

NEWS



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New 85-unit affordable housing community for seniors opens in West St. Pete

December 11, 2024

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BEAR CREEK COMMONS, AN 85-UNIT AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMUNITY FOR SENIORS, OPENED ITS DOORS ON WEDNESDAY | CITY OF ST. PETE

More than 85 seniors earning low-income wages have a new modern apartment in St. Pete to call home.

Earlier today, developer Blue Sky Communities and Park & Eleazer Construction cut the ribbon on the new 85-unit Bear Creek Commons affordable housing complex at **635 64th Street South** in west St. Pete, adjacent to Bear Creek, a 2.7-mile stream that flows to Boca Ciega Bay.

The property was previously home to Grace Connection Church before construction commenced in 2023.

“Affordable housing for all St. Petersburg residents is a top priority of my administration,” Mayor Ken Welch said in a statement.

“We know that stable housing creates strong neighborhoods and a thriving community. Bear Creek Commons is a shining example of how public-private partnerships can successfully address the needs of our most vulnerable residents. By providing safe, secure housing for seniors, we are not just meeting a need—we’re strengthening the fabric of our entire community. This is only the beginning, and we remain

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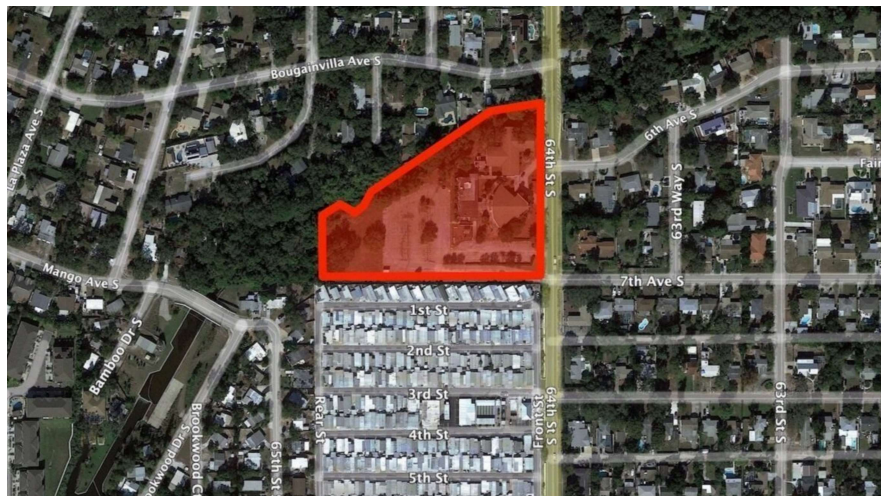
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committed to expanding affordable housing opportunities for all.”

The community is fully occupied and all of the residents have recently moved into the four-story building.



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THE COMMUNITY IS LOCATED ON A 4.66-ACRE SITE AT 635 64TH STREET SOUTH IN WEST ST. PETERSBURG | GOOGLE EARTH

The complex features 47 one-bedroom, one-bath units and 38 two-bedroom, two-bath units ranging from 651 to 977 square feet. Each unit is equipped with multiple energy-efficient features.

Community amenities include a fitness room, game room, gazebo, large back porch, and outdoor recreation space.

Management will provide residents with 24-hour support for urgent issues, an assurance check-in program, adult literacy programs, and assistance with light housekeeping, shopping, and laundry.

The breakdown of units that are reserved for those earning less than the area median income (AMI) includes:

- 48 units for those earning 60% of the AMI
- 19 units for those earning 80% of the AMI
- 13 units for those earning 30% of the AMI

- 5 units for those earning 22% of the AMI

The complex represents a \$25 million investment with significant contributions from the City of St. Petersburg, the Penny for Pinellas Affordable Housing Program, and various partners.

Bear Creek Commons was the first development to be funded by the Penny for Pinellas Affordable Housing Program, an \$80 million initiative funded by the Penny for Pinellas sales tax, which was approved by Pinellas County voters in 2017.



BEAR CREEK COMMONS BROKE GROUND IN JUNE 2023 AT 635 64TH STREET SOUTH | CITY OF ST. PETE

However, the road to the groundbreaking of Bear Creek Commons was tumultuous at times. In August 2020, the developer sought to rezone the land to facilitate the project, which triggered a backlash by neighborhood groups who said the building was out of scale with the surrounding areas.

Despite the opposition, the St. Petersburg City Council unanimously approved a rezoning and later approved the development in 2022 after a judge dismissed a lawsuit against the rezoning.

Blue Sky Communities also recently opened The Adderly, a 126-unit affordable housing development in Tampa, and broke ground on a second phase of Skyway Lofts, which will add 66 apartments along 34th Street in St. Pete.

 Veronica Brezina /  3 Comments

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William

3 days ago

It was not initially made clear to locals that this was to be restricted to seniors. Even now, I have not seen the age requirement published, but I'm assuming by "senior," it means 55 and over. The complex is visually attractive. Covered parking would be a useful addition.

0 0 Reply 



Tim Newt

5 days ago

Odd they do this while being way under capacity on the city sewer system.. are they still doing regular discharges of sewage into Tampa Bay?

0 0 Reply 



JayOB

3 days ago

→ Tim Newt



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