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Stroudwater Lodge at center of development



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Mid-day traffic was backed up off Spring Street Tuesday, with construction booming at the site of the Blue Spruce Farm subdivision.

But across the street, tucked away in the expanse of land between Spring and Stroudwater streets, there is more activity.

Building connections

Construction crews are working at the site of the Stroudwater Lodge Tuesday, which will feature 95 units of assisted living and independent living apartments. The project will also result in a new road to connect Stroudwater and Spring streets. Staff photo by Andrew Rice

This week, construction officially began on the 95-unit Stroudwater Lodge, the second phase of the Stroudwater Landing senior living campus developed by Northbridge Companies. The first phase, Avita of Stroudwater, opened in 2013 and provides memory care for those living with forms of dementia and Alzheimer's.

For Westbrook, the project will also provide an infrastructure boost when Landing Road is completed, a new through street that will connect two major roadways in the city – Spring and Stroudwater streets.

Stroudwater Lodge, adjacent to Avita, will feature 95 units of both assisted living and independent living apartments for seniors, filling a need in Westbrook and Greater Portland for more senior housing.

Wendy Nowokunski, the president of Northbridge Companies, said Tuesday that with the success of Avita, which has a waiting list, the company was frequently asked about other senior housing options.

"People were interested in other independent living and senior living options in the area," she said. "We saw this as an opportunity to expand our offerings in the Greater Portland area."

The 90,000-square-foot development will feature one- and two-bedroom units, with a theater, art studio, salon and barber shop, café, pub, outdoor patio, "brain gym," sunroom and landscaped courtyards.

An official groundbreaking ceremony will be held Thursday, Nov. 12, at 2 p.m.

Nowokunski said Maine is "under-vetted" in terms of senior living options, and she expects waiting lists are only going to grow. She said Northbridge communities have typically seen a 12- to 21-month "fill-up" period for new facilities, but Avita of Stroudwater was full in nine months.

Landing Road will provide a connection for commuters who must now use William Clarke Drive, but will also directly connect to projects under way on either side. On Spring Street, Blue Spruce Farm will feature 183 units of housing, with apartments, condos and homes. Along Stroudwater Street, the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland is in the early stages of building its new facility, which is also slated to feature walking trails that will connect to the Stroudwater Lodge property.

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When Avita of Stroudwater was built, an access road stemming from Spring Street was created, culminating at the memory care facility. An entrance to the Lodge development will be across from Avita, but the road will continue, running past the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland land and onto Stroudwater Street.

City Administrator Jerre Bryant said Tuesday that the city advocated for the project to include building the connector road. He said Molly Just, the city planner who resigned this week, was a big proponent of stipulating the connector be built, but that it also received support from the city engineer and fire department.

"It's really going to present some options for traffic flow across the city," he said about Landing Road. "It's a huge advantage to the entire school bus system."

Bryant said the Stroudwater Lodge project is also significant because it brings together several senior living developments at a time when they're needed.

"It accommodates a huge bubble in our population right now," he said.

Northbridge is simultaneously breaking ground on two new Avita memory care facilities in Brunswick and Wells.

The third phase of Stroudwater Landing is expected to be independent living condos.

Nowokunski said the campus approach to this type of senior development has stemmed from seeing more couples looking for options simultaneously. She said one person may be able to live independently, another may need a higher level of care.

Dan McGuire, a managing partner with the Sandy River Co., the developers of Northbridge Companies' projects in Maine, said the Stroudwater Lodge "continues our commitment to create a senior care campus in Westbrook with a full continuum of services."

Sandy River also developed Springbrook Nursing Home and Avita of Stroudwater.

Both Stroudwater Lodge and Landing Road are expected to be complete by this time next year.