



nerej

MassDevelopment provides \$2.75m to Cougar Capital to renovate and convert industrial building in Leominster, MA

May 19, 2023 - Construction Design & Engineering



Leominster, MA MassDevelopment has provided \$2.75 million in loan financing to 34 Tremaine Street, LLC, an affiliate of Cougar Capital Management, to renovate and convert a historic and long-vacant former industrial building at 34 Tremaine St. into 17 market-rate apartments.

Built in 1890, the building was previously home to several manufacturers during the 20th and 21st centuries and has been vacant since 2008. Once renovated, the building will offer three studio units and 14 one-bedroom units. Construction will begin this spring and is expected to be complete in spring 2024.

MassDevelopment's loan financing included a \$2.25 million construction-to-permanent commercial real estate loan and a \$500,000 tax credit bridge loan. MassDevelopment also previously supported

the project in 2022 by awarding a \$725,000 grant from the Commonwealth's Underutilized Properties Program to fund renovations and improvements to the building. The project is also supported by state and federal historic building tax credits.

"In historic buildings that were once critical to central Massachusetts' manufacturing industry, developer Dan Botwinik and his team see prime properties with the potential to be transformed into housing," said MassDevelopment president and CEO Dan Rivera. "MassDevelopment is pleased to support Cougar Capital Management as it continues to invest in the gateway city of Leominster, revitalize vacant buildings, and create housing in and around its downtown."

"The partnership between MassDevelopment and the city of Leominster has allowed us to accomplish one of our most important goals for our city center – reuse of our historic buildings to create housing right in the downtown area," said Leominster mayor Dean Mazarella. "Cougar Management has done an amazing job maintaining the historic authenticity of the buildings while developing modern housing to serve both individuals and families. The project will help Leominster to continue to build our downtown economy while addressing critical housing needs in the region."

MassDevelopment has previously supported projects by Cougar Capital Management. In 2021, MassDevelopment partnered with Clinton Savings Bank to provide the company with \$2.52 million in loan financing to convert a historic vacant former rooming house at 41 Summer St. in downtown Leominster into 21 market-rate apartments. In 2019, MassDevelopment provided \$6 million in loan financing to help Cougar Capital Management redevelop the W.S. Reed Toy and Manufacturing Factory at 45 Summer St. into the Toy Factory Apartments; the formerly vacant mill building now features 36 market-rate rental housing units (both one-bedroom and two-bedroom) with high ceilings, exposed brick, large windows, a rooftop deck, and solar panels. The Toy Factory Apartments were honored in June 2021 as a recipient of the Paul and Niki Tsongas Award by Preservation Massachusetts, an award that recognizes individuals and projects that promote the preservation of Massachusetts' past.

Located in downtown, 34 Tremaine St. was previously owned by companies such as the Earl Company Factory, the Howe Comb Company, and the Cornelius E. Buckley Company.

"We are excited for our third historic adaptive reuse project in Leominster, MA with help from MassDevelopment," said Cougar Capital Management owner Dan Botwinik. "34 Tremaine has sat vacant for over 15 years and this project will bring much-needed market-rate housing to a downtown location while revitalizing a historic mill building in desperate need of rehabilitation. Without the support from MassDevelopment and the city of Leominster this piece of American history would have been lost. MassDevelopment has been a great partner and is helping us make this project a reality."