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Church Community Housing's Sandywoods Farm honored: Donald powers architects provides master plan

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Sandywoods Farm, an affordable, mixed-use agricultural / artists' community, was honored with a merit award in the "Project of the Year: Best Reuse of Land" category at the Multifamily Executive Conference in Las Vegas. The "Best Reuse of Land" award recognizes development projects that have best repositioned land for multifamily use, and/or with specific attention to environmental issues. Present to accept the award was Douglas Kallfelz, AIA, LEED AP, principal at Donald Powers Architects. The project was developed by Church Community Housing Corp.

Sandywoods Farm has been recognized as a development model for rural communities that are struggling to a) combat sprawl while trying to encourage economic growth; b) provide innovative affordable housing options; and c) foster sustainable arts communities as economic generators.

This sustainable land development preserves 150 acres of farm land, with an additional 27-acre clustered community affordable housing, market-rate housing, commercial and mixed-use space all organized around the perimeter of the larger agricultural preserve. The first phase of the project is complete, providing 50 units of affordable artists housing that is 100% occupied, as well as a 9,000 s/f community Grange Hall building, art studio space for resident use, and a commercial village center consisting of three mixed-use buildings including gallery space, retail and a caf   all encouraging residents to buy and sell their goods locally. Residents grow produce in community gardens, which will eventually be sold at an on-site produce market. A 250 kW on-site wind turbine is currently being erected, which will provide energy for the community.

Planning for the project began in 2004, when a local land owner suggested a collaboration with a non-profit housing developer (Church Community Housing Corp.). Donald Powers Architects was commissioned to provide the master plan and all architectural design within this new community. As part of the project's goal to preserve open space and reduce sprawl, the Tiverton Land Trust acquired 94 acres of the original Sandywoods Farm site.

"This project is a powerful example of what can happen when the right people - a town planner, a resident land owner, a non-profit, an arts organization, an architect, and engineers - all come together to solve a problem. In this case, the problem was 'how do we create a new community that provides strong economic development opportunities within a rural context, while also reflecting the best practices in sustainable development on environmental and social levels?'" said project architect Douglas Kallfelz. "We hope that this project provides an example for other rural communities that struggle with similar issues."

Donald Powers Architects is a national, award-winning planning and architecture firm located in Providence, RI. With a growing office of 12 designers, architects and planners, the DPA studio focuses on the design of exceptional communities. The firm's portfolio includes traditional neighborhood design, civic and institutional buildings, commercial, and residential architecture. DPA

has developed a national reputation for distilling the nuances of local character combined with a traditionally inspired view of sustainability, economy and simplicity.

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