunity to strengthen a growing arts community.

Thanks to a MetLife Foundation grant, Artspace was able to add solar panels to the building’s roof. Over time, these panels should significantly lower the project’s operating costs.

“Patchogue proved the skeptics wrong by making Artspace work. People who said Patchogue is a dead downtown are wrong; those who decried Artspace as a fad are misinformed; and those who said Long Island downtowns will cease to exist are disingenuous. It takes an incredible amount of work, collaboration and cooperation (and sometimes manipulation) but it can be done, as Patchogue proved.”

— Editorial Board, Long Island Advance