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## NEI General Contracting honored by MHIC for Racial Equity and Inclusion

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Shown (from left) are: Travis Watson, director of racial equity and community engagement, MHIC; Andre Barbour, NEI GC; Eric VanDusen, Lena New Boston; Joe Flatley, former CEO MHIC; Guillaem “Rusty” Aertsen, chairman, MHIC board of directorr.

Boston, MA NEI General Contracting was honored with a “Racial Equity and Inclusion Excellence Award” from the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation (MHIC) for its impact on the Olmsted Green 100-unit rental project. NEI and the developer, Lena New Boston, LLC, were recognized at their annual meeting at the Omni Parker House. Offering apartments for rent, homeownership opportunities, and a mix of smartly designed flats and townhomes with private back

yards and landscape, Olmsted Green is a one-of-a-kind 42-acre landscaped community located six miles from downtown, in Mattapan.

Lena New Boston was created by the merger of New Boston Fund, Inc. and Lena Park Community Development Corp. (CDC). New Boston Fund has developed mixed-use urban projects in Boston and other cities while Lena Park CDC has a 30-year track record of developing and managing affordable housing.

“Olmsted Green is an exceptional example of what is possible when development teams prioritize racial equity and inclusion and follow industry-proven best practices to achieve results,” said Travis Watson, director of racial equity and community engagement at MHIC. “The Olmsted Green team believed that the most successful projects reflect the community’s vision and that developing long-term, capacity-building relationships with black and brown contractors and workers will help to chip away at the racial wealth gap. NEI awarded \$11.7 million, or nearly half of the construction contracts, to Black and brown-owned businesses and they directed 68% of the construction hours to Black and brown workers.”

The redevelopment of Olmsted Green, the former Boston State Hospital site, creates over 500 mixed-income units as the first workforce housing homeownership project funded by MassHousing’s Opportunity Fund, the city of Boston’s Office of Neighborhood Development, and the Neighborhood Housing Trust. The project is designed to be a 21st century transit-oriented and energy efficient community. Homes feature Energy Star rated mechanical systems and appliances, triple-paned windows, and continuous fresh air circulation. The two and three-bedroom units include a modern contextual design with quality finishes throughout including, engineered wood flooring, open concept living, laundry machines and private patios. Dedicated parking in front of each unit is also provided. Residents have access to the Gateway Center, a community activity hub featuring a fitness center, outdoor patio with barbecues, and resident club room with WiFi.

“This award reinforces NEI’s solid foundation in community engagement and workforce development while monitoring and overseeing diverse worker and business participation throughout Boston,” said Josef Rettman, president at NEI. “We make every effort to enhance diverse business and workforce utilization which allows us to participate more fully in the community and economic development interests of our clients and the communities where they do business.”

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