

## MHIC News

October 31, 2014

### Roxbury Tenants of Harvard celebrates opening of new Community Center in Mission Hill, Boston

*Boston* – The **Roxbury Tenants of Harvard** (RTH) held a ribbon cutting ceremony last evening to celebrate the opening of their new Community Center on Vining Street in Boston's Mission Hill neighborhood. The festive ceremony was attended by nearly 400 people and included a Lion dance, performances by RTH residents, and comments from residents, public officials, project sponsors and lenders.

The RTH Community Center is a new 28,000 square foot facility with full-size indoor basketball court, state-of-the-art wellness center, meeting rooms, youth lounge, and a computer lab dedicated to providing RTH's residents with a year-round destination for athletics, art, education, and community gathering.



The project was financed by a \$4.3 million community improvement grant from **Brigham and Women's Hospital**, \$2 million in New Markets Tax Credit equity from **Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation** in partnership with **U.S. Bank CDC**, and RTH's retained earnings from its operations over the past 15 years.

The project originated from a need in this neighborhood for high quality multi-purpose space for community programs and activities. This area is densely developed, with over 2,000 residents, many high-rise apartment buildings and busy streets, but few areas where children can play and participate in organized activities. Prior to the opening of the Community Center, there was only one multi-purpose community room with a maximum capacity of 111 people, severely limiting the program offerings. Now, RTH can expand its youth development program, after-school program, senior services, indoor recreation opportunities, and host assemblies for larger gatherings.

The opening of the RTH Community Center represents the culmination of a 15-year long effort by the RTH Board. What made it financially possible was the "gap" financing provided by MHIC with New Markets Tax Credits.

Karen Gately, Executive Director of RTH said that "the new RTH Community Center will allow us to offer expanded social and recreational programs and services that will improve the quality of life for our residents. It will be an important tool in the ongoing fight against rising levels of obesity and the many diseases that negatively affect quality of life. The center will support health and well-being programs and services for residents of all ages and abilities. In addition it will offer a nice, safe, fun and welcoming place for residents to hang out with family, friends and neighbors."

"We have been working with RTH for many years and we know how long and hard RTH has worked toward this end, so it is particularly satisfying to celebrate the community center's opening," said Joseph Flatley, President and CEO of MHIC. "We're pleased to have provided New Markets Tax Credit financing to help make it a reality, to provide a fantastic resource for residents, and contribute to fostering a healthy community."

Vincent McDermott, Vice President of Brigham and Women's Health Care, Finance & Real Estate said, "BWH is honored to continue its longstanding partnership with the RTH and provide funding for the Community Center. This state-of-the-art facility will enable the RTH to further develop our remarkable shared neighborhood. BWH is grateful for this opportunity to join with RTH as we work together to create a better community for all."

In addition to the funders noted above, the project team consisted of Traggorth Companies of Boston, Steffian Bradley Architects of Boston, NEI General Contractors of Randolph and Munkenbeck Consulting of Cambridge.



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