



City of Portsmouth Hosts Groundbreaking Event For Permanent Housing For Homeless Adults

Portsmouth, VA – (December 7, 2009) The City of Portsmouth will host a groundbreaking ceremony on December 9th at 11 a.m. to kick off development of The South Bay Apartments, 60 studio apartments for formerly homeless single adults, at 1600 South Street in downtown. This development project by developer, Virginia Supportive Housing (VSH), is scheduled to open in late 2010.

Confirmed speakers include representatives from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development, Portsmouth Mayor James W. Holley III, and Portsmouth Redevelopment and Housing Authority Chairman, William Kline.

The localities of Portsmouth, Chesapeake, Norfolk, and Virginia Beach will provide funding and rental subsidies for the project and the Portsmouth Redevelopment and Housing Authority donated the land. Additional funding sources include \$4.5 million from Virginia Community Development Corporation for Low Income Housing Tax Credits, loans from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, and grants from The Norfolk Foundation, Beasley Foundation, and Portsmouth Community Foundation. Total development costs will be between \$6.5 and \$7 million.

South Bay Apartments will be the non-profit organization's third permanent supportive housing project of this type in South Hampton Roads that will assist the four participating localities in finding permanent solutions to ending homelessness. The other two are Gosnold Apartments in Norfolk and Cloverleaf Apartments in Virginia Beach.

Residents will sign leases and pay 30% of their income in rent. The minimum monthly payment from a resident is \$50. On-site supportive services will be available to help residents stabilize and improve their health, incomes, and housing stability and increase their self-sufficiency. Forty-two South Bay units will be reserved for Portsmouth residents and six units each for residents of the remaining three localities.

Each of the 60 studio apartments, approximately 380 square feet in size, will include a bed, dresser, table, chair, kitchenette, and a full bathroom. Eight of the units will be completely accessible. The 35,000 square-foot building will have an extensive security system and off-street parking. In addition to apartments, the newly constructed property will contain a community room, laundry facilities, a front desk, staff offices, a computer room, and a fitness room for residents. The front desk will be staffed 16 hours per day with a resident manager on duty at night.

Efficiency Housing of South Hampton Roads (EHSR), a regional homeless planning committee coordinated by The Planning Council, invited VSH to develop permanent supportive housing in the region. VSH opened Gosnold Apartments in December 2006, Cloverleaf Apartments in October 2008, and also hopes to develop studio apartments for homeless single adults in Chesapeake in the future.

Ward Robinette, President of Towne Bank-Portsmouth and a member of VSH's Hampton Roads Council of Advocates, will also launch the \$180,000 South Bay Adopt-A-Room Fundraising Campaign at the groundbreaking event to raise funds for one year of supportive services and furniture costs for each of the 60 apartments. **See Adopt-A-Room details in separate attachment.**

For more information about South Bay Apartments, contact Barbara Barnes at 757.373.8288 or barnesbarbaraf@gmail.com. **South Bay brochures and press kits will be available at the event.**

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