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Nauset Construction breaks ground on senior cohousing development

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Littleton, MA Nauset Construction has broken ground and foundation work is now underway for Hager Homestead, a five-building, 24-unit, 55+ cohousing development that will be built in two phases. Located on the 15-acre site on King St., the new community is located close to the town center, the town hall and public library, and a five-minute drive to the commuter rail station. Hager Homestead will be the first cohousing development for seniors in New England.

“Many seniors are looking for a downsized, community-oriented, environmentally friendly lifestyle, and that’s what Hager Homestead will provide,” said Matthew Blackham of Massachusetts Cohousing, LLC, which is developing the project in conjunction with the residents of the community. Cohousing consists of privately-owned homes clustered around shared open space and a common house with shared amenities. “We’re offering a purposefully designed community where everyone has a say, and where residents can connect with one another to create a real community.”

Designed by Concord, NH-based Sheldon Pennoyer Architects, the project centers around a historic, three-story, 2,500 s/f farmhouse built in 1795 in the Federal style. The building, which features several original masonry fireplaces, will be thoughtfully re-imagined as the Hager Homestead’s Common House, and serve as the social center for the community. The Common House will include a large dining room and kitchen, community space, a living room, library, and other amenities, including an exercise room. Nauset will also raze an adjacent single-story building (formerly home to a dental office) to make way for a three-story, 15-unit building to be constructed in the Federal style to remain in harmony with the historic character of the Common House. Three additional “cottages” will be constructed from the ground up, two with two units and a third with three units, and Nauset will also renovate a single-family home located on the property into two housing units to create the fourth cottage in the second phase. Eight of the units will be designated as affordable or workforce housing.

A modern, well-constructed post and beam barn, originally sited next to the Federal house, will be

relocated intact to the northeast corner of the development. The barn will house woodworking tools, serve as a storage area for large equipment and supplies for the development's planned community garden.

Hager Homestead also features twelve acres of open space – which will be protected in perpetuity by a conservation restriction – consisting of a meadow, a pond, and wetlands bounded by Beaver Brook. A walking path at the rear of the property will also be designated as a public amenity for the residents of Littleton. Eighty percent of the total acreage of the development will be green, open space.

Challenges for the construction team include providing structural reinforcement to the Common House to ensure support during the excavation process for the new buildings, maintaining erosion control and protecting the wetlands from materials runoff during the simultaneous construction of four separate buildings.

“Characteristics of this project check the boxes of several of Nauset's core competencies including historic renovation, senior living, and multi-unit residential housing developments – as well as our team's ability to devise and implement creative solutions to some of the more challenging aspects of the development,” said Benjamin Goldfarb, vice president of Nauset Construction.

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