

BILLERICA Minuteman

April 26 - May 2, 2012

WickedLocalBillerica.com

Vol. 42, No. 15 \$2

SENIOR HOUSING

Rose hill manor officially opens

By Liana Measmer

lmeasmer@wickedlocal.com

Following the official ribbon cutting on April 17, those present reminisced about their journey to get to this point.

On that day, Cardinal Sean O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston was welcomed by Billerica Town Manager John Curran, State Representative Marc Lombardo, Selectmen Bob Correnti, Mike Rosa and Dave Gagliardi who celebrated the dedication of this affordable housing development, giving 40 senior residents much-needed new homes.

"It is an example of a development using 40B regulations that had a positive result, with all parties sitting at the table and working together," said Correnti.

Also on hand were Lisa Alberghini, President of the Planning Office for Urban Affairs; Kristine Foye, Deputy Regional Administrator of the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, and Aaron Gornstein, the Undersecretary of the MA Department of Housing & Community Development. Alberghini said although it has been a long road, she was pleased with all of the committed parties who put in all their time and effort to make this a success.

"We are especially grateful to the Board of Selectmen and all of the Town offices, committees and councils who helped make Rose Hill Manor a reality," said Alberghini.

In 2004, St. Theresa's Parish approached the Planning Office for Urban Affairs (POUA) to develop the land behind the church, and the

POUA agreed to help. Alberghini said it took three years to obtain the \$5.5 million in federal funding from the office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and another two years to acquire the state funding which totaled over \$2.5 million. The organization has developed more than 2,500 units of affordable and mixed income housing, providing homes for more than 10,000 people in Massachusetts. Along with the efforts of the POUA, the Rose Hill development was permitted under Chapter 40B, the state's affordable housing law.

The POUA worked alongside many municipal offices and boards like the Housing Partnership, the Board of Selectmen, and the Council on Aging. The Housing Partnership, a town committee tasked with finding housing solutions, was looking for locations to develop for seniors, said Selectman Mike Rosa. They were approached by Ron DiOrio Sr., a future member of the Housing Partnership, who presented them with the information about the Federal HUD Section 202 program.

"No one in town knew what a 202 was until Ron DiOrio brought it forward," said Rosa.

In addition to 40 resident units, Rose Hill Manor includes one manager's unit, a community room with dining area, kitchen facilities, a work-out room and is located near a wide-variety of amenities that support the seniors in their new homes. DiOrio said that he was focused on helping because housing is so difficult to find. He said he was involved in



Cardinal Seán O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston joined the Planning Office for Urban Affairs (POUA), alongside other state officials, representatives, and Billerica's town manager and selectmen to celebrate the grand opening of Rose Hill Manor, an affordable housing development for seniors. Seen here at the ribbon cutting are Kristine Foye, US Department of Housing and Urban Development; Helen Wallace, Rose Hill Manor resident; Bill Faradie, Vertec Construction; Lisa Alberghini, Planning Office for Urban Affairs, and Cardinal Sean O'Malley. COURTESY PHOTO

working with the consultant who was hired for the feasibility study. He is pleased that seniors are living there.

"It's up and it's running," said DiOrio. "It's good."

In addition to municipal officials, St. Theresa's retired Pastor, the Reverend Eugene Tully, played an "immense part" in this project, said Correnti. Correnti added that \$25,000 was contributed for a feasibility study and \$225,000 was contributed by the town for

the project.

"It certainly was a community effort," said Correnti.

The development was actually completed in late December 2011 with lottery drawings for residents immediately following, said Alberghini. She recounted stories of gratitude from the residents who, for some, were alone as a result of a spouse's passing but now making new friends.

"They tell me they aren't lonely anymore," she said.