

AFRO Achieves at the Upton Mansion

811 W. Lanvale Street | Baltimore, Maryland

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Cross Street Partners and AFRO Charities are renovating Upton Mansion and its adjacent carriage house and constructing a new annex at the rear of the Mansion. This campus will serve as the headquarters for AFRO Charities and the AFRO American Newspapers, and most importantly, will become the new permanent home for the AFRO American Newspapers Archives. The Building, which will be certified LEED Gold, will also feature a gallery and exhibit space, recording studio, research and digitization space, leasable offices for similarly aligned organizations, community events space, a green roof, and short-term residences for visiting artists and scholars.

Located in West Baltimore's Upton community, the Upton Mansion is a nationally registered historic structure originally built in 1838 as the primary residence of a prominent Baltimore family. The Upton Mansion is a rare example of a Greek revivalist palatial estate in Baltimore. In addition to its former use as a primary residence, the Mansion site has been utilized by WCAO, Maryland's oldest radio station; the Baltimore Institute of Musical Arts (which at one time was the only accredited music school south of New York City to admit Black students); and most recently the Baltimore Public School system. Vacant since 2006, the City of Baltimore has awarded Afro Charities the exclusive right to redevelop the city-owned building. Upton Mansion is on the National Register of Historic Places and is a contributing structure to the Old West Baltimore Historic District - the largest Black historic district in the nation.

The Upton Mansion renovation will be a major step forward in establishing Upton as a cultural tourism destination by creating a pre-eminent archival and research center for the study of Black culture and history. The redevelopment of the Upton Mansion will help the community actualize its community vision, which commits to "reclaiming the vestiges of its distinct African American heritage and being the hub of a cultural revitalization where the memory of the great entertainers, artists and civic leaders who proudly proclaimed Upton as their neighborhood will serve as a beacon by drawing investments back into the community."

The redevelopment of the Upton Mansion into the permanent home for the AFRO Archives represents both a homecoming for the AFRO as well as a renewed commitment to the community's vibrant future. ■



DEVELOPER

AFRO Charities
Cross Street Partners

ARCHITECT

Sulton Campbell Britt & Associates

CSP ROLE

Co-Developer
Financial Advisory
Owner's Representative

PROJECT TYPE

Adaptive Reuse, Mixed Use

PROJECT SIZE

17,000 sf (11k sf historic mansion and carriage house and 6k sf new annex)

PROJECT COST

\$12.3MM

COMPLETION

Q2' 2024

2101 E. Biddle Street, Suite 1201
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