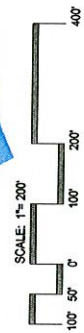




Consultants:
Winton Scott Architects
Carroll Associates Landscape Architects
Pinkham & Greer Site Engineering



December 2006
Scale: 1" = 100'



EXISTING OFF-SITE
BUILDINGS

RESIDENTIAL
BUILDINGS

NON-RESIDENTIAL
BUILDINGS

Brickhill Fast Facts

- Project took place from 1999-present
- 156 residential units; 62 more to be built for a total of 218
- 78,000 sf of office space, 100,000 to be built for a total of 178,000
- Total construction cost estimated \$65 million
- 3-way Public Private partnership with State and City of South Portland
- Used CDBG, AHP, TIF, and private financing
- First Affordable Housing TIF in Maine
- Received EPA Smart Growth Environmental Merit award in 2005
- Cottages featured in *Blueprint for Greening Affordable Housing*, published 2007.
- Features central open space, trail linkages, and boat launch

Lot 1 - Brickhill Townhouses

The first Lot completed at Brickhill was the Townhouses, a development of 66 affordable rental units serving families making 60% or under of the median income. The State receives an annual base rent of \$280 per unit for this development (\$18,480 total). The Townhouses were developed in partnership with Avesta Housing, now the owner of the project. The Townhouses are currently fully occupied.



Lot 2 - Brickhill Heights

Lot 2 consists of 30 additional units of affordable rental housing in a single building, known as Brickhill Heights. The Heights is nearing construction completion and units are scheduled to be occupied in late spring/early summer 2008. The State will also receive an annual base rent of \$280 per unit for this development (\$8,400 total).

Lot 3 - The Castle

Lot 3 is The Castle, the former administration building, now 52,000 square feet of renovated office space. Currently 26,000 feet are rented; Case Professional and Portland Urologic Associates are the tenants. The project is considered a great success in that it is preserved an important historic building that was generally believed to be beyond saving. It has won several awards and recognition for adaptive reuse. The Castle was developed and is owned by Castlebrook LLC, a partnership of Richard Berman and Dirk Thomas.



Lot 4 - Riverbrook Office Site

Lot 4 has received permitting approvals from the City of South Portland for a 76,000 square foot office building. Currently there are several opportunities to land major anchor tenants at the site in a LEED-certified building which may be up to 100,000 square feet in size. As a part of this, negotiations are also progressing with the City to build a second access road to Brickhill off Western Avenue. Lot 4 will be developed by Riverbrook Properties LLC, a partnership of Richard Berman, Dirk Thomas, and Kevin Bunker.



Lot 5 - Youth Alternatives

Lot 5 was developed by Youth Alternatives, a non-profit serving youth at risk and their families. The project is a renovation of a historic barn, designed by John Calvin Stevens, into a family center and the development of 25,000 square feet of new office space to house all staff functions.



Lot 6 - Cottages at Brickhill

Lot 6 consists of 43 additional units of affordable rental housing in 5 renovated historic cottages, known as the Cottages. The Cottages are completed and fully occupied. The State will also receive an annual base rent of \$280 per unit for this development (\$12,040 total). The Cottages were developed in partnership with Avesta Housing, now the owner of the project. The Cottages are currently fully occupied.

Lot 7 - Heron Cove Condominiums

Lot 7 is the one portion of Brickhill that was sold to Long Creek Redevelopment rather than leased from the State. Heron Cove LLC was originally a partnership of Richard Berman and Jim Hatch but is now wholly owned by Richard Berman. Heron Cove has been permitted for 79 condominium units, of which 30% were to be affordable to low and moderate income buyers earning from 80% up to 125% of the area median income. Currently, 17 units have been built.



Lot 8 - Jordan Park

Lot 8 is Jordan Park, a privately owned public park for the benefit of Brickhill residences and businesses. On September 30, 2007, Jordan Park was the site of Long Creek Family Day, an event put on by the South Portland Land Trust and co-sponsored by LL Bean and Developers Collaborative, among others. The event included a ribbon cutting at the new Clark's Pond Trail, a family barbecue and events for children, fly casting and kayak demonstrations courtesy of LL Bean, and a tour of the historic Castle.

In 2000, the State of Maine began to communicate with the City of South Portland on ways to utilize property that had formerly been occupied by the Maine Youth Center in South Portland. Youth Center facilities were being consolidated in a new building that only occupied a fraction of the former Youth Center campus. The property available for redevelopment was roughly triangular, bounded by the Portland Jetport to the north, Westbrook Street on the west, and Long Creek to the southeast. The property includes the former administration building, called the Castle, and five "cottages" that were used as dormitory style housing. The cottages were designed by the famed architect John Calvin Stevens in the mid-1800's and are included in the National Registry of Historic Houses.

