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CUBE 3 designs Northeastern Univ. LightView student housing

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Boston, MA CUBE 3, the architect of record, joined American Campus Communities (ACC), mayor Marty Walsh and the project design team including Copley Wolff Design Group, for the grand opening of LightView student housing at Northeastern University.

CUBE 3 worked with American Campus Communities to take Northeastern University president, Joseph Aoun's vision of the overall aesthetic of the project and seamlessly connect it to the existing urban campus. The 310,000 s/f building has commercial space and student related community amenities and services at the ground floor, and 207 modern student apartments (798 beds) housed in an assemblage of components: a low-rise portion of eight stories on Columbus Ave., a mid-rise portion of 16 stories on Coventry St., and a high-rise portion of 20 stories in the middle of the block, on Burke St. A glazed narrow bridge connects the mid-rise and high-rise, which create transparency through these two component parts.

"As the very first developer-led, equity financed student housing project in the city of Boston, we are grateful to Northeastern and the city for choosing us to be their trusted partner to deliver on what we do best, providing a community where students love living," said Bill Bayless, CEO of ACC. "This winning partnership between Northeastern, the city and ACC has resulted in providing this year's incoming students and those for years to come with our best living-learning community to date."

The property, located 400 feet from Ruggles Station (Boston MBTA), features an advanced student security system, leasing office, modern fitness center, inviting café/lounge space, retail tenants, a large academic success center to accommodate quiet study spaces, laundry facilities large enough to support all residents, and both in-unit and general bike storage, including a maintenance shop for quick or complicated repairs. The buildings are LEED Gold with anticipation of achieving LEED Platinum status.

"Our building design approach required great sensitivity to the existing historical scale of Columbus Ave.," said CUBE3 founding partner, Brian O'Connor. "It's a critical campus street, which had strong influence over material changes, window patterning, and the glass pedestrian bridge that connects the buildings, yet provides a clear visual separation between the volumes. Our partnerships with American Campus Communities helped ensure that the building would integrate cleanly into the community and provide student housing options that would positively impact the neighborhood."

Copley Wolff Design Group served as landscape architect for Northeastern University's new LightView dormitory, located across the street from the school's new Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Complex, recreational fields and pedestrian bridge. Working in collaboration with the university, American Campus Communities and CUBE 3, Copley Wolff Design Group applied useful design elements to the front entrance of the building.

"Maximizing outdoor space is important given our dense urban fabric. We created an inviting enclave, where students can relax and enjoy the outdoors, that is designed to feel like a natural extension of the LightView lobby," said Copley Wolff Design Group principal James Heroux. "We are pleased to have partnered with American Campus Communities and CUBE 3 to deliver a place for students to spend time that seamlessly blends with the surrounding city environment."

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