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Project of the Month: Dellbrook | JKS to complete \$50 million mixed-use development project - Landing 53

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Landing 53 - Braintree, MA

Braintree, MA In 2015, at a local Braintree planning board meeting, Cambridge developer Josh Katzen unveiled his proposal to build 172 apartments and 11,000 s/f of retail space at 19-37 Commercial St., the site of the former Trio restaurant and bar, H&R Block office building, Chair Fair furniture and a municipal parking lot. Both Braintree and Weymouth had been struggling for years to revive the Landing which was tired and run down. The property had been underutilized, with old, semi-vacant buildings. The town of Braintree had spent \$2 million several years prior to improve the area with underground utility lines and improved street lighting. Braintree's mayor Sullivan and Weymouth's former mayor Kay worked together to develop a shared vision to stimulate economic development at the Landing. With a MassWorks grant of \$2 million in place, engineering firm Howard Stein Hudson delivered the shovel ready streetscape improvement project within the one year design schedule.

In April, 2016, under the new administration of Weymouth's mayor Robert Hedlund, developer Josh Katzen and Forest Properties, along with construction manager Dellbrook | JKS and architect Russell Scott Steedle & Capone, broke ground on the \$50 million mixed-use development project, named Landing 53. After approximately 15 weeks of site preparation, construction began. Dellbrook | JKS started with demolition of the former Chair Fair and H&R Block buildings to make way for the new building featuring 172 apartments and 11,000 s/f of retail space. Construction consists of wood frame construction of the 5-story building over a post-tension concrete parking garage with space for 198 vehicles.

Landing 53 is located on a two-acre site at the Quincy Ave. and Commercial St. intersection, across the street from the Weymouth Landing/East Braintree MBTA Commuter Rail station with transit service to downtown Boston. The new development will revive the neighborhood and spur economic growth consistent with the town's stated mission of promoting sustainable development. The project's easy access to the navigable Fore River, which will be upgraded as part of the development, will also further the town's desire to increase public use of this unique resource.

Dellbrook | JKS project executive Scott Macleod said, "As a longtime resident of Braintree, it is very exciting to be an integral part of the Landing redevelopment. This is a great project that the community is proud of and is the catalyst for many more great things to come for this neighborhood." The project is being funded in part by the Healthy Neighborhoods Equity Fund (HNEF) – a fund set up by the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation (MHIC) and the Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) to finance transformative, transit-oriented development in Boston and gateway cities in Mass.

Landing 53 fits the HNEF model perfectly – the project creates 172 units of moderately priced

housing, opportunities for healthy living with new walking paths and a kayak launch at the Monaquot Riverwalk, improvement of the environment with new landscaping and an eye toward improving the safety of pedestrians in the immediate area.

The Conservation Law Foundation found in its HealthScore screening for the project that it was likely to be a high impact project. The HNEF funding influenced Katzen to invest more in environmental and health-related impacts such as seeking a healthy food retail tenant, adding electric car chargers, ZipCar dedicated parking spaces and EPA indoor Air Plus certification into their plans.

The project is also notable for the number of partners working together on its planning and development. The project was able to move forward in large part because of an agreement between the two municipalities of Braintree and Weymouth - the property sits on the boundary between the two communities.

“Our work has only just begun, and Landing 53 marks an auspicious start,” said Braintree mayor Joseph Sullivan.

The Landing 53 project is scheduled to open in early 2018.

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