

PEQUANNOCK

NewBridge's project adds 12 affordable housing units

BY STEVE JANOSKI
Staff Writer

NewBridge Services Inc. recently celebrated the opening of its Evans Place project, which featured the remodeling and opening of three different buildings as affordable housing rental units.

The buildings were once the company's administrative offices, said Nina McCormack, the director of development and marketing for NewBridge, which is a non-profit mental health services agency that provides services throughout Morris and Passaic counties.

"We had the opportunity to either sell it to a developer or give it back for the public good," McCormack said. "(We) made the decision to do something good with it."

The 11 units, which had their grand opening on Dec. 7, include eight efficiencies, two one-bedroom apartments, and one two-bedroom apartment.

A press release stated that the efficiencies and the one-bedroom apartment will provide permanent supportive housing to 10 individuals who are recovering from mental illness, while the two-bedroom units will serve an adult parent recovering from mental illness who is living with dependent children.

"We've found that people really wanted individual space as opposed to group homes," said McCormack. "And (the apartments) are beautiful."

Robert Parker, NewBridge's executive director, said in a press release, "The township has embraced affordable housing as an asset for this community."

The project cost approximately \$2.9 million, and funding came from a variety of sources, including the NJ Housing Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA), the



One of the three Evans Place properties owned by NewBridge Services. The buildings will provide affordable housing to those recovering from mental illness.

Morris County Community HOME Development Fund, and the United Way of Morris County.

The HFMA, which is an affiliate of the state Department of Community Affairs, provided \$2.4 million in construction and permanent financing.

"The opening of Evans Place symbolizes tremendous progress for the Pompton Plains community," said HMFA Executive Director Anthony Marchetta in a press release.

The Pequannock Township Council contributed \$100,000 to the project from its Affordable Housing Trust Fund, and the Pequannock Township Senior Citizens Corporation gave \$150,000.

One possible benefit to Pequan-

nock comes in that the project raises Pequannock's number of affordable housing units.

Although few know the future of the state's Council on Affordable Housing (COAH), if Pequannock must build more units, the 11 units can count toward its obligation if necessary.

The properties will be administered and maintained by NewBridge.

McCormack said that with its senior, youth, counseling, and substance programs, NewBridge impacted nearly 12,000 residents in Passaic and Morris counties last year.

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