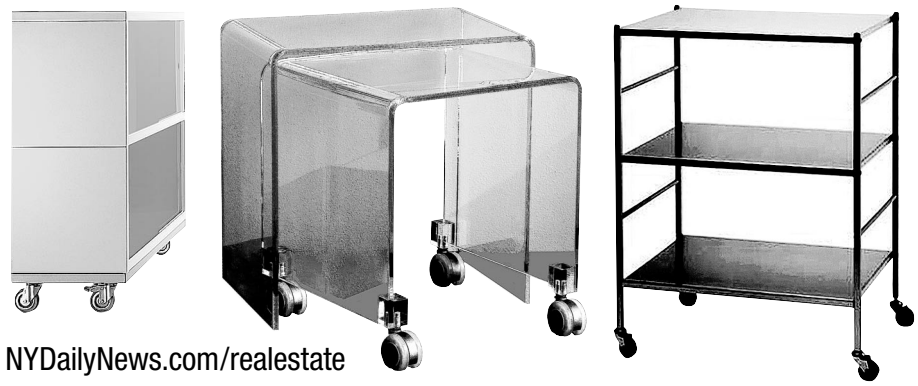
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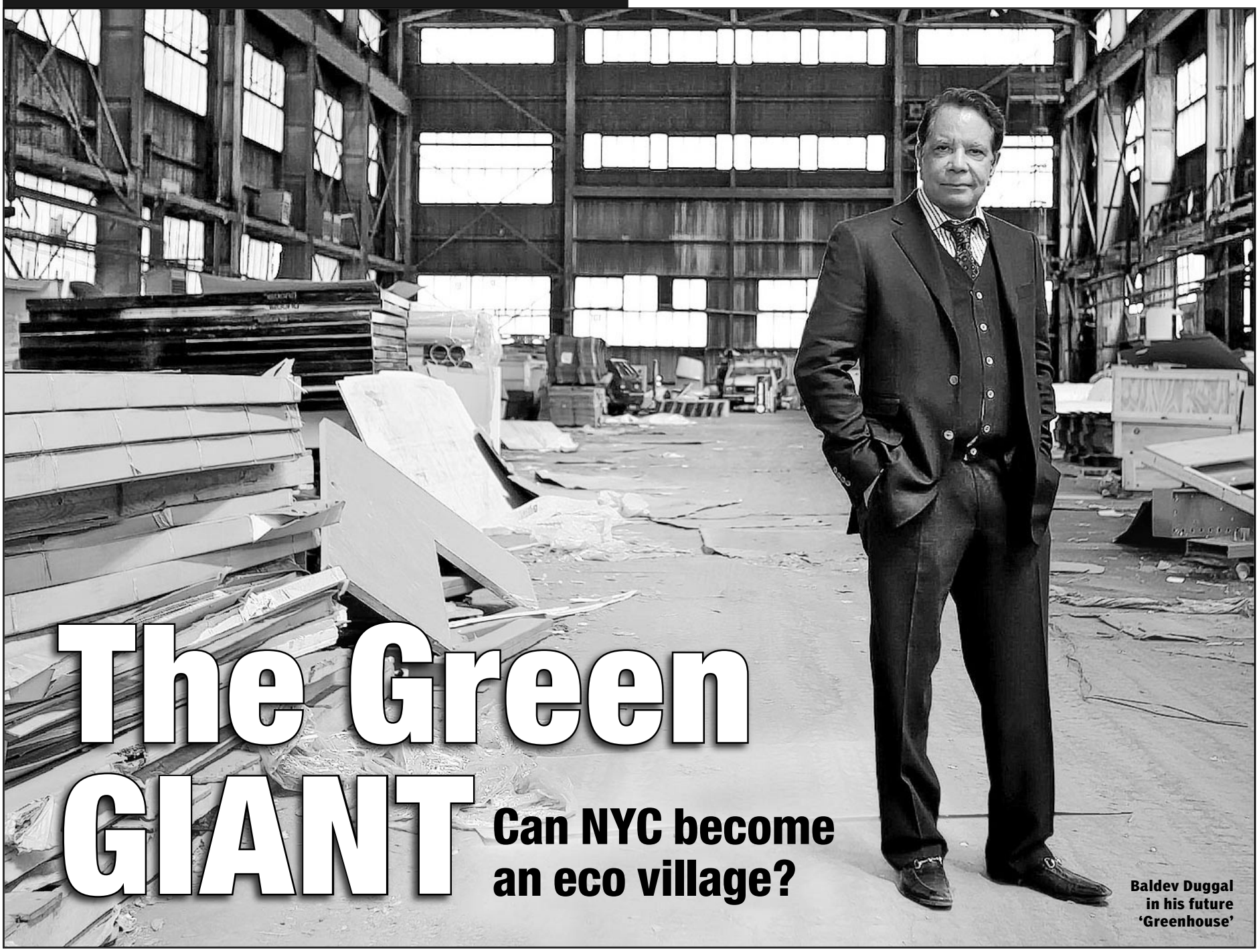
Friday, May 8, 2009

