

Over the past 40 years, Boston-based WinnDevelopment has turned to a trusted partner in its legal counsel, Murtha Cullina LLP. In the last decade alone, the partnership has resulted in nearly 30 successful adaptive reuse efforts—one of which is the Livingston School in Albany, New York.

The property, which had sat vacant since 2007, now features 103 units of mixed-income housing for senior citizens, filling a vital role in the community.

“Schools make great adaptive reuse projects,” says Deirdre Robinson, Partner at Murtha Cullina. “Space is limited and the Northeast has beautiful old buildings, whether it’s a former mill or an old school. Deals arise from a combination of historic preservation and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, as adaptive reuse projects often cannot be accomplished without both. It is amazing to watch a boarded-up building be converted into beautiful housing—it’s just a great transformation.”

The Livingston School came with a number of challenges. Because the state of New York offers its own historic tax credit in addition to the federal credit, it was necessary for WinnDevelopment to pursue both to assure enough financing to move the effort forward. However, Livingston School was not registered as historic at the time.

“We found the school, believed it worked well and then found out it was not eligible for historic [tax] credits,” says Adam Stein, Project Manager for WinnDevelopment. “We needed help from Murtha Cullina to start with the National Park Service and register it. That took a year and a half, but we needed the credits. We had to address a number of financing hurdles before even starting construction.”

In the end, it all proved to be a worthy effort.

WORKING WELL TOGETHER

One reason the partnership has been so successful, according to both Robinson and Stein, is the teamwork between the two firms.

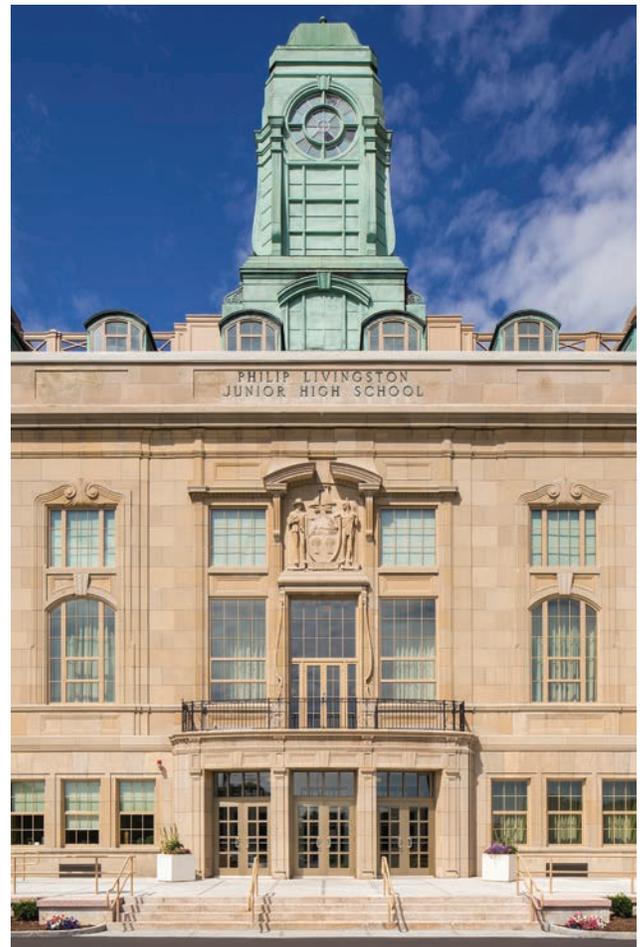
“Last year was one of our busiest years we’ve ever had between WinnDevelopment and Murtha Cullina,” Stein says. “It has been crazy, but good. We are expanding our footprint and our amazing team is evolving. WinnDevelopment and Murtha are very loyal to each other, just as we are to our other key consultants like our contractors and engineers.”

As WinnDevelopment and Murtha Cullina celebrate the latest success at the Livingston School, the two firms have plenty to look forward to on the horizon.

“There are currently 10 items on my board just with WinnDevelopment,” Robinson says. “There is a big project in Rochester, the Sibley Building, which is a historic rehabilitation effort combining new markets, historic and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits. There is another big project in Connecticut and two mills being renovated in Massachusetts. There are a lot of adaptive reuse projects and it will likely continue for a long time to come.” 

Assisting with Adaptive Reuse

Livingston School is the latest beneficiary of a partnership that spans decades



Murtha Cullina LLP

Partner :: Deirdre M. Robinson | Location :: Boston, Massachusetts