

REAL ESTATE > HOUSING



Former industrial area is becoming a neighborhood with river views in Bristol Borough

Amid a downtown renaissance, Bristol Borough is experiencing a condo boom with the construction of Radcliffe Court on the Delaware.



One of the buildings at the still under-construction Radcliffe Court on the Delaware. The project is adding 76 condos to the Bristol Borough riverfront.

Tom Galish / Staff Photographer

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A Delaware River waterfront site once home to a shipyard and an aircraft manufacturing plant is being transformed into a residential neighborhood in Bristol Borough.

A 96-unit condominium complex of mid-rise buildings is the second phase of [Radcliffe Court on the Delaware](#), where 76 two-story townhouse condos already have been sold.

The \$40 million community on 14 acres north of the borough's resurgent downtown is being developed by [BCS Builders](#), a company based in Newtown, [Bucks County](#).

» **READ MORE: [Bristol Borough won a national contest to revitalize Mill Street. Eight years later, business is booming.](#)**

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“I’m born and raised here, and if someone told me growing up that we’d be seeing this many condos built along the river, I wouldn’t have believed it,” said Bristol Mayor Ralph DiGuiseppe III.

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The development “is a testament to the improvements in the borough and to people taking a new interest in our walkable town,” DiGuiseppe said.

Radcliffe Court has ready access to the [Bristol Spurline Park Trail](#). A section of the regional [Circuit Trails network](#), the paved path runs north toward the Turnpike Bridge and south toward downtown Bristol, with a sidewalk connection to the Mill Street business district.

The Bristol Station on the Trenton Line of [SEPTA](#)’s Rail Regional service is within walking distance.

Radcliffe Court also is within the [Riverfront North](#), 52 waterfront acres the [Redevelopment Authority of the County of Bucks](#) designated for environmental cleanup and commercial and residential reuse.

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The view toward the Delaware River from the corner balcony of the model home at the still under-construction Radcliffe Court on the Delaware.

Tom Gralish / Staff Photographer

So far, so good

The first four buildings, each with four floors of condos above ground-level parking, are complete or under construction. Two more will be built.

All of the condos have two bedrooms and two baths, about 1,200 square feet of living space and a corner balcony; most of the units have river views.

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Buyers and prospective buyers range from seniors looking to downsize, boomers wanting to live near the water, and younger people looking for a starter home. Prices range from \$400,000 to \$525,000.

Sales manager Sue Edger said 22 units have been sold so far, with an additional closing set for the weekend.



Builder Bernie Sauer along the Delaware River at his under-construction Radcliffe Court on the Delaware.

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A small town's evolution

With nearly 10,000 people in less than two square miles, Bristol Borough is a densely populated, once-industrial community in Lower Bucks County. It is close to [I-95](#) and linked to South Jersey by the [Burlington-Bristol Bridge](#).

Early railroad service to Philadelphia and New York helped spark industrial development, which by the early 20th century included the [Harriman Shipyard](#), later replaced by the [Kaiser-Fleetwings](#) aircraft factory. Later, a soap factory operated in a building on the site.

