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Nauset Construction delivers 59-unit Passive House apartment project

February 21, 2025 - Construction Design & Engineering



Somerville, MA Nauset Construction has completed the phase II building of the Union 346 Apartments, located at 3 Hawkins St., a 59-unit, transit-oriented apartment community in Union Sq. built to Passive House standards. This performance-based certification focuses on creating super-efficient building envelopes that significantly reduce energy use for heating and cooling, providing occupants with optimal comfort.

Developed through a joint venture partnership between John M. Corcoran & Company (JMC), The Grossman Companies, Inc., and SMT Development, this project marks their second consecutive multifamily community in Union Sq. Last year, Nauset completed the adjacent phase I building of the Union 346 community, a 94-unit building with ground-floor retail. The adjacent buildings have a Walk Score of 97 and a Bike Score of 99 and are located near restaurants, entertainment venues, and

public transportation options, including the new Green Line Extension.

“The Passive House design of the phase II building at Union 346 reflects our commitment to sustainability while addressing the need for transit-oriented, market-rate, and affordable housing in Somerville,” said Tim Corcoran of JMC.

Designed by ICON Architecture, the development has revitalized this residential neighborhood by replacing two distressed structures. The building features four levels of wood-framed construction over a steel and concrete-framed podium, housing 59 studio, one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments, with 11 units designated as affordable. The building’s exterior facade is comprised of brick at the ground level and a combination of fiber cement lap siding and panels at the upper levels. Casement windows and an aluminum storefront provide natural light for the residences, while a sustainable TPO membrane roof completes the building envelope.

Amenities at phase II of Union 346 include a community space with work-from-home pods, a rooftop deck with garden plantings, a sky bar, and a seating area with views of the Boston skyline. The fifth-floor units feature private walk-out patios, and several of the units on the lower floors are adorned with balconies. There is also parking for 59 bicycles and on-grade parking for 15 vehicles, as well as EV charging stations.

In addition, residents of both buildings benefit from shared building amenities. Phase I of Union 346 offers a fitness room, bike storage and repair station, dog washing station, lounge with a kitchen and fireplace, and a roof deck featuring a fire pit, garden planters, and views of the Boston skyline. Union 346 also features an on-site patio, complete with cooking grills and furniture.

In collaboration with the city, the project team also designed and constructed a publicly accessible park at the rear of the site that provides open green space for the community to enjoy. Both buildings are professionally managed by John M. Corcoran & Company.

Passive House

Phase II of Union 346 was designed and constructed to meet the stringent requirements of the Passive House Institute US (PHIUS), which is currently reviewing the project for final certification. This standard mandates compliance with rigorous benchmarks for airtightness, insulation, and ventilation to achieve ultra-energy-efficient heating and cooling, leading to significant operational cost savings and a smaller environmental footprint. Passive House design also provides residents with improved air quality, consistent indoor temperatures, reduced noise pollution, enhanced natural lighting, and minimized mold risks.

“Since its inception, Nauset Construction has been committed to green building and sustainable construction practices, and we are pleased that developers continue to recognize our focus of providing highly efficient, urban infill projects throughout the Greater Boston multifamily markets,” said Anthony Papantonis, president of Nauset Construction.