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Another Boost For Waterfront

Riverfront Recapture's dream of a thriving Hartford/East Hartford waterfront moved another step closer to reality this week when officials launched construction of a \$3.6 million boathouse in Riverside Park.

For decades, Hartford was cut off from the Connecticut River after the construction of flood-control walls and I-91. Twenty years ago, a group of visionaries began the private, nonprofit Riverfront Recapture to once again make the river accessible.

The boathouse, which is scheduled to open next spring, will be a vital part of a thriving waterfront that already is drawing thousands of visitors for various events from concerts to fireworks.

The new facility will be called the Greater Hartford Jaycees Community Boathouse, in recognition of the Jaycees' generous \$500,000 gift toward the cost of construction. Every dollar of boathouse funding comes from corporations, foundations and individuals; no govern-

ment money is involved.

Riverfront Recapture started its boating program in 1989. It got a huge boost in 1993 with a \$60,000 grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Since then, Bulkeley and Hartford Public high schools have formed rowing teams under Riverfront Recapture's tutelage, and Weaver High School is scheduled to join them this fall. The rowing program has given many city youths new confidence. Several have gone on to row for elite colleges.

The boathouse will be more than a headquarters for rowing. The second floor will have a large community room and a

spacious front porch overlooking the river. The facility will be available for weddings, civic functions and business meetings.

The handsome, Victorian-style building will be lighted at night and thus serve as a welcoming beacon for visitors. It will be another exciting piece of a revived downtown able to draw together people from the city and suburbs.

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