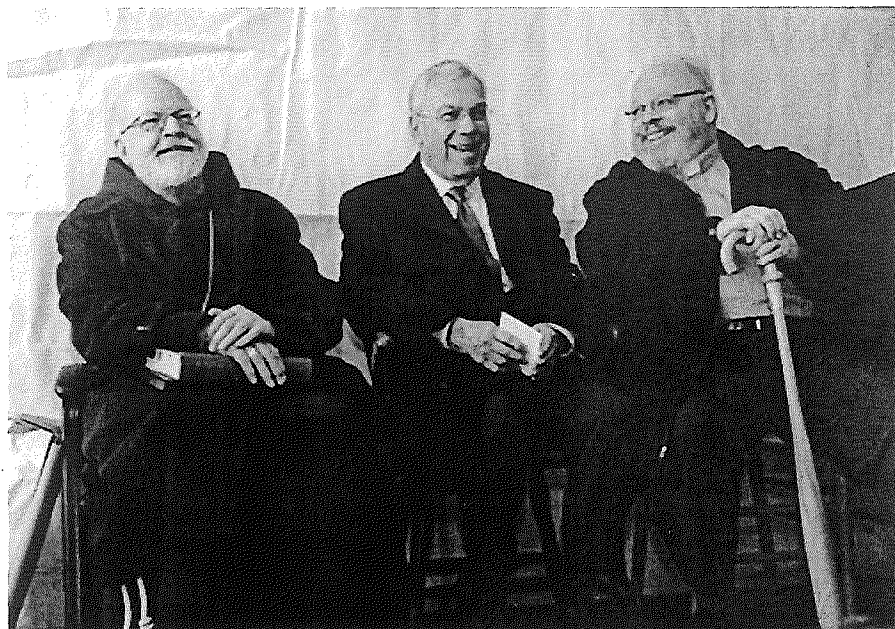


Former Dorchester parish property will provide affordable housing

By Pilot Staff
January 10, 2014



Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley, outgoing Boston mayor Thomas M. Menino and Father Jack Ahern of Holy Family Parish in Dorchester are pictured at the Dec. 30 groundbreaking ceremony for the redevelopment of the former St. Kevin Parish property. The property will provide 80 units of affordable housing for the neighborhood. Pilot photo/George Martell, Courtesy Planning of Urban Affairs

BOSTON -- Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley, outgoing Boston mayor Thomas M. Menino and Aaron Gornstein, state Undersecretary for Housing and Community Development, joined the Planning Office for Urban Affairs to celebrate the redevelopment of the former St. Kevin's Parish campus in Upham's Corner in Dorchester Dec. 30. The redevelopment of St. Kevin's is a coordinated effort led by the Planning Office for Urban Affairs, St. Mary's Center for Women and Children and Holy Family Parish, all operating on behalf of the Archdiocese of Boston.

"The collaboration of the Planning Office for Urban Affairs, St. Mary's Center for Women Children and Holy Family Parish with the City of Boston and our federal and state government will provide much needed affordable housing for this neighborhood," said Cardinal O'Malley. "The need is very great. Throughout the archdiocese we hear of experiences that are becoming all too common: families made homeless when they lost

their house to foreclosure; families paying high rents for apartments that are in poor condition or are far from good schools and good jobs; working people who cannot afford to rent an apartment; elderly residents on fixed incomes who have to choose between paying their rent and buying their prescriptions and food. The development of affordable housing provides a sustainable response to these needs while making an important contribution to the economic and social life of the community. We are grateful to all who are working on behalf of this project."

The project will answer a critical need for safe and affordable housing in the city. The former St. Kevin's site will be redeveloped to create 80 units of affordable housing; 25 percent of which will be for formerly homeless families. St. Mary's Center will provide on-site supportive services to families transitioning to permanent housing. The remaining 75 percent of the units will be workforce housing to provide affordable apartments for people who serve the community, including teacher's aides, lab technicians, licensed practical nurses, paralegals and restaurant workers.

"There have been so many projects over the years in which the City of Boston has partnered with the archdiocese's Planning Office for Urban Affairs," Mayor Menino said.

"These projects have not only been catalysts for revitalization, but they have also provided almost 1,500 units of housing in the city. This particular project is so special because it represents a coordinated effort to house some of our most vulnerable families, while reconnecting a now-vacant property to the surrounding area, ensuring vitality and investing real capital into the neighborhood."

Construction will begin in February and the project is scheduled for completion in July 2015. The development will include three multi-story buildings, two newly constructed (35 Bird Street and 530 Columbia Road) and the adaptive reuse of one of the existing buildings (516 Columbia Road).

"Housing is a cornerstone of our economy and of our local communities," said Gornstein.

"These 80 new units of housing will not only create jobs here in Dorchester, but also safe, quality apartments for our neighbors. I commend the Planning Office for Urban Affairs for their tremendous commitment to expanding permanent affordable housing in the City of Boston, especially for formerly homeless families."

The development received funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the City of Boston, Bank of America, the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

"This project was truly a collaborative effort among the archdiocese, the City of Boston and the Commonwealth," said Lisa Alberghini, President of the Planning Office for Urban Affairs. "We are excited to start building and create much needed affordable housing that will contribute to the vibrancy of this community."