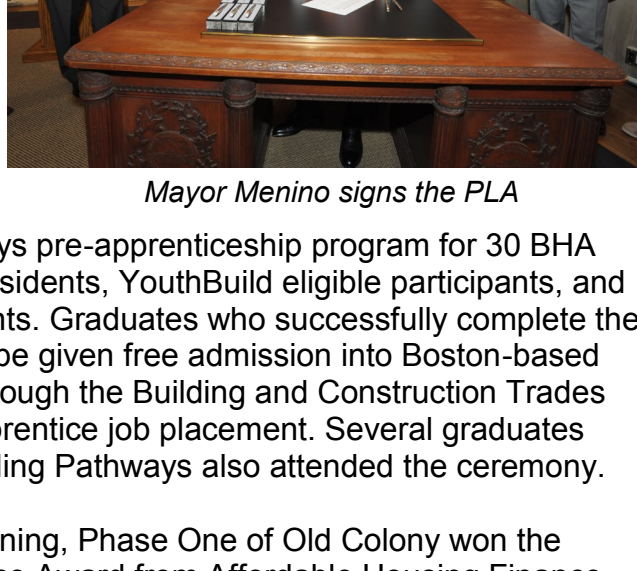




## BHA Signs PLA for Old Colony Phase Two *Redeveloped South Boston site wins “Best Urban Project” Award*

BHA Administrator Bill McGonagle recently met with Mayor Menino, Beacon Communities President Pam Goodman, and Building and Construction Trades Council President Martin Walsh to sign a project labor agreement for a \$64 million construction contract to redevelop Phase Two of Old Colony.

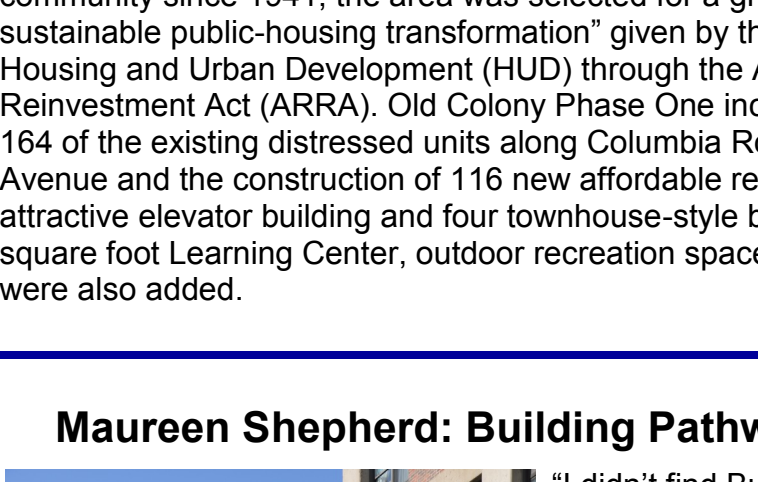


*Mayor Menino signs the PLA*

The agreement also includes funding for the Building Pathways pre-apprenticeship program for 30 BHA public housing and Section 8 residents, YouthBuild eligible participants, and very low-income Boston residents. Graduates who successfully complete the pre-apprenticeship training will be given free admission into Boston-based apprenticeship opportunities through the Building and Construction Trades Council as well as first year apprentice job placement. Several graduates from the first two cycles of Building Pathways also attended the ceremony.

A mere month after the PLA signing, Phase One of Old Colony won the prestigious 2012 Readers' choice Award from Affordable Housing Finance magazine.

The Best Urban Project award will be presented in November to the Boston Housing Authority (BHA), Beacon Communities Development LLC and the architecture firm The Architectural Team, Inc. Phase One has been promoted as a model for extensive and sustainable redevelopment of an aging public housing community.



