

Government Update is a quarterly publication of the Columbia Housing Authority, Columbia, South Carolina for the elected officials of Richland County and the City of Columbia, South Carolina.

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CHA has award winning year!

The Columbia Housing Authority (CHA) had an outstanding 2003-2003 fiscal year, winning the following prestigious housing awards:

- * NAHRO Award of Merit for T.S. Martin Homes
- * NAHRO Award of Merit for The Door Project
- * CAHEC Best Family Development Award for T.S. Martin Homes
- * SERC-NAHRO Human Service Award for the Door Project
- * South Carolina State Housing Authority Achievement Award for T.S. Martin

Update on the Hendley Homes Planning Process

Open space, economic development and design compatibility were common themes at the Hendley Homes Planning Workshop #2 which was held on May 22 to gather public input on the future of the Hendley Homes site off Rosewood Drive.

More than 100 concerned residents attended the workshop to contribute their ideas to the development process. During the meeting, participants were divided into six groups of 10 to 12 persons and instructed to use paper, ribbon and a map of the existing land use to create a 'collage' capturing a vision for the future of the area.

Based on the ideas generated by the collage exercise, Urban Collage, the group hired by the CHA to oversee the planning process, has strived to incorporate as many of the following elements as possible into the master plan for the Hendley site.

- * Provide open space and enhanced connectivity
- * Provide a range of housing on and near the site
- * Revitalize commercial uses on Rosewood Drive
- * Provide economic development opportunities along the Spine Road
- * Include key neighborhood facilities at strategic locations
- * Design excellence and compatibility with the surrounding neighborhoods

These recommendations formed the framework for assembling a draft concept plan. They will also be instrumental in detailed discussions on the specific site development program.



The next public workshop has been scheduled for Thursday, August 21, at 6:30 p.m. at Rosewood Baptist Church, 2901 Rosewood Drive.

Left: Columbia residents provide input during a Hendley Homes planning workshop.

COLUMBIA HOUSING AUTHORITY

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A publication for the elected officials of Richland County and the City of Columbia, South Carolina.

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Jagers Terrace Homes for Sale

The Columbia Housing Authority has an exciting homeownership opportunity available to low-income families in the Midlands. Any family with an annual income of at least \$18,500 is eligible to purchase a home in Jagers Terrace, a CHA homeownership community located off Barhamville Road, and receive up to \$20,000 in free down payment money.

Although the homes at Jagers Terrace are already affordable with a price tag of just \$80,000 for a 3-bedroom brick home, the availability of down payment assistance puts the homes within financial reach of a greater number of low-income families. Families who take advantage of this opportunity are not required to repay the down payment assistance as long as they reside in the home for the designated number years.

In order to be eligible, a family must:

- * Complete a homeownership application
- * Complete 14 hours of homeownership training
- * Meet with the CHA's consumer credit counselor
- * Obtain pre-approval from a financial institution
- * Meet with the CHA's Homeownership Counselor to complete the application for Home Funds.



There are currently 14 houses still available in the Jagers Terrace community, and the CHA hopes to sell them all before October 31. After that date, the Home Funds, which are the source of the down payment assistance, will no longer be available.

Anyone who is interested in the program should call (803) 254-3886 ext. 220 for more information.

Left: One of the homes available for sale in Jagers Terrace.

Everything you ever wanted to know about HOPE VI

The former Saxon Homes site is abuzz with activity as construction of the Elder Cottages continues to progress and the newly selected master developer, The Communities Group (TCG), enters the final planning phases for the remainder of the site.

Several years have passed since the Columbia Housing Authority (CHA) was approved for a 26 million HOPE VI grant that paved the way for the demolition of Saxon Homes and will fund the construction of the new Celia Saxon community. In recent months, the CHA has received many requests for information about the status of the revitalization project, the history of Saxon Homes, and how it all came to be. The next few paragraphs will attempt to provide an overview of the history of the original community and what the future holds.

The history of Saxon Homes:

Construction of the original Saxon Homes community began on March 27, 1952 and was completed on April 15, 1953. The community consisted of 63 residential buildings that housed 400 apartment units and one administrative building. In the 1970s, a day care center was added to the site.

The community was named after Celia Dial Saxon, a well-known and dedicated educator in the state of South Carolina.

How HOPE VI came to be:

In September of 1999, the CHA was approved for a 26 million HOPE VI grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to demolish Saxon Homes and replace it with a neighborhood featuring a variety of housing types and retail stores.

What happened to all of the families in Saxon Homes?

In preparation for the revitalization effort, the CHA began relocating families from Saxon Homes in the Spring of 2000. Families who were relocated had the option of receiving a Section 8 voucher or

moving into another conventional public housing unit. The CHA provided each family with funds to offset moving costs.

