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**A New Housing Model in East Baltimore,
Downtown Office Tower Up for Auction,
Ceremony Coffee Coming to Harbor Point**



The six Formstone-clad row houses in the 2100 block of E. Madison Street are the sort of buildings that might have been torn down as part of the demolition spree that has consumed much of Baltimore.

Instead, they are being reborn as a model for a new kind of healthcare-related housing.

The vacant dwellings are being combined and renovated to become The UCF House, a “home away from home” that will provide free lodging and a supportive environment for young adult cancer patients receiving treatment in Baltimore.

Construction began last month on the \$1 million project at 2108-2118 E. Madison Street, which is within the 88-acre footprint of the East Baltimore Development Inc. renewal area.



Doug Ulman, founder of the Ulman Cancer Fund for Young Adults

The renovation is a project of the [Ulman Cancer Fund for Young Adults](#), a nonprofit organization that was founded in 1997 by Doug Ulman to support young adults affected by cancer and their loved ones.

This is the first residential facility that the Ulman Cancer Fund has built, and representatives say it has been 20 years in the making. They say the average cost for lodging for a young adult to stay in Baltimore the 100 required days after receiving a bone transplant is \$10,000, and the UCF House is designed to help mitigate these costs.

“With treatment protocols that require young adults to stay near hospitals for long periods of time, housing can be crippling financially and prevents some young adults from receiving treatment at top-notch Baltimore hospitals,” said Brock Yetso, president and CEO of the nonprofit. “Our organization exists to remove barriers and drive change—for years we’ve wanted to make this home away from home for young adult cancer patients and their families a reality, and now it is becoming one.”

Baltimore already has residences for children receiving medical care, such as the Ronald McDonald House. What sets the UCF House apart is that it’s being created to help young adults, ages 15 to 39. Advocates say there are no facilities available for that age range at present.

“Young adult patients often age out of many other facilities or don’t find critical peer support at non-age specific facilities,” Yetso explained. “The UCF House will create a community for these young adults that fosters peer and social support, decreases financial and other burdens, and encourages hope and healing.”

The project involves connecting the six row houses into one larger building. The UCF House will contain eight family suites for patients and caregivers, communal living and dining spaces, a fitness area, a relaxation space, a library, a backyard and a roof deck.

The UCF House will be available to patients receiving cancer treatment anywhere in the region, including Johns Hopkins Medicine, the University of Maryland Medical Center, Walter Reed and other institutions. Patients will be able to live there anywhere from three days to 100 days.

The Madison Street houses are about 100 years old. Ulman worked with East Baltimore Development Inc. to acquire five of the six and purchased the other one separately. NW2 is the architect and Jon Cole Builders is the builder.

Besides the building expenses, the UCF House will cost \$200,000 to operate each year. In 2016, UCF launched a capital campaign to raise \$3 million. The campaign has three priorities: to build the house and raise funds to operate it for the first three years, increase the organization’s endowment and enhance existing programming for young adults and families affected by cancer.

So far, the organization has raised approximately \$2.5 million, and that was enough to move ahead with construction. The UCF House is scheduled to open in the fall of 2017 and is expected to serve more than 200 families a year.