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Affordable Senior Housing opens in Billerica



Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley is joined by other community leaders at the ribbon cutting ceremony of Rose Hill Manor April 17. The residential development will provide affordable housing for seniors in the Town of Billerica.

Pilot photo/Courtesy Planning Office of Urban Affairs, George Martell

By PILOT STAFF

BILLERICA — Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley joined the Planning Office for Urban Affairs (POUA), Aaron Gornstein, Massachusetts Undersecretary of Housing & Community Development, representatives from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, State Representative Marc Lombardo, and Billerica Town Manager John Curran to celebrate the grand opening of Rose Hill Manor, a residential development that will provide affordable housing for seniors in the Town of Billerica.

"I would like to express my gratitude to all of those here today who share a commitment to ensuring that our seniors have access to decent and affordable housing," said Cardinal O'Malley. "The Planning Office, federal and state officials, and the Town of Billerica have created a community that will be truly a home for the seniors who live there."

The development was per-

mitted through Chapter 40B, Massachusetts' affordable housing law, and sponsored by St. Theresa of Lisieux Parish. Funding for the development included \$5.5 million from the Federal HUD Section 202

program and more than \$2.5 million from a variety of state sources and funding from the Town of Billerica.

Rose Hill Manor is located on a 3.2-acre parcel owned by St. Theresa of Lisieux Parish.

The residential development features 41 units of high quality housing, a community room and dining area, a central lounge with fireplace, a workout room and other ancillary spaces. The site is located near

a wide-variety of amenities and resources that will support the seniors living in their new homes.

According to a recent report by the Wider Opportunities for Women and UMASS/Boston, the elderly in Massachusetts struggle with one of the largest shortfalls between income and costs, with the age group's median income more than \$10,000 short of the estimated costs for basic necessities, such as food and shelter. In addition, a 2008 study by UMASS Donahue Institute for the Department of Housing and Community Development identified seniors as the group with the largest housing cost burden: fully 53 percent are paying more than they can afford for their housing.

The Planning Office for Urban Affairs is a social justice ministry affiliated with the Archdiocese of Boston. POUA has developed more than 2,500 units of affordable and mixed-income housing, providing homes for more than 10,000 people in Massachusetts.