

**Fact Sheet:**  
**United South End Settlements –**  
**Sale of 566 Columbus Avenue**



*(Updated 12/9/2019)*

**We are at a crossroads:** sell our location at 566 Columbus Avenue and preserve our legacy of service, or keep it and continue with a business model that will eventually put United South End Settlements out of business

### **What We Do**

- More than 350 families in the South End and surrounding communities rely on USES for quality, accessible early education, out of school time programs and services that help families on pathway to greater income security and build a diverse network to reach their personal and financial goals.

### **USES Families**

- More than 80% of USES families are from communities of color; 73% reside in the South End and Roxbury; 66% specifically in the South End; 23% reside in other Boston neighborhoods, such as Dorchester and Mission Hill.
- More than 70% of USES families receive subsidies to participate in our programs.

### **Our Need to Sell**

- Since Frieda Garcia's departure in 2001, the organization has had 5 executive leadership transitions over the past 18 years. This along with sustained structural deficits, two recessions (late 2001 and 2007), the quickly changing field of non-profit funding, and the gentrification of the South End contributed to a nearly depleted endowment that forced USES to answer hard questions about its future viability. vision125 is to correct the business model so that the organization can continue to serve families.
- USES is burdened by significant annual building maintenance costs totaling over \$700K per year; these costs are not sustainable over time.
- We cannot afford the millions of dollars it will cost to replace mechanical systems and repair the structural issues at 566 Columbus Avenue. The only way we can continue to serve our community is through the funds of the sale.
- The sale of 566 Columbus will save us more than \$300K a year across the organization, plus the prohibitive costs of repairs.
- Money from the sale will help keep our organization financially viable for future generations by allowing us to expand programs for children and families at Rutland Street, a few blocks away, and create an endowment for long-term financial sustainability.

### **Honoring Harriet Tubman's Legacy**

Harriet Tubman's legacy is of serving others. " She gave everything she had away to somebody who needed it more than she did."—Judith Bryant, Harriet Tubman's great-great grandniece.

- The work of the institution that is Harriet Tubman and her legacy will continue at 48 Rutland Street in the South End. Expanding our programs and creating a comprehensive campus at Rutland Street gives us the capacity to increase the number of children and families we serve in our community, encompassing all of our programs. We will also have community space available to the neighborhood.

- Harriet Tubman's legacy wasn't about bricks and mortar; it's about helping others – and that is what USES is committed to doing. By selling and consolidating all programs a few blocks away, we can preserve and grow our legacy of serving children and families.
- We are taking great care to ensure that the spirit of the Harriet Tubman House continues to be a central part of USES and the communities we serve going forward.
  - The building that is 566 Columbus Avenue will be sold and its unique art preserved for future generations to enjoy.
- David Lee, partner of Stull & Lee who are the renowned architects of the Harriet Tubman House at 566 Columbus has joined the USES real estate design team for the new Harriet Tubman House.

### **History of the Harriet Tubman House**

- Six Black women of Boston opened the Harriet Tubman House at 37 Holyoke Street in the South End. A personal friend of Tubman, Julia O. Henson rented the Tubman House as a place of lodging for Black females who had recently migrated from the South. Later on, the Harriet Tubman House was moved to Mrs. Henson's own home at 25 Holyoke Street. There, she and her friends organized a settlement house for the purpose of "assisting working girls in charitable ways."
- In 1950, five settlement houses formed the Federation of South End Settlements Houses and in 1960, the Harriet Tubman House, along with four other settlements houses, combined to form United South End Settlements. In 1976, the Harriet Tubman House legacy continued at 566 Columbus Avenue and will now continue at our 48 Rutland Street location.

### **New Boston Ventures as Developer of 566 Columbus**

- USES was intentional about finding a developer who would be a partner and keep the community needs in mind and that is what we found in New Boston Ventures; it didn't have the highest offer, but it had the best offer - it's the best match.
- Among several community-focused initiatives for 566 Columbus Ave., New Boston is:
  - Setting aside 17% of its units for affordable housing (above the 13% the city of Boston requires); these units are estimated to cost between \$1,200 - \$1,500 a month and will be 11 studios dedicated for residential/workspace for artists
  - Helping current tenant find new, nearby spaces and providing relocation assistance, reimbursement for buildouts and rental subsidies
  - Dedicating almost 5,000 square feet of space on the ground floor designated for community use
  - Preserving the building's iconic mural by Jameel Parker

### **Community Outreach**

- USES spent 18-months engaged in a strategic planning process and invited the community to participate in multiple meetings. We posted flyers, mailed notifications directly to residences, shared on social media and with local news outlets, emailed community members who have opted into our mailing lists, met directly with residences and posted information on our website.
- USES live-streamed the latest community meeting for those who could not attend in person and held open office hours with the President & CEO.
- Information from community meetings and updates throughout the planning process can be found on our website at [www.uses.org/vision125](http://www.uses.org/vision125).

We encourage your feedback at [vision125@uses.org](mailto:vision125@uses.org)