

New Bedford Harbor Hotel officially opens its doors

Mayor Jon Mitchell joined City and state officials and representatives of the New Bedford Harbor Hotel to formally open the new hotel, a welcome addition to downtown New Bedford.

At a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Union Street hotel on Wednesday morning, Mayor Mitchell joined Tony Sapienza, president of the New Bedford Economic Development Council; MassDevelopment CEO Lauren Liss; Shiawee Yang, president of Columbus Group, LLC, who developed the hotel project; and Duane Schroeder, vice president of Waterford Hotel Group, LLC, the company managing the New Bedford Harbor Hotel, an Ascend Collection hotel by Choice Hotels.

The construction and redevelopment of the site began in Spring 2017, and an official groundbreaking ceremony was held last April for the project, and construction fully wrapped up in the last two weeks. It adds a second hotel to downtown New Bedford to better serve the demand posed by visitors to Greater New Bedford.

The boutique hotel project consisted of a complete exterior renovation and a full interior build-out of the 46,000-square-foot building in the heart of the downtown, located at the corner of Union and Pleasant streets. The New Bedford Harbor Hotel has 70 rooms, a 3,300-square-foot restaurant and bar (now open to the public as well as hotel guests), and a 5,100-square-foot banquet space. The restaurant employs just over 50 employees, 42 of them New Bedford residents.

The project was funded by a combination of private equity, as well as a TIF (tax increment financing) by the City of New Bedford and Commonwealth of Massachusetts to encourage

economic development; MassDevelopment provided loan guarantee for the project.

The New Bedford Economic Development Council facilitated the project by coordinating with all partners during site selection, design, permitting and construction, working with local and state agency partners throughout the project.

The City of New Bedford also provided significant infrastructure support to the hotel project during its concurrent roadwork and infrastructure improvements to Union Street, taking the operation of a hotel at the heart of the downtown into consideration during the design and planning of the Union Street reconstruction project.

“The opening of the New Bedford Harbor Hotel will add fuel to the downtown restaurant and retail scene and help meet the growing demand for hotel rooms in the city,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell. “This investment is a validation of the general optimism for the city’s future.”