

# The Portland Daily Sun

THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2009

VOL. 1 NO. 87

PORTLAND, ME

PORTLAND'S DAILY NEWSPAPER

699-5801

**FREE**

## Green-themed apartments due to open on Danforth

### Units should open this summer

By **MATT DODGE**  
THE PORTLAND DAILY SUN

Equipped with a green theme and high-profile location in the Old Port, developer Szanton Company plans to open its newest apartment complex by mid-August.

The \$5.4 million dollar development at 53 Danforth St. will feature a mix of 43 one- and two-bedroom apartments, according to Szanton, which also maintains residences on Congress and State streets.

Thirty of the units are designated as "affordable" housing and set aside for renters earning under 60 percent of the state's median income. These apartments will be leased for \$771 for a one-bedroom residence, and \$924 for the two-bedroom layout. The other 13 units will be leased at market price, ranging from \$1,200 to \$1,500 a month, according to Dirigo Management, the

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Shoveling mortar, Eric Libby works on the brick exterior of apartments on Danforth Street Monday. (DAVID CARKHUFF PHOTO)

# Green units under construction

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property's leasing agent.

By embracing green building practices and sustainable technologies, the Szanton Company followed the Maine State Housing Authority green standard, which is designed to help insulate owners and occupants from fluctuations in fuel prices and operating costs, the builders reported.

These standards mandate a high level of insulation — leading the developer to opt for a new “blown-in” type of cellulose insulation made from shredded newsprint that not only traps heat, but also acts as a superior sound-deadener. Double-pane insulated windows and highly insulated roof are expected to keep heating costs down.

53 Danforth will also include Energy Star appliances and climate-control systems, a partially solar-powered hot water system, and a non-smoking policy designed to maintain the theme of clean, natural living, the company stated.

“We strive for a chemical-free environment,” said developer Nathan Szanton. This green theme extends to everything from low-chemical carpets and paint, a no-smoking policy and a \$40 monthly rent deduction for residents without cars.

Despite the economy, the builders have no worries about finding tenants.

“Portland is the only Maine city where more than 50 percent of the population rents instead of owns,” noted Szanton. This active rental market allows developers to create properties custom-catered to potential residents lifestyle, a factor that has served Szanton's company well in their other residential ventures.

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**— Developer Nathan Szanton**

we have no problem attracting tenants,” Szanton said. “We have a realistic shot of having all units spoken for by the time we open.”

“The location is also a huge green factor,” said Szanton.

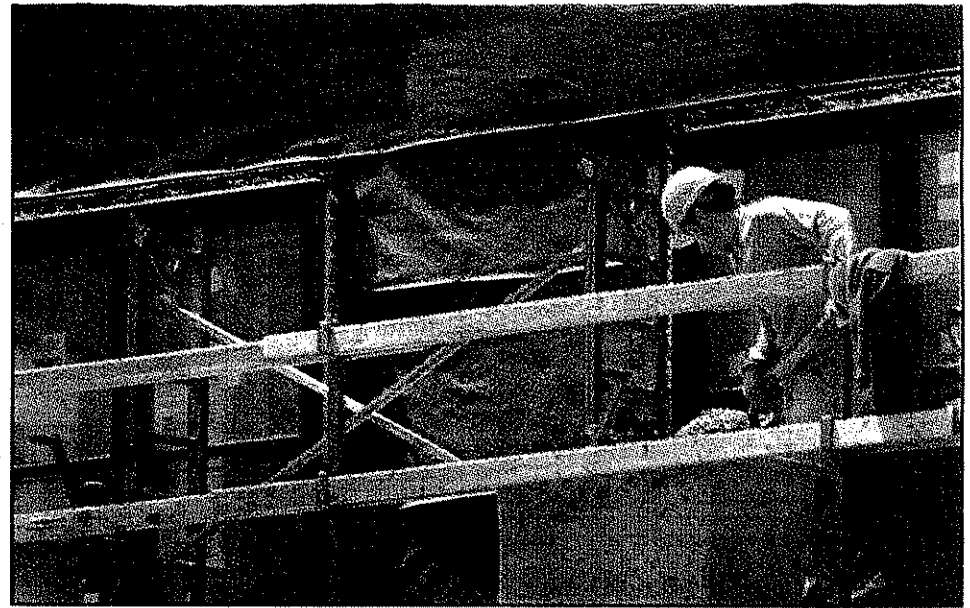
With its central locations two blocks east of the Old Port, three blocks below Congress, and a half a block from the city's bus line, residents have every reason to leave their vehicles in the building's covered parking lot and venture out on the city by bike or foot.

“It's got awesome views and easy access to arts, entertainment, museums and restaurants,” said Dirigo's Karen Walker.

Prospective renters have been appearing right on schedule, with Dirigo reporting two security deposits already received.

But just who is going to live there? Its prime downtown location makes an attractive prospect for the city's young professionals, its green features are sure to bring the ecologically minded renter, and its elevators and handicap access are designed to encourage the retired and elderly, the builder noted, but Szanton and Walker are not targeting just one demographic.

“We usually have real diversity in our buildings,” said Szanton. “I try to create a variety of income groups and ages.”



ABOVE: Eric Libby lays bricks at a new apartment complex on Danforth Street Monday. BELOW: Nick Leo moves bags of mortar into position at the construction site. (DAVID CARKHUFF PHOTOS)

