

## Business & Finance

# New Embassy Suites by Hilton Berkeley Heights Hard-Hat Tour Shows Progress; Slated for Spring 2017 Opening

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By BOBBIE PEER

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BERKELEY HEIGHTS, NJ - The Connell Company's hotel and restaurant project is about 80 percent complete and is slated for a spring 2017 completion! The Embassy Suites by Hilton Berkeley Heights and Grain & Cane Bar & Table restaurant are already pretty impressive up close, as we saw during a recent hard-hat tour.

Leila Campisi, Embassy Suites by Hilton Berkeley Heights Marketing Director, coordinated a hard-hat tour with local businesses to show the progress and generate excitement around the completion of the new 176 room hotel, ballroom and restaurant.

From its enormous 5,300 square foot ballroom, 4,467 square foot restaurant, 3,000 square foot Starbucks, guest and meeting rooms; main lobby and its grand staircase with water wall, breakfast bar and fireplace; indoor salt water pool and 2,100 square foot exercise facility to the outdoor patios and 2,400 square foot solarium -- we got the inside look at Berkeley Heights' new luxury hotel.

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Boston based construction firm Tocci Building Companies is currently working on the latest phase of the construction project which includes new first-floor retail locations and an amazing solarium, said **John Tocci**, Chief Enabling Officer at Tocci. "These highly custom food service amenities and uniquely designed solarium will provide much-needed event facilities with fine

dining to the hotel guests and tenants of the 1.5 million square foot Connell Corporate Park, as well as area professionals and residents."

Progress is being made and each day there's something new and exciting for us, said Ian Brodsky, Embassy Suites by Hilton Berkeley Heights General Manager. The benefit of being under construction, Brodsky's team can include the latest state of the art amenities, such as built-in audio-visual systems in their large board room and meeting space, as well as floor to ceiling windows throughout.

Campisi also pointed to other details that will cater to professionals, such as bedside USB ports in each suite and a room layout that separate the work and living area from the bedroom in most of the rooms.

During the tour, we could envision the 4,467 square foot Grain & Cane Bar & Table fine dining restaurant that will include a unique rustic brick interior to resemble a 1920s commodity exchange warehouse which was designed to pay tribute to the Connell family. Connell Company was once the largest nongovernmental rice trader in the world and a major broker of sugar and sugar products. It will also include vintage photos with polished concrete floors and a large Solari Board over the bar, which will display menu items. The private dining room will be designed to pay homage to The Connell Company's founder Grover Cleveland Connell's original office.

Additionally, "there will be garage doors that open the restaurant to the outside," said Campisi. The exterior will incorporate a fire pit, dining patio with seating for an additional 40 people, and a large mural on the restaurant's brick façade.

The 3,000 square foot Starbucks is custom designed to complement the full service hotel and function space. It will be accessible from both the lobby of the Embassy Suites and the exterior parking lot. It will feature seating for 120 people, along with an attractive exterior patio space for use in the summer months.

The glass enclosed 2,400 square foot solarium will be accented with crystal chandeliers and surrounded by a garden of flowers, providing a unique setting for receptions, weddings, cocktail parties, lunches, dinners or corporate meetings. Constructed of state-of-the-art SageGlass®, this one of a kind versatile space will allow for day meetings through the use of controlled glass panels that tint darker on demand, blocking out light and making it possible to easily view a presentation without distraction.

Outside the building will be a two-acre park with a waterfall, an amphitheater and a food truck associated with the hotel's Grain & Cane restaurant.

Embassy Suites by Hilton Berkeley Heights located at 250 Connell Drive in Berkeley Heights is currently taking reservations for 2017. Visit their [website](#) and call 908.673.3754 for further information.

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