

Lynn women's shelter gets \$4M for rehab

By Thor Jourgensen/The Daily Item

LYNN - The Lynn Home for Young Women has offered a helping hand for more than a century and now the state is returning the favor by giving it \$4 million worth of renovation money. Home Assistant Director Lisa Connolly said the money will pay for renovations to the Home's two Broad Street buildings.

The renovation, slated to start in a year, will create 43 rooms including single ones with shared bathrooms, rooms with private bathrooms and studios with kitchens and bathrooms. The buildings currently have 31 rooms with shared bathrooms. "We'll go from five people to two people per bathroom," Connolly said, adding, "Being an old building, it's not that efficient."

The state is initially providing \$2.4 million to pay for construction with \$1.6 million allocated for the second phase of the project. The Home will raise or accept donations for about \$1 million more to pay for the work.



A model of the new Lynn Home for Young Women on Broad Street in Lynn. Assistant Manager Lisa Connolly, gesturing, explains the plans to (from left) Kathleen Reynolds, Stephanie Gross, Dot Jurgenson, and Rosemary Palmer.
ITEM PHOTO/ REBA M. SALDNAHA

Founded in 1907 initially on Market Street, the Home provides rooms to women 18 years and older. It has a common room, exercise room, a common kitchen and smaller kitchens. Women often live four years or longer in the Home and pay a monthly rate for their room. Many of the residents attend school and work part time. The Home works closely with North Shore Community College to help residents pursue an education and has a close connection with the Unitarian Universalist Church. In 2004, the church joined with Wild Oats Natural Marketplace in Saugus and Lynn Housing and Neighborhood Development to provide the Home with \$1,400 to pay for elevator repairs and \$1,000 to improve its exercise room.

The \$4 million in state money for the Home is part of a \$100 million state project to create 908 new apartments in 21 cities and towns across the state.

"Building new housing that is affordable to those across all income levels is the best way to boost business and job growth in Massachusetts," said state Department of Housing and Community Development Undersecretary Tina Brooks. "This blend of public and private resources will help to ensure a better quality of life for citizens from all walks of life in the Commonwealth for many years to come."

Connolly said the state money will also pay for the Home to provide additional computers and other study resources for residents. "We hope to really be a force in the community to help women reach their potential," she said.