

See Inside Brooklyn Navy Yard's Completely Renovated Building 77

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It was 1941, America was throwing everything it had into prepping for the war, and the Brooklyn Navy Yard was frantic with activity. So frantic, in fact, that it took the Navy only five months to construct Building 77, a 16-story, one-million-square-foot command and supply center running operations for the entire North Atlantic fleet. Constructed with solid cast concrete, the massive structure housed mountains of supplies in the bottom, windowless two-thirds. The top third, which did have windows, served as offices. Two five-ton gantry-fed rail lines ran along the east-west axis of the building, and trains would roll in, load up, and continue on to ships waiting in the harbor.

The Navy decommissioned Building 77, along with the rest of the 225-acre yard, in 1966, and apart from an occasional gig as a storage facility, the enormous space had been sitting hulking and empty until 2010, when the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation commissioned a “first assessment” of the structure to see what could be done. Eight years

of gut renovation later—including adding windows to the entire facade—we have the result, a combination of light manufacturing, food services, public space, and a dozen floors of offices, all readily accessible right from Flushing Avenue.

Over the weekend, as part of [Open House New York](#), we joined a tour of the newly reoccupied space, led by representatives of the two principal architectural firms who brought it to life, [Beyer Blinder Belle](#) and [Marvel Architects](#)

One of the primary goals of the project was to open up the building, and the Navy Yard beyond, to the community. Gone is the fence on Flushing, and the entrance to 77 functions as a gateway to the gantry corridor, a public space where businesses like Russ & Daughters will sell their goods adjacent to their commercial kitchens. There are multiple communal tables at either end of the block-long corridor, and the layout and space feels similar to the Tunnel building in Chelsea.

Up on the 16th floor, which [may not have a tenant](#) yet, there are most definitely some spectacular views to the north, to the east, and especially to the west looking out over the yard. Among the new(ish) spots in this rapidly changing area: the Brooklyn Grange rooftop farm; the huge, still-under-construction future home of WeWork, called Dock 72; and the low-slung, green manufacturing buildings that house businesses like Brooklyn Roasting Company. Between Building 77, the WeWork space, and the manufacturing complex, this one section of the yard is expected to have some 3,000 people coming here every day.

Click through for a look at Building 77, and other buildings nearby. Then go read Jennifer Egan's *Manhattan Beach*, which partially takes place in the Navy Yard.

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Brooklyn Grange

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Dock 72, new WeWork

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Green Manufacturing Center

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Building 123, Brooklyn Roasting Headquarters

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