



SISTERS
of CHARITY
NEW YORK

Vision

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 1, Winter 2006

Meeting Today's Needs: Affordable Housing

Eric Feldmann

Over the past 20 years the Sisters of Charity of New York have created a growing presence in providing affordable housing to the elderly and special populations. Today the congregation operates eight housing projects with 466 apartment units. The projects span a wide geographic area in New York, from Staten Island to Manhattan and Rockland County.

All of the housing has been developed in furtherance of the Sisters of Charity mission, "to reveal God's love to all in need, especially the poor."

The four projects on Staten Island are known as "202's," a reference to the federal regulation section which provides 100% of the development fund, and then funds operations so residents need spend no more than 30% of their income for housing. The income level for individuals is currently \$22,000 or less and for couples \$25,100 or less. Applicants must be 62 years of age or over. The projects include Joseph House in West Brighton with 75 units; St. Vincent's Manor in Port Richmond with 72 units; St. Elizabeth's Manor in Seaview with 80 units and Sr. Elizabeth Boyle Manor in Stapleton with 65 units.

The three Manhattan projects are Casa Cecilia in Washington Heights with 35 units for families; Seton House in Harlem with 16 units for families and Fox House, also in Harlem,

continued on page 6

In this issue:

- Life Experience and Faith Sharing Association
- Responding to Natural Disasters
- Sister Kathleen Professes Final Vows

Web Highlight:

To read this issue's History and Heritage story visit

www.scny.org



*Staff and residents of Fox House
East 117 Street, New York City.*

which is a Tier II Shelter, serving 17 families. All three of these housing programs respond to the needs of the formerly homeless.

The newest project is Seton Village in Nanuet with 106 units for those 55 years of age and older. Rents are based on income and currently range from \$630 per month to \$956 per month.

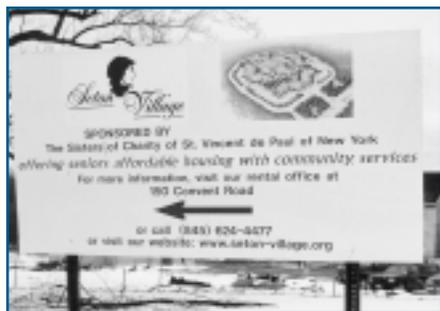
At each of the housing sites social service support is offered to meet particular resident needs and to assist in tying residents to community based services.

Sisters of Charity are active in the day-to-day operation of the housing. Sister Sheila Finucane currently serves as the social service coordinator at Sister Elizabeth Boyle Manor; Sister Marie Trinita Flood serves at Seton House as the resident liaison; Sisters Kathleen Gilbride and Eileen Walsh, R.N. are at Seton Village as the executive director and resident services coordinator, respectively; and Sr. Anita Miriam Lavelle is receptionist at Seton Village. Sister Florence Speth serves as the executive director of Fox House and chairs the Boards of Directors of Casa Cecilia and Seton House. She is also spearheading the development of new housing for mentally ill mothers, with children – an Assembly initiative of the Sisters of Charity.

A number of sisters are also involved as board members, including Sister Miriam Kevin Phillips who serves as chair of the Sisters of Charity Housing Development Corporation established in 1998 as the corporate parent of many of the housing companies.

It also is responsible for housing management and undertakes the development of new housing programs.

New projects can take many years to develop and may ultimately not become realities. The Sisters



Sign erected during construction phase of Seton Village



Dedication of Seton House, Lexington Avenue, NYC

of Charity are continually pursuing new housing opportunities. Currently, in addition to the Assembly project, the congregation is seeking to develop a 19-unit facility for the chronically mentally ill; three additional “202” projects with a total of 220 units; 120 market-rate rental apartments for seniors and 49 units of single family homes for seniors for purchase. The single-family homes, one of the “202” projects with 80 units, and the market-rate rental apartments are proposed to be combined on a single site with appropriate amenities including a community center. The complex would be known as St. Vincent’s Village.

Besides offering a basic human necessity, affordable housing has provided other possibilities for many of the families. It has enabled some persons to further their education, thus opening the door for the opportunity of a better job. Children’s education is stabilized because of consistent attendance in the same neighbor school. In addition, tutoring is often available to improve grades and self-respect. Affordable safe housing offers more than four walls and a roof. It contributes greatly to a better quality of life for all of us.

For further information regarding the housing programs – present and planned – or to apply for housing, call the Sisters of Charity Housing Development Corporation at 718-477-6803.

Eric Feldmann is the Executive Director of the Sisters of Charity Housing Development Corporation, overseeing all housing projects with Sister Jane Iannucelli.

- To be involved in weekly outreach to people who live on the streets and around the parks
- To work together with people who are homeless, formerly homeless, and advocates to address the systems and structures that keep people oppressed, and to work toward their transformation
- To address the drug epidemic in a focused way, and to deal with it on personal, communal and structural levels.

James summed up how LEFSA helps by quoting

Langston Hughes about an injured bird. He said, “That is what life for me was like being homeless. I remembered sitting on the steps of Franklin Men’s Shelter watching a bird that was hurt that could not fly. He was trapped, hovering in a corner with fear, and vulnerable to everything and everybody. This is a very lonely and isolated situation for me and this bird to be in.

“Life and Faith Sharing helped me to dream again and heal through our life and faith sharing gatherings in the shelter. This Empowerment Model helps you to take the steps that are necessary that eventually helped me to fly again.”