



Conservation Services Group

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**VILLAGE AT HOSPITAL HILL APARTMENTS ACHIEVE
EPA'S HIGHEST RATING FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY;**

Certified homes are expected to save residents
35 percent on electric and heating bills

WESTBOROUGH, Mass., April 13, 2006 – Developers of The Village at Hospital Hill in Northampton, Mass., today announced 33 affordable housing units, the Hilltop Apartments, have received the ENERGY STAR® Homes certification. According to Conservation Services Group (CSG), the apartments far exceed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s standards for energy efficiency, with home energy rating scores of more than 90, which translates into a "Five Star Plus" designation. This group of homes represents the first phase of residential buildings at Hospital Hill. An additional 150 units are also being built to meet ENERGY STAR Homes standards.

The Village at Hospital Hill is a 126-acre mixed-use development located at the site of the former state hospital. The 33 certified Hilltop Apartments opened in Feb. 2006 and are 80 percent occupied. As a result of meeting the ENERGY STAR standards, residents will save 35 percent a year on their heating and energy bills. Said Northampton Mayor Mary Clare Higgins, "Building these homes to ENERGY STAR standards is yet another positive development at the Village at Hospital Hill. We have recently seen energy efficiency arise as an important goal in the current public planning meetings for a sustainable Northampton. On behalf of the city, I thank everyone involved for having the foresight to make this project an environmentally sound one."

The Hilltop Apartments are comprised of one-, two- and three- bedroom units and feature ENERGY STAR appliances and lighting, low-e argon windows, high grade insulation, high efficiency HVAC systems and extensive air sealing. CSG tested the units with sophisticated diagnostic equipment including a "blower door" test that checks for air leakage.

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Village at Hospital Hill Certification/2

The ENERGY STAR Homes program is a nationally recognized new construction initiative that meets strict criteria set by the EPA for maximum energy efficiency. For nearly a decade, CSG has administered the program in New England and has tested and certified more than 11,000 homes to “ENERGY STAR Homes” specifications. Craig Marden is CSG’s project manager for the Village at Hospital Hill. He attributes the project’s energy efficiency attributes to high density foam insulation and attention to air sealing details by the contractor, Aquadro & Cerruti, of Northampton, Mass. Marden said, “In all of the years we have been doing this, we have never seen a gut rehab achieve such a high efficiency rating. Most homes receive an 86 rating, so achieving numbers of over 90 is exemplary. Our goal is to make the entire Village an ENERGY STAR neighborhood. I think we are well on our way, thanks to the thoroughness and dedication of everyone involved in building this outstanding project.”

The Village at Hospital Hill is a joint project of MassDevelopment and The Community Builders, Inc. (TCB), of Springfield, Mass. Thomas Kegelman, TCB senior project manager for the Hilltop Apartments, said, “Eighteen percent of the pollution in our atmosphere comes from the home, so building to ENERGY STAR standards significantly cuts down on harmful emissions. We are proud to be incorporating the EPA’s guidelines into the residential units at Hospital Hill. It’s not only more cost-effective for the tenants, it’s the right thing to do for the environment.”

Springfield, Mass.-based Dietz and Company Architects, Inc. designed the Hilltop Apartments and will be involved in other phases of the development. Marc Sternick, company vice president, said, “This is an important aspect of the work we do. I am thrilled to be involved in this kind of forward-looking design and I look forward to more of the same in the coming phases of the Village at Hospital Hill.”

Rick Aquadro, president of Aquadro & Cerruti, notes that achieving high energy efficiency for a renovation project is difficult, but necessary. He said, “Meeting these standards is an important part of today’s construction industry and we are working hard to stay on top of the latest building technology.”

The ENERGY STAR Homes program is sponsored in New England by the JMC, a consortium of utility companies and energy efficiency service providers including Berkshire Gas and National Grid. For more information about program, visit www.energystarhomes.com.

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