

## **N.C. Company Eyes Housing On Reservoir**

VIC BRADSHAW

PUBLICATION: Daily News-Record (Harrisonburg, VA)

April 16, 2016

HARRISONBURG — A North Carolina company has applied for building permits to begin building an affordable-housing apartment complex on the site of a former baseball field near Reservoir Street in Rockingham County.

Plans submitted by Charlotte-based SEGM VA LLC to build 88 garden-style apartments are being reviewed by county officials. The complex, located across from Fieldale Place, will be known as Robinson Park.

Jen Surber, the company's managing partner, said the complex will have 12 one-bedroom apartments, 44 two-bedroom units, 32 three-bedroom apartments and a clubhouse/community building. WB Properties & Construction, headquartered in Calabash, N.C., is the general contractor for the \$11.6 million project.

Construction is expected to begin in May or June, she said, and take about 10 months to complete.

Surber and her partners have multiple affordable-housing projects under their belts, including several in Virginia. They include recently opened, 48-unit Lilly Ridge in Ruckersville as well as a complex in Chesapeake, and projects in Newport News and Chesterfield County are about to begin.

Statistics, she said, led the developers to the Harrisonburg area.

"We believe there's a need there based on market-study data we've received," said Surber.

The project is being partially financed by tax credits allocated by the Virginia Housing Development Authority. She said the Raleigh, N.C.-based Community Affordable Housing Equity Corp. is buying the credits for \$7.9 million.

Tenants will have to meet earnings qualifications to rent at Robinson Park. Surber said 44 units would be rented to people earning 60 percent or less of the median income for the area and 44 would be for people earning 50 percent or less of the median.

The median income figure to be used when leasing begins net year hasn't been set, but the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development now uses \$58,400 as the median for Rockingham County.

Rent rates aren't set because all the financing isn't settled, Surber said, but she expects one-bedroom units to lease for \$375 to \$475, two-bedroom apartments to rent for \$550 to \$675, and three bedrooms to go for \$750 to \$760.

### 'Green' Project

Though Robinson Park will be an affordable-housing complex, Surber said it will be built with quality materials. The apartments will be 80 percent brick and 20 percent Hardiewood or SmartSide siding.

"They're going to look market rate," she said.

Surber Development and Consulting, owned entirely by Surber, and HEGM Corp. are the two corporate entities that comprise SEGM VA.

Surber said HEGM's partners are Gary Ellis, Tim Gunderman and Mel Melton, who own Charlotte-based GEM Management. GEM, which manages approximately 22,000 affordable-housing units in seven Southeastern states, will manage Robinson Park.

Indian Trail Farm LLC, owned by Terry and Lorri Taylor, acquired the Robinson Park property from Rockingham County by swapping it for 75 acres to be used as part of Albert Long Park. In January, the Taylors sold the land to its current owners for just more than \$1 million.

Thirty-two ground-floor units will meet VHDA design standards for physically impaired tenants, Surber said, with nine meeting the most stringent accessibility standards.

"Not everyone is paying attention to the needs of those folks," she said. "They may be looking for units that they haven't found yet."

The apartment complex, Surber said, will be designed with energy efficiency and the environment in mind and built to the highest standards recognized by the EarthCraft green building standards.

Prospective residents interested in being put on the waiting list to rent a unit can email their contact information to Tammy Barringer at [tammylbarringer@gmail.com](mailto:tammylbarringer@gmail.com).

Contact Vic Bradshaw at 574-6279 or [vbradshaw@dnronline.com](mailto:vbradshaw@dnronline.com)