The CHA has continued to monitor the whereabouts of each of the relocated families, and as housing opportunities become available in the new Celia Saxon community, those families will have the first right of refusal.

The CHA has been recognized in several national housing publications for its sensitivity in relocating Saxon Homes families, and on multiple occasions has advised other housing authorities on how to oversee relocation activities.

The demolition of Saxon Homes:

In September of 2000, once the relocation of families was complete, the CHA commenced with the demolition of Saxon Homes.

Completion of the first phase of HOPE VI - the opening of the T.S. Martin Community:

The first phase of the HOPE VI revitalization process came to fruition on August 20, 2002, with the opening of the T.S. Martin Community—a neighborhood of 35 single-family homes. As residents were chosen to occupy the new community, the CHA kept its promise to give former Saxon Homes residents the first opportunity to move into developments that resulted from the HOPE VI process. Every family that moved into T.S. Martin was a former resident of Saxon Homes.

The T.S. Martin Community was not a part of the original HOPE VI plan. It was included later in the fall of 1999 when the City of Columbia donated an unused part of T.S. Martin Park to the CHA.

Current HOPE VI construction projects:

On May 20, 2003, the CHA began constructing the first units on the actual Saxon Homes site. The ten elder

cottages, which will house former Saxon Homes residents over the age of 50, are located on the corner of Elmwood Avenue and Oak Street.

The idea for the Elder Cottages came from the public hearings that were held as part of the HOPE VI planning process. The input gathered from the meetings indicated that there was significant interest among members of the community in providing additional housing options for seniors. Specifically, they wanted single family detached housing for individuals over 50. As a result, the CHA made a concerted effort to include that type of

housing in the final plan for the Saxon Homes site. The design for the elder cottages came from focus groups with former Saxon Homes residents who would eventually be eligible to live in the cottages.

Who is the developer for HOPE VI?

Although nearly four years have passed since the CHA was approved for the HOPE VI Grant, there have been many challenges to overcome in order to move the project forward. One of the largest obstacles was selecting a new master developer after the original developer was

removed from the project. However, that obstacle was cleared in June of 2003 when the CHA signed a new master developer agreement with The Communities Group (TCG).

Now that a new developer is officially on board, development of the Saxon Homes site should move forward quickly.

It is important to note that, in an effort to keep the HOPE VI process moving during negotiations with TCG, the CHA acted as the developer for the T.S. Martin community and the elder cottages.

The new Wellness Center

One of the most exciting aspects of the new Celia Saxon Neighborhood will be the City of Columbia's new Wellness Center. In the original HOPE VI application, the CHA had agreed to cover the existing pool at Drew Park. However, as the City began to study the feasibility of the plan, it was determined that the age and condition of the pool did not warrant such a major investment.

At that point, the City began exploring other options, and the concept for the new Drew Park Wellness Center was the result. As the concept for the wellness center was developed, it became apparent that in order for the project to work, it would need to be moved closer to Harden Street to facilitate traffic patterns and to make it more accessible to the entire neighborhood. The CHA agreed to this plan, and the site plan was shifted to allow for the change.

The new Wellness Center will feature an indoor track and pool, weight and fitness rooms, a gymnasium, meeting rooms and much more. The City's current plan calls for a groundbreaking on the Wellness Center late in the fall of 2003.

Left: The current site plan for the Saxon Homes site.



Facts & Figures

The following figures apply to the "expanded Saxon footprint" which consists of the 20 +/- acres of the original Saxon Homes site plus contiguous parcels along Oak Street and Slighs Avenue.

Breakdown of units to be built:

- Homeownership: 93
- Public Housing rental units: 93
- Tax Credit rental units: 39
- Rental Units (probably market rate): 32

TOTAL Rental Units: 164

TOTAL Homeownership Units: 93

TOTAL units on the footprint: 257

Total investment by the CHA in the expanded Saxon footprint:

- CHA investment (all HUD sources, including HOPE VI funds): \$16,200,000
- Leveraged funds (tax credit, city contribution, FHLB, Mortgages): 15,300,000
- Total: \$31,500,000

The additional HOPE VI grant funds are expended and/or budgeted on demolition, resident relocation, resident supportive services, administrative costs, acquisition and soft costs such as architectural and engineering.

Units to be built **OUTSIDE** of the expanded Saxon Homes footprint:

- Market rate rental units: 14
- Market rate homes: 132
- T.S. Martin: 35

TOTAL units outside of footprint: 181

The Breakdown of total number of units to be built as a result of HOPE VI (inside and outside the expanded Saxon Homes footprint) is as follows:

- Homeownership: 225
- Rental: 213
- **TOTAL units to be constructed: 438**

The total value of the investment, to include the in-fill units in the surrounding neighborhood outside of the expanded footprint, is estimated at \$58,000,000.