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Nauset Construction completes Richdale Place, a 20-unit cohousing community in Cambridge, Mass.

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Nauset Construction has completed Richdale Place, a multi-unit cohousing residential project. Offering a unique living opportunity to its residents, the 38,000 s/f building located near Porter Sq. will house 20 condominium units, including two affordable housing units. After the demolition of a 15,000 s/f warehouse building, the new \$5 million three-story building was constructed on a very tight urban site, fronting a MBTA train line. The completion of this developer initiated cohousing project marks a rapidly growing trend in residential living first introduced to the US about 20 years ago.

"We are very excited about the completion of our new community home. Working again with Nauset Construction was a positive experience, the Nauset team worked diligently to complete the project on-time and within budget. Their expertise was crucial due to the tight space for construction. We are very pleased that the residents will have a quality building for their new home with great amenities and facilities," said Gwen Noyes, a principal of Oaktree Development.

According to Anthony Papantonis, president of Nauset, "The greatest challenge we faced was the demolition and construction of the building on an extremely tight urban space adjacent to a MBTA track. We were severely restricted. Our team had to pre-assemble panelized building systems off-site and erect them in place using a Potain tower crane. This solution worked extremely well since there was little to no space for staging of material or an equipment lay-down area. We have a lot of experience working in urban locations, but this is the first time that we used a self-erecting tower crane. Overall, the project was very successful due to careful planning and execution."

Designed by Khalsa Design Inc., with substantial design input from Oaktree, this Energy Star three-story building is comprised of wood frame construction with a hardieboard exterior façade. The individual units feature high ceilings, sunny rooms, granite countertops, hardwood floors and balconies. Richdale Place has several common areas, including a living room, dining room, and library/guest room, allowing residents to socialize and entertain. A "green" landscaped roof deck also invites gatherings while enhancing the cooling and heating efficiency of the building. A 5-stop elevator was incorporated into the design for residents to access each floor, the roof deck and a 9,500 s/f heated below grade parking facility.

Richdale Place is a unique variation on a typical cohousing community because Oaktree initiated its development and has actively facilitated a spirit of community among residents who committed before construction completion. Cohousing communities are traditionally created and managed by their residents and combine the advantages of private homes with the benefits of more sustainable living, including shared common facilities and ongoing connections with neighbors. They also provide desirable, efficient and economical living spaces for the residents and offer an innovative solution to today's environmental and social challenges.

