

Historic Rehab of High School Meets Stringent Energy-Efficiency Standard

WinnDevelopment's adaptive-reuse project provides 70 units of mixed-income housing in East Haven, Conn.



The Architectural Team

WinnDevelopment is taking the adaptive-reuse of an 83-year-old high school in East Haven, Conn., that shuttered in 1998 to the next level. The four-story brick building is being transformed into 70 units of mixed-income housing with impressive energy and sustainability targets, specifically for residents 55 and older.

It is said to be the first multifamily project in the nation to use historic rehab tax credits and meet the Germany-based Passive House Institute's stringent EnerPHit standard for energy efficiency. It also is expected to be the first EnerPHit-certified multi-family project in Connecticut and one of the largest in the U.S.



The Architectural Team

"It will be the first of its kind, and I see it as transformative for the entire industry," says Christina McPike, director of energy and sustainability at WinnCompanies.

The renovation will include upgraded HVAC and utilities; efficient exterior wall, slab, and roof insulation; and Energy Star LED lighting and appliances. Once completed this summer, the apartments are expected to use approximately 20% less energy than an Energy Star equivalent home. By converting the structure, which was built in phases between 1936 and 1973, the project will avoid 18,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

WinnDevelopment will partner with Columbus House to provide economic empowerment programming to residents. Of the 70 units, 40% are at 40% of the area median income (AMI), 10% are at 80% AMI, 30% are at market, and the remainder are for households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

In exchange for a reduction in the purchase price, the city of East Haven retained ownership of and will upgrade the building wings containing a pool, auditorium, and gym. In addition to the federal historic rehab tax credits, financing for the \$31.7 million development includes low-income housing tax credits and state historic credits.