



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 26, 2012

DevelopSpringfield announces new President and CEO



DevelopSpringfield selects A. John “Jay” Minkarah as its new President and CEO

SPRINGFIELD, MA John “Jay” Minkarah has been appointed President and CEO of DevelopSpringfield – the City of Springfield’s private non-profit development partner. DevelopSpringfield was formed in 2008 as a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) corporation to advance development and redevelopment projects, to stimulate and support economic growth, and to expedite the revitalization process within the City of Springfield. The organization has a 14-member board of directors including representatives from the city, state, and business community. The organization’s mission is to help create conditions that encourage private development, with a bricks-and-mortar focus and always with an eye toward understanding and meeting Springfield’s unique and diverse redevelopment needs.

DevelopSpringfield co-leads the Rebuild Springfield effort with the Springfield Redevelopment Authority, is advancing various elements of the State Street Redevelopment Program and administers its successful Corridor Storefront Improvement Program.

Most recently, Jay served as Economic Development Director for the City of Manchester, NH and has worked in planning and economic development in southern New Hampshire for almost twenty-five years. Prior to coming to Manchester in 2007, he served as Economic Development Director for the City of Nashua, Community Development Director for the Town of Merrimack and as a planner for the Nashua Regional Planning Commission. Jay received a Bachelor of Urban Planning from the University of Cincinnati in 1986 and a Juris Doctor from The University of New Hampshire School of Law (formerly Franklin Pierce Law Center) in Concord, NH in 1994. Jay is a member of the New Hampshire Bar and active in several planning, economic development and arts and cultural organizations.

Since March of this year, Kevin M. Sweeney has led DevelopSpringfield as its interim President and CEO. Kevin was previously a senior executive in mergers & acquisitions and international operations with MassMutual Financial Group for 19 years before serving as CEO of DevelopSpringfield. He stepped in on an interim basis to lead the organization while a search for a permanent President and CEO was underway. He focused his leadership efforts on capacity building, new revitalization initiatives and advancing critical initiatives the organization had already undertaken including the Rebuild Springfield effort. Kevin is now a Professor of Practice in Finance and full-time member of the faculty of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute School of Business, and he is also a visiting lecturer at other universities, including Columbia University in New York, NY, and a Principal of Sweeney Strategic Consulting.

“We are thrilled to welcome Jay to Springfield. He brings an excellent set of skills to the work in front of us and will be a tremendous asset to economic development in the City of Springfield,” said Nicholas A. Fyntrilakis, Chairman, DevelopSpringfield. “We also extend our thanks and appreciation to Kevin Sweeney for his leadership and guidance during the past seven months where he created a lasting foundation for the organization,” said Fyntrilakis.

Sweeney commented, “It has been a unique privilege to serve as interim CEO of DevelopSpringfield working with the residents of the City of Springfield to build a stronger, more vital community. I want to extend my best wishes to Jay as he assumes this important role as the permanent leader of DevelopSpringfield. I look forward to working with him and to supporting him in his transition.”

Minkarah said, "I am very pleased to be coming to Springfield and excited by the opportunity to play a key role in working with DevelopSpringfield and its partners in implementing development and redevelopment initiatives that are meaningful to the community and certain to have long lasting impacts on the way in which the City develops and grows."

Springfield Mayor Domenic J. Sarno offered, “Jay’s strong skills, background and expertise in urban redevelopment are key to leading DevelopSpringfield. As the City’s private economic development partner, DevelopSpringfield plays a key role in advancing economic development in the City and I am confident that it will be successful with Jay at the helm”, said Sarno.

DevelopSpringfield will host a welcoming reception for Jay at Red Rose on Tuesday, December 4, 2012 from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Diane Swanson at dswanson@developspringfield.com or (413) 273-1519 if you plan to attend the event on Tuesday, December 4th.

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