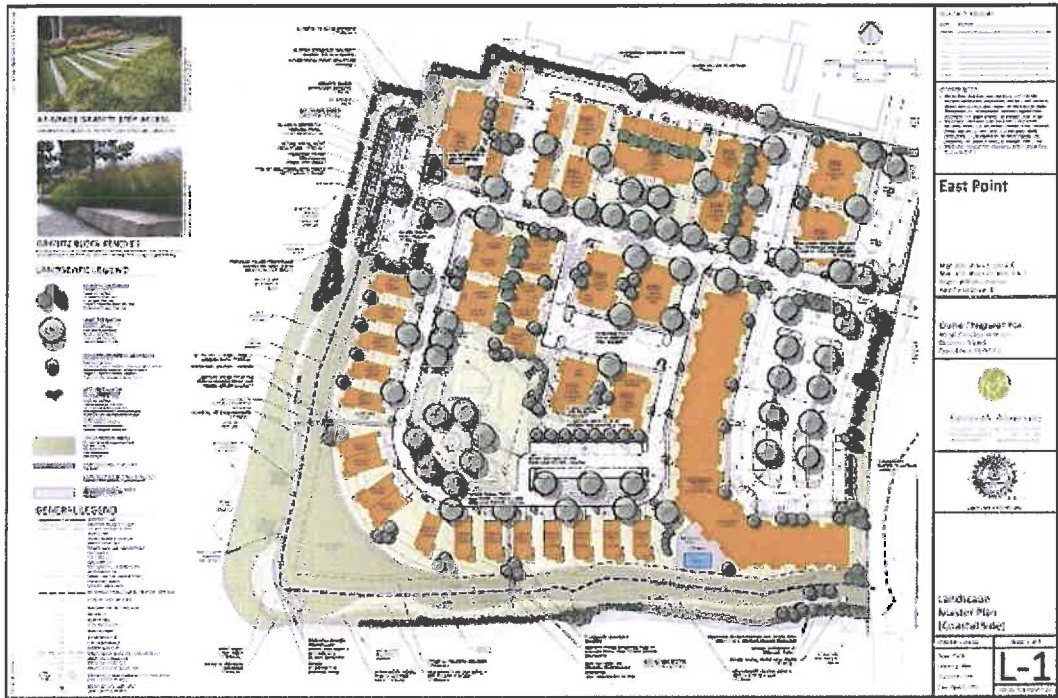


East Providence, Churchill & Banks break ground on \$120M East Point project

By **Marc Larocque** - 11/10/2022



NOBLE DEVELOPMENT LLC and East Providence are moving ahead with plans to redevelop a 27-acre site at 300 Bourne Ave. into a 392-unit residential development on the waterfront after Noble Development bought the property for \$4 million. / COURTESY CITY OF EAST PROVIDENCE

EAST PROVIDENCE – Churchill & Banks Co. subsidiary Noble Development LLC, along with city officials, recently broke ground on the construction of a \$120 million, 392-unit waterfront residential development at the former site of Washburn Wire and the Ocean State Steel Co.

The 27-acre site at 300 Bourne Ave. is a polluted brownfield site that was left in “environmental ruins” when it was placed in a court-ordered receivership amid a legal dispute between the city and former owners GeoNova Development Co. in 2009, according to a statement from the office of Mayor Roberto DaSilva.

A special master’s deed filed in late October with the city clerk shows that Noble Development paid \$4 million for the land.

Special Master Mark Russo, attorney from law firm Ferrucci Russo Dorsey PC, was appointed by R.I. Superior Court to oversee the sale of the property.

"This went through a number of twists and turns to get to this point," said Russo, who credited the mayor for supporting the process.

Noble Development now plans to develop the site, which was remediated by the city, into 392 single- and multifamily housing units, including 39 age-restricted affordable homes.

With a groundbreaking celebrated recently at the site, construction is expected to last for several years, starting with what's known as the Seekonk River parcel during phase 1, before a phase 2 is planned to start in about two years at the Omega Pond parcel, according to the East Providence Waterfront Commission.

"This is a big win for our city," DaSilva said. "This development will help retain and attract residents to our community, which will strengthen our local economy."

Noble Development, which is led by Richard Baccari II, of Churchill & Banks, is working with Northeast Engineers on civil design, Union Studios on architectural design and Kevin Alverson on landscape design.

"Thousands of homes need to be built in Rhode Island to keep pace with the demand," Baccari said. "The reuse and repurpose of vacant, industrial land for residential development is smart growth policy that will help Rhode Island's future."

DaSilva's office said the former industrial area will feature 6 acres of public access to the waterfront, providing an accessible kayak launch and public access along Omega Pond and the Seekonk River, as part of the Urban Coastal Greenway.

"It has been a long road to arrive at this point today," said William Fazioli, chairperson of the East Providence Waterfront Commission, a quasi-public organization formed in 2004 to facilitate the redevelopment of the waterfront. "Fortunately, we have city leaders and development partners who share

this approach and who know how to transform potential into reality.”

DaSilva said the \$4 million deal freed up \$1.6 million in Community Development Block Grant funds that the city was planning to spend at the site.

Marc Larocque is a PBN contributing writer.