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**PLANNING OFFICE FOR URBAN AFFAIRS AND
FENWAY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION ADVANCE TOWARD PRESERVING
OUR LADY’S GUILD HOUSE**

*Partnership pushes forward to make permanently affordable housing
in the Fenway*

BOSTON—March 23, 2023

Two non-profit Boston-based affordable housing developers, the Planning Office for Urban Affairs (the Planning Office) and Fenway Community Development Corporation (Fenway CDC), have signed an option agreement with Our Lady’s Guild House (OLGH), a long-time residential property for women located at 20 Charlesgate West, to purchase the property and preserve the building for permanent affordable housing in the Fenway neighborhood. The decision of the current owners, Our Lady’s Guild House, Inc., to sell the property provides an opportunity for Fenway CDC and the Planning Office to work with the City of Boston to preserve affordable homes in the Fenway neighborhood of Boston.

With the support of the City’s Mayor’s Office of Housing, the Planning Office and Fenway CDC plan to redevelop the property as 100% permanent affordable housing and have committed to preserving the tenancies of long-term residents. They also plan to invest significantly in rehabilitating and renovating the OLGH property to create housing that is welcoming, inclusive, universally accessible, energy-efficient, supportive of healthy living, and rich in shared amenity spaces for residents.

Located just outside of Kenmore Square in the Fenway, Our Lady's Guild House is a 140-unit single resident occupancy-style residential building. In 1946, the Archdiocese of Boston purchased the 20 Charlesgate West property at the urging of female parishioners for the purpose of providing affordably priced housing for women in Boston; following the purchase, Archbishop Richard Cushing created a Massachusetts charity, now known as Our Lady's Guild House, Inc. to own the property and to fulfill its charitable mission. Since 1947, OLGH has provided safe, affordably-priced housing for female Boston residents. In recent years, OLGH has been a home to many students, as well as long-term residents who have resided in the building for decades. During its history, OLGH has received significant operational support from the Daughters of Mary of the Immaculate Conception, a New Britain, Connecticut-based religious order.

"Affordable housing is crucial to building strong and equitable communities, and the Planning Office for Urban Affairs and Fenway Community Development Corporation are taking an important step in preserving and expanding access to affordable housing in the Fenway neighborhood," said Sheila Dillon, Chief of Housing. "Our Lady's Guild House is a unique property that has for decades been a home for low-income residents. This acquisition allows the property to continue to be an asset to the Fenway neighborhood and serve the community there. We are glad that the City of Boston, with these partners, is able to continue our work towards the goal of ensuring that everyone has access to safe and affordable housing. This initiative is a beacon of hope for the future of affordable housing in Boston and a reminder of the power of collaboration in creating lasting change."

"We are delighted to have this opportunity to increase the amount of quality affordable housing available in the Fenway. Fenway CDC has a long history of advocating for and working with Fenway residents to create affordable housing. We look forward to working with the City of Boston, the Commonwealth and mission-aligned quasi-public entities, banks, and investors to make this project a reality," said Leah Camhi, Executive Director of the Fenway CDC.

"We are grateful that Our Lady's Guild House has been willing to work with us in the acquisition of the property and its preservation as an important affordable housing resource in the City. This acquisition aligns with our mission to respond to the urgent need for affordable housing in the City of Boston, and our moral obligation to ensure that everyone has a roof over their heads," said Bill Grogan, President of the Planning Office for Urban Affairs. "This work often gets done by creating partnerships, and we look forward to partnering with Fenway CDC and continuing our close relationship with the City to make this preservation a reality."

"From its inception, Our Lady's Guild House has been defined by its mission of creating stability and opportunity for women and students in Boston," said Mother Mary Janice Zduncyzk, Chair of the OLGH Board. "That spirit is inextricably linked to the building and its future use honors that legacy in a changing Boston marked by a growing housing gap. We know that the stewardship of the Planning Office and the Fenway CDC will renew this jewel for a bright future directed towards meeting a critical need for residents. We look forward to the evolution of 20 Charlesgate West."

The Planning Office and Fenway CDC are committed to preserving the homes of long-term residents who have lived at OLGH, along with maintaining shared amenity spaces that have been

a key component to the existing community. The Planning Office and Fenway CDC (operating within constraints from funding sources and applicable laws) will seek to create homes that are affordable, inclusive, accessible, healthy, and sustainable, and that continue to foster a sense of community that has existed at OLGH for decades.

Since OLGH is a public charity, the sale of the OLGH property is subject to the approval of the Massachusetts Attorney General and the Supreme Judicial Court.

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About the Planning Office for Urban Affairs, Inc. (the Planning Office)

The Planning Office for Urban Affairs, Inc. is a social justice ministry affiliated with the Archdiocese of Boston that creates vibrant communities through the development of high-quality affordable and mixed-income housing and economic development efforts. As a prominent regional non-profit developer and a leading diocesan housing development ministry for the Catholic Church in America, the Planning Office has completed over 3,000 units of affordable and mixed-income housing and has undertaken several neighborhood revitalization initiatives in Massachusetts.

About Fenway Community Development Corporation (Fenway CDC)

Fenway CDC is a 50-year-old neighborhood-based non-profit organization that works to preserve the Fenway as a vibrant and diverse neighborhood by developing affordable housing, providing programs that enrich lives, and strengthening community voices. Fenway CDC owns 400 affordable homes throughout the Fenway.

About Our Lady's Guild House, Inc.

Our Lady's Guild House, Inc. was established in 1947 and has administered the 20 Charlesgate West property since that time in keeping with its mission of promoting the religious, spiritual, social, and physical welfare of women.