

Fenway rooming house Our Lady's Guild House to be sold to 2 local non-profits



Our Lady's Guild House, at 20 Charlesgate West in Fenway, as seen on March 8, 2019. (Matt Stone/Boston Herald)

Matt Stone/Boston Herald

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A Fenway rooming house for women will change hands a day after the state attorney general's office announced it had reached a deal with the ownership to stop evictions and settle discrimination claims against it.

Two Boston-based non-profit affordable housing developers, the Planning Office for Urban Affairs and Fenway Community Development Corporation, announced Thursday evening that they had signed an option agreement with the Our Lady's Guild House, a rooming house for women at 20 Charlesgate West with 140 units.

In a statement, the groups say they "plan to redevelop the property as 100% permanent affordable housing."

On Wednesday, state Attorney General Andrea Campbell announced her office had secured a deal to stop evictions, settle allegations of age and disability discrimination against long-term tenants and secured a \$115,000 penalty payment.

Rooms in the house — which a resident told the Herald in an email are to be called “single-room occupancy ... not apartments” as they share kitchens and bathrooms — go for \$810 to \$950 a month, depending on size, according to the website.

“From its inception, Our Lady’s Guild House has been defined by its mission of creating stability and opportunity for women and students in Boston,” said Mother Mary Janice Zdunczyk, Chair of the House Board. “That spirit is inextricably linked to the building and its future use honors that legacy in a changing Boston marked by a growing housing gap.”

The city’s chief of housing, Sheila Dillon, called the purchase move “a beacon of hope for the future of affordable housing in Boston,” which is itself “crucial to building strong and equitable communities.”

“This acquisition aligns with our mission to respond to the urgent need for affordable housing in the City of Boston, and our moral obligation to ensure that everyone has a roof over their heads,” said Bill Grogan, the president of the Planning Office.

The building is located just outside Kenmore Square was purchased by the Archdiocese of Boston in 1946 to be run by a new charity, the Daughters of Mary of the Immaculate Conception. The building’s ownership changed from the Daughters of Mary to its own name in 1981, according to corporate records filed with the Secretary of the Commonwealth.