

The Architectural Team Combines Forces with Wood Partners on TOD Project

The Alta Union House in Framingham, Mass., includes 196 units of housing and over 2,500 square feet of retail.



Courtesy Wood Partners The Alta Union House in Framingham, Mass.

The Architectural Team (TAT), based in Chelsea, Mass., and Atlanta-based Wood Partners are at the cutting edge of more than one current development trend with the construction of the five-story, 196-unit Alta Union House in Framingham, Mass., about 20 miles west of downtown Boston.

The community officially opened in late summer and has since been named a New England Project of the Year by Smart Growth America. The Alta Union House is the first new multifamily development built in downtown Framingham in over 40 years. The building includes 2,587 square feet of ground floor retail, is located near a commuter rail station, and is a product of statewide zoning changes aimed at increasing density.

“The first significant project to result from a state-led 2016 rezoning effort, Alta Union House represents an important shift in land-use policy for Framingham and offers a strong example for neighboring towns, such as Natick and Marlborough,” says TAT project manager Matt Duggan. Framingham is halfway between Boston and Worcester, a growing corridor known as “MetroWest.” Development forces are working to reinvigorate the town center.



Courtesy Wood Partners The courtyard at the Alta Union House in Framingham Mass.

“Like many other small and midsize cities across the country, Framingham’s urban core is at the edge of transition,” says Duggan. “This city made a smart long-range choice by rezoning to encourage greater density and reduce parking requirements, and by identifying strategic sites for infill development. Add to that, greater walkability, access to transit, more commercial and retail uses, and appealing new housing options, and you have powerful new reasons for people to consider relocating to one of these MetroWest downtowns, which they would never have considered five years ago.”

The building offers one-, two-, and three-bedroom homes of up to 1,400 square feet in size and shared outdoor space split between three courtyards, a layout designed by TAT and landscape architect’s Copley Wolff Design Group.

The courtyards are not only scenic but also functional. The smallest courtyard offers bistro-style seating along Howard Street, and the mid-sized courtyard activates a strip of land between Alta Union House and a neighboring building with seating, a grilling area, and outdoor movie projection. The complex also includes a saltwater swimming pool, a fitness center, and a tech lounge.