Elaine Clark, as Director of the Bureau of General Services (BGS), heads the state bureau with legislative authority to sell or lease state properties that are no longer serving state functions. Her goals were to make this land available for redevelopment, to provide income to the State, and be of use to the City of South Portland. She wanted to keep the land in state ownership, because it was such a great location and the state may someday wish to expand the new Youth Center that currently occupies but a small portion of the property.

Clark formed a steering committee that included officials from South Portland, including the city manager, Jeffery Jordan, as well as the South Portland legislative delegation and representatives from the City of Portland, the Maine Department of Corrections, two state social service agencies, Greater Portland Landmarks, and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. Clark and the steering committee spoke with several developers on how best to proceed with evaluating options for redevelopment.

After speaking with Richard Berman, Clark decided that a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) would be preferable to a Request for Proposal (RFP). The RFQ would allow BGS to evaluate developers based on their resources and their past projects, rather than on their specific plans for the Youth Center property.

Several vendors responded to the RFQ, and proposals included such visions as a hotel and new commercial center for the property. Berman responded to the RFQ by listing the constraints on development for the property, and along with community process consultant Ed Suslovik and architect Winton Scott, offered the commitment to develop the property in a way consistent with the desires of the people of South Portland. Rather than develop and present a specific plan for the property, Berman's approach was to show the state that it had the opportunity to meet community needs by working with him. He and Suslovik developed a public participation plan to get the input they would use for crafting a development plan for the property. Berman won the contract for a 50-year lease on the property from the state based on this approach and set to work.

Berman's team and the steering committee brought together community leaders, residents, and neighbors to participate in the planning process. Suslovik designed a four-month long process that included three public meetings with stakeholders to develop a master plan for the property. Stakeholders included people from the neighboring parts of the city, city councilors, and the parents of students who attended a school nearby. Out of these meetings came "values" for developing the property in such a way as to incorporate affordable rental housing, affordable ownership options, mixed use to include commercial and business development as well as residential, and public access to the Fore River. A plan was then created that included all of these elements.

The plan for redevelopment called for the new construction of 114 affordable rental townhouse units that would be equally divided between two and three bedroom units; renovation of the brick cottages into 44 units of affordable rental housing, with a mix of one, two, and three bedroom units; and construction of 88 market-price condominium units with a mix of one, two, and three bedroom units. A new office building and the renovation of the Castle to office space are the commercial pieces of Brick Hill. Finally, provisions for public access and open space include a public square and a trail to a public dock on Long Creek.

The first major challenge to development arose in the fall of 2002 when Jeffrey Jordan recommended that Berman go to the South Portland City Council to ask that they apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The grant would be in the amount of \$400,000 for infrastructure construction within the boundaries of the Brick Hill development. The City Council declined to apply for the money, however. Berman and Clark were surprised by the decision, based on the assurances and encouragement from Jordan, and viewed this initially as a lack of support for and commitment to the project from the City. Berman was disappointed because he had done run several meetings to involve the community and designed the project to meet the wishes of those in attendance. Councilor Linda Boudreau pointed out, however, that there were issues and concerns from people in *other* parts of the city who had not had an opportunity to provide input and suggestions. Councilor Boudreau suggested that Berman become “his own advocate” and work with people from all over the city, not just those in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development.

As a result, Berman took two important actions. First, he contacted each member of the City Council and spoke with them about their thoughts and concerns for the kind of development he was proposing for Brick Hill. Second, Berman decided that it was not sufficient just to have community input at the beginning of the project, and began a more intensive series of meetings with a wider circle of South Portland residents. Berman worked to get community members from around the city on board with the project, by meeting with all organized neighborhood associations in the city. These two actions served to educate and build awareness at a grassroots citizen level, at the same time as a parallel process was taking place with policy makers in city government.

To gain the trust and support of South Portland residents, Berman focused on what he called “community and communion”. The communion was “breaking bread together” and having food at every meeting and workshop his group ran regarding the Brick Hill project. He wanted to make this gesture of sharing to help people open up with their concerns about the project. He built community by making the decision to open his books on the project. This financial transparency was coupled with his concept of financial partnership with the city and state. After developer fees and a return on investment of 25%, any additional profits are to be split equally between Berman, the City of South Portland, and the State of Maine. Berman wanted to “make them partners,” to reduce his risk by encouraging the City and State take active roles in ensuring the success of the development.

The second major challenge the project faced came in the State legislature in the spring of 2003. As part of the financing package, Berman was counting on funding from federal and state sources, in addition to private investment. Berman had some issues with

financing because of his desire to include housing that would be sold to residents, in addition to the rental units. Financing for this could be secured from the Maine State Housing Authority only on a lease of at least 90 years – as opposed to the 50-year lease Berman had obtained from the state. Berman went back to Clark with a request to make the lease 90 years, but found that BGS has no the authority to grant leases for more than 50 years. To extend the term of the lease, legislative approval was required.

