

CITY OF NEW BRITAIN



Office of the Mayor

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City of New Britain celebrates new housing to combat homelessness

NEW BRITAIN— The Connecticut Department of Housing has awarded a Competitive Housing Assistance for Multifamily Properties (CHAMP) grant of \$2.145 million to fund the construction of 11 units of permanent supportive housing on North Street in the city.

The funds were part of \$28 million in CHAMP grants announced by Governor Dannel P. Malloy and the Department of Housing in late March, and were awarded to the Friendship Service Center, which will own and manage the new building. News of the grant was shared at a press conference hosted today by New Britain Mayor Erin Stewart and the Housing Committee of Building Hope Together: New Britain's Permanent Work Plan to End Homelessness.

Located at 180 North Street, the three-story apartment building will provide 11 efficiency and one-bedroom units of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals with mental health and addiction issues, with two units designated for veterans. Case management staff employed by the Friendship Service Center will be based on-site to provide services to the residents. Construction will begin in summer 2016 and finish one year later, and the building should be fully occupied by winter 2017.

“This is an awesome new opportunity to assist with permanent supportive housing those the Friendship Center has had the privilege of serving for almost 50 years,” said Ellen Perkins Simpson, executive director of the Friendship Service Center. “Thanks to the wonderful support from the state, the city, the American Savings Foundation, and many others, these homes will offer hope to those still living on the streets and for our ultimate goal of ending homelessness.” She added that the building will be named “Howey House” in honor of Greg Howey, Chairman of the Board of Okay Industries and a longtime leader of The Mayor's Permanent Workplan to End Homelessness.

The City of New Britain has committed \$ \$258,829 in HUD HOME funding to support the project, and arranged for the acquisition of the land it will occupy.

“We have made great strides in tackling the issue of homelessness in New Britain by connecting individuals with the services they need to get back on their feet. The construction of this new housing and combined service center will continue our efforts to ensure that everyone who has a home has access to one,” said Mayor Stewart.

A \$250,000 challenge grant from the American Savings Foundation enabled the Friendship Service Center to raise an equal amount from other private funders, including Webster Bank, the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain, the Liberty Bank Foundation, Hospital of Central Connecticut, and numerous individual donors.

“The board of directors of the American Savings Foundation saw this challenge grant as an opportunity to demonstrate the breadth of support for this project in the greater New Britain community,” said Maria Falvo, President and CEO of the American Savings Foundation. “The tremendous response from 20 organizations and individual donors who came together to meet this challenge helped make the proposal for state funding so strong.”

David Berto of Housing Enterprises, a longstanding member of the Housing Committee, was instrumental in managing the project. Designed by architects Schadler Selnau Associates, the building will be constructed by Naek Construction Company.

The neighborhood where Howey House will be located lies within the North-Oak Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ), and care was taken in the design of the building to ensure it would fit within the character of the neighborhood. “The North-Oak Neighborhood Revitalization Zone is committed, with other agencies such as the Friendship Center, to create social and economic progress in the North-Oak region of New Britain,” said Yvette Ghannam, president of the North-Oak NRZ. “We hope this new building will bring just that with the ambition to be part of a vibrant, progressive and peaceful community.”

“We are so thrilled and so grateful to everyone who has made this project possible,” said Ellen Perkins Simpson. “The success of Howey House is a demonstration that our community can and will come together to put an end to homelessness. We won’t stop until the job is done.”

About:

The **Department of Housing** (DOH) strengthens and revitalizes communities by promoting affordable housing opportunities. The Department seeks to eliminate homelessness and to catalyze the creation and preservation of quality, affordable housing to meet the needs of all individuals and families statewide to ensure that Connecticut continues to be a great place to live and work. The DOH works in concert with municipal leaders, public agencies, community groups, local housing authorities, and other housing developers in the planning and development of affordable homeownership and rental housing units, the preservation of existing multi-family housing developments, community revitalization and financial and other support for our most vulnerable residents through our funding and technical support programs.

Building Hope Together: New Britain’s Permanent Work Plan to End Homelessness had its roots in 2007, when Mayor Timothy Stewart and other community leaders developed a 10 Year Plan to end homelessness in New Britain. Seven years later, Mayor Erin Stewart led a revision of the original plan to better address the needs of the homeless population and service providers. The shared vision of Building Hope Together is to make New Britain a place of wide opportunity, with businesses able to employ all who are able to work, including individuals who are homeless. Its goal is to build a community where all residents find economic opportunity and a place to call home.

The **Friendship Service Center** of New Britain is in its 48th year of living out its mission to provide friendship and direct service to the poor and needy of Central Connecticut, including the ownership and operation of housing for the poor.. Howey House joins The Virginia C. Davis Friendship Center at 241 Arch Street, The American Savings Foundation Building at 85 Arch Street, and the Ellen Perkins Simpson Building at 59 Arch Street, adding 11 units to its portfolio of project based permanent supportive housing.

American Savings Foundation was established by the board of directors of American Savings Bank to give back to the towns and communities served by the company for 140 years. It remains a permanent, independent charitable endowment dedicated to strengthening the community by supporting education, human services, and the arts, with a special emphasis on the needs of children, youth, and families. Since its inception in 1995, the American Savings Foundation has contributed a combined \$45 million in grants to local nonprofit organizations, and in college scholarships to hard-working students in need of financial support.

Contact:

Ellen Perkins Simpson
Friendship Service Center

