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First HCR Funded Passive House Project Breaks Ground

RE: CreekView Apartments

The first New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) funded project to pursue Passive House Certification has broken ground: Creekview Apartments at Woodland Ridge located in Canandaigua, NY. Developed by Baldwin Real Estate Corporation, built by DiMarco Constructors, and designed by Glasow Simmons Architecture, LLP, the CreekView Apartments consist of 96 units of 1, 2, and 3-bedroom family housing across 12 buildings. The project intends to complete construction in 2019.

CreekView Apartments was submitted in 2016 to the competitive HCR Funding round. While Passive House Certification has been on their request for proposal (RFP) for a few years, this was the first year HCR offered additional scoring points for achieving Passive House. Baldwin Real Estate, an industry leader in energy efficient, comfortable, affordable housing, saw the opportunity to differentiate their project and get the additional scoring points on their application.

The project was awarded funding in May 2017 and the design team met regularly for the next few months to incorporate the stringent Passive House requirements into the design documents. The design and energy modeling were approved by Passive House Institute US (PHIUS) and received Pre-Certification on October 6, 2017.

While New York State is a leader in energy efficient affordable housing, when it comes to Passive House, Pennsylvania has set the example. In 2014 the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) adopted Passive House into their competitive round, offering a substantial advantage to affordable housing projects pursuing Passive House. Under PHFA's first award round, almost 40% of projects included Passive House in their submission, and seven (7) of those projects were awarded.

The Passive House program boasts an 80% reduction in heating and cooling costs and drastically reduces energy bills. Affordable housing is a prime opportunity to capitalize on these benefits. Low income tenants are the most vulnerable to increasing energy costs, and with long-term ownership the initial investments in energy efficiency can be paid back through reduced operating costs over an extended payback period.

Sustainable Comfort, Inc. serves as the Passive House Consultant and Verifier for the CreekView Apartments project. With the increased complexity of the design, each building assembly must be reviewed for integrity and insulation levels. The project walls include 2x6 wood studs with 3.5" exterior rigid insulation, roof insulation ranging from R-60 to R-80, R-15 under slab insulation, triple pane windows, balanced energy recovery ventilation, and ductless mini split heat pumps for heating and cooling. Most units are all electric and have eliminated the infrastructure, service, and usage costs associated with natural gas.

The final achievement of the Passive House Certification includes stringent air sealing to create a practically air tight building. Fresh air will be brought in through the balanced heat recovery ventilation. Upon completion, in addition to Passive House Certification, the homes will also meet the DOE Zero Energy Ready Homes requirements as well as EPA Indoor AirPLUS, EPA Energy Star Homes, and the NYSEKDA Low Rise New



Construction Program. Throughout construction the Passive House program requirements will be reviewed with the team and any construction issues will be identified to achieve the stringent air tightness requirements. The first buildings will be complete and occupied in the fall of 2018 with final completion in 2019.