

# This Is What An "In Progress" Renovation Looks Like

By Clay Griffith Published: Aug 8, 2015



*Trevarren Flats, a new development in Walnut Hills, is on its way. The \$10 million mixed-use development is currently 35% complete. [Image courtesy of Walnut Hills Redevelopment Foundation]*

Renewal is afoot! You'd have to try really hard — like, *really* hard — not to notice the wave of rejuvenation currently coursing through the Queen City. And no, it's not just Over-the-Rhine. (But hey, "a rising tide..." right?)

Let's turn our attention to Walnut Hills. The history-rich area obviously has its own set of assets, challenges, and potentials. And, at current, all of those elements are being placed on the table, examined, and addressed/activated. From grassroots engagement to expertly orchestrated arts events to the investment of capital in the area's revitalization, there is a broad range of activity taking place within the neighborhood.

Take the Trevarren Flats project, for instance. The folks at Walnut Hills Redevelopment Foundation recently pulled back the curtain and let us in on the action.

If *a*) you've ever wanted to see how a property goes from down-on-its-luck to top-of-the-world, take a tour through the photo gallery for a glimpse at the work behind the scenes. And if *b*) you've ever pondered about what compels/ inspires some folks to dig in their heels and not only envision a new life for their neighborhood, but actually *work* for it... read below.

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**Cincinnati Refined: The Trevarren Flats project... Give us the “elevator pitch.” What, in a nutshell, is it all about?**

**Walnut Hills Redevelopment Foundation:** The Trevarren Flats project is a \$10-million, mixed-use development project by the Model Group, Walnut Hills Redevelopment Foundation, and the City of Cincinnati.

The three historic buildings that make up the development were long vacant and required a lot of TLC. Most of the necessary major structural repairs uncovered during the rehabilitation have been completed and the elevator tower for the seven-story Trevarren building has been completed. At this point, construction teams have begun to frame in walls, rough in electrical, and insulate.

**CR: Can you give us a quick bird’s-eye view of the Walnut Hills Redevelopment Foundation?**

**WHRF:** We are the community development corporation serving Walnut Hills and East Walnut Hills. We believe a quality physical place is a driver of a healthy, safe, thriving community. So, we work to improve the physical environment of our neighborhoods.

We do that in a variety of ways. We buy and stabilize vacant and abandoned buildings, we partner with private sector developers and public sector partners, like the City of Cincinnati, to reactivate those buildings and the spaces around them. We consider ourselves placemakers.

**CR: Any notable info about the buildings involved in the project? Goals?**

*Jason Chamlee of Model Group, project manager:* The project, which will be LEED certified, includes 30 apartments (a mix of studios two-bedrooms) and five storefronts.

**CR: What do you find inspiring about Walnut Hills?**

**WHRF:** Walnut Hills is a diverse community. We’re home to all sorts of different people — young, old, black, white, young professionals, senior citizens, families — and we’re welcoming to everyone. We’re a neighborhood of people who take pride in their community and work hard to make it better and better every day.

**CR: Any projects, etc. (other than the Trevarren Flats, of course) that you’re particularly excited about on the Walnut Hills horizon?**

**WHRF:** We’re working on several exciting projects, including the re-purposing of a historic bathhouse and bank. And there are plenty of other projects in the works that are super top secret. Stay tuned...

**CR: What’s the ultimate vision? How do you picture Walnut Hills in say... 5-10 years?**

**WHRF:** Our hope is that Walnut Hills is a safe and healthy community for everyone. We see a lot of potential here, not just in the building stock, but also in the community as a whole. In the next 3-5 years, you will see Peeble's Corner emerge as one of the premiere destinations in the City and, as this occurs, the housing market in the neighborhood will improve along with it.

**CR: Favorite thing about the Trevarren Flats project? ... The LEED certification? The rehabilitation of historic buildings? ... Go!**

*Chamlee, project manager:* My favorite thing about Trevarren is being on the front edge of the revitalization of this neighborhood. I strongly believe in the story, potential, and advantages of the neighborhood, as well as the pent-up demand for this type of community and lifestyle. I love being a pioneer and working to prove the market, knowing that in several years, when I look on a thriving Walnut Hills community, I contributed its rebirth.

**CR: Motto to live by...**

**WHRF:** Positive impact, powerful change.

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