DAILY NEWS

Cart wheels for the home



NYDailyNews.com/realestate



The Green GIANT

Can NYC become an eco village?

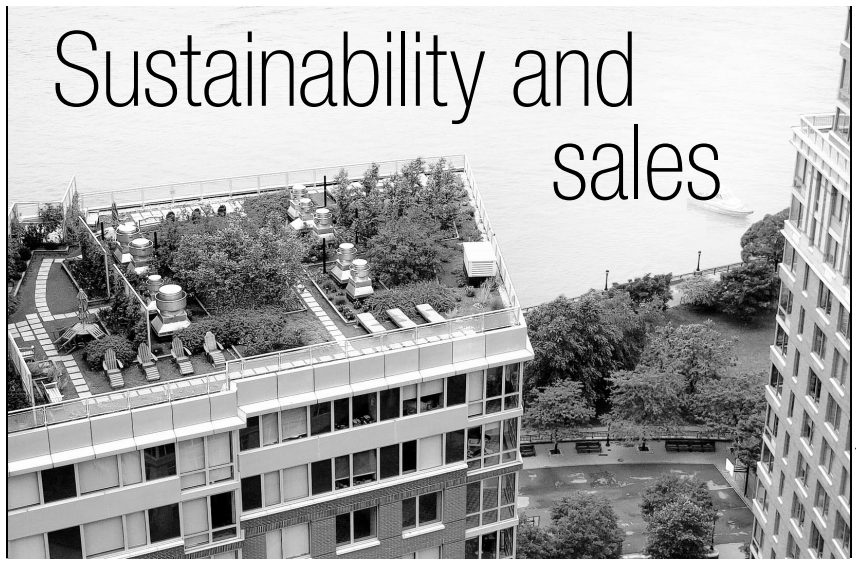
Baldev Duggal in his future 'Greenhouse'

GARY HE

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Sustainability and sales



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DANIEL AUBRY

YOUR HOME EXCLUSIVE

Living Laboratory



By Jason Sheftell
Daily News
Real Estate
Correspondent

Can New York become the center of eco-living? It's already started in the Brooklyn Navy Yard

San Francisco is powered by the software and hardware industries. Hollywood bankrolls L.A. New York was known for Wall Street, but can green make the Big Apple go?

Mayor Bloomberg thinks so.

"The market for green living is right here," the mayor told Your Home in an exclusive interview. "There's an enormous concentration of companies, families and people who are committed to this as a lifestyle. We have the greatest workforce in the world, and this government stays committed to this as a future."

After contributing $250 million to the Brooklyn Navy Yard to remedy infrastructure issues such as plumbing, coastline cleanup and building repair, the mayor's office has watched the Yard grow into the largest single concentrated area of environmentally conscious businesses in the country.

Currently, 29 green-related companies use the Navy Yard as base. Many of them are rooted in the home sector, including Capsys, which manufactures prefabricated homes; Ice Stone, which mixes cement with recycled glass to make kitchen countertops; and Bien Hecho, a furniture-maker who specializes in salvaged materials.

Three years back, many called the mayor's plans for the Yard risky. Bloomberg scoffs at that.