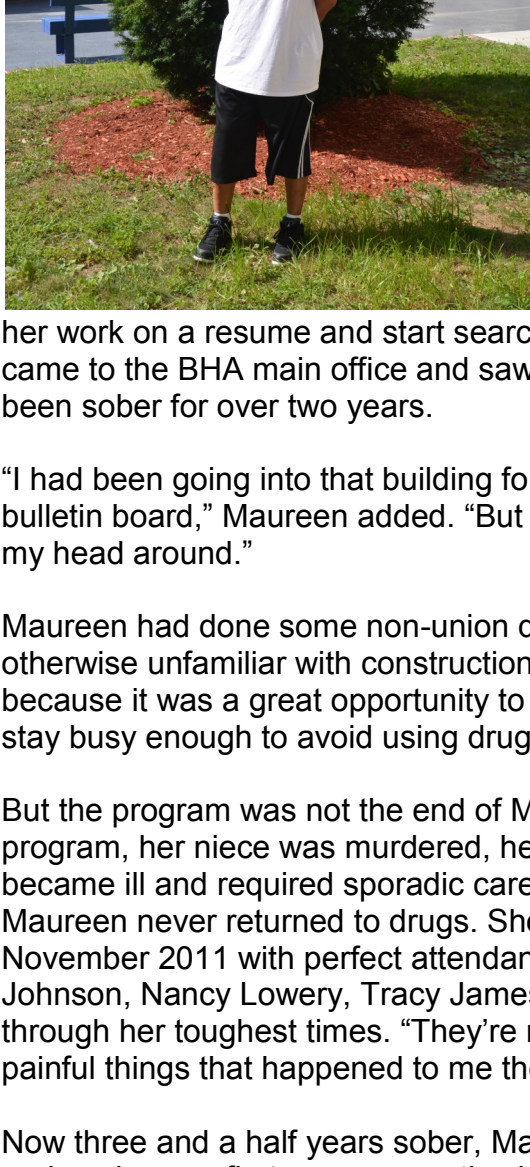
*Bill McGonagle with City Councilor Bill Linehan, Pam Goodman (President, Beacon Communities), Mercedes Farrando (Beacon Concepts) and Ed Bradford (The Architectural Team)*

“We are very proud that Old Colony has been recognized as a forerunner of future public housing redevelopment projects,” said BHA Administrator Bill McGonagle. “This award shows that affordable housing can also be green, healthy sustainable and attractive.”

Chosen from among approximately 140 nominated projects from around the

country, Phase One of Old Colony represents the reinvention of formerly distressed public housing buildings on a 16-acre site. A low-income community since 1941, the area was selected for a grant for “environmentally sustainable public-housing transformation” given by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Old Colony Phase One included the demolition of 164 of the existing distressed units along Columbia Road and Old Colony Avenue and the construction of 116 new affordable rental units in an attractive elevator building and four townhouse-style buildings. A 10,000 square foot Learning Center, outdoor recreation space and two new streets were also added.

## Maureen Shepherd: Building Pathways graduate



“I didn’t find Building Pathways,” said Maureen Shepherd. “It’s like it found me.”

At the time of her enrollment in the program, Maureen was training to be a drug counselor. She wanted to help others going through what she had gone through when she was trapped in the cycle of drug addiction. As an addict, Maureen had experienced the harshest of a life on the streets, and violence was a regular occurrence. “I had experienced the spiritual death that I hear people talk about, that separation from God,” Maureen said of the last time she used drugs. “But I had a little spark of hope in me. I turned to God and I didn’t look back.” Maureen graduated from several drug treatment programs and joined the Moving Ahead Program which helped

her work on a resume and start searching for jobs. On the day Maureen came to the BHA main office and saw a flyer for Building Pathways, she had been sober for over two years.

“I had been going into that building for years, and I had never looked at the bulletin board,” Maureen added. “But that day it was like something turned my head around.”

Maureen had done some non-union demolition work years before, but was otherwise unfamiliar with construction. Building Pathways stood out to her because it was a great opportunity to start a career, make some money and stay busy enough to avoid using drugs again.

But the program was not the end of Maureen’s troubles. During the 7-week program, her niece was murdered, her sister was dying and her mother became ill and required sporadic care. Yet through those tribulations, Maureen never returned to drugs. She graduated from Building Pathways in November 2011 with perfect attendance. She credits her friends Gloria Johnson, Nancy Lowery, Tracy James and Monique Dalton for helping her through her toughest times. “They’re my support, and through all those painful things that happened to me they were there for me,” Maureen said.

