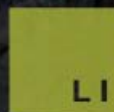


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JAMAICA PLAIN, ROXBURY

Key part of \$225M Jackson Square redevelopment gets financial lift

Posted by Matt Rocheleau March 4, 2011 09:34 AM

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(Courtesy: Sally Swenson, JPNDG)

Rep. Jeffrey Sanchez spoke Thursday and was one of several elected officials in a 50-person crowd on-hand during the on-site announcement.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

The largest component of a multi-phase, quarter-billion-dollar Jackson Square redevelopment plan received new state and federal funding Thursday, allowing construction to soon begin.

More than \$7.1 million was announced to support the \$50 million construction of a mixed-use, transit-oriented 103 rental-unit development at 225 Centre St. The project, conceived by residents and city officials one decade ago that will include 35 affordable units, 10 of which will be reserved

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for "extremely low-income families," state officials said Thursday.

The project, which will begin in early summer and be completed, project also calls for 16,000 square feet of retail.

Within 100 feet of the square's MBTA station at a vital crossroads between Jamaica Plain and Roxbury, the project is part of the first phase of a 14-building, \$250-million [Jackson Square Redevelopment Initiative](#), officials said.

The initiative was developed through 10 years of community planning led by three nonprofits that comprise Jackson Square Partners, hundreds of local residents and project developers to transform the area "into a vibrant, healthy place with hundreds of new homes at a wide range of affordability, new green space, new retail and office space, new programs for youth and families, and new recreational opportunities," said Sally Swenson, spokeswoman for the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Council, which along with Urban Edge and the Hyde Square Task Force, makes up Jackson Square Partners.

The 225 Centre St. project is one 31 rental developments in 21 communities statewide bolstered by a combined \$71 million from "various affordable housing programs" pledged by Governor Deval Patrick two weeks ago, the state said.

The development projects will create or preserve 1,642 units of rental housing, including 1,415 affordable units for low- and moderate-income families, according to the release. The projects will also create an estimated 2,000 construction jobs across Massachusetts, including 276 for the Jackson Square project.

"By investing this targeted blend of funds to spur housing development, we are actively strengthening Jamaica Plain and other communities across Massachusetts," Governor Deval Patrick said in the announcement. "Creating affordable housing helps to generate jobs, grow local businesses and build a better, stronger Commonwealth."

Developers Mitchell Properties and The Community Builders will use \$2.3 million in state issued low-income housing tax credits, \$2 million in Department of Housing & Community Development program subsidies and \$503,988 in federal low-income housing tax credits to complete 225 Centre St., the release said.

"We are very proud to be developing 225 Centre at Jackson Square," said development team member Bart Mitchell in the release. "Jackson Square was torn apart 40 years ago by land takings for an ill-designed highway expansion that was thankfully stopped by citizen action. The new Orange Line subway and wonderful Southwest Corridor park were built instead. We are proud to be working with Jackson Square Partners to re-establish Jackson Square as the vibrant mixed-use neighborhood center it once was and will be again."

MassHousing will receive a \$2.3 million [MassWorks Infrastructure](#) grant for construction of public parking at the site as well as for area pedestrian improvements, officials said. Two years ago, the state awarded a \$3.1 million MassWorks Infrastructure grant for infrastructure improvements to support future development of the Jackson Square initiative.

"The state's funding support for 225 Centre marks the next step in our efforts to unlock the potential of a revitalized Jackson Square," Mayor Thomas M. Menino said in a statement.

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“The funding of the Jackson Square mixed-use building will stimulate economic growth to not only the Jackson Square neighborhood but to the entirety of Jamaica Plain. It will also provide job opportunities and affordable housing units to members of the Jamaica Plain community. Projects like these are helping move Jamaica Plain forward as a neighborhood, and as a unique place to live,” Representative Jeffrey Sánchez added in the announcement.

Other Boston projects being funded through the \$71-million mid-February pledge by state officials are, according to a release:

- **Codman Washington Apartments (Dorchester)** -- Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation will use \$539,740 in federal low-income housing tax credits and an additional \$4,305,356 in DHCD program subsidies to preserve existing affordable housing and for the production of new affordable units. Of the 80 affordable housing units, 8 will be dedicated for extremely low-income families. The project is anticipated to create 55 jobs.
- **Lucerne Gardens (Dorchester)** -- Trinity Financial will use \$349,665 in federal low-income housing tax credits, \$506,081 in state issued low-income housing tax credits, and an additional \$2,211,381 in DHCD program subsidies to rehabilitate 45 rental units. 36 of the units will be affordable, and 5 will be for extremely low-income families. The project is anticipated to create 57 jobs.
- **Renwood Housing For PWA (Roxbury)** -- The Cushing Companies will use \$998,333 in DHCD program subsidies for the rehabilitation of 24 units of affordable housing. These units are reserved for previously homeless individuals and families living with AIDS. 19 of the units will be reserved for extremely low-income families. The project is expected to create 11 jobs.
- **Uphams West (Dorchester)** -- The project will use \$1,425,000 in DHCD program subsidies to renovate two existing buildings in order to create 13 affordable units for low-income families, including 5 units reserved for formerly homeless families. The project is anticipated to create 18 new jobs.
- **Urban Edge Limited Partnership Apartments (Roxbury)** -- Urban Edge will use \$545,251 in federal low-income housing tax credits and an additional \$2,000,000 in DHCD program subsidies to make necessary upgrades to 82 units of affordable rental housing, 9 of which are set aside for extremely low-income families. The project is expected to create 64 jobs.
- **Worcester House (South End)** -- Caritas Communities will use \$1,000,000 in DHCD program subsidies to renovate and preserve 16 affordable single-room occupancy (SRO) units in a high-demand neighborhood. 2 units will be set aside for formerly homeless individuals. The rehabilitation is anticipated to create 13 jobs.

To see a statewide list of projects, [click here](#).

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(Courtesy: Sally Swenson, JPND)

Bart Mitchell of 225 Centre St. developer Mitchell Properties points out aspects of the site plan to state housing Secretary Greg Bialecki.

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