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MassHousing provides \$44.8m in financing to B'nai B'rith Housing

March 08, 2019 - Financial Digest

Brighton, MA Senior citizens living at the 200-unit Covenant House I and II housing community have had affordable rents extended through 2052 and will see significant property improvements as a result of \$44.8 million in MassHousing affordable housing financing to the non-profit developer B'nai B'rith Housing.

B'nai B'rith Housing refinanced the Covenant House property through MassHousing's Multifamily Accelerated Processing (MAP)/Ginnie Mae Joint Venture Initiative with partner lender Rockport Mortgage Corp. As a condition of the MassHousing financing, B'nai B'rith Housing extended two federal Section 8 Housing Assistance Payment Contracts on 199 apartments at Covenant House I and II for 20 years beyond the current contract maturity of 2032, extending affordability through 2052.

"Covenant House I and II have provided quality, affordable homes for low-income senior citizens in Brighton for many years and B'nai B'rith Housing was committed to ensuring that affordability at the properties will continue well into the future," said MassHousing executive director Chrystal Kornegay. "B'nai B'rith Housing is a creative, mission-driven developer, and MassHousing is pleased to support their efforts to create welcoming communities and invest in the needs of their residents."

"We are grateful to MassHousing and Rockport Mortgage for their roles in completing the refinancing of Covenant House I and II," said B'nai B'rith Housing executive director Susan Gittelman. "This refinancing makes available additional resources that we can put to work to advance our mission of creating the high quality affordable housing options that our region so desperately needs. This is an exciting opportunity for us, and we are thankful to these key financial partners."

As part of the refinancing of Covenant House I and II, B'nai B'rith Housing will make a number of property improvements, including accessibility upgrades, the replacement of bathtubs with walk-in showers, common area improvements, and computer lab and fitness upgrades.

Located at 30 Washington St. in Brighton, Covenant House I was built in 1982 and Covenant House II was built in 1992. The housing community has 12 studio apartments, 180 one-bedroom apartments and 8 two-bedroom apartments. One apartment is occupied by site staff.

MassHousing's MAP/Ginnie Mae loan program is offered in partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The MAP/Ginnie Mae financing allows owners of affordable rental housing to access a faster loan review process and lower interest rates.

To date, MassHousing has used lower-cost taxable MAP/Ginnie Mae financing to preserve affordability for nearly 5,600 low-income senior citizens and families, without relying on scarce public resources, such as tax-exempt financing and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.

"As a leading lender in affordable housing, Rockport Mortgage has been fortunate to continue to have opportunities to work with MassHousing in preserving valuable community housing resources for future generations of seniors," said Rockport Managing partner and President Dan Lyons. "By helping to extend long-term affordability, by funding essential capital improvements and by sustaining critical senior services, Rockport is proud to support the unique role that Covenant House and B'nai B'rith play in fulfilling their mission to ensure access to safe and affordable housing for low-income seniors."

MassHousing has financed or manages the rental subsidies of 16 rental communities in Allston/Brighton involving 2,376 units of housing and \$168.1 million in financing. The Agency has also made 8,353 home mortgage loans in Boston involving \$1.1 billion in financing.

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