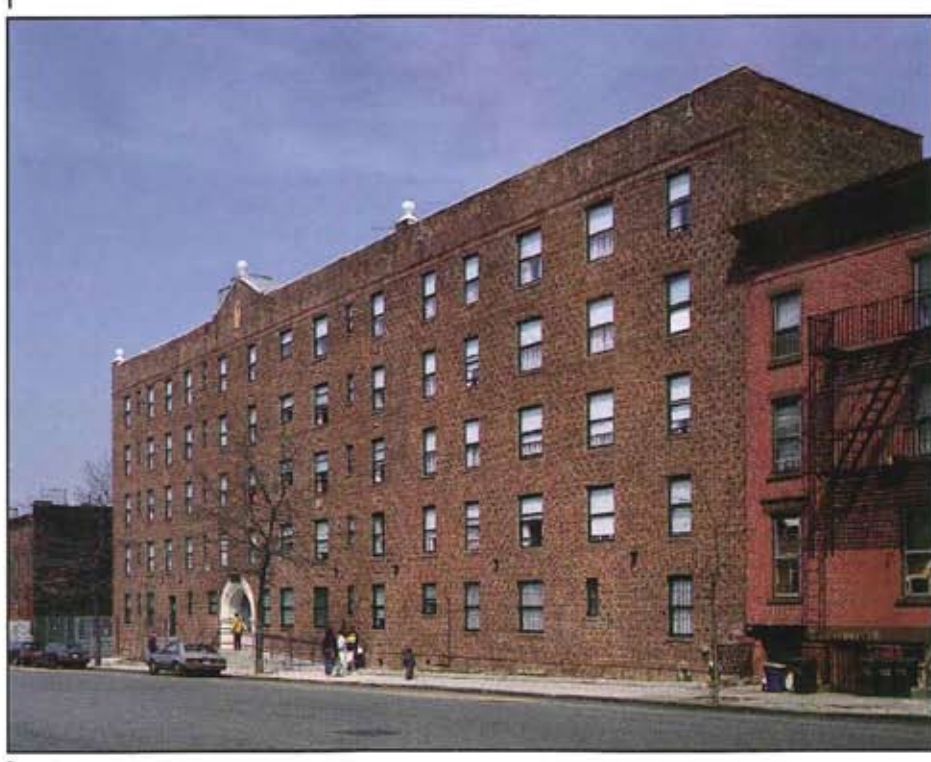
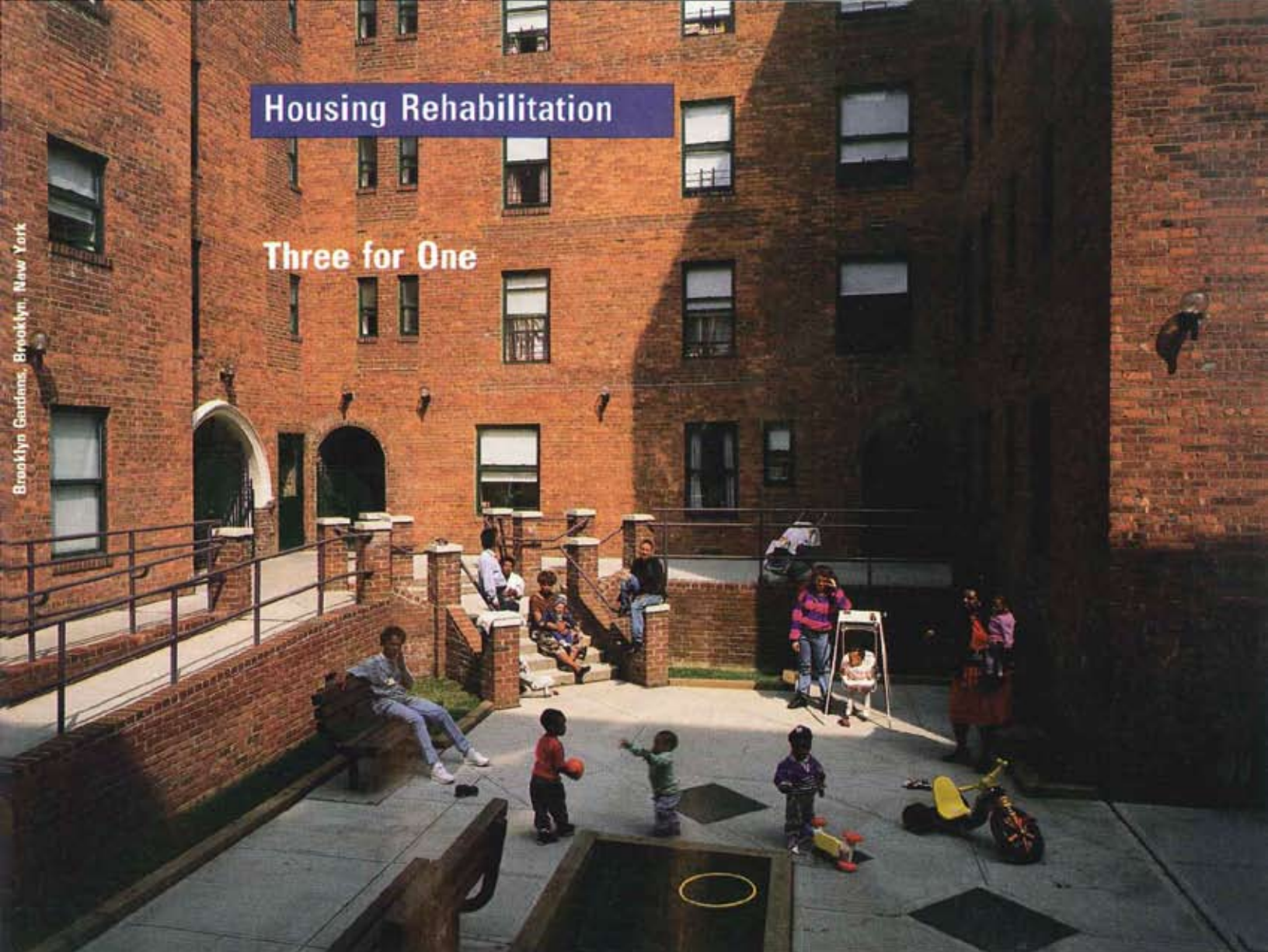


