



MAYOR DAVID J. NARKEWICZ

City of Northampton
Office of the Mayor

210 Main Street Room 12
Northampton, MA 01060-3199
(413) 587-1249 Fax: (413) 587-1275
mayor@northamptonma.gov

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Mayor signs option to purchase Curran Roundhouse Building for Community Resilience Hub

NORTHAMPTON - Last night, Mayor David J. Narkewicz announced at a meeting of the City Council that he had executed an option to purchase the Curran Roundhouse Building located at 244 Main Street, behind Pulaski Park, for potential reuse as the Community Resilience Hub the City of Northampton has been developing for the last three years.

“Yesterday, we took several important steps toward realizing our vision for a Community Resilience Hub to connect our most at-risk Northampton neighbors to needed services and to be available for the kind of community disasters that could affect any of our residents,” shared Mayor Narkewicz, “Now, we have not only assembled the necessary funding, but we’ve identified a viable downtown site, secured a no-cost option on it, and can begin doing due diligence to determine whether the Curran Roundhouse Building can ultimately become the Northampton Community Resilience Hub.”

The idea for a Community Resilience Hub began in 2019 as a key recommendation from the report [*“A Downtown Northampton for Everyone: Residents, Visitors, Merchants, and People At-Risk,”*](#) produced by the Mayor’s Work Group on Panhandling. Planning was accelerated during the early spring of 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic laid bare the profound need for this critical resource. The Mayor’s Office and the Planning & Sustainability Department convened meetings with architects and local and regional stakeholders, identified Community Action of the Pioneer Valley as the city’s lead social service partner, and began work to secure funding sources and a location.

The Curran Roundhouse Building has 15,000 square feet of office space, on a 6,000 square ft. footprint. The location is immediately adjacent to the City Hall Campus and can be accessed from the Roundhouse parking lot, as well as from Pulaski Park via catwalk.

The location was chosen after an extensive real estate search and advertising for proposals for qualifying space. This option kicks off the due diligence phase. As with any large historic building with complex systems, there is no guarantee that the building will prove to be sufficient for the needs of a potential Community Resilience Hub, but the city is optimistic.

The Roundhouse dates to 1856, when it was built to convert and store gas made from coal. After long sitting idle, it was renovated in the late 1980s by owner Robert Curran's father, and recent tenants have included the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle "Words and Pictures" Museum, Disney Magazine, and most recently an outpatient drug treatment service provider.

The news came on the heels of an announced \$200,000 gift from Smith College for the Community Resilience Hub project earlier in the day, a final vote by the City Council late last evening to approve Mayor Narkewicz's recommended use of \$1,610,000 in cannabis mitigation funds for the project, and a previous \$445,000 allocation that the Mayor made of federal Community Development Block Grant funds. The city has now secured full funding for due diligence, purchase, and carrying costs.

The project will provide the additional benefit of creating 20 new public parking spaces during the day that had previously been reserved for Roundhouse tenants and opening the existing city-owned plaza behind the building to more extensive public use.



For more information, please visit the city's [Community Resilience Hub](#) page, or contact the Mayor's Office at 413-587-1249 or mayor@northamptonma.gov. Tax-deductible contributions to help coordinate the programming and improvements needed before the building can be used as a Community Resilience Hub can be sent to City of Northampton, % Planning & Sustainability, 210 Main St, Northampton, MA 01060.