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B'klyn Navy Yard has a new captain

The Brooklyn Papers

The corporation that runs the Brooklyn Navy Yard has a new president. And here's why you should care: The new leader, Park Sloper Andrew Kimball, told The Brooklyn Papers that the Yard is about to embark on a construction boom to expand operations at the once-storied ship-building center.

Currently, more than 4,500 people call the Brooklyn Navy Yard their office — but with vacant land on the Yard's eastern side ready to be exploited and with dilapidated buildings on the Yard's western side ready to be torn down, Kimball's mandate is to bring in as many employees as will fit in the 300-acre complex.

"We're bursting at the seams," Kimball said. "We have no room to grow right now."

Kimball said his goal would be to add one million square feet of industrial and manufacturing space to the existing 3.6 million square feet.

In addition to new construction, Kimball will oversee the demolition of the historic Admiral's Row houses, which will be torn down to make room for a supermarket on the Yard's western side.



Andrew Kimball

Such a store could open by late next year, said Kimball, who earned the top job after working closely with Deputy Mayor Dan Doctoroff on the city's failed 2012 Olympic bid. Before that, Kimball worked for the New York Public Library, where he helped raise \$200 million to renovate 30 branches.

He also worked for the New York State Economic Development Corporation under Gov. Mario Cuomo.

Mayor Bloomberg, who nominated Kimball to head the non-profit corporation, hailed his choice, who will earn \$162,000 a year in the post (sorry, but the salary is a matter of public record).

"With his extensive experience in the government and non-profit sectors,

Andrew Kimball is the perfect fit to lead the Brooklyn Navy Yard forward," Hizzoner said in a statement.

"Andrew understands the importance of the industrial sector to the economic health of the city, and I am confident that he will build on the successes the Navy Yard has achieved over the past four years [and] create hundreds of new jobs and open up more commercial and industrial space."

At its peak during World War II, 70,000 workers walked through the Navy Yard's gates every day. Now, there are 225 businesses, employing 4,500 people.

Sweet 'n' Low is made there. So are pre-fabricated houses. But the Yard's location will be its greatest selling point for future growth. Situated between DUMBO and the Williamsburg/Greenpoint waterfront, the Yard is in a good position to house small manufacturers — furniture makers, print shops and the like — that will soon be pushed out of those neighborhoods by residential development, Kimball said.

"There is such demand," he said. "And it will only grow."

— Kuntzman