

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

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NOVEMBER 2008

VOL. 16, NO. 12

WWW.HOUSINGFINANCE.COM

The Nation's Best

Broadway Crossing
Named Top Project





Transit-oriented and energy-efficient, Broadway Crossing has room to become even more sustainable by producing its own energy. The roof is wired for solar panels, and the developer is actively pursuing grant opportunities. (Photo by Tim Matsui)

BEST OVERALL PROJECT:

Broadway Crossing Serves Community

BY BENDIX ANDERSON

SEATTLE

In April 2007, a young married couple moved into Broadway Crossing after four years of living in motels and homeless shelters. Both Melissa Ellis and Dan Walker were recovering from methamphetamine addiction. Their son, Rowan, was just 2 months old.

By September 2007, they were both working again, Melissa as a nurse and Dan as a sign installer. And then in July 2008, the family moved into unsubsidized housing.

"There is no way we could have done it without Broadway Crossing," says Melissa, who along with Dan, still attends Narcotics Anonymous meetings to maintain sobriety.

Every day, Broadway Crossing helps people—and formerly homeless families like Dan and Melissa are just the beginning. On a busy corner downtown, this green building balances the needs of its residents, a demanding neighborhood, and the nation's largest pharmacy chain. AFFORDABLE HOUSING FINANCE readers have voted it as the overall winner in this year's Readers' Choice Awards.

Capitol Hill Housing developed 10,000 square feet of retail space for Walgreens Co. at Broadway Crossing in partnership with local retail developer S.E. Granger. The developer also built 44 affordable apartments above the store and 25 parking spaces on two levels underneath. Despite rising construction costs and all the different stakeholders that needed to approve the development, it

finished its building on budget and met its own goal to win a certification under the strict Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design silver standard for new construction created by the U.S. Green Building Council.

Walgreens has exact specifications for its stores, from the position of electrical outlets to the shape of the space, usually a

Broadway Crossing

Developer: Capitol Hill Housing

Architect: GGLO

Major Funders:

Enterprise Community Investment, Inc.

City of Seattle

Washington Department of Community,

Trade, & Economic Development

one-story building with surface parking and a drive-through window. The retailer had to redraw its standard plans when community activists demanded a taller building for the prominent corner—as well as the inclusion of affordable housing.

“Walgreens was forced to deal with a building that was not designed for their exclusive use,” says Betsy Hunter, Capitol Hill’s director of property development.

The Seattle-based affordable housing developer put itself between Walgreens and the neighborhood in a process that called for a constant give and take. For example, to please locals, Broadway Crossing includes awnings that protect pedestrians on the sidewalk from rain and large windows that allow them to see into the store. The typical Walgreens covers its windows with advertisements and has no awnings.

Walgreens also needed to be included in every decision that involved the store, so that it could replicate as much as possible its usual arrangement of displays and infrastructure.

Despite all the extra negotiations—“It was like pulling hair,” Hunter recalls—the developer finished Broadway Crossing on budget in March 2007, just two months later than planned, even after Capitol Hill had discovered contaminated earth from an old Chevron gas station on the site that needed to be removed.

Work began at the \$14 million project in the fall of 2005. The residents at Broadway Crossing are a mix of low-income tenants with full-time jobs but who earn no more than 60 percent of the area median income (AMI) and recently unemployed people and people living with AIDS who earn no more than 30 percent



Partners Jonathan Hall, senior associate with architectural firm GGLO, and Betsy Hunter, director of property development for Capitol Hill Housing, at Broadway Crossing.

of the AMI. The more disabled residents at the building should benefit from living among more stabilized residents in a location near transit and convenient to the offices and shops of downtown.

City officials are helping other mixed-use developers partner with their commercial tenants from the start of the development process, just as Capitol Hill did at Broadway Crossing.

“If you build the commercial space without knowing who it’s for, you limit your options,” explains Adrienne Quinn, the city’s director of housing.

Quinn hopes to help a broad range of uses share space together at Broadway Crossing, from national chain stores to community art centers to housing for families like Melissa and Dan. ■



Young married couple Melissa Ellis and Dan Walker and their son, Rowan, found the stability they needed to thrive at Broadway Crossing.

(Photos by Tim Matsui)