



Michelle Mogavero/Staff

Workers are putting the finishing touches on the first 11 rental houses in the Chicora Crest neighborhood.

A new day ahead

Haynie-Sirrine transformation takes next step

By John Boyanoski

Staff Writer

For thousands of daily commuters, the Haynie-Sirrine neighborhood has been nothing more than a place to look at while stopped at the Church Street red lights on the way downtown.

But this historically black neighborhood is undergoing a transformation that has seen dozens of aging structures demolished in the last 12 months; new housing being built for the first time in decades and a major office project – the NEXT building – being constructed on its edge.

The idea is to bring downtown revitalization to a long-time blighted community, said Ginny Stroud, the city's

community development director. Haynie-Sirrine is within walking distance of County Square and Fluor Field. Sirrine Stadium and Augusta Road are two of its boundaries.

The neighborhood is one of several that the city targeted in the late 1990s and early 2000s as a special-emphasis for redevelopment.

"We are making some good headway there," she said.

Haynie-Sirrine may be best known as the first home of civil rights leader Jesse Jackson before his family moved to the government housing complex in Nicholtown that later bore his name.

However, the neighborhood was once a leading working-class, black community in Greenville, said Felsie Harris, a resident for more than 50 years. The neighborhood slowly deteriorated as many older families moved away and the ones that stayed became fearful of a growing crime presence.

A major reason the neighborhood >