

Hailey senior housing to break ground in spring

Housing Authority taking applications from people 55 and older

By TONY EVANS

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The Hailey City Council approved last week a planned-unit development application for a 24-unit senior rental housing project on River Street. One- and two-bedroom units in the three-story building will be available to low-income residents ages 55 and older.

"I'm thrilled and grateful," said ARCH Community Housing Trust Executive Director Michelle Griffith in an interview. "Now I'm looking forward to the fun part, which is building it."

The project spent several months in limbo while the city of Hailey worked toward a settlement agreement with Sweetwater developer J. Kevin Adams. The settlement, reached on Monday, Dec. 27, gave clear title to about half an acre of land at 731 River St. for the housing project.

"Because everybody gave a little, the community gained a lot," Griffith said.

The first floor of the housing project will include interior parking, offices and a community space. The building will have 14 one-bedroom units and 10 two-bedroom units and multiple common rooms and spaces. The building will include elevator service and be about 26,600 square feet in size.

The City Council granted ARCH generous waivers to the city's zoning requirements, including a doubling of the housing-unit density allowance, from 12 to 24 units. The city also allowed ARCH to reduce parking space requirements from 36 to 26 spaces.

Twenty-four of the spaces will be covered and enclosed under the apartments. Two parking spaces

will be outside.

The building will be designed to accommodate the elderly and be available to rent to couples making less than 60 percent of the area median income, and singles making less than 50 percent of the area median income.

Under current area median income statistics, supplied each year by the federal government, a double unit will be available to couples earning less than \$37,440 per year, and cost from \$625 to \$700 per month. Single units would be available for a person earning less than \$32,760 per year and cost \$525 to \$600 per month.

While area median income figures change each year, renting terms will be based on area median incomes at the time of lease signing.

Griffith said the Blaine County Housing Authority is taking applications for the housing project. She said 10 people have already applied to for the rental units.

Griffith said the project will cost between \$5.5 million and \$6 million. She said most of the funding will come from low-income housing tax credits, issued by the U.S. Department of the Treasury and administered through the Idaho Housing and Finance Association.

About \$600,000 will be provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and \$500,000 will be provided through a conventional construction loan issued to a limited-liability corporation established by ARCH Community Housing Trust and New Beginnings Housing, a Boise-based private company specializing in affordable housing.

A professional management firm will take the Housing Authority's applications list and begin processing the applications.

A general contractor will be selected for the project in January. Griffith said she expects to break ground in the spring.

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