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St. Francis House and the Planning Office for Urban Affairs Announce State Funding for 46 Units of Affordable Housing

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Development will convert the historic Boston Young Men's Christian Union into housing



St. Francis House (SFH) (http://www.stfrancishouse.org/site/PageServer?pagename=SFH_homepage) and the [Planning Office for Urban Affairs of the Archdiocese of Boston \(POUA\)](http://www.poua.org/) (<http://www.poua.org/>) are excited to announce the award of funding from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to create 46 units of affordable housing at the former Boston Young Men's Christian Union (BYMCU) building at 48 Boylston Street in Boston.

On behalf of the Baker Administration, DHCD will support the project with a combination of Federal and State Low Income Housing Tax Credits that will leverage approximately \$11.8 million in equity, and \$4,000,000 in various subsidies from DHCD. The City of Boston is also providing significant funding for the development.

"These affordable housing awards reflect our administration's commitment to a stronger, more prosperous, and more inclusive Commonwealth," said Governor Charlie Baker. "By increasing affordable housing production, and stabilizing working families, low-income senior citizens and homeless families or those at risk, these housing awards will strengthen communities across Massachusetts."

In April 2016, SFH and POUA purchased the historic building located near the Boston Common and on the edge of Chinatown on Boylston Street. Together, SFH and the POUA will undertake the rehabilitation of the now-vacant building.

“This funding will help create affordable housing in the heart of downtown Boston in a neighborhood that has seen rental costs skyrocket,” said Karen LaFrazia, Executive Director of St. Francis House. “Without an affordable home, finding a job and being an active member of the community can be impossible. This development will strengthen our mission to provide pathways to stability for individuals experiencing homelessness.”

The property will be redeveloped by SFH and POUA to provide much needed affordable housing in the community. The completed development will include units to serve people who have experienced homelessness, and others with very modest incomes. Twenty-six of the units will be reserved for individuals earning less than 30% of the area median income.

“Providing permanent housing for the homeless and workers priced out of the market is a critical need. We’re redeveloping this building to provide permanent housing for individuals who can’t afford Boston’s very high housing costs,” said Lisa B. Alberghini, President of POUA. “Our goal is to carry on the mission of the BYMCU by providing for people in need, and by offering housing for those who would otherwise be forced out of the neighborhood.”

A designated Boston Landmark listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the building was constructed in 1875 and was operated by the BYMCU for more than 150 years to provide a variety of social, recreational and service programs.

In keeping with the building’s history, the development will also provide benefits beyond housing. A street-level business venture will established by St. Francis House to add to the vitality of the neighborhood and create important employment opportunities for the people they serve. Additionally, SFH will relocate its corporate offices from 39 Boylston Street to free up space to provide more robust support services. Taken together, the award of DHCD funding for this project creates badly needed affordable housing, employment training and new jobs for homeless individuals, and expanded social services for vulnerable populations.

O’Neill and Associates is proud to provide St. Francis House with communications and government relations services.

About St. Francis House

Located in the heart of Boston, St. Francis House rebuilds lives by providing refuge and pathways to stability for adults experiencing homelessness and poverty.

St. Francis House is a welcoming and inclusive community. For over thirty years, every day of the year, we meet guests’ basic needs for food, clothing and shelter. We transform lives by using a holistic approach to understanding and addressing the behavioral health, housing and employment needs of people. We commit ourselves to helping those we serve achieve renewed lives of dignity and self-determination.

About the Planning Office for Urban Affairs

The mission of the Planning Office for Urban Affairs, a non-profit housing developer affiliated with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston, is to serve as a catalyst for social justice through its work in housing development, commercial development and neighborhood revitalization, and affordable housing advocacy. POUA has completed over 2,700 units of affordable and mixed-income housing. The emphasis of the Office is not on numbers, though, but on having a qualitative impact on the harsh reality of housing deprivation for all those we serve.

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