



New York State Association for Affordable Housing names Fairport Apts. Upstate Project of the Year; Redeveloped by Cornerstone Group

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The New York State Association for Affordable Housing (NYSAFAH) has named the renovation of the Fairport Apartments, located at 1030 Whitney Rd., as its Upstate Project of the Year. A senior living campus since 1972, all thirteen residential buildings and the community center underwent extensive rehabilitation inside and out. The campus was redeveloped by Rochester's Cornerstone Group, Ltd., a local developer, and the two original owners: the Fairport Baptist Home and Perinton Churches Housing, a consortium of 13 local churches concerned about senior housing. For the 10 weeks their building was under construction, the existing residents relocated to live with friends or family or moved for a short term stay at a furnished facility owned by Rochester Management Inc. The complex remains affordable for 62+.

The construction scope included major exterior improvements, such as installing a gable roof over the previous flat roofs to solve long-standing storm water issues. Along with the new roofs, exterior insulation and new siding were installed over the pre-cast concrete structure. The existing recessed windows were removed and new energy efficient windows were installed flush with the exterior, creating a window seat in each of the 104 living rooms. The complete rehabilitation of the interior of all 104 apartments included new kitchens, bathrooms finishes. Platform lifts were installed in all 13 residential buildings to facilitate access to the second floor. Stackable washers and dryers were added to each building, so the residents would not have to take their laundry to the community center. Each apartment was laid out with extensive wheel chair access, including roll-in showers in all the units. This work modernized the apartments, including the implementation of a more functional floor plan.

This rehabilitation was done using a variety of green building techniques including 6 kilowatts of solar photoelectric panels on the roof of the community center. Permeable concrete used to pave the area where new parking spots were added. The addition energy efficient appliances and lighting as well as increased insulation was projected to reduce energy use by approximately 23%.

A major aspect of this rehabilitation was relocation of the residents during the 10 weeks their building was under construction. SOFI (Senior Options for Independence), a Perinton organization dedicated to helping seniors age in place, was instrumental in directing this relocation. Biagio Zarcone, a dedicated relocation coordinator, was hired to assist the seniors before, during and after the move. It required a patient hand to move from building to building answering tenant questions for the 10 months of the project. Additional help resettling the residents into their newly renovated units was provided by volunteers from the constituent churches of Perinton Churches Housing, along with the staff and volunteers of SOFI (Senior Options for Independence) helped to resettle.

In addition to rehabilitation of the residential space, the community center was completely

renovated. The living space formerly used by the property supervisor was converted into a craft room, dedicated library, two handicap accessible bathrooms and a greatly expanded kitchen. Of all the changes on the Fairport Apartments campus, the change from a tiny galley kitchenette to an expansive kitchen has had the most significant impact. The seniors are not organizing many more lunch gatherings, including a recently catered barbeque. Along with the cooking and eating has come an increase in social events, such as game nights.

Rochester's Cornerstone Group, Ltd. worked closely with the Buffalo office of Housing and Urban Development for the HUD 236 decoupling, which resulted in each of the residents being potentially eligible to receive an enhanced Section 8 voucher. Fairport Section 8 Housing interviewed and qualified each of the 104 tenants, awarding those whose annual income was more than 30% of the annual rent an enhanced voucher. These vouchers allow the units to be affordable to the lowest income seniors.

The NYSAFAH award was presented at the Yale Club, located at 50 Vanderbilt Ave. in New York City. The development team was represented by Rochester's Cornerstone Group, Fairport Baptist Home Caring Ministries, LECESSE Construction, Smith + Associates architects, Cannon Heyman and Weiss attorneys and Salmin, Celona, Wehrle and Flaherty, LLP accountants.

One risk with a long project period is a change in key personnel. Over the last few years of the project, the main architect, property management CEO and one of the ownership CEOs retired, as well as the project's managers at HUD Buffalo. Despite the four years required to secure financing, the project retained strong local support from the Town of Fairport, Monroe County, Fairport Section 8 Housing and Fairport Municipal Electric. The lease up has gone well, with full occupancy and a waiting list.

Owner/Developers: Perinton Churches Housing

Fairport Baptist Home

Rochester's Cornerstone Group, Ltd.

Architect: Smith + Associates Architects

General Contractor: LECESSE Construction Services, LLC

Engineering: Marathon Engineering

Property Management: Rochester Management Inc.

Tenant Relocation: Senior Options for Independence

Tax Credit Equity: Raymond James Tax Credits

Legal: Cannon Heyman and Weiss, LLP

Accounting: Salmin, Celona, Wehrle & Flaherty, LLP

FAIRPORT APARTMENTS FUNDING SOURCES

SOURCE AMOUNT

LIHTC Equity - Raymond James \$8,809,377

Federal Home Loan Bank - NY \$795,000

HFA Empire Housing Loan \$592,000

NYS Housing Trust Fund Corp. \$521,760

Monroe County HOME funds \$250,000

Interest Reduction Payment Loan \$192,619
Income during Rehabilitation \$150,304
Deferred Developer Fee \$228,021
30 Year Mortgage (First Niagara Bank) \$315,000
Fairport Electric Grant \$20,000

Total \$11,874,081

Construction Loan (First Niagara Bank) \$6,200,000
Seller's Note \$3,449,904

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