There was some strong political resistance to the project in the legislature, however, stemming from a South Portland representative with political ties to the owner of a construction firm. The contractor was fearful that his company would not be chosen for work on this specific project, and therefore did not want to see the Brick Hill project go forward. Clark and a legislative member of the steering committee for the Brick Hill project spent a weekend speaking with this representative to gain his (and his Party's) support for it. The 90-year lease for Brick Hill came to the floor of the House of Representatives, facing a fight, but was eventually approved.

Traffic was also a concern to the South Portland Planning Department and to one city councilor, in particular. Throughout the public participation process, increased traffic congestion was not so important a concern to residents as it was to the Planning Department and the city councilor, who lived near the Brick Hill site. The project was broken into phases that are tied to traffic improvements. Phase 1, scheduled for completion in June of 2005, includes 66 rental townhouse units under the low-income tax credit program, and is tied to the completion of a traffic study. Phase 2 will involve the conversion of the five existing cottages into 44 rental units, and is tied to synchronizing traffic lights and adding cameras to control the lights when traffic backups are detected.

Phase 3 is tied to improvements of Exit 3 on I-295. Berman also agreed to build a new road that would run along the southern side of the Jetport to connect Westbrook Street with Western Avenue. This will change Westbrook Street from a dead-end street and allow for more efficient METRO bus service to Brick Hill and the Red Bank neighborhoods.

As a result of the early successes and the good will that Berman's transparency engendered, the Brick Hill project began to gain momentum. This momentum helped the project succeed as other challenges arose, and represents a shift in the "ownership" of the Brick Hill project. The City of South Portland became vested in the success of Brick Hill, and began to take on the role of partner in the project with Berman and his team. As such, the city became more proactive role in advancing the cause of Brick Hill. Several examples result from the mutual ownership brought about by building trust and cooperation between the developer and the city.

In February 2003, the city council approved zoning amendments to establish a contract zone for the Brick Hill development. The amendment states that at least 50% of the residential units need to be affordable to families earning 80% the median household income. This was an important step because Brick Hill represented South Portland's largest residential development since the 1940's, when housing was quickly built to support the growing workforce at the city's shipyards during World War II.

In early 2004, funding that Berman had been counting on from the federal government for tax credits on affordable housing were cut. This left a hole in the balance sheet that loomed large as ground breaking approached. Berman went to the City Council to ask for tax increment financing (TIF) for the project. A TIF is a form of

financial assistance to a project that allows funds that would have otherwise been paid in taxes to the municipality to be reinvested into the project itself. It is a common economic development tool in commercial development, but new to housing projects in Maine. Indeed, it was so new that it only became a legal option in the spring of 2003, when the state legislature had passed a bill that allowed for affordable housing TIF's. At the City Council meeting where the housing TIF for Brick Hill was being discussed, there was overwhelming public support as citizens spoke on behalf of granting the TIF. In May 2004, South Portland became the first Maine city to grant a TIF district for an affordable housing project.

Sunday, August 14, 2005

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a friend](#)

Extreme makeover begins at old
MYC

By MARK PETERS, Portland Press
Herald Writer

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[BRICKHILL AT A
GLANCE](#)


SOUTH PORTLAND —

Portland has the Eastern and Western promenades. But its neighbor across the Fore River may have an answer to these well-known spots. Call it the Southern Promenade, a nickname developer Richard Berman gave to what construction crews are building at the former Maine Youth Center in South Portland.


Three years after the state transferred residents of MYC to the Long Creek Youth Development Center, the former facility for troubled youths is busy starting a new life.

Families are moving into townhouses. Workers are turning the former administration building into offices. And the historic cottages, which the state once used to hold delinquent teenagers, will be apartments by next spring.

Berman sees redemption in the multi-million dollar redevelopment of a place Amnesty International once criticized for its conditions.

 Staff photo by Pouya Dianat

Staff photo by Pouya Dianat
Developer Richard Berman stands in front of the Arthur R. Gould School at the former Maine Youth Center. "There has been a stigma associated with this," Berman says of MYC. "I think we're changing it."

 Staff photo by Pouya Dianat

Staff photo by Pouya Dianat
A crew works on the roof of the former Maine Youth Center's administration building, known as "The Castle." A group already has signed a lease for space inside.

All 145 apartments at Brickhill, the formal name for the project, must be affordable. The units are aimed at filling a gap in Greater Portland between low-income housing and market-rate apartments. Offices, condominiums, parks and trails, and a new home for Youth Alternatives, a non-profit agency, will go around the housing.

Berman envisions the 58-acre community of people working, playing and raising families. As he walked the site last week, two boys played catch amid the 66 new townhouses. A girl on a scooter whizzed by.

"There has been a stigma associated with this. I think we're changing it," said Berman, with a wide-brim hat on his head and a hard hat in his hand.


