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2020 Ones to Watch: Karen Bunch, Urban Advisor at Jay Nuss Realty Group

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Karen Bunch
Jay Nuss Realty Group

Which project, deal, or transaction was the “game-changer” in the advancement of your career? From 2017 to the present I have been the chairwoman of the board of directors of Greater Grove Hall Main Streets organization. It is a non-profit organization that partners with the city of Boston, small businesses and community stakeholders to improve the vitality of the community. I became the owner’s representative for the development of the property at 1199-1203 Blue Hill Ave., Mattapan, MA, a 32-unit mixed-use housing with 2500 s/f of retail space and parking. This project enabled me to enhance my portfolio and to advise on an array of large projects with private owners throughout the state.

How do you contribute to your community or your profession? As Chairwoman, Greater Grove was one of the sponsors of the Neighborhood Network Art Week located at 434 Warren St. in Roxbury, MA. In addition, Greater Grove Hall Main Streets was able to partner with the Harvard Street Neighborhood Health Center to disseminate COVID-19 health and safety information

What led you to your current profession? I began my career working for Staples, Kraft and Sara Lee Corp. in the division of Hillshire Farms and Kahn’s. Fenway Park was one of my major accounts. I rose from buyer to field sales manager. Upon my promotion, my father congratulated me, but told me that I would never be free in America until I worked for myself. I realized that my calling was to help to improve communities. For that reason, I chose to go into real estate. The first property I sold belonged to Red Sox great, Luis Tiant.

Who or what inspires you? My Dad had worked for the Stamford, CT Housing Authority, and when I was a young girl, I would go with him and to see the buildings on which he worked. Seeing his work inspired me to go into real estate. Following my father’s death, my mother encouraged me to “go do something,” like build a building. My mother, Rose Evelyn Bunch, is 80 and lives in Stamford, CT. My mother was 58 when my father died. Her strength for two decades inspired me. It was during those years that I began to realize how strong a woman my mother was.

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