

Home for the holidays

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SPECIAL TO THE PILOT

BRIGHTON — The holidays are a time of homecoming for many people, with a renewed emphasis on family, friends and faith. However, to seniors whose relatives live far away, have a chronic illness or a mobility issue, the "hustle and bustle" of the season can be a challenging time. The work of the Planning Office for Urban Affairs of the Archdiocese of Boston made this year's holiday season a little easier for a number of seniors.

The opening in early January of the senior-living community at Providence House provides many seniors with their best holiday gift of the season. Providence House, an elderly living community located on the grounds of the former St. John of God Hospital, offers them over 100 studio and rental apartments. The housing community provides a range of assisted living and support services for seniors, 62 or more years old, of all income levels.

"Our hope in developing Providence House was to reuse this property, which has been affiliated with the archdiocese for decades, to continue helping seniors by offering service-enriched housing

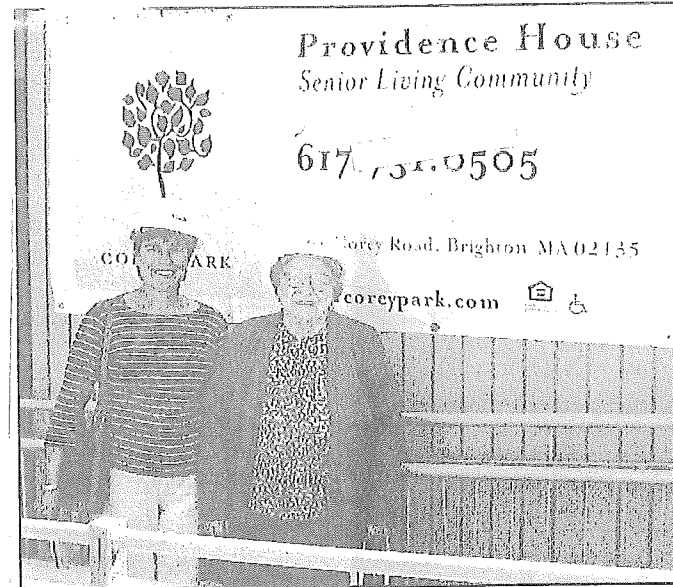
for people with a wide range of incomes," said Lisa Alberghini, executive director of the planning office. "All seniors deserve the opportunity to live with respect and dignity in comfortable homes they can afford, and Providence House is a good beginning."

Among those who will benefit from the housing and services of Providence House are two octogenarians with strong ties to Brighton. The housing community presents them with a way to ease the burden of living alone. Eighty-seven-year-old Rita Quane, a former social worker with Catholic Charities in Connecticut, and 80-year-old Rose Brady, who was a nurse for 30 years at St. Elizabeth Medical Center, cannot wait to move in.

"I was lonesome and started to think about what I was going to do," said Quane, a Watertown native who has watched her friends move out of the area over the years.

Born and raised in Brighton, she said she was eager to visit the Providence House model apartments advertised in the newspaper. Developed by the planning office in partnership with E.A. Fish Associates, Providence House offers a new option for independent senior living.

Brady, who was born in Ire-



Rose Brady of Allston and her niece Eileen Dillon toured the new Providence House senior-living community in December while it was still under construction. Brady was one of the first to take up residence in community after it opened in early January.

land and has been living in Allston for 52 years, said she, too, knew it was time to let others take on the chore of maintaining her home.

"I find it a bit difficult climbing the stairs, doing my shopping and checking my furnace oil and thought it was time to take it a little easy," she explained.

Located near Cleveland Circle at 180 Corey Road, Providence House is comprised of 102 studio and one-bedroom rental apartments and includes a park, walking paths and gazebo. Every apartment features a kitchenette,

private bathroom and wall-to-wall carpeting. Residents have round-the-clock access to a range of amenities, personal care assistance and social events, including daily meals in the restaurant-style dining room, medication management and regularly scheduled group activities and outings.

Providence House offers market, below-market and low-income rates for rent and assisted living services to eligible individuals. Prices start at \$2,100 per month, which is much lower than many assisted living communities and some units are available at lower cost for qualified indi-

viduals. A unique combination of federal, state and local funding supports eligible seniors who need financial assistance.

There have been dramatic changes in senior housing during the past 25 years. Today, fewer seniors live with their adult children or other relatives and many seek alternatives to traditional nursing home care.

As the population ages — with an estimated 70 million people age 65 or older by 2030 — there is an increased need for alternative senior housing.

"Senior communities such as Providence House offer older residents the best of both worlds," said Richard Johnson, executive director of the housing community. "For independent seniors in their 60s, 70s or 80s, Providence House offers a wonderfully safe and comfortable lifestyle. On the other hand, we also offer assistance with aspects of daily living that can be a hardship for some older residents who may have a limited disability or simply feel the need to slow down."

According to Johnson, the community is designed for seniors who want or need daily and weekly services such as meals, housekeeping, transportation, medication reminders or personal care.

Quane said that getting to know the Providence House staff has reaffirmed her decision to move there.

"I was impressed at first glance by the caliber of the people. I know I'm going to like it," said Quane. "I know I'm going to be in good hands because of what I have observed."

To learn more about Providence House or to arrange a tour, call Lucille Sorrentino at 617-731-0505.