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Diamond Sinacori and Urban Spaces break ground on 61-unit BRIX - Designed by Tise Design; constructed by Groom Construction

October 04, 2019 - Owners Developers & Managers

Salem, MA The joint venture of Urban Spaces and Diamond Sinacori held a groundbreaking ceremony for \$20 million BRIX, a 61-unit, mixed-use condominium development in downtown. One of the city's first concierge buildings, BRIX will provide downtown with residences and 3,000 s/f of retail/restaurant space.

Located at 65 Washington St., BRIX is near the Salem Commuter Rail Station into Boston as well as shops, restaurants, and museums of the Federal St. District, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

"We're excited that the former Salem District courthouse will be replaced with a signature, mixed-use building," said mayor Kim Driscoll at the ceremony. "BRIX will bring much needed housing downtown – some affordable, some market-rate, some new commercial space. This building will be part of our community's on-going effort to transform the northern part of our downtown to better serve as a welcoming entryway to Salem. It will really make a difference and I am thrilled to see this work starting today."

Designed by Tise Design Associates and to be constructed by Groom Construction, the 110,000 s/f BRIX development will be comprised of eight one-bedroom, 44 two-bedroom and nine three-bedroom units. Units will range in size from 800 to 1,700 s/f. Building amenities will include a roof terrace, club room, pet spa, and fitness studio. The building will also include a two-level parking garage to accommodate 88 vehicles.

"A vibrant city requires an array of housing options and we're excited to add a new home ownership opportunity to the heart of downtown Salem. The groundbreaking represents the culmination of many years of thoughtful planning. We're pleased to have achieved this important project milestone and look forward to BRIX contributing to the streetscape and neighborhood," said Paul Ognibene, CEO of Urban Spaces.

Urban Spaces partnered with Ken Foster, SVP of commercial banking and Kevin Rourke, SVP and commercial banking division head at Salem Five Bank to secure \$20 million of debt financing.

“With a partner like Urban Spaces/Diamond Sinacori, who has delivered on urban renewal work so successfully in other areas, we’re confident in the project’s potential to deliver a vibrant option for downtown living and retail in the city,” said Foster.

The project also benefited from the Commonwealth’s Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP) which provides Gateway Cities like Salem with a tool to increase residential growth, expand diversity of housing stock, and support economic development. BRIX will be the first condominium project to utilize the HDIP program.

BRIX will be constructed on the site of the former federal district courthouse, which had been designed in the “Brutalist” style of architecture and had sat vacant for several years. The foundation of the courthouse will be re-purposed for the project, which will speed up the construction process and reduce the level of disruption to the neighborhood.

BRIX will be constructed using fire-treated wood framing above a steel and concrete podium. The base of the building is a contemporary interpretation of urban storefront design, with stone and steel column covers, fretwork, planter boxes, and awnings. The overall building is designed to adhere to the current historic patterns of Washington St. with retail on the ground floor and residential above, using a combination of brick, metal panels, and stone details.

Designed to appeal to young professionals and retiring baby boomers, the units will be marketed exclusively by Charlesgate Realty Group and Merry Fox Realty.

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