PIECE BY PIECE

To lift the past, the red-brick buildings of the former center have been gutted to their exterior walls - some of which are five bricks thick. Construction workers now are rebuilding the insides so the historic buildings can support modern living. From below, drivers on Interstate 295 can see the hollow cottages, with gaping holes cut into some of their roofs.

"They are a different beast," said Rick Bergeron, pre-construction services manager for Wright-Ryan, a Portland-based construction firm.

Wood paneling and the fade lines of a basketball court remain in the administrative building. Known as "The Castle," the 150-year-old, turreted building was a honeycomb of former renovations and neglect when construction began earlier this year.

The state made sure Berman would take on the cost of demolishing the administrative building after engineering reports predicted it

 Staff photo by Pouya Dianat

Staff photo by Pouya Dianat
Matthew Quimby, 4, zips around the Brickhill community's recently built condominiums. All 145 of the planned apartments in the development must be affordable housing units.

BRICKHILL AT A GLANCE

- Work completed: 66 townhouses.
- Under way: 43 apartments in cottages, redevelopment of administration building into office space.
- Still to come: 79 condominiums, 36 townhouses, new office building, redevelopment of barn and new building for Youth Alternatives.

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would be costly and difficult to rehab. But the risk Berman took is likely to pay off. Portland Urologic Associates signed a lease for part of the building and a lease is in the works for the remaining space.

The whole project fits many of the buzzwords in the building. Berman called it smart growth, green construction, mixed-use development and a model for community process. He talked about residents walking from their apartments to work at stores, hotels and restaurants in the nearby Maine Mall area. And he laughed when suggesting how some residents could commute to work in Portland by kayak once a dock on Long Creek is finished.

WHAT THEY WANTED

Berman got the rights to redevelop the youth center through a proposal process, which the state Department of Financial and Administrative Services conducted in 2002. While some developers came forward with detailed plans, Berman proposed asking the community what it wanted.

"If they wanted a Wal-Mart, I would have given them a Wal-Mart," he said.

A series of community meetings highlighted a need for affordable housing. Statistics from the Maine State Housing Authority show Cumberland County could use as many as 4,000 more affordable housing units. This need for housing comes at a time when rents and home prices are climbing. For example, the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment has climbed in the last four years from \$837 to \$986.

"I think the use in that area is very timely and very needed," said state Rep. Kevin Glynn, R-South Portland, a veteran lawmaker whose district includes the former youth center.

Glynn said the 500 apartments that make up the World War II-circa Redbank housing development once were perfectly priced for working class families just starting out. But in recent years, the rents have become less affordable..

The Brickhill project looks to answer a demand for the families Glynn described. The income requirement falls between low-income and home ownership.

Samantha Smith and her three children recently moved into one of the new townhouses. What drew the 26-year-old waitress and restaurant manager-in-training was the chance to have three bedrooms, a quiet neighborhood and her sister next door.

Smith was living in an apartment complex nearby, but the heating costs in the winter were high and she didn't like how teenagers hung out by the complex's entrance when she came home late at night. And Smith only found that apartment after living with family and looking for six months.

"Nothing," Smith said, describing the housing stock for a single mother of three in the Portland area.

PROJECTED COSTS

All of the apartments at Brickhill will rent to families making 50 to 60 percent of the median income in Cumberland County, which for a family of four is between \$32,200 and \$38,640. Those living in this income range would pay between \$725 and \$870 for a two-bedroom apartment and \$837 and \$1,005 for a three-bedroom place.

"Even within that window, the market is quite sufficient to warrant this project and many more," said Jay Waterman, director of development for Avesta Housing, a non-profit housing organization that will manage and own the apartments at Brickhill.

Housing officials say Berman's project is unique. Only a handful of private developers are willing to develop affordable housing. There is a risk in putting hundreds of thousands of dollars into a project that may never win approval or government aid. Getting federal funding also can be complicated and time consuming.

But Rick Churchill, a multifamily loan officer for the Maine State Housing Authority, said developers can make money off these projects.

The South Portland project includes an estimated \$10 million of government money through federal tax credits. Berman also got low-interest loans, grants and the state's first housing tax increment financing for Brickhill. The so-called TIF is a local property tax abatement to help pay for the project.

Churchill added: "There are lot easier ways to make money."

And even with all his approvals in place, Berman still could face some challenges ahead. His local approvals for the project are contingent on certain road projects getting done on Exit 3 off I-295 and a new road along the outskirts of the airport, which will relieve traffic pressure onto Western Avenue.

The work at Brickhill is moving forward, but the government projects proceed at a slower pace. This could leave Berman waiting to rent some of his units until the road projects catch up, said Stephen Puleo, community planner for South Portland.

Berman is "probably twice as fast as we anticipated," Puleo said.
"We are struggling to keep up with the pace of it."

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