"There are always people who are going to say that the time for risk is not now," said Bloomberg. "For families, for businesses and for government, if you want a payback down the road, you take the risk now. The Navy Yard is becoming the top incubator space for green thought in the country. It's a place where businesses right next to each other understand the value of forward-thinking ideas, and communicate with each other."

The most ambitious plan by far comes from Duggal Visual Solutions. Changing focus from photo solutions to energy-saving solutions, the company's founder, Baldev Duggal, hopes to revolutionize the home boiler system, take street lights off the city's electric grid and give a New York address to the world's first environment-focused resource center.

"This is the time for radical solutions," said Duggal, who came to New York over 40 years ago with $200, a camera and a pocketful of dreams. "You don't lose when you do something out of the ordinary, you only lose when you don't. We cannot waste more time waiting for the green movement to come to us."

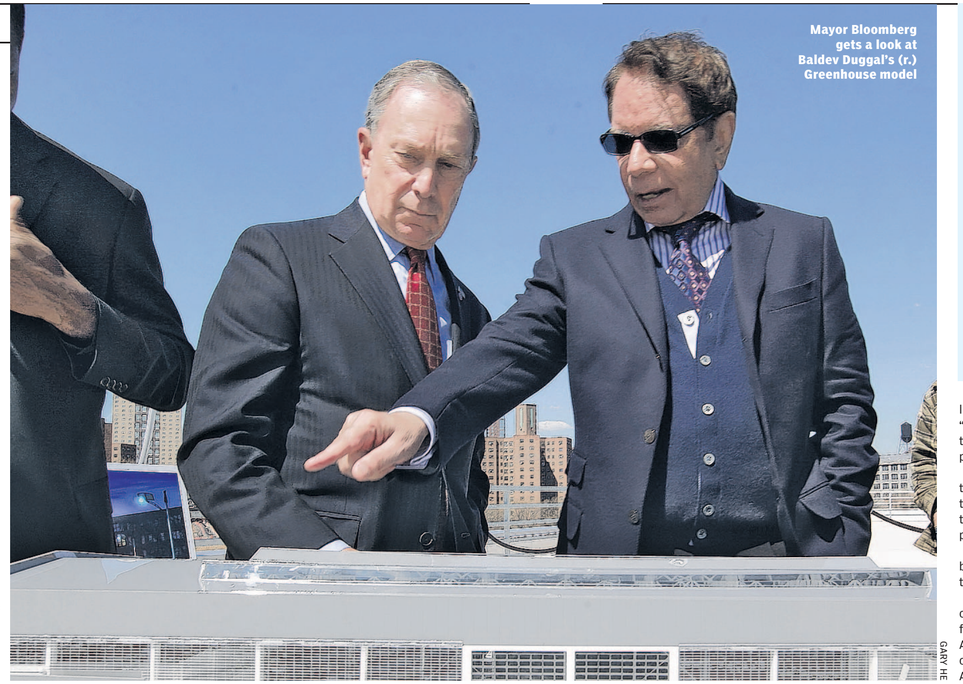
Duggal has already contributed to the Navy Yard's green status by creating the first New York-made solar panel and wind-turbine powered street lamp. While similar products exist in France and Japan, importing them to the United States classifies the lights as environmentally incorrect due to the carbon footprint released during transportation.

> *'This is the time for radical solutions.'*

They're called the Lumi Solair, and 91 of them are being installed in the Navy Yard. As reported in this newspaper, the Lumi Solair will save the Yard $600,000 in installation costs and $11,000 per year in electricity costs.

But it's the reclamation of one of the Yard's most abandoned structures that will show other area businesses what's possible when you go green. Navy Yard Building 268 is a former metal foundry located on the water. At 30,000 square feet and 70 feet high, it's as big as a football field. It looks like a heap of rusty iron.

Duggal plans to turn the building into a work of art. Calling the building a living laboratory, his "Greenhouse" will be part think tank, museum, events hall and eco-product incubator. The building is set for completion in January.



Mayor Bloomberg gets a look at Baldev Duggal's (r.) Greenhouse model

GARY HE

"The Navy Yard exists to support this kind of entrepreuneurial spirit," said the mayor. "All New Yorkers can contribute to make a measurable overnight difference. Just by painting a roof white you can improve the environment."