Now three and a half years sober, Maureen is part of the Laborers Local 22 and works as a first-year apprentice laborer for Zorpo Construction. She is currently working nights on the Mass Pike off-ramp at the Prudential Center. She no longer smokes cigarettes, takes care of her ailing mother and spends time with her family, including her teenage stepson. With the money she received after graduating from Building Pathways, she was even able to buy a used car. “I would recommend Building Pathways to anybody,” said Maureen. “It’s the best thing that ever happened to me. To be a 51-year-old laborer, after doing what I did to my body – it’s a miracle.”

Maureen encourages others, especially women, to join Building Pathways. She recently called a friend to admonish her for not signing up yet. “Why are you procrastinating?” she asked. “Don’t you want a career?”

## BHA Receives \$300,000 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant

The BHA is one of 17 agencies from across the U.S. recently awarded a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The \$300,000 grant will allow the BHA to craft a comprehensive, community-driven plan to revitalize the Whittier Street development in Roxbury.



*Whittier Street Apartments*

“We’re excited to have this opportunity to revitalize the Whittier Street development and surrounding community,” said Mayor Thomas M. Menino. “It’s through partnerships like these that we really change and improve people’s lives.”

HUD’s [Choice Neighborhoods Initiative](#) promotes a comprehensive approach to transforming distressed areas of concentrated poverty into viable and sustainable mixed-income neighborhoods. Building on the successes of HUD’s HOPE VI Program, Choice Neighborhoods links housing improvements with necessary services for the people who live there – including schools, public transit and employment opportunities.

“This is the first step toward creating a new community for the residents of the Whittier Street neighborhood,” said BHA Administrator Bill McGonagle. “We thank HUD for this wonderful opportunity and are ready to get to work.”

## Rolling it Forward at Lenox-Camden



Dozens of kids at Lenox-Camden have extra wide smiles thanks to a donation of 65 bicycles from Mayor Menino’s Boston Bikes program. Boston Bikes and International Bicycle Centers partnered with the Boston Housing Authority to give away the bicycles as part of the Roll it Forward program.

Children ages 4-7 at the South End development attended the bike giveaway on October 16th, where they received a helmet and bicycle. There was also a “bike rodeo” to learn safe bike handling skills.

“It’s important that children from all neighborhoods can benefit from our city bicycling programs,” said Mayor Menino. “Biking is a great way for children to stay healthy and have fun, and Roll It Forward makes that possible.”

The Roll it Forward program, an initiative of Boston Bikes, was started in collaboration with the Boston Public Health Commission in 2010 with the goal of distributing 1,000 bicycles to low-income Boston residents in order to make cycling a more accessible transportation option and promote a healthy lifestyle. To date, the program has distributed over 1,400 bicycles to children, teens, adults, and seniors across all Boston neighborhoods including BHA developments like Franklin Field in Dorchester and Orient Heights in East Boston.

“The BHA is excited to receive more bicycles through Roll It Forward,” said BHA Administrator Bill McGonagle. “The City has taken the initiative to teach low-income children the many positive outcomes of cycling.”

Roll it Forward collects used bicycles of all sizes through designated drop off centers in Greater Boston and in partnership with area bike shops. Mechanics refurbish the bikes to ensure they are in good working order. Bikes are then distributed in partnership with organizations such as the Boston Housing Authority, Artists for Humanity, Franklin Park Coalition, LIFT Boston, Boston Public Schools, and area health centers – to name only a few. Each recipient receives a bike, helmet, and lock and participates in a safety workshop. International Bicycle Centers has been a longtime supporter and partner of Mayor Menino’s Boston Bikes, recently donating 107 bicycles, bringing the total donated by International Bicycle Center to nearly 800 bicycles over the last two years.



“Our goal is to increase access to bikes by supporting Boston Bikes through donation bikes received as part of our youth bike trade up program,” says Harold Knochin, owner of International Bicycle Centers.

Anyone with a bicycle they no longer need can drop it off at one of many locations and be eligible to receive a free t-shirt or jersey. Learn more at [www.bostonbikes.org](http://www.bostonbikes.org).

## Service Day at Franklin Field



In September, the Big Sister Association and Blue Cross Blue Shield organized a community service day at Franklin Field in Dorchester.

Volunteers painted inside and out, set up the community room, did landscaping and built bookcases and shelves. Thanks to all who volunteered!

