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MPZ Development's 34 East Springfield St. awarded 2024 Preservation Award from Preservation Massachusetts

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Boston, MA On June 28, MPZ Development LLC (MPZ) was honored by Preservation Massachusetts with a 2024 Preservation Award for its project 34 East Springfield St., a 100% affordable apartment community for formerly homeless veterans located in the city's South End. The annual Preservation Awards celebrate exemplary projects that made significant contributions to preserving historic resources in communities across the Commonwealth. 34 East Springfield St. has been awarded the Mayor Thomas M. Menino Legacy Award, given to preservation projects that are transformative, catalytic, embrace the community, create partnerships and revitalize the best of the past to make something good for the future.

34 East Springfield St. is a 150-year-old Italianate-style brick rowhouse in the South End's National Register Historic District which sat vacant and in disrepair for more than a decade before MPZ began re-developing the Boston Housing Authority project in 2020. MPZ worked with The Narrow Gate Architecture, Epsilon Associates and ZVI Construction to preserve and restore important historic features of the rowhouse, including renovations to the building's facade. MPZ collaborated with the project abutters at 32 East Springfield St., and the neighboring condo owners agreed to temporarily relocate so the façade of both 34 and 32 East Springfield St. could be reconstructed. Additional exterior work, including cast stone lintels and sills and historically accurate double-hung windows all contributed to restoring the original, historic appearance of 34 East Springfield St.

Interior renovations at 34 East Springfield St. included restoring the original staircases and other common area elements to maintain the historic nature of the building. MPZ and its project partners created five one-bedroom apartments, four of which are accessible by the building's original staircases, and the fifth at the basement level designed for handicap accessibility. While prioritizing historic preservation, 34 East Springfield St. is designed to ensure veterans can live both comfortably and sustainably in the 100% electric, solar-ready building with green upgrades throughout. 34 East Springfield St. celebrated its grand opening in March of 2024, and its five deeply affordable one-bedroom apartments for formerly homeless veterans are fully leased.

34 East Springfield St. was funded through a mix of state, local, and philanthropic funding sources, including HOME funding through the mayor's Office of Housing. Other funders include the Neighborhood Housing Trust, The Boston Housing Authority, Dedham Savings Bank and Dedham Savings Construction. Further funding was provided through state and federal historic tax credits. The units will be permanently affordable thanks to the HUD Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Program which provides project based vouchers for all five apartments, as well as ongoing supportive services for the residents.

"I'm honored that 34 East Springfield St. was recognized with the Mayor Thomas M. Menino Legacy Award from Preservation Massachusetts," said Mathieu Zahler, principal at MPZ Development. "In transforming this South End rowhouse into a home for formerly homeless veterans, we prioritized the historic preservation of the site's original features but sought to breathe new life into the once-abandoned building. Through great collaboration, we produced a thoughtful and well-balanced project that preserves the past but envisions a bright future. I am proud that the revitalized 34 East Springfield St. will be a safe space for veterans in need of affordable housing in Boston."

“Preservation Massachusetts is thrilled to honor 34 East Springfield St. as a recipient of the 2024 Mayor Thomas M. Menino Legacy Award for its transformative and community-driven impact in Boston’s South End,” said Jessica Rudden-Dube, executive director of Preservation Massachusetts. “34 East Springfield St. not only revitalizes a historic structure but offers stability and resources to local veterans. This project serves as a model example of how preserving our past can directly benefit our future.”

“This project restores a historic South End Brownstone and gives its residents the housing stability and supportive services that they need to thrive here in Boston,” BHA administrator Kenzie Bok said.

“It is fitting that MPZ Development is receiving a historical preservation award from Preservation Massachusetts for 34 East Springfield St.,” said Sheila Dillon, Boston’s chief of housing. “Not only was the building meticulously restored but it will now serve as a home for local veterans. Thank you to MPZ Development and all the project partners that collaborated to make this preservation possible. We’re proud that the City of Boston was able to contribute to this project.”

“We are honored to have contributed to the preservation and transformation of 34 East Springfield St. and are proud that it has been recognized with a 2024 Preservation Award,” said Kitty Ryan, principal of The Narrow Gate Architecture. “This project exemplifies how thoughtful architecture and meticulous preservation can help breathe new life into a historic building and help meet the needs of the community by housing local veterans.”

“Working on 34 East Springfield St. allowed us to apply our expertise in historic preservation and specifically historic tax credits to a project that offers profound community impact,” said Brian Lever of Epsilon Associates. “The Preservation Award is a testament to the power of collaboration, historic preservation, and community development as well as an example of how historic buildings can be sensitively rehabilitated and address Boston’s housing needs.”

“We are immensely proud to have contributed to the revitalization and restoration of 34 East Springfield St. and are honored to see it receive a 2024 Preservation Award,” said David Schwarzman of ZVI Construction. “The project team transforming 34 East Springfield St. created high-quality, visionary affordable housing in a historic rowhouse in Boston. We’re grateful to Preservation Massachusetts for recognizing the commitment to revitalization and historic preservation on this project.”

“This affordable housing development for veterans in the South End met a critical need,” said Doug Shaw, executive vice president & senior lending officer at Dedham Savings. “As a community bank, Dedham Savings is proud to support such a project that further strengthens the local community.”

“We were excited to see this vacant space come to life in such a meaningful way and are pleased to fund such an important project for the City of Boston,” said Martin Connors, first vice president, commercial real estate lending at Dedham Savings.

“The Grossman Family was thrilled to be a small part of this wonderful project which has restored

beauty to a historic building, provided affordable homes for our valued Veterans, and proved that hard work by a passionate and committed developer who overcame many unanticipated challenges is well worth the time and effort required for the success of this project,” said Louis Grossman, a historic tax credit investor.

“Collaborations like this between HUD, VA, the City of Boston and private sector partners like MPZ Development are helping ensure Veterans have a safe place to call home,” said Vincent Ng, director of VA Boston Healthcare System. “That foundation combined with ongoing support from HUD-VASH staff can have a life-changing and lasting impact on Veterans’ lives.”

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