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Beacon Communities hosts a ribbon cutting at Edith Johnson

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New Haven, CT Beacon Communities hosted a ribbon cutting celebrating major upgrades to 95 affordable apartments at Edith Johnson. The two-year renovation of the 14-story high-rise community serving low-income, elderly residents also included assuming loans and tax credits so that Edith Johnson continues to be an affordable housing resource for decades to come.

Beyond the physical improvements of the building, including a new facade, windows, and roof, residents now have revitalized common areas and improvements to the life-safety systems. The renovated building features 85 studios and ten one-bedroom units, tailored to the needs of aging residents. All units are covered by a Section 8 contract designated for elderly families, making them deeply affordable.

“Beacon Communities is thrilled to be investing in quality housing and the well-being of our senior residents with the support of New Haven’s leadership,” said Dara Kovel, CEO of Beacon Communities. “Our commitment to the city and our residents is demonstrated by our work at Edith Johnson where we have improved the building and preserved affordability for the long term.”

Shown (from left) are: Suzanne Piacentini, field office director, HUD - Hartford Field Office; Karen DuBois-Walton, Ph.D., president, Elm City Communities and secretary, Housing Authority of the city of New Haven; Pat Guliano, managing director of multifamily, CT Housing Finance Authority; Seila Mosquera-Bruno, commissioner, Department of Housing; Paul Crocker, Edith Johnson resident; Justin Elicker, mayor, city of New Haven; Jeanette Morrison, Ward 22 Alder, city of New Haven; Toni Walker, CT state representative, 93rd District; and Dara Kovel, CEO, Beacon Communities LLC.

The property, originally built in the early 1970s, was last renovated in the late 1990s by Beacon Communities and public and private partners to transform the Elm Haven public housing development into Monterey Place. In 2021, Beacon began renovations to upgrade and revitalize Edith Johnson, making it a thriving affordable senior community.

The general contractor for the project is Keith Construction Inc. and the architect is The Architectural Team, Inc. The project was financed with tax-exempt bonds and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits from the Connecticut Housing Finance Agency (CHFA), tax credit equity from the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation (MHIC), subordinate financing from the Connecticut Department of Housing (DOH), and a first mortgage from BlueHub Capital. The development also assumed an existing loan from the Housing Authority of New Haven and benefits from a real estate tax PILOT agreement with the city.

“Modernizing and upgrading Edith Johnson is an important step forward for our community and we applaud Beacon Communities and their partners for preserving the affordability of these apartments for many years to come,” said mayor Justin Elicker.

“We appreciate the work of Beacon and their partners for their efforts to provide New Haven with a remarkable affordable housing asset.”

“The seniors of Edith Johnson, of ward-22, have worked hard throughout their lives,” said Alder Jeanette Morrisson. “Having somewhere to live where they are proud to call home is what they deserve throughout their golden years! I love each and every one of them!”

Beacon Communities LLC is a privately owned real estate firm that develops, acquires, invests in, and manages a wide range of multi-family housing. Their portfolio includes affordable housing,

market rate housing and mixed income-housing. Their developments range from new construction, to historic adaptive reuse, to the renovation of existing housing. They take on challenging developments and make them succeed. Their driving passion is to create well-designed, healthy homes that improve the quality of life of their residents and enhance the neighborhoods in which they are located.

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