



Renovations Of Historic Roxbury Lenox Apartments Begin In Boston

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BOSTON - Saturday, February 27, 2021 - Mayor Martin J. Walsh, recognizing the partnership between Beacon Communities and the Boston Housing Authority, today announced the closing of nearly \$125 million in financing to renovate the Lenox Street Apartments in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston, a 285-unit federal public housing community.

"Lenox was built more than eight decades ago as a promise and an investment in Boston's communities here in Roxbury," said Mayor Walsh. "This project, and the work we've recently finished at nearby Camden, are investments in the lives and futures of Lenox families, and I'm proud of the work to improve the homes and lives of so many."

"Beacon is proud of our long partnership with the Boston Housing Authority and is thrilled to be moving forward with the Lenox Apartments renovation," said Dara Kovel, CEO of Beacon Communities. "Together with the recently completed Camden Apartments complex, these efforts will significantly improve living conditions for close to 400 families in Boston."

Lenox will undergo extensive renovations that preserve and honor the historic character of the community. Beacon Communities is working closely with The Architectural Team and D.F. Pray to modernize the apartments to today's standards of convenience and livability, while guaranteeing the continuation of long-term affordability for current and future generations of low-income Bostonians from all walks of life.

"Lenox has been a vital part of Boston's Roxbury community for more than 80 years," said BHA Senior Deputy Administrator Gail Livingston. "These

improvements will help us preserve a historic housing resource that has been at the heart of Roxbury's African American community for generations-while at the same time refreshing the apartments with modern conveniences and amenities."

Upgrades to the 192,796 square foot property will include masonry repairs, new decentralized heating and hot water systems, new security cameras, windows and exterior doors, life-safety improvements, installation of solar thermal panels on each building, new intercoms, fully renovated kitchens and bathrooms, ventilation and air quality improvements, in-unit washers and dryers, accessibility improvements, common area upgrades, dumpster enclosures, stair railings, and signage. The community, management and maintenance space will be reconfigured and fully renovated, and will include new amenities designed to promote health, learning and interaction. The landscaping-originally designed by the distinguished Olmsted Brothers landscape architecture firm-will be refreshed while continuing to honor the prominent Black Bostonians for whom the Lenox courtyards have been named for the past eighty years: William Monroe Trotter (d. 1934), founder of the Boston Guardian newspaper and Boston Equal Rights League; physician Dr. Andrew B. Lattimore who practiced medicine in the Lenox Street area, and veteran Edward A. Ditmus.

"This transaction will completely renovate and modernize the Lenox Apartments for the residents who live there," said MassHousing Executive Director Chrystal Kornegay. "MassHousing was pleased to collaborate with Beacon Communities, the BHA, the City of Boston, the Commonwealth, and all the development partners in this transformative project that will result in new affordable homes and opportunities for the nearly 300 households who call Lenox home."

The project is financed with Section 8 Tenant Preservation Vouchers awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development pursuant to its Section 18 Disposition process. This rental subsidy will be used in combination with nearly \$67 million in MassHousing tax-exempt and taxable permanent financing, approximately \$92 million in construction financing from Bank of America, and over \$49 million in federal 4 percent Low Income Housing Tax Credits provided by the MA Department of Housing and Community Development, and federal and state historic tax credit equity structured through BlueHub Capital. Bank of America is the equity investor. The Boston Housing Authority will remain involved as the Section 8 Administrator and via a 99-year ground lease.

The Lenox Apartments are adjacent to its sister property, Camden Apartments, where Beacon recently completed \$23 million in renovations. Renovations included remodeling all 72 units, making energy efficient improvements and improving accessibility throughout.

"We have worked very hard to keep our historical development affordable for generations to come and we look forward to the beautification that our residents deserve," said Julieta Lopez, president of the Lenox and Camden Residential Association. "The work next door at Camden helped preserve the community, while offering residents a better quality of life. We are so excited to be able to do the same here at Lenox."

"Lenox Apartments is an important next step in preserving affordable housing options in Lower Roxbury," said Todd Gomez, North Region Market Executive for Community Development Banking at Bank of America. "Beacon's work with the Boston Housing Authority to redevelop Camden Apartments and now Lenox, has been extraordinary. We are committed to lending and investing capital to build communities throughout the U.S. and we are proud to partner with Beacon on this impactful redevelopment project."

The renovation of Lenox Apartments is expected to create over 100 construction jobs. D.F. Pray has done extensive outreach and has offered free training to residents in order to maximize job opportunities for people of color, women, residents of the community and of the broader Boston area. Renovations are scheduled to be completed by October 2023.