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Manchester Economic Development Office and Anagnost Investment begin River's Edge

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On the heels of a hallmark decade that boasted development of a new 10,000-seat civic arena, a mixed use riverfront complex anchored by a new minor league baseball stadium, and several other initiatives, the city of Manchester is once again the site of a large-scale public/private development project that is certain to further transform this historic riverside city and help propel its economic engine forward.

In 2004, the Manchester lost hundreds of jobs when Tyson Food closed its Jac Pac facility, a large meat-processing plant about a mile south of the city's center. Aware the 17-acre brownfields site, situated at a major gateway into the area south of downtown, was a potentially prime piece of riverfront real estate, city leaders elected to purchase the site to ensure that a redevelopment strategy would be pursued in-keeping with the city's long-term economic and community development goals. In 2006, the developers were invited to submit proposals for acquisition and redevelopment of the property through the Manchester Economic Development Office. The RFP's criteria included requirements for mixed-use development, green building construction, quality design and retention of public open space on the riverfront.

In the spring of 2007, the city entered into a purchase and sales agreement for the site with the Manchester-based development firm, Anagnost Investments, Inc. After completing design work and receiving all necessary state and local approvals, the city and Anagnost Investments closed on the property in October of 2008 and the formal groundbreaking took place later that month.

What has emerged from this process is the city's largest development project in decades. The Jac Pac site has been recast as River's Edge - a project that involves the clean-up and redevelopment of the site into a 236,000 s/f urgent care facility for Elliot Hospital (expandable to 349,000 s/f), an 111,000 s/f medical office building, a three-story residential building, a 13,000 s/f commercial building and a four-acre riverfront park.

Demolition of the former Jac Pac plant is nearly complete and construction of River's Edge has begun. The anchor facility, Elliot at River's Edge, will include urgent care, diagnostic imaging, pulmonary rehab, physical rehab, outpatient cardiac care, physician offices and more. The adjacent medical office building will be leased to various private medical practitioners. Overall, River's Edge is expected to create at least 250 to 300 new jobs in addition to numerous jobs that will be relocated from elsewhere in the City. The existing Elliot Hospital will remain as a center for in-patient care and other services. The new Ambulatory Care Center at River's Edge will be the largest building of its size in Manchester to be designed "green."

"What we're looking at is the most significant project in Manchester in the last 30 years," said Jay Minkarah, director of economic development for the city of Manchester. "Anagnost Investments and Elliot Hospital's commitment to the city is a testament to the overall strength of this community."

River's Edge enhances our role as a center for healthcare in northern New England and the jobs and additional tax base created will significantly strengthen our economy. Further, the design and quality of construction, including the use of green building principals, reuse of a former brownfields site, the preservation of open space, and the mixed-use nature of the development will stand as a bold example the type of forward thinking development that Manchester strives to champion."

The buildings at River's Edge were designed by Cube 3 Studio of Lawrence, Mass. with engineering services provided by CLD Consulting Engineers of Manchester, Eckman Construction of Bedford, N.H. and Suffolk Construction of Boston are general contractors.

Phase one of River's Edge is slated for completion at the end of 2010.

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