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Chestnut Hill Realty's investment division

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Through a restructuring in 2007, Chestnut Hill Realty created an investment division to oversee investment strategy and portfolio asset management, as well as the acquisition of new properties. A goal to double CHR's residential portfolio was established, and the division has been making steady progress ever since.

Carl Andersen, treasurer, is responsible for making capital available for maintaining and improving existing assets, as well as acquisitions and development projects. Carl says, "it is my job to make sure capital needs of our existing portfolio are met and cash is available for company growth."

Peter Poras, investment division president, says "we're in an excellent financial position and have the internal infrastructure to support a doubling of the portfolio. We are highly selective about our investments, searching out opportunities in our existing market areas, where volume and proximity can support cost savings." Three such properties meeting those criteria are Brattle Arms in Cambridge, Waterfall Hills in Canton, and Village Green in Plainville. Purchased in 2006 and 2007, 682 apartments were added to the portfolio.

Another strategy focuses on acquisitions that will enhance the value of existing communities. Referred to as PADS, these are investments, often assets adjacent to existing properties that allow for expanded Parking, improved Access, Development of additional units, or Signage. One such purchase included two houses adjacent to Norwest Woods which provided us the opportunity to create a new entry providing improved access, signage, parking, and the possibility of developing additional units.

To identify other potential sites, Stephen Gladstone, senior acquisition manager, met with property managers to familiarize them with the PADS strategy. "We want to build relationships with adjacent property owners," says Stephen, "so they think of CHR first when they are ready to sell."

Also essential to CHR's growth are the extraordinary relationships the company has built with its lenders. "We have worked with many of these lenders for years and they will respond in a timely manner to help us take advantage of opportunities," explains Peter.

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