

# The Boston Globe

Serving our community since 1872

FRIDAY, MAY 19, 2023



PHOTO BY DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

## HIGH aspirations

After losing its financing at the start of the pandemic, the \$1.3 billion Winthrop Center tower finally nears completion

By Catherine Carlock  
GLOBE STAFF

**A**ston was having a fabulous time at Winthrop Center's Club VIP. The 5½-year-old white Pomeranian trotted the spa-like lobby reserved for "Very Important Pets" Wednesday morning, surveying rooms for grooming, training, and doggy massage and reiki. Larger dogs romped in and out of a bone-shaped paddling pool in the open play area down the hall. Club VIP — which will serve the pets of both residents and office workers at Winthrop Center, the 62-story mixed-use tower with entrances on both Devonshire and Federal streets that's now opening to residents — will even offer boarding services at an Amherst, N.H. farm.

"To implement this unprecedented level of pet care in an industry-leading project like Winthrop Center is a dream come true," said Karen Ray, the director of Club VIP and a veteran pet-service provider in Boston, in a statement.

Winthrop Center is the latest downtown Boston tower from real estate developer Millennium Partners, the result of a long and winding design and development saga that prompted former governor Charlie Baker to

**WINTHROP CENTER, Page B8**





PHOTOS BY DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

The Junior Olympic-sized swimming pool is one of the amenities at the new Millennium Residences at Winthrop Center.

## Winthrop Center is readying for its debut

### ► WINTHROP CENTER Continued from Page B5

change state law managing shadows on the Boston Common and Public Garden. It is — by a few feet over its cousin Millennium Tower — the tallest tower built in Boston's downtown core, and the fourth-tallest in the city. The \$1.3 billion project nearly stalled out after losing its financing in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. But finally, Winthrop is ready for its close-up.

Residents have started moving into the 317 condominiums on the tower's upper floors. Some 20 units have closed so far, at an average price point of just under \$3 million, said Richard Baumert, a principal of MP Boston, Millennium's local development arm. Another 45 or so units are under contract, Baumert said — including an upper-floor penthouse unit for \$14.1 million. Many of Winthrop Center's first wave of condo buyers are purchasing their units with cash, and thus haven't been scared off by the recent surge in interest rates, Baumert said. He's seeing many more empty nesters than at Millennium Tower — the 442-unit tower a few blocks away that was near-



There are 317 condominiums on the upper floors of Winthrop Center and residences have started moving in.

ly sold out when it opened in 2016.

"There's a tremendous sense of pride" in Winthrop Center and its offerings, Baumert said during a tour Wednesday. The amenities are plentiful: a Junior Olympic-size pool designed for music to play underwater, a rock-climbing wall backlit with technicolor lights to showcase different climbing paths, game rooms with billiards, shuffleboard and poker tables, and of course a golf simulator — a feature that's almost de rigueur in many office and residential buildings nowadays. (The for-

mer kids' playroom at Millennium Tower has been converted into a golf simulator.)

Winnie's, the residents-only restaurant from Michelin-starred chef John Fraser, features seasonal menu items such as chilled spring asparagus and roasted wild mushrooms. A 14-ounce New York strip steak, sourced from the storied Savenor's Market, is served with Julia Child's sauce au poivre. The bar list ranges from the "champagne of beers" — a \$6 Miller High Life — to actual champagne, a \$149 bottle of Charles Heidsieck Carte Blanche.

A co-working area open to both residents and Winthrop Center office workers has a cozy yet airy feel, with seating options ranging from deep-cushioned club chairs surrounding a gas fireplace to soft butter-yellow leather banquettes. Around the corner, a low-lit Zen Room blocks cellular service and, with its cozy pillows and mats, calls out for a meditation or midday rest.

Beyond the 510,000 square feet of residential space on floors 35 and up, Winthrop Center also has 812,000 square feet of office in its lower half. Cambridge Associates, Income Research + Management, and McKinsey have leased a combined 249,000 square feet, with the rest still on the market.

The Connector, a public space on the building's ground floor that rises three stories, links Federal and Devonshire streets and will house multiple food and beverage options when it's ready this fall. Details are still to come on the space's programming. A landscaped outdoor plaza on Devonshire Street is also set for a fall opening.

Catherine Carlock can be reached at [catherine.carlock@globe.com](mailto:catherine.carlock@globe.com).