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NeighborWorks Housing Solutions breaks ground on adult emergency shelter and supportive housing

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Attleboro, MA In partnership with the Northern Bristol County Assistance Collaborative, Catholic Social Services, Father Bill's & MainSpring, Massachusetts Alliance for Supportive Housing, Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, BayCoast Bank, and the office of representative James Hawkins, NeighborWorks Housing Solutions hosted a ceremony on the site of what will become the first-ever adult emergency shelter and permanent supportive housing development. This project will create a new 18-bed adult emergency shelter and 22 studio apartments with supportive services for chronically homeless individuals. The ceremony took place at 150 Pleasant St.

This project is being completed in memory of Sue Smith, a homeless advocate at CCBC. Construction is expected to be completed in 2024.

NHS was awarded \$5 million in development subsidies from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development coupled with an additional award of state rental subsidies and supportive services for this effort, which represents the majority of the funds required for the project. A \$2 million grant from Massachusetts Alliance for Supportive Housing was given at the event.

For nearly five years, the Northern Bristol County Assistance Collaborative (NBCAC) has advocated for creating an emergency shelter in Attleboro. In 2020, as the pandemic increased the urgency of their efforts, NBCAC asked NeighborWorks Housing Solutions to partner with them to create an emergency shelter to address the current needs of those experiencing homelessness and establish permanent supportive housing to provide a long-term solution to help end homelessness in the community.

In addition to NBCAC, NeighborWorks Housing Solutions is partnering with Catholic Social Services to manage and operate the emergency shelter program; Father Bill's & MainSpring to provide the supportive services for the permanent housing program; BayCoast Bank, a regional community bank that provided a generous grant for project planning and development; and representative Jim Hawkins and his staff, who have actively advocated for the project and secured multiple commitments of critical early funding.

"We started this project with nothing, we didn't even have a bank account, but the team worked tirelessly to bring this development to fruition," said Hawkins. "Housing is an essential component to helping end homelessness in our area. I'm proud of the work everyone has done to get us to this point. I'm looking forward to cutting the ribbon on this property in a year."

In addition to Representative Hawkins, those participating in the ground-breaking included Cathleen DeSimone, mayor of Attleboro; Senator Paul Feeney; Susan Mazzeola, the CEO of Catholic Social Services; and Joyce Tavon, senior director of policy and programs for Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance.

"Groundbreakings are always exciting events," said Robert Corley, CEO of NeighborWorks Housing Solutions. "This one is especially meaningful, as it will help to affect real change for the most vulnerable in Attleboro. We are proud to be part of a project that is not just housing, but actually helping people start over, to heal and stabilize and rebuild their lives and relationships. We are so grateful to the many individuals and organizations who came together to make this day a reality."