

# Hillside development breaks ground

By Will Whitehorn

**GREATBARRINGTON** — Community Development Corporation Director Tim Geller was candid in calling it a “drop in the bucket.”

But the long-discussed Hillside Avenue complex — which broke ground on Aug. 1 — is the first of what he hopes are many such structures intended to ease the cost of living for some residents in South County.

The 10-unit, \$2.3 million project is expected to be finished in January 2009, and will begin renting to tenants shortly thereafter.

The housing project represents the first newly constructed affordable rental units in Great Barrington in over two decades, according to the CDC, and will target individuals who make between 50-60 percent of the Area Medium Income — or \$31,000 for an individual or \$48,000 for a family of five.

“This is a very important, significant start,” Geller said.

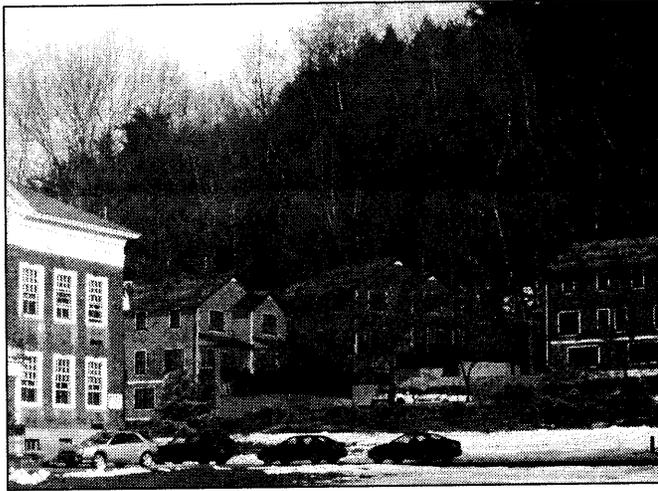


Photo contributed

**An artist's rendering of the Hillside Avenue project.**

“I think this is a clear indication of what can happen when the town and a not for profit work together ... and I hope that it is the first of many developments like it.”

The town and the CDC have been working for over five years on a housing site for Hillside Avenue, located near the Gilmore area that was once under consideration for the town's new fire station.

The Hillside development will feature 10 units, all of which are designated “affordable,” that include three one-bedroom dwellings, five two bedroom units and two three-bedroom units.

The project was funded through a number of local and statewide sources, notably TDBanknorth, which sponsored the construction loan and a permanent mort-

gage.

The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, the town of Great Barrington — which donated the land — the Massachusetts Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation, the Massachusetts Housing Partnership and Construct, Inc. also played major financial roles in realizing the project.

Rent will range between \$514 for a one-bedroom unit and \$845 for a three bedroom. While the units will begin being rented in January or February, landscaping at the site will be concluded in the spring.

“I perfectly fits the CDC's mission to provide affordable housing and economic development opportunity ... to all who live and work here,” Geller said.