



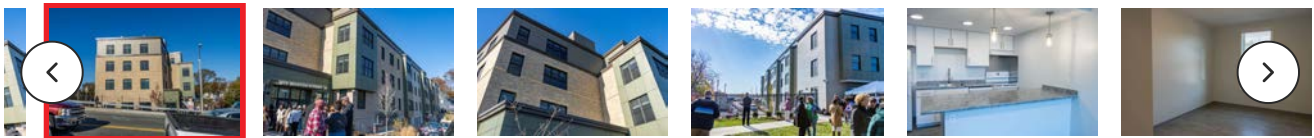
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NEWS

Mattapan affordable development mixes rental and homeownership near transit

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Morton Station Village

By [Tréa Lavery | TLavery@masslive.com](mailto:TLavery@masslive.com)

A new affordable housing development in Mattapan was designed to meet the neighborhood's needs by combining rental and homeownership units in one building.

Morton Station Village, which was developed by the Planning Office of Urban Affairs of the Boston Archdiocese and Caribbean Integration Community Development, a community development corporation, will bring 40 units of housing to the area just steps away from public transportation. The building includes 28 rental apartments and 12 homeownership units, all of which are designated affordable at a variety of income levels.



“Our state faces a housing crisis that has priced to many families out,” said Housing and Livable Communities Secretary Ed Augustus at a ribbon cutting on Friday. “We need to build more housing of every type. We need more rental units. We need more opportunities for homeownership. And Morton station village exemplifies all of that right here.”

Of the rental units, there are nine one-bedroom, 15 two-bedroom and four three-bedroom apartments. Four are for renters making 50% of the area median income, 13 at 60% AMI, one at 70% AMI and three at 90% AMI.

There are also four one-bedroom and eight two-bedroom homeownership units, with seven being sold to households making 80% AMI and the remaining five at 100% AMI.

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The four-story building includes 495 square feet of office space, common laundry and fitness rooms, a community room that will host programming by the neighborhood group Redefining Our Community (ROC), and a 30-car parking garage.

The developers worked on the plans for Morton Station Village for years, working with the community to make sure that they were providing the right resources. While the original plan was to build all rental housing, advocacy by local neighborhood associations and ROC led them to the eventual “mixed-tenure” plan.

“You helped build a model for the nation that homeownership and rental can coexist,” said Donald Alexis, president of CICD. “Now we’re going to have more wealth generation happen.”

Another aspect that was sparked by community engagement is a serenity garden located behind the building.

The garden is named in honor of Steven Odom, a 13-year-old who was killed by a stray bullet in 2007 on Evans Street, just feet from where Morton Station Village now stands. Odom's parents, Ronald and Kim Odom, founded ROC in memory of their son.

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"He had just 13 short years to be on Earth, but that's going to be there forever," Alexis said.

The site, right across the road from Morton Street Station and steps from the train tracks, was formerly a police station.

State Rep. Russell Holmes, D-6th Suffolk, said the location close to the commuter rail station was important because of the history of the Fairmount Line, which connects Readville with South Station.

Before three new stations were built along the line between 2012 and 2013, trains on the line would run through Mattapan and Dorchester without stopping.

"Can you believe that we actually let that happen? That you could just drive through neighborhood and not have four stops," Holmes said. "To be able to be in the fight, we're now going to put housing again next to a train station."

Bill Grogan, president of the Planning Office for Urban Affairs, said they received more than 4,000 applications for the 28 apartments, and said it was an indication of how badly needed affordable housing is in the neighborhood.

State Sen. Liz Miranda, D-2nd Suffolk, said it was important to have the variety of housing types offered by the project in a neighborhood where there is a high percentage of residents of color and of low-income people.

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“Our neighbors and loved ones are experiencing rapid gentrification and displacement from communities not only that they built up for decades, but for generations,” Miranda said. “They love these communities, and when they are leaving, they’re not leaving because they don’t love and want to contribute. It’s oftentimes a matter of being able to feed your family, go to work, or being able to provide shelter.”

The project was financed with \$4.9 million from MassHousing, \$7.6 million in state and federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits, \$1.8 million from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, \$1 million from the state’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund and \$100,000 from the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation.

Grogan told MassLive the developers are in the final stages of the lottery selection for the rental units and are in the process of qualifying people for the homeownership units.

Residents are expected to begin moving in in early 2024.

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