

## Opus-Newton

### 2Life Communities

#### Project Description

2Life Communities, (formerly Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly) is the developer and owner of Golda Meir House on Stanton Avenue and Coleman House on the JCC Campus at Winchester Street. Now 2Life is proposing a new development adjacent to Coleman House at the JCC campus based on a first-in-the-nation concept we call “Opus”.

The name “Opus” represents our work in two important ways. First, we believe in older adults — that the best of life can still lie ahead — that drawing on everything they have experienced can culminate in a masterwork — their life’s Opus. Second, in addition to each individual’s “Opus,” the term applies to the community as a whole. An Opus is a musical masterpiece that draws on every instrument in the orchestra. When we combine all the diverse and different sounds from all the instruments, it is the combination of each unique sound coming together that creates an Opus — a masterwork. The people in our communities, each an individual, all joining together, will create our Opus.

Opus builds on our foundation of affordability, equity, sustainability and adaptability - always innovating with new programs and health and wellness services. Opus will provide the benefits of *aging in community* to adults age 62 and older who are financially “in the middle”. Opus will serve those who want to stay in Newton living with connection and purpose as they age but are over-income for subsidized housing (e.g. 2Life’s Coleman and Golda Meir Houses) and not able to comfortably afford the upscale senior living options available on the market.

We intentionally designed Opus for the middle market as uniquely affordable and distinct from upscale options in the marketplace based on the following 3-part strategy.

- *Volunteerism*: Every Opus resident will make a commitment to volunteer to help the community and their neighbors. We know this generation of older adults is looking for purpose — to continue contributing. A recent University of California study determined that people with a sense of purpose are 2.4 times less likely to develop Alzheimer’s or even minor cognitive problems. This is one way Opus can be more affordable, by activating our most valuable resource — the residents — to make the community thrive.
- *Partnerships*: Opus residents will have on-site care navigation available through 2Life-trained staff ensuring that residents get the right care at the right time. Further, rather than building expensive assisted living and nursing facilities, 2Life will have a tapestry of third party partnerships who can bring care to the resident apartment, rather than the resident moving to the care, and the care will be available for purchase in small increments, stretching limited resources.
- *Location*: We select Opus locations that are part of or near vibrant hubs of activity rather than creating all-inclusive enclaves with single-purpose amenities to keep construction and operating costs lower.

Opus combines a one-time, up front community share with a recurring low monthly fee, allowing this model to work financially. The required volunteer hours will engage residents' passions and enliven the community while lowering costs by creating economic value from their skills and experience.

Opus-Newton will be 2Life's first Opus Community. It will be connected to 2Life's Coleman House, an affordable housing property, creating an income-inclusive senior community. The proposed community is designed to be integrated into the existing campus of the Leventhal Sideman Jewish Community Center (the JCC) and will include 174 apartments, garage and surface parking and green spaces. Opus will be joined to Coleman House via a two-story connector building with a new main entrance and vibrant center of community life. The connector will serve both buildings and include spaces for creative dining offerings, fitness, a wellness clinic, arts & culture, life-long learning, intergenerational programs and community events. The connector will also have offices for multi-lingual resident services staff and our care coordination team. The outdoor green spaces include al fresco dining, a patio, multiple walking paths, a courtyard with senior-specific fitness equipment, accessible gardening trugs and seating areas.

The new building will meet the highest standards of universal design, adaptability, and sustainability - now standard in every 2Life project and documented in our own design guidelines published in 2018. 2Life's universal design elements (especially in the bathrooms and kitchens) will enable new residents to remain at Opus-Newton as they age. The highly-efficient and sustainable building is designed to be LEED Gold certifiable and the residential portion is designed to Passive House performance goals offering residents improved health, economic and environmental benefits and addressing the important objective of reducing our carbon footprint.

### **Highlights of 2Life Opus-Newton**

- Construct 174 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom apartments with full sized contemporary kitchens
- One apartment set-aside for live in staff member, supplementing two apartments currently set-aside at Coleman House for 24/7 staff emergency response
- Construction of 243 garage and surface spaces, of which 65 serve as replacement spaces for the JCC's gravel lot
- Inclusionary Zoning through Elder Housing with Services
- Physical and programmatic integration with 2Life's low-income Coleman House (at or below 50% Area Median Income) including sharing all programs, services and community spaces
- Universal design and adaptable features in every apartment and throughout the development, building off of 2Life's own "Design Guidelines for Aging in Community"
- LEED Gold certifiable, with the resident portion of the construction designed to Passive House performance goals
- Campus oriented building and site design, including preserving the 80 foot tree buffer to the road and relocating the driveway to physically connect Opus-Newton and Coleman House

The Special Permit application reflects the comments and feedback we have received during an extensive engagement process over the past 18 months totaling 17 external meetings with abutters, advocates, local groups and elected officials.

In order to develop Opus, 2Life will require a special permit from the City Council to allow the construction of a congregate living facility, as well as to allow relief from certain dimensional requirements for the parking facility. The approximately 6 acre development parcel will be acquired in

part from Coleman House and in part from the JCC. The JCC was constructed by special permit in the 1980s, and its permit has been amended several times since then. An amendment of the JCC's special permit will be required to allow for the subdivision of the property to create the 2Life lot. Similarly, Coleman House was constructed in the 1980s pursuant to a Comprehensive Permit, which will need to be amended to permit the conveyance of land to 2Life.