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Village Centre in Brewer Pursuing Passive House Certification

(Brewer, ME – May 15, 2015) – Community Housing of Maine (CHOM) is pursuing Passive House Certification for Village Centre, a 48-unit affordable housing development for working families in Brewer. When complete, Village Centre will be among the largest Passive House developments in the country – if certified it will be the largest Passive House multifamily development in the country at completion. A ground breaking ceremony has been scheduled for Wednesday, May 13th, at 10:00 am at the property.



The Development Team is pursuing Passive House Certification for the 54,400-square-foot building under the Passive House Institute US (PHIUS) standards, and is participating in a pilot program. The team is seeking to attain this ambitious certification while staying within the typical budget of an affordable housing development in Maine. This is no easy task, because one

of the principal challenges is staying under the cost cap imposed by MaineHousing, the Maine State Housing Authority. To do this, the team set aggressive energy targets early on, and evaluated a multitude of high performance systems, including HVAC systems, wall and roofing insulation, and energy recovery ventilation systems seeking the most cost effective.

CHOM is committed to sustainable building design and construction not only for reasons of energy efficiency, but also for reasons of indoor air quality and natural lighting, which residents appreciate. “Sustainable building makes economic sense, contributes to better buildings and happier tenants, produces lower operating costs, and improves market appeal,” said Erin Cooperrider, Development Director for CHOM.

Village Centre, CHOM’s pioneering Passive House effort, will be the embodiment of all that CHOM staff and its project team have learned about good design, energy efficiency, and thermal comfort over the last decade as its projects have progressed through MaineHousing’s green design standards, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), to the rigorous standards of Passive House construction. Ultimately, it is the families who come home to Village Centre who will benefit from the process.

CHOM has retained Thornton Tomasetti to manage the PHIUS process and work, CWS Architects, Bennett Engineering, Becker Structural Engineering, and Wright-Ryan Construction as Construction Manager-at Risk in developing the plans and specifications.



Village Centre will be a new construction project, located on land formerly occupied by the State Street School. Located at 266 Center Street, the project will contain 48 units in one, three-story elevator building. The unit mix will be 21 one-bedroom units, 17 two-bedroom units, and 10 three-bedroom units. Village Centre will include a community playground and garden space, a central laundry facility, community space, bicycle storage, and office and program space. The project location is close to traditional “downtown” commercial points, shopping, professional

services, medical services, and employment opportunities. The Brewer recreation center, swimming pool and ball fields are located in the next block. The project will also support and promote the use of public transportation by constructing a sheltered bus stop on the existing route down State Street, and a designated, curbed pull-off zone in the street, allowing the bus to stop without holding up traffic.

“We are very excited about launching this project in Brewer,” said Cooperrider. “The City of Brewer has been phenomenal to work with – positive, efficient, and forward-thinking. We really could not have done this without their proactive help.”

Village Centre is scheduled to begin construction in May 2015, and will be completed by March 31, 2015. MaineHousing, Northern New England Housing Investment Fund, and TD Bank are providing construction and permanent financing for the project. TD Charitable Foundation Housing for Everyone grant funding is also included in the project.

About Community Housing of Maine

Community Housing of Maine (CHOM) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides advocacy, supportive housing, community inclusion, and stability for homeless and special needs populations across the state. CHOM develops, owns, and maintains high quality, affordable, service-enriched housing for people with low incomes and disabilities. Founded in 1993, CHOM has become the largest supportive housing developer in Maine with some 78 housing sites in 33 communities spanning 12 counties, creating over 699 units of low-income and special needs housing. CHOM has provided stable homes to thousands of disadvantaged people. To learn more, visit www.chomhousing.org. Find CHOM on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CHOMhousing and Twitter at www.twitter.com/CHOMhousing.

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