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### Lynn to save \$600G annually with new heating system

By David Liscio / The Daily Item

LYNN - Maintenance workers at Curwin Circle were unhappily familiar with the public housing's centralized hot-water heating system, antique plumbing known for frequent breakdowns and staggering repair bills.

Replacing that single system with 17 boilers was among the many reasons that prompted the Lynn Housing Authority & Neighborhood Development (LHAND) to pursue a public-private partnership aimed at trimming energy costs at Curwin Circle and at Wall Plaza, a subsidized apartment building for elderly residents.

LHAND Executive Charles Gaeta, U.S. Rep. John Tierney, Mayor Judith Flanagan Kennedy and representatives from the renewable-energy company Ameresco gathered Thursday at the housing authority's 10 Church St. headquarters to mark the completion of a \$6.3 million energy-savings project.

"This is an extremely happy day for the housing authority," said Gaeta. "Ameresco held our hands through the entire process."

According to the mayor, the project wasn't simply an upgrade of utilities and building insulation. "This was a complete, head-to-toe look at weatherization and energy conservation," she said.

Ameresco Executive Vice President David J. Anderson said the city will annually save more than \$600,000 in energy costs as a result of water conservation, increased efficiency and more effective insulation. Replacing Curwin Circle's antiquated hot-water system with a series of individual boilers, each capable of supplying three buildings, cost \$4 million or more than two-thirds of the entire energy project.

The boilers are expected to save the city \$100,000 to \$150,000 annually in energy costs since breakdowns and subsequent repairs will be less frequent.

"Without those savings, this project would not have been possible," said Gaeta, noting that eight of the Curwin Circle buildings affected will be back in operation by December or January and six others are being converted for use by handicapped occupants.

Curwin Circle is comprised of 278 apartments spread over a cluster of low-rise buildings, while the federally subsidized Wall Plaza has 176 units.

"We're pleased to have been the chosen local partner to bring energy efficiency improvements to LHAND and to truly make a difference to the residents of Lynn," said Anderson. "Not only will these improvements save LHAND a substantial amount of money per year, but it will improve the comfort and quality of life for residents, especially in the harsh New England winters."

In addition to upgrading the Curwin Circle heating system, Framingham-based Ameresco laid new underground plumbing, installed baseboard heaters and thermostats and insulated attics, crawl spaces and walls. A new ventilation system was also included, as was running a natural gas pipeline into Curwin Circle.

The project is designed to save energy costs over the next 20 years while reducing energy and water consumption by 40 percent, Anderson said. A total 455 apartment units were upgraded.

LHAND staffer Paul Gaudet said the project took five years to complete because of initial difficulties related to



From left, Dave Anderson, vice president of Ameresco, Mary Castrello, Charles Gaeta, director of the Lynn Housing Authority, Mayor Judith Flanagan Kennedy, Congressman John Tierney, Tim Leonard and Paul Gaudet cut the ribbon at the Lynn Housing Authority headquarters Thursday. Item photo / Owen O'Rourke

obtaining approval from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Once Tierney opened the door to the appropriate HUD administrators, the project got under way, Gaudet said.

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-- CLOSE WINDOW--