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An artist's rendering shows what the Conway Pines Senior Apartments will look like when completed. (COURTESY PHOTO)

Conway senior housing has been years in making

Groundbreaking for 30-unit building set for next Friday

By **TOM EASTMAN**
 THE CONWAY DAILY SUN

CONWAY — After years of waiting and stalled attempts to get financing, a groundbreaking ceremony for the three-story, 30-unit Conway Pines Senior Apartments affordable housing rental project is set for Oct. 23 at 2:30 p.m.

The project is located off Route 16 on Poliquin Drive across from the Conway Shurfine Plaza, next to the 32-unit Conway Pines Apartments, which was built as affordable rental housing in 2012.

The new project is intended for those age 62 and older and is expected to be completed by next July or August, says developer Chris Davies of Great Bridge Properties LLC of Manchester.

The general contractor is Gary Chicoine of Chicoine Construction of Weare, who also worked on the adjacent housing project.

Glen Builders of Bartlett did the site work on the first project and will also serve in that capacity with new one.

Work has already begun on the concrete at the site.

The senior housing project received conditional approval from the Conway Planning Board in July 2012. Plans were signed and approved by the town on July 1, 2015.

After two previous attempts in 2012 and 2013, financing was finally obtained in late spring, Davies said.

Financing for the \$5.9 million project is through the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority and a \$462,000 town-sponsored, federally funded Community Development Block Grant that came through the state Community Development Finance Authority to the town.

The main funding source is tax credit equity of \$4.2 million, Davies said, in which tax credits are sold.

Great Bridge Properties will own the building for at least 30 years, according to the company, and Northway Bank will provide a \$2.9 million construction loan.

Davies said the project has been worth the wait as it allowed for the creation of partnerships with local service providers.

"We were able to bring together our community partners who will work with the senior residents to bring services on a daily basis," he said.

Former Mount Washington Valley Housing Coalition director Theresa Kennett said last spring that one reason Great Bridge was denied financing its first two tries was lack of support services in the rural area.

Kennett said she discussed the project with others,

including MWV Economic Council Executive Director Jac Cuddy, who recommended pulling together existing services to better meet the state's expectations.

She also spoke with Visiting Nurse Home Care and Hospice Director Sandy Ruka, George Cleveland of the Gibson Center for Senior Services and Jim Lyons and Bob Lenzi of Banners Restaurant.

The result of those discussions is that Banners will deliver a noon meal a day for those who request it from a special menu, with the Gibson Center for Senior Services also supplying Meals on Wheels.

"It really evolved into a win/win: By providing these services, we were able to score enough points to be awarded the financing but also are providing housing and services that are truly needed in the Conway area," Davies said. "We realized when we started doing this that this is what the community needed: not just housing, but services the residents will use."

Banners, Visiting Nurses, Gibson Center

Visiting Nurses will be service coordinator for the residents, Davies said.

"This is not an assisted living building. But if the Visiting Nurses deem that someone needs care, they can guide them," said Davies. "I am thrilled to have Visiting Nurses and Banners as part of this project."

Ruka said Visiting Nurses will have an office on site. "We will help with case management and home care services that we normally provide, and we will be able to recommend referral services," she said this week.

The Gibson Center will provide bus transportation. As the county ages, the need for affordable, handicapped accessible rental housing will grow, all noted.

"Carroll County in the next 15 years is going to be the oldest in the state," according to Ruka. "This is a big step in meeting the needs of the community."

Kennett said: "This will enable people who worked and spent their lives in this region, building it up, to continue to call it home."

Davies credited town and state officials for helping to bring the project to fruition, as well as the MWV Housing Coalition, Visiting Nurses, the Gibson Center and others. He also saluted former property owner Ed Poliquin, the onetime owner of Glen Builders.

"This has been a tremendous community project," he said.

Like the adjacent rental project, the senior facility will be built according to "green standards," said Davies. Unlike Conway Pines Apartments, however, its primary source for heat will be a high-efficiency gas heating system.

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Pete Hamilton, superintendent for Gary Chicoine Construction, said Tuesday they are getting as much done as possible before the ground freezes at the senior housing project in Conway. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

HOUSING from page 8

Both complexes will be managed by Stewart Property Management of Bedford, which manages more than 110 properties in New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine and Massachusetts, as well as several other Great Bridge projects.

The apartments will be somewhat smaller than those at the workforce rentals next-door, Davies said. "But they're still nice, spacious units with full decks in each unit. Most senior complexes do not have decks, but I always ask what would I like were I to be a resident of a complex — so yes, we are having decks."

The complex will consist of 24 one-bedroom apartments and six two-bedroom units. Rental rates are not yet set, but Davies said he expects the one-bedroom units to rent in the mid-\$700-per-month range and the two-bedroom ones in the mid-\$800s. Rent will include heat and hot water.

Those eligible must qualify under Housing and Urban Devel-

opment median family income limits. HUD median income for Carroll County is \$61,900, with 24 of the units set aside for residents at 60 percent of that level: for a one-person household, the limit is \$30,120, and \$34,380 for a two-person household.

Six of the apartments will be for residents at or below 50 percent of the MFI: \$25,100 for a one-person household and \$28,650 for a two-person household.

A minimum of two apartments at the senior site will be fully handicapped-equipped. All remaining apartments will be adaptable for any handicapped requirements.

Like the neighboring project, the elderly rental facility will be serviced by an elevator, have laundry facilities on each floor and a community room.

A walking trail is to be built around the facility, which will feature multiple community spaces, including a patio seating area.

Great Bridge was created in 2000 to build and renovate affordable housing projects. The

company has built medium-size and large apartment units in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, according to Davies and partner William Caselden.

Past projects include Ossipee Village Apartments, Brookside Place in Rochester, Bellamy Mill Apartments in Dover and Parker Village in Littleton. In addition to new facilities, such as Conway Pines, the company has also renovated old mills, schools and other structures to create apartments.

This will mark Great Bridge's first senior housing rental project, although the company did act as consultants on another project in southern New Hampshire, Davies said.

Applications are being handled by Stewart Property Management, he said, with a waiting list already being compiled.

For more information, call (603) 647-6300 or visit www.greatbridgeproperties.com. To contact Stewart Property Management, call (603) 641-2163 or visit www.stewartproperty.net.

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The senior housing building will go up next to the Conway Pines affordable workforce housing (above). (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)