

City, state and federal officials join development team and residents in celebrating 270 Centre Street's opening

Jamaica Plain – Last week, HUD Regional Director Barbara Fields, Boston Neighborhood Development Director Evelyn Friedman, State Representative Jeff Sanchez, and City Councilor Matt O'Malley joined residents, business leaders, and Studio G in celebrating the formal opening of 270 Centre Street. The building at 270 Centre Street not only answers the affordable housing need for low-income residents in Jamaica Plain, it also is a blessing for tenants with disabilities. Addressing the crowd in Spanish, new resident Mauricio gave a moving account about the difficulties he faced relocating from the violence in Colombia to settling in the US. In a wheelchair for 20 years, he expressed his gratitude that for the first time in his life he has a home designed to address his physical limitations.



Mauricio thanking the development team for his new home



View of 270 Centre from Centre and Wise Street

All the rest of the residents have settled in happily to the 40,000-sf environmentally sustainable mixed-use building developed by the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation and designed by Studio G Architects. The building's 30 units of 100% affordable housing shelter some of Boston's most vulnerable residents, including several recently homeless families and those with mental and physical disabilities, while its three ground-floor retail spaces incubate local business.

Just as importantly, the building heralds the eventual transformation of the community through the Jackson Square Initiative, which although years away from full realization, will renew the neighborhood through infrastructure improvements, new educational

and recreational facilities and additional affordable housing. Although 270 Centre Street is a single building, it links Boston's Latin Quarter (Hyde Square) with the Jackson Square MBTA Station. It also serves as an object lesson in the capacity of sustainable, transit-oriented, mixed-use development to revitalize struggling neighborhoods into 21st Century urban villages.

Throughout the ten-year process of designing the building, obtaining approvals, acquiring financing, and construction, the design/development team remained focused on making 270 Centre Street the anchor for a sustainable urban village at Jackson Square. In collaboration with residents and community groups, the team addressed a



(left image) From left: Clark Ziegler and Leslie Bos of Mass Housing Partnership, Richard Thal of JPND, State Rep. Jeffrey Sanchez, Evelyn Friedman, Director of the Department of Neighborhood Development, Barbara Fields, HUD Regional Director, and Matt O'Malley, City Councilor cut the ribbon to celebrate the opening of 270 Centre



(right image) Sylvia Mihich and Tamar Warburg of Studio G, and Nat Hailey, the Owner's Project Manager listen to the speakers

critical need for affordable housing and local commerce with a mixed-use building adjacent to transportation, parks, schools, jobs, stores and services. With its highly visible location diagonally across the street from the T-station, 270 Centre Street acts as the gateway to Jackson Square, and its contemporary yet contextual design mediates between the monolithic brick construction of Bromley Heath Housing Development and single-family cottages on Lamartine Street, harmonizing disparate building scales to unify the neighborhood.

The design team stretched the limited budget of just \$212/SF to create the most environmentally sustainable building to back up its location-efficient design. A 30 kWh grid-tied photovoltaic array, the first PV array in Jackson Square, powers house lights and HVAC, while "living walls" on the building roof and exterior

walls, planted with climbing vines, reduce the heat island effect and improve outdoor air quality in the neighborhood, which has the highest asthma rates in the city. The building's construction provides excellent indoor environmental quality for residents through tight

walls and foundations, a high performance HVAC system, low/no VOC materials, and a simple no-smoking policy. Residents suffering from asthma have already noticed the difference, commenting that they sleep more soundly and have fewer episodes.

Even before its completion, 270 Centre Street played an important role in sustaining Jackson Square. With the design and construction industries in economic free fall in 2008-2009, 270 Centre Street sustained employment levels at Studio G Architects, and it supported 75 full time construction workers who patronized the lunch spots and bodegas around the job site. Now that it is complete, it will provide jobs for 6.3 full time equivalent employees.



View of 270 Centre toward Jackson Station and the Southwest Corridor Park

Contact: info@studio-g-architects.com The Brewery 179 Boylston Street
Jamaica Plain MA 02130 T 617-524-5558