Housing Rehabilitation

Three for One

Brooklyn Gardens, Brooklyn, New York



An apartment block transformed by a team of Brooklyn architects offers an exemplary collection of special needs housing.

The Brooklyn neighborhood of Fort Greene is like many in New York, with housing projects that rise like modern Leviathans above traditional apartment blocks. Likewise, stories of the old survivors' rebirth have become typical of the city, as renovations of pre-war housing continue to gather momentum. Brooklyn Gardens offers a new episode in these accounts. This 60-year-old apartment building, once moribund, has a program unprecedented in the city, and perhaps the nation: today it comprises a transitional residence for single mothers and their children, a single room

The 23-year-old Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development has a long tradition of designing low-income housing for New York City. Over the past four years, the scope of its advocacy and technical expertise has grown to include housing for the homeless through the development of 55 proposals for a variety of emergency shelters, transitional and permanent facilities. The largest, most functionally complex of these projects is Brooklyn Gardens, an abandoned, five-story apartment block located across the street from a public-housing complex in the Fort Greene area of Brooklyn (right). Sponsored by a local nonprofit group, Pastoral and Educational Services (PAES), its renovation will provide housing and social services for the most needy homeless: a community residence for 18 mentally ill men and women; transitional housing for 44 families of single mothers with children under 6 years old; and permanent accommodations for 74 elderly single adults. Each population will be separated within the U-shaped brick building in three, self-contained residences that are entered from a landscaped central courtyard (plans).

In developing this hybrid building type, architect Cindy Harden adapted the long, double-loaded corridors of typical SRO hotels into wings of clustered bedrooms and living areas which were carefully programmed to cater to each clientele. For the families, the bedrooms can be interconnected depending on the number of children, and bathrooms are detailed with vanities wide enough for changing diapers. In the elderly adults' wing, a lobby provides a place to pick up mail and meet visitors, and four rooms on the ground floor have been designated for the handicapped. A multi-purpose hall for use by all the occupants and the community is intended to promote neighborhood acceptance of the project. States PAES executive director, Doris Clark: "At the very least, we expect our residents to be invited to join the community block association."

Owner/Sponsor:
Pastoral and Educational Services
Architects:
Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development—Cindy L. Harden, project architect; Chuck Brome, job captain; Richard Choy, Janet Covert, project team
Associate architects:
Peter Woll Architects
Consultant:
Project for Public Spaces, Inc. (landscape)

Cindy Harden

