# Historic Stone Mill in Lawrence Transformed into Energy-Efficient Apartment Building



The historic Stone Mill in Lawrence, Massachusetts, formerly a bustling industrial center, has been transformed into the Stone Mill Lofts, an 86-unit apartment building that preserves much of its historic charm while incorporating modern, energy-efficient technologies. This retrofit was made possible through settlement funds from the Merrimack gas explosion and federal and state low-income housing tax credits.

Eighty percent of the units are designated for residents earning less than 60% of the area median income, which is just under $128,000 for a four-person household in Lawrence. The renovation project was led by Boston-based WinnDevelopment, emphasizing energy sustainability and historic preservation.

The building features heat pumps, all-electric appliances, and triple-pane windows. A new tool has been piloted to power both hot water and HVAC systems using electricity, nearly eliminating the need for gas. Architects were also mindful of maintaining the building’s original look while enhancing its energy efficiency.

This project aligns with broader trends in Massachusetts to address affordable housing shortages and climate goals through green retrofits. Such initiatives aim to decarbonize existing housing stock, with experts highlighting that updating current structures can be as cost-effective as new construction.

For example, in Salem, another retrofit project by Onion Flats Architecture uses a panelized system for better insulation without displacing tenants. The approach applies to both multifamily buildings and single-family homes, offering a template for sustainable renovations across the state. Additionally, programs like Mass Save and Boston's Healthy and Green Retrofit pilot provide financial incentives and support to encourage these upgrades.