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WinnCompanies opens \$21.5 million 70-unit The Tyler in East Haven - featuring 70 apartments for individuals aged 55+

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East Haven, CT Connecticut officials and WinnCompanies celebrated the opening of The Tyler, an award-winning mixed-income apartment community for seniors that will be the first historic adaptive reuse project in the United States to meet the industry's strictest standards for energy performance.

Built under the direction of WinnDevelopment within the three-story core of the 84-year-old former East Haven High School building, The Tyler features 70 apartments for individuals aged 55+, a fitness center, craft room, outdoor courtyard, on-site management office, and a resident lounge. The property was recently named as the nation's Best Overall Development and Green Building of the Year in Affordable Housing Finance magazine's annual Readers' Choice Awards.

Several residents of The Tyler are former students who attended high school in the building. Two thirds of the apartments are already leased. The property includes 67 one-bedroom units and three two-bedroom units. Twenty apartments rent at market rates and 50 others are available at rents ranging from 25% to 80% of Area Median Income (AMI).

"This project is a grand slam for East Haven. It delivers high quality, critically needed senior housing; restores a beautiful, historic landmark; sets a high bar for energy efficiency and sustainability; and, returns a long-vacant property to the tax rolls," said WinnDevelopment president and managing partner Larry Curtis. "We're pleased to deliver this ambitious project for the benefit of our public and private partners."

Designed and built to meet the Passive House Institute's rigorous EnerPHit Standard with applicable

historic exclusions, The Tyler is on track to certification, expecting to use 20% less energy than an Energy Star new construction building. By repurposing the former school building, the community will avoid 18,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions annually – the yearly energy use of 1,900 homes. Finally, a 90-kilowatt solar PV system on the roof will contribute to even greater carbon reductions by producing more than 100,000 kilowatt hours of clean, renewable energy every year.

Financing for the \$21.5 million project came from federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits from the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA); historic rehabilitation tax credits from the National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO); soft debt from the Connecticut Department of Housing (DOH) Flex Program; construction financing from Bank of America and Citizens Bank; Affordable Housing Program funds from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston; energy rebates from United Illuminating; partnership equity from Bank of America, and a low-interest permanent loan from BlueHub Capital (formerly Boston Community Capital). As a project partner, the Town of East Haven agreed to a 10-year deferred property tax structure.

“The Town of East Haven is committed to building relationships with quality and respected partners; WinnDevelopment is just that. Their craftsmanship on The Tyler is exceptional and I look forward to continued work with them. I, like several residents of The Tyler, attended high school in that building and it gives me great pride to see it so handsomely restored while also providing much-needed senior housing,” said mayor Joseph Carfora.

“Adaptive reuse presents exciting opportunities to showcase how we can utilize old structures for modern purposes,” said commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Housing Seila Mosquera-Bruno. “The reimagining of this high school into energy efficient homes that are affordable is a remarkable transformation. Seniors deserve to live in a nice quality environment as they enjoy their retirement.”

“CHFA awarded federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits that resulted in \$14.8 million in equity for The Tyler. These credits allow developers to leverage the private investment needed to build affordable housing. With the adaptive reuse of East Haven High School, WinnDevelopment has converted an under-used community asset into much-needed affordable housing for seniors that will benefit the entire town,” said CHFA Chief Executive Officer Nandini Natarajan.

The Tyler is managed by WinnResidential, which now operates 16 apartment properties in 10 Connecticut communities, featuring 2,439 units across all income categories and 22,600 square feet of commercial space. The Architectural Team of Chelsea, MA, served as architect, and Keith Construction, of Canton, MA, as the general contractor for the project.

“The development of quality senior housing that seamlessly matches the community’s character is a goal that many towns look to achieve, and I’m thrilled to see that WinnDevelopment has accomplished that here,” said State Rep. Joe Zullo, ranking member of the Legislature’s Housing Committee. “They kept their promise to build a unique, first-class facility—not only restoring an iconic East Haven building, but also preserving it for future generations to appreciate.”

WinnDevelopment is the nation's leading developer of historic and iconic buildings for use as multifamily housing – transforming more than three dozen abandoned textile mills, schools and other landmark structures into apartment properties in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia and Washington, DC. No other developer has won more awards for residential adaptive reuse projects.

“The State Historic Preservation Office would like to congratulate the WinnDevelopment team for the completed rehabilitation of the historic East Haven High School. We are pleased to have played a role in the first project in the country to propose using state and federal historic tax credits for a passive house rehabilitation. We hope it will serve as a reminder to all that historic preservation is an inherently sustainable practice,” said Elizabeth Shapiro, Director of Arts, Preservation and Museums for the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

The Tyler, which encompasses 104,871 square feet, benefited from the company's expertise at integrating sustainability with historic preservation and adaptive reuse, and its commitment to pursuing the extremely challenging EnerPHit standard.

“Although historic preservation projects pose many challenges to energy efficient design, the adaptive reuse of an existing building is actually the most sustainable form of development. The preservation of existing buildings like The Tyler saves non-recoverable embodied energy, which is the amount of energy required to process and put materials of construction in place,” said Christina McPike, Director of Energy and Sustainability for WinnCompanies. “By balancing the project's unique historic assets, such as oversized windows, with the EnerPHit standard, The Tyler not only preserves the historic character of East Haven High School, but also creates environmentally responsible housing for years to come.”

Steven Winter Associates served as the project's Certified Passive House Consultant. Building Efficiency Resources provided Energize Connecticut program support. Sunwealth, a clean energy investment firm, will own and operate the building's rooftop solar array.