

**Bridging The Gap Homeownership
Project Overview
April 2022**

Bridging the Gap Homeownership is a 24-unit homeownership project in the Nubian Square and Grove Hall neighborhoods of Boston. The proposed project consists of the redevelopment of three parcels of land located at 3-5 Schuyler Street, 24 Cheney Street, and 21-23 Greenville Street.

The Cheney and Schuyler St. parcels will bring 15 new equitably affordable homeownership opportunities to families earning between 80 and 100% of AMI. The third parcel, located at 21-23 Greenville St., is reuse of an existing, vacant fire damaged building that will provide an additional nine (9) units of affordable housing to families between 80 and 100% of AMI. There will be a mix of 1, 2 and 3-bedroom units, with the majority of the units being 2 and 3-bedroom family units.

Key Features of the Project Include:

- Transforming underutilized vacant lots which have been abandoned for decades into new homes where families can build equity.
- Innovative approach to offer equitable homeownership to income eligible buyers between 80% and 100% AMI – a high priority request from the neighborhood.
- Production of 24 new affordable housing units in an environment in which the demand for affordable housing production is high.
- Bold and environmentally friendly design by MBE architects Jonathan Garland Enterprise.
- Concurrent development of three sites allows creation of 24 units with cost and time efficiencies
- Commitment to creating meaningful opportunities for workers and project participants, including MBE & WBE procurement, local workforce goals and an owner-imposed requirement for a minimum wage of \$20 per hour for all labor on the project.
- Creating opportunities for families of color who have been displaced from the City of Boston to build equity or excluded from accessing traditional financing due to systemic racism to build equity in Boston.
- Will leverage new resources, such as Capital Magnet funds, to allow for the subsidization of additional units at the 80% AMI level.

All three proposed sites have been vacant or abandoned for years, some for decades, blighting the neighborhood. Many families in the neighborhood have seen real estate values skyrocket in

the last decade and have found themselves priced out of ownership opportunities in a neighborhood they and their families have enjoyed for generations.

Mission: Expand Opportunities for Families of Color to Avoid Displacement and Build Equity in Boston

This project will expand JPNDC's mission by dedicating twenty-four units of much needed homeownership to families struggling to keep a foothold in the City. Of particular import to JPNDC is to seize the unique moment of time where there is focused attention on bridging the wealth gap and helping families of color and individuals in underserved community begin to build equity through one of the fundamental American notions, homeownership. Our recent experience with Call Carolina saw 120 qualified families applying for a scant eight (8) units of homeownership, meaning each family had just a 6.7% chance of becoming a homeowner. Bridging the Gap will increase the odds that more families are able to build wealth through homeownership and help close the race and equity gap.

JPNDC is committed to partnering with DND, the Commonwealth and others to find a path to bridging the racial wealth gap through creating affordable homeownership. We are deeply committed to healing from centuries of systemic racism that have permeated our economic, and legal system. We believe that by creating pathways to true equity-building homeownership in communities of color we can create opportunities for racial healing and help build a more equitable Boston. Without new approaches to equity building in the homeownership market, Boston will continue on a path that will lead to assets increasingly concentrated among white residents and while people of color do not have the opportunity to build equity or wealth. We care deeply about Boston's future as a place where people of color can thrive and crafting a new approach to homeownership is an essential component of making that vision possible. We are focused on making targeted improvements to affordable homeownership covenants as a model for the Commonwealth.

Mission: Maximize MBE Participation

In addition, JPNDC has made a deep commitment to furthering MBE goals in this project, by inclusion of MBE architects and a strong focus on MBE participation in construction, both in General Contractor selection as well as as through sub participation through the JPNDC Construction Wealth program to assist with MBE subcontractor selection. This is another way this project will help closing the wealth gap, by fostering, and funding, development activities through small businesses and business of color.

Opportunities for Meaningful MBE/WBE Participation

After consulting with contractors, JPNDC believes that the scope and scale of these buildings creates a prime opportunity to cultivate MBE participation at the sites; hitting the sweet spot for smaller to mid-size subcontractors. The general contractor will use JPNDC's Constructing Wealth Program which provides mentorship, networking and training to MBE subcontractors. JPNDC also serves on the working group for the Workforce Opportunity Resource Center

(WORC2) Lab which similarly seeks to support and build the pipeline of subcontractors in the areas of Mattapan, Roxbury and Dorchester.

Funding and Financing

The Bridging the Gap Homeownership will be funded through a combination of public subsidies and sales proceeds. Funding sources include:

- City Soft Debt
- Sales Proceeds
- MassHousing Commonwealth Builders Program
- Capital Magnet Fund Grants
- MassSave Energy Rebates

Eastern Bank and Boston Private Bank provided letters of interest for the construction loan. Additionally, Boston Private has an interest in being a preferred lender, with a suite of first-time homebuyer products, including the MHP One+ and the FHLB Equity Builder Program, which would increase the purchasing power for the buyers and provide additional stability and opportunities for them to build wealth in the new homes.