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Officials cut ribbon at \$15m mixed-use Jackson Square building

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Residents, development leaders and local officials lined up for a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 270 Centre St. Thursday afternoon.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

An affordable housing project that is the first slice of a [quarter-billion dollar effort](#) to redevelop Jackson Square was formally unveiled before residents and local officials at a ribbon cutting Thursday afternoon.

Nearly 1,400 families applied for the 30 affordable apartments at 270 Centre Street, where officials from the project's leader, the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation, expect three businesses – a restaurant, salon and laundromat – will open within 6,000 square-feet of ground-floor space this winter.

Constructing the four-story, 44,700 square-foot building cost \$15 million. It is across from the Jackson Square MBTA station on the corner of Centre and Lamartine Streets.

The development stands on a site of once-vacant city-owned parcels that developers purchased. It was combined with an adjacent privately-owned property, bought for \$1-million in 2005, where an out-dated building was demolished two years ago, officials said.

The nonprofit development organization said the building meets high standards

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The nonprofit developer said the building meets high standards for indoor air quality through the installation of a “green” roof and “green” walls – vegetation that releases oxygen into the environment, increasing the fresh air available to residents.

Through a publicly-funded initiative, officials said the building’s management company will place a focus on keeping the building smoke-free, including through offering smoke-free education and referral to smoking cessation services.

The developer said construction of the facility was done through the use of non-toxic building materials and high-efficiency systems.

According to the developers, tenant Cinthia Arias said that after only one month in her new home, her asthma has improved.

“Moving into 270 Centre has truly given me peace of mind,” she said, according to the JPNDC. “And not only for myself. I feel I’ve finally found a healthy place for my baby girl to grow up.”

The building features a sustainable design, including rooftop solar panels that provide power for common areas and energy-efficient appliances, officials said. It was designed by Studio G Architects, a Jamaica Plain-based architecture firm that specializes in environmentally-friendly projects.

“270 Centre addresses a tremendous need in our community for healthy housing that’s affordable to people of modest means,” said JPNDC executive director Richard Thal. “Poor housing conditions are a major contributor to high asthma rates among low-income Bostonians. We’re very proud that with this project, JPNDC is contributing to safer homes for kids at risk as well as to the overall revitalization of Jackson Square—for everybody.”

There are 20 two-bedroom units, four studios, four one-bedrooms and two three-bedroom apartments, the developer said. Tenants’ rents vary according to each resident’s income and funding source, but the rates range from \$25 per month to \$1,165 per month for a two-bedroom apartment.

Build-out of the first-floor retail space is ongoing. The three businesses will be a restaurant, the [Jackson Square Landromat](#), and Xposure by Noel salon, which will relocate around one mile from its current, smaller shop along Centre Street near Pond Street, according to a spokeswoman for the developer.

The nonprofit developer won two national awards within the past year for creating homes that are both affordable to low- and moderate-income households and for featuring “green” design elements. The award-winning developments were the [Creighton Commons homeownership project](#) on the former Blessed Sacrament campus and the [recently-honored Julia Martin House](#).

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