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Project of the Month: NEI General Contracting converting former school into N.E's first LGBTQ-friendly senior affordable housing complex

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Rendering courtesy of DiMella Shaffer

Hyde Park, MA NEI General Contracting, an award-winning general contracting firm, is converting the former William Barton Rogers School at 15 Everett St. into The Pryde, New England's first LGBTQ-friendly senior affordable housing complex. The project is a joint development by Penrose and LGBTQ Senior Housing Inc. A groundbreaking ceremony was held on June 17th, and the project is expected to be completed in the fall of 2023. NEI has been retained to convert the historic school into 74 units of housing, featuring a mix of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units.

Shown (from left) are: NEI employees Adam Umbro, Nada Jaber, Chris Finch and Brian Turley.

"NEI has a strong reputation for the preservation of historic properties and their conversion to modern-day uses. We are excited to be preserving the historic William Barton Rogers School and providing quality affordable housing for LGBTQ seniors," said Charles Adams, regional vice president for Penrose.

NEI is managing the entire historic renovation project which includes interior/exterior selective demolition, the restoration of existing historic millwork details, and building two three-story additions. The new additions will both include an elevator and lobby area servicing the ground floor to level three. One addition features a new sunroom space on level one providing access to a courtyard, site amenities, and walking track. New mechanical, electrical, and life safety systems will be installed throughout the building.

The building will house 74 units built within the current classroom walls. New walls will subdivide the current classroom spaces into an open living/dining/kitchen area, a bedroom, a bathroom, and closet storage space.

The second-floor auditorium will be repurposed to serve as the resident community room; and the tired classroom on level four re-purposed as a movie room. A living room, library, management office, toilet rooms, and floor laundry rooms will be constructed in current classrooms off the main hallways. The two-story high school gymnasium on the ground level will be renovated as a space programmed for activities such as yoga, large meetings, indoor pickle ball, and other activities for the current building residents and the nearby community. There will also be additional community amenities to be used by the building residents and the larger community such as: an art space accompanied by an art gallery; classrooms for life long learning programs; a large multi-purpose room and fitness room; as well as resident services coordinator and programming offices located in former classroom spaces on the ground floor.

NEI prioritizes equity and inclusion with initiatives that are designed to engage and maximize the participation of diverse local contractors and community-based workforce on all of its construction projects.

The Pryde project team included:

NEI General Contracting - General Contractor
DiMella Shaffer - Architect
Pennrose and LGBTQ Senior Housing Inc. - Developers
Norfolk Multi-Family - Cabinets & Countertops
Universal Window and Door - Windows
Microdesk - Modeling and VDC Consultant
Wayne J. Griffin Electric - Electrical
Sublime Construction Corporation - Concrete