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State and local officials dig in to launch \$41-million low-income housing project

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State and local officials throw dirt around at Wednesday's groundbreaking of the Musterfield at Concord Place development in Framingham. From left to right, State Rep. Pam Richardson, Fair Housing Committee member Rev. Faith Tolson-Pierce, Framingham Housing Authority (FHA) Treasurer Phyllis May, FHA Assistant Treasurer Edward Convey, Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Associate Director for Public Housing and Rental Assistance Mass. Amy Schectman, State Sen. Karen Spilka, FHA Executive Director Kevin Bumpus, FHA Vice Chairman Stephen Starr, FHA member Robert Merusi, and MassHousing Deputy Director Robert Ruzzo. (Matt Rocheleau for The Boston Globe)

By Matt Rocheleau, Globe Correspondent

State and local officials held a ceremonial groundbreaking at the site of a \$41-million low-income housing renovation project in Framingham late this morning.

Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray described the housing modernization project at the Musterfield at Concord Place Development as a place for low-income families to rebuild their lives.

"This is a recommitment to a principle that all families deserve affordable housing," said Murray, who was one of several speakers at the groundbreaking ceremony.

"Those of us in government haven't always kept up in [such] efforts," said Murray, but he added that he is proud to be a part of this project.

The Framingham Housing Authority launched the 18-month project on Wednesday to renovate 110 two- and three-bedroom brick townhouse apartment units at the location formerly known as the Pearl Harbor Development along Concord, Normandy and Anzio streets.

The redevelopment is among the first in the state to be funded under the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) mixed financing program for state-financed public housing

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developments – a funding approach that partners state funding resources with private investors who receive tax credits for participating, said a press release from the authority.

“This project represents a dynamic and innovative collaboration between the public and private sector to revitalize our communities,” said Gov. Deval Patrick, who did not attend the ground breaking, in a press release. “By targeting resources in this way, we are not only assisting individuals and families in need, but lifting up those neighborhoods that need it the most.”

Total development costs of \$41 million include the \$6 million purchase of the property. The \$35 million modernization is funded by \$22 million in financing from the DHCD and \$13 million from the state tax credit program.

"If we are to lift people out of poverty, we need to give them the tools to do so," said the housing authority's chairman Stephen Starr.

Deputy Director of MassHousing Robert Ruzzo said though, "There is nothing newsworthy about daily maintenance," it is the most difficult long-term challenge of such undertaking, and must not be forgotten once the renovations are complete.

To read more about the project, [click here](#) to see the recent story detailing the modernization plans.

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