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The Architectural Team Announces Completion of Sustainable Affordable Housing: Boston's The Homes at Old Colony, Second Phase

Planned and designed by The Architectural Team, the redevelopment of the U.S.'s oldest public affordable housing development combines fresh, super-green design with new neighborhood amenities in 129 new housing units completed in April.

CHELSEA, MASS, May 22, 2014 – The Architectural Team, a nationally recognized master planning and architectural design firm specializing in multifamily housing and sustainable design, announced this week the completion of 129 residential units for Phase II of The Homes at Old Colony. The oldest public housing project in the United States, South Boston's Old Colony had become a symbol of poor housing conditions, until the introduction of federal funds and an innovative master plan and green-building design approach began to breathe new life into the community.

Now the revamped neighborhood plan and energy-efficient, high-performing residences and community facilities have turned The Homes at Old Colony into a national model for sustainable multifamily design and desirable urban



living. Stemming from a grant for “environmentally sustainable public-housing transformation” awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the Old Colony project demonstrates how public housing projects can be modernized efficiently, and with efficient, economical outcomes.

Boston Strong, and Green

“The continuing redevelopment of Old Colony exemplifies our client’s commitment to building sustainable, affordable quality apartment homes, and the impact that creative and innovative construction can have on revitalizing an entire community.” says Michael D. Binette, AIA, principal at The Architectural Team. “Throughout the design process, the development team strove to create high quality, healthy, and efficient housing that would have a positive and transformational impact on the community.” Planning for the redevelopment of Old Colony began in 2009 with the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) and master planner Chan Krieger NBBJ. Later that year, BHA engaged Beacon Communities Development LLC as developer and hired The Architectural Team as master planner and architect, with Suffolk Construction as general contractor, to collaborate with the planning team and begin the design of Old Colony.

Old Colony's Phase One, completed in December 2011, included 116 housing units divided among a six-story midrise residential building and four groups of townhouses topped with



photovoltaic panels all achieved Platinum certification under the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED for Homes program. Phase One also included a 10,000 square foot learning center awarded LEED-NC Gold.

Phase II structures and planning, including 129 new units with 40 to be added next year, are in keeping with the first phase, and tracking LEED Platinum as well. Old Colony is also designed to EPA’s Energy Star and HUD Healthy Homes Guidelines, and the revitalized site is anticipating a LEED for Neighborhood Development certification.

“The buildings are oriented to maximize solar exposure, with carefully designed exterior envelopes that significantly reduce heating and air-conditioning loads,” says Jay Szymanski, AIA, project architect and associate at The Architectural Team. Szymanski notes that the homes incorporate rooftop solar panels, in addition to energy-efficient mechanical systems, appliances and lighting, as well as recycled content and healthy materials.

"Old Colony's redevelopment also incorporates new policies to limit waste and improve indoor air quality," he adds.

A list of sustainable design features utilized in all phases of The Homes at Old Colony and helping to achieve LEED and Energy Star ratings follows:

- Sustainable Site: Permeable concrete pavers and infiltration leaching galleys
- Water Efficiency: Efficient irrigation system, low-flow plumbing fixtures
- Energy: High-performing water pipe insulation, non-HCFC refrigerants
- Materials: low-VOC flooring, sealants and paints; locally produced aggregate and drywall, and 85% of construction waste diverted from landfill
- IEQ: Closed combustion, vented; outdoor air and local exhaust meet ASHRAE 62.1 and 62.2 (2007); all structures non-smoking, with designated smoking areas.

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About The Architectural Team

Founded in 1971, The Architectural Team, Inc. is an 85-person master planning and architectural firm that has grown through its design excellence and commitment to responsive and collaborative client relationships. The Architectural Team has developed a portfolio of distinctive design solutions for a broad range of building types and programs, and has earned more than 90 awards for design excellence. These include the new construction of large urban mixed-use developments, multifamily residential, commercial, hospitality, healthcare, recreational, and academic facilities, as well as a national reputation for historic preservation and adaptive reuse. The firm is located in the restored 1840s-era Commandant's House in Chelsea, Mass. Visit www.architecturalteam.com.