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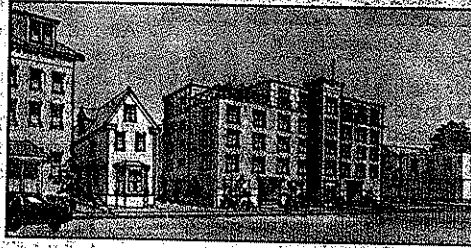
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Danforth St. picked for Y proxy housing

By Kate Bucklin

PORTLAND — The developers who earlier this year brokered a multi-party deal for sale of the former YWCA property on Spring Street hope to fulfill their part of the agreement by building a 43-unit apartment building on Danforth Street.

Nathan Szanton and Robert C.S. Monks last June reached a deal with the city, the state housing authority, the YWCA and the Portland Museum of Art that allowed the Y to sell its property to the neighboring



A rendering of the apartment building planned at 53 Danforth St. by developers Nathan Szanton and Robert C.S. Monks.

museum, dissolve and pay back a large portion of its debt.

The Y had announced it was closing in October, but had trouble selling its property because

it was bound by the state and the city's replacement housing ordinance to provide affordable housing on the peninsula.

Szanton agreed to take re-

sponsibility for replacing 33 units of affordable housing, the museum agreed to put \$900,000 in escrow with the Maine State Housing Authority for the project, while MSHA said it would add an additional \$1 million to the account. The deal got the YWCA and the museum out of having to build housing.

On Monday, Szanton said his company has reached an agreement to purchase 53 Danforth St. and planned to build a four-

See page 23

January 16, 2008

Housing

from page 1

story, 43-unit brick apartment building on the site. The property is at the northwest corner of Danforth and Maple streets and is now leased by New England Imports, a car repair business.

"We are very happy with the site," Szanton said. "It is close to a lot of things that I think my tenants will find appealing."

The property is in the center of the peninsula, he said, so waitresses, nurses aids, office workers and others who work downtown could easily get to work on

foot.

Of the 43 units, 30 will be available to people who earn less than 60 percent of the area median income. That means a single tenant would have to make no more than \$28,600 a year to get one of the affordable apartments, Szanton said.

Szanton and Monks have developed two other mixed-income rental projects on the peninsula in recent years. Casco Terrace on State Street opened in 2004, followed by Walker Terrace on Congress Street in 2006.

The David Lloyd-designed Danforth Street project will be similar to Casco Terrace and Walker Terrace in terms of

having ground-floor parking, but the new building will also have unique features, Szanton said, including a tower entrance and large windows throughout. He said tenants will have harbor views from the Danforth Street side of the building.

The Planning Board will get its first look at the project Feb. 12 during a workshop meeting. The project will need conditional rezoning from the city to accommodate a request for less parking than required and greater density.

A neighborhood meeting on Szanton's proposal is scheduled for Jan. 23 at 7 p.m. at Wright Ryan Construction, at 10 Danforth St.

Kate Bucklin can be reached at 781-3661 ext. 106 or kbucklin@theforecaster.net.