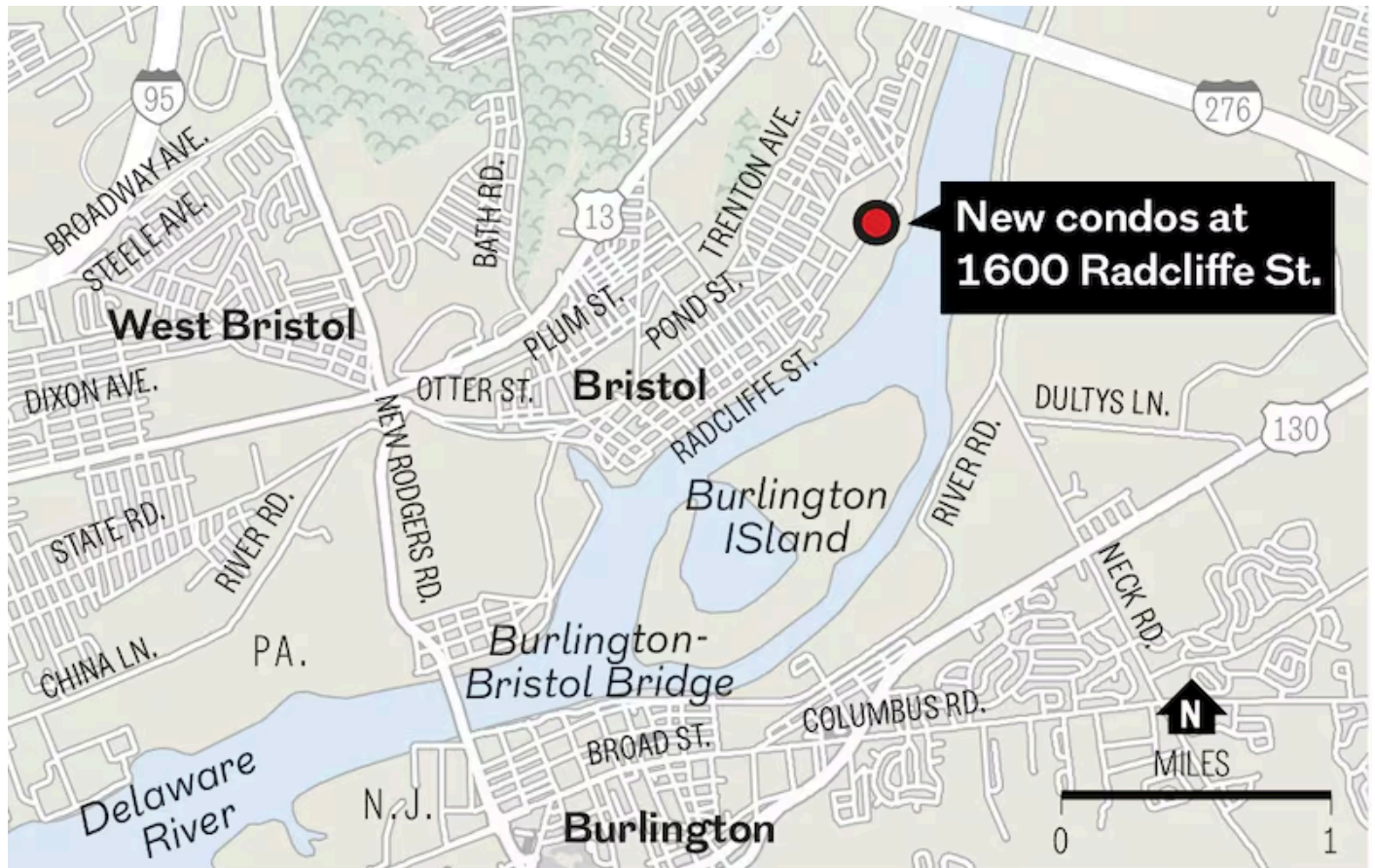
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The job losses due to the closings of these and other industries contributed to a population decline of 2,000 since 1950, and along with suburban malls, led to the hollowing out of the business district in the 1970s and '80s.

But a nonprofit organization, Raising the Bar, has been [promoting downtown Bristol Borough](#) for more than a decade. Along with the borough government and community partners, it has helped reenergize what had become a sleepy Mill Street into a dining and entertainment destination.

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“We’ve had a renaissance on our main street, and we knew it would be attractive thing for people looking for a new home in Bristol,” he said.



Steve Madden / Staff Artist

Map for Kevin Riordan story on new condos in Bristol

Steve Madden

Just around the corner

Edger, the mayor, and the builder Bernie Sauer said potential buyers have included residents from elsewhere in Bucks County and the region. People who already live in Bristol are also moving in.

David and Laura Chichilitti, a retired couple who are both lifelong borough residents, moved in last November.

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Laura added: “I had dreams about living on the water.”



Bristol Borough Mayor Ralph DiGuseppe III (left) visits new residents Dave and Laura Chichilitti in their condo in the first open building at Radcliffe Court on the Delaware in Bristol Borough.

Tom Gralish / Staff Photographer



Kevin Riordan [✉](#) [✕](#) [📷](#)

I cover business and real estate stories in Philadelphia's New Jersey and Pennsylvania suburban counties.