



**For Immediate Release:
March 2, 2022**

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Franklin Food Pantry Purchases Building to Expand Programming
Edwin's Building to be new site of the Franklin Food Pantry

FRANKLIN, MA - The [Franklin Food Pantry](https://www.franklinfoodpantry.org/) has purchased a new building to better serve its neighbors. The building, formerly known as Edwin's, is located at 341 West Central Street and will undergo renovations to convert it into a functional, accessible and expanded Pantry.

In April of 2020, the Pantry purchased 138 East Central Street to serve as a new location for its operations. After almost 18 months of work, the Pantry concluded that while 138 East Central was a viable option for pre-pandemic operations, Covid-19 so drastically changed operations and programming that the property no longer fully met the Pantry's neighbors' needs. The Pantry sold 138 East Central Street in late 2021. Simultaneously, the Pantry identified Edwin's as a new relocation opportunity. After detailed due diligence evaluating the feasibility of the property for its operations, the Franklin Food Pantry Board, on the recommendation of senior staff and the Pantry Building Committee, moved forward with the purchase of 341 West Central Street. The Pantry will use a variety of funding sources to purchase, renovate, and operate the building including grants, state funding, Board restricted funds and private donations specifically restricted for the new building.

"This new building gives us an opportunity to continue the innovative programs we created during the Pandemic to better serve our neighbors. We are thrilled to honor Jean and Edwin Aldrich by continuing their legacy of connecting with and enriching our community," said Tina Powderly, Executive Director of the Franklin Food Pantry. "Through the generosity of our Board members and close friends, the hard work of our Building Committee and staff, and community members like Representative Jeff Roy who secured funding in the state budget for our new building, we will more fully meet our vision. The new building will have a larger and more accessible space that we will renovate to best fit our unique programs, especially those developed over the past two years."

These unique programs increase access to healthy food and related services that support needs arising out of food insecurity:

- Three simultaneous distribution models (curbside, in-person, and home delivery) to maximize access and options for neighbors in various circumstances
- Onsite farmer's market to provide access to healthy fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs

- Three holiday meal kits during the summer, at Thanksgiving, and during year-end holidays that neighbors can customize to their own family traditions
- In-person office hours to assist neighbors to access support for their everyday challenges

341 West Central Street will provide ample and accessible parking, warehouse, shopping and community spaces needed to continue these programs as well as launch additional services to meet the neighbors' growing and changing needs. The new site will be designed with increased accessibility, confidentiality, safety and comfort and with flexibility to grow additional programs and expand community partnerships. Together, all of these pieces will better fulfill the Pantry's vision of building a community in which everyone in need has an improved quality of life through nutritious food and supportive resources.

Renovations should begin later this year. In the meantime, The Pantry will continue to operate at its current location and appreciates the continued support of Rockland Trust.

About the Franklin Food Pantry

The Franklin Food Pantry offers supplemental food assistance and household necessities to almost 1,100 individuals per year. The Franklin Food Pantry is not funded by the Town of Franklin. As a private, nonprofit organization, we depend on donations from individuals, corporations, foundations and other strategic partners. We are grateful for our many partnerships, including that with the Greater Boston Food Bank, that allow us to achieve greater buying power and lower our costs. Donations and grants fund our food purchases, keep our lights on, and put gas in our food truck. Other programs include home delivery, Weekend Backpack Program for Franklin school children in need, mobile pantry, emergency food bags and holiday meal packages. The Pantry is located at 43 W. Central St. in Franklin on Route 140 across from the Franklin Fire Station. Visit www.franklinfoodpantry.org for more information.