Duggal hopes the Greenhouse becomes the go-to resource center for the acceleration of the eco movement.

"Right now, there is no central place in the country for people to go who want to transform their business to green," said Chhaya Bhanti, Duggal's sustainability strategist, who gave up working at a French advertising agency to get an MBA in sustainability. "This building will be the central hub for people looking for green solutions. You can call us, and we will help you find the right people."

The building will also become a training facility for unemployed workers looking to learn green skills and for companies looking to train their people in the latest eco-technologies. It will be equipped with classrooms, offices, an event stage, and a dedicated gallery space.

"I don't believe in anything else but this right now," said Duggal, who changed his life after seeing Al Gore's documentary on the environment, "An Inconvenient Truth." "We had the Industrial Revolution, then the digital revolution. I want New York to be the center of the green revolution."

Duggal's Greenhouse will be completely self-sustainable. All 30,000 square feet of roof space will be dedicated to lighting, heating, cooling and providing the building with hot and cold water. At its entrance, the $7 million building will have a stairwell for event seating and a waterfall to collect and filter rainwater. Eight 20-by-20 garage doors will open to the Manhattan skyline. Architects will transform the building from 29,000 square feet to 69,000.

"This is Mr. Duggal's ode to the city," said architect Gregory Okshteyn, president of Studios GO, who designed the building. "Because green technology changes so fast, we'll use replaceable parts similar to the way you add memory to a computer motherboard. The building will never be outdated."

Duggal, who saw pitches from big-name city architects, chose Okshteyn based on his presentation.

"He talked from the heart," said Duggal, who lives in the Riverhouse, a green building. "If this is going to work, I'm going to have to find the best thinkers in the world. My people are my greatest assets."

Paul Daidone hopes so. He has been with the company 27 years. It's his job to build the Greenhouse, and work with inventors to perfect green products. One tool may replace the home boiler with solar energy.

"We're close to never needing a gas-based boiler again," said Daidone. "Imagine taking that bill off your monthly expenses?"

In eight years, Duggal has grown from one Navy Yard building with 10,000 square feet to five buildings with over 100,000. According to Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation President and CEO Andrew Kimball, that kind of growth is typical to Yard tenants who pay $15-plus per square foot for space.

"The Yard has become a national model for how an industrial park can thrive within a residential area," said Kimball, who teamed with Dan Doctoroff on New York's bid to host the 2012 Summer Olympics. "We still have 30 acres to develop."

As the Yard grows, the warehouse-filled neighborhood on the Fort Greene side of the facility could become the city's top real estate investment. Similar to how the area changed in the 1950s with the production of naval vessels, new ventures such as restaurants and residences will parallel the Yard's success.

"There are areas near the Navy Yard where nobody wanted to live a few years ago," said Bloomberg. "Now you have families and businesses committed to reducing crime, improving schools and bringing more culture to the area. Of course, that kind of pride, confidence and hope filters out to the surrounding area."

Duggal's optimism mirrors the mayor's.

"Usually, America thinks of the idea and gives it away," said Duggal, who recently initiated a search for financial partners. "This time we need to think of it, perfect it, spread it and keep it. Sustainability is everyone's business. If we do it right, we're out of this economic crisis in a year."

Tours to see the Navy Yard are available through the Brooklyn Historic Society, (718) 222-4111.

Facts about the Brooklyn Navy Yard



BNYDC

- Land is **bought** by the U.S. government for **$40,000** in 1801
- The Yard hires **70,000 employees** during 1939-45. Women are hired for the first time as mechanics
- **Closed** as a Navy Yard in 1966, New York State buys the land for **$24 million**
- Opened as an **industrial park** in 1971.
- In 2009, has over **40 buildings**, **250 tenants** and **5,000 employees** with 5,000 more coming
- Mayor Bloomberg endorses **$250 million** to remedy infrastructure
- For every **$1 million invested** in green concerns, **17 full-time jobs** are created
- **29 green companies** call the Navy Yard home





COURTESY OF STUDIOS GO

Duggal's Greenhouse will turn one of the Navy Yard's oldest structures, Building 268, into a sustainable green resource center. The Lumi Solair (l.), a Duggal creation, combines solar and wind power

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