

Brownfields Success Story

The Stone House

Boston, Massachusetts

A haven for healing and renewal for almost 50 years, Stone House was able to expand its domestic violence prevention and support services in Roxbury and other Boston neighborhoods thanks to federal and local funding. With construction of the new Roxbury facility, which opened in 2021, Stone House will continue providing emergency services for individuals and families fleeing domestic violence as well as supportive housing for those experiencing homelessness.

Roxbury, not afforded the same economic development opportunities as many other Boston neighborhoods, has seen many of its former industrial sites shuttered, leaving abandoned buildings and vacant lots. Roxbury is a diverse neighborhood with more children, minorities and low-income populations than the state or nation as a whole.

Cleanup

After a devastating fire in 2007 destroyed its emergency shelter in Roxbury, Stone House moved into its transitional housing facility. As demand for its programs grew, the nonprofit organization began searching for a larger space and found a suitable property at the corner of Washington Street and Westminster Avenue in Egleston Square. This former single-story, 20,000-square-foot building had been used as an automobile parking garage in the 1920s and later converted for mixed industrial, warehouse and automotive repair until it was abandoned in 1996. Due to these past uses, there were concerns that this property might be contaminated. Luckily, Stone House applied for and received an EPA Brownfields grant in 2015, which helped them clean up the site.

Stone House used its cleanup grant to remove asbestos and hazardous building materials and dispose of 142 tons of soil contaminated with gasoline. The cleanup was completed in 2018, and the building was demolished. The new Stone House facility was finished in January 2021. In addition to cleaning up this site and creating a new facility providing much-needed community services, this project also generated 29 new jobs.



Photo Credit: Stone House

EPA Grant Recipient:
Stone House, Inc.

Grant Types:
EPA Cleanup Grant

Current Use:
\$27M Facility to support domestic violence survivors in Roxbury's Egleston Square neighborhood.

Former Uses:
Automobile parking garage, mixed industrial warehouse, and automotive repair facility



Photo Credit: Stone House



Photo Credit: Stone House

"It's hard to remember how badly damaged this property was when we bought it. It was a drag on the whole neighborhood from every perspective - safety, aesthetics, economics, social well-being, and environment. Without EPA funding, our project could never have begun. That corner is now flourishing, with 32 new housing units for domestic violence survivors, a state-of-the-art day care center, and ample space for private counseling, classes, and groups to support domestic violence survivors as they build better futures for themselves. EPA funding helped transform not just a piece of degraded property, but thousands of lives."

Nancy Owens Hess
CEO of Stone House

EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant	\$ 173,000
Stone House Fundraising	\$ 634,699
City of Boston	\$ 2,100,000
TOTAL:	\$ 2,900,000

\$24,000,000 in other private and public funds for construction of the new facility.

Today

Today, this five-story, 56,000-square-foot building provides 32 affordable apartments for domestic violence survivors and will soon feature a licensed childcare center, a new parking area, and community programming space. The Stone House, which serves over 2,000 survivors a year, offers shelter and transitional housing, as well as support groups, classes, private counselling, and family-centered activities for children and adults. Support groups and classes for Stone House and neighborhood residents cover financial literacy, mental health, therapeutic childcare, client advocacy, and many other topics. Around the building is a children's play area and a park with sloping, landscaped hills and mature trees the create a calm place for clients to enjoy.



For more information:

Visit the EPA Brownfields website at www.epa.gov/brownfields or contact Amy Jean McKeown, 617-918-1248, McKeown.AmyJean@epa.gov