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<https://www.dailyfreeman.com/2022/09/24/rhinebeck-workforce-housing-project-gets-6-million/>

## Rhinebeck workforce housing project gets \$6 million

By WILLIAM J. KEMBLE |

RHINEBECK, N.Y. — A \$6 million donation to Housing Partnership Development Corp will help fund the construction of the 80-unit Hamlet at Rhinebeck workforce housing project, officials announced.

The grant is expected to be discussed during a Town Board meeting at 6 p.m. in Town Hall at 80 E. Market St.

“It’s the proceeds of the sale (in 2020) when Northern Dutchess transferred Wells Manor to the new owner,” hospital spokeswoman Sarah Colomello said.

“The proceeds were \$6 million but because it was nonprofit and had HUD money ... the deal stipulated that the proceeds would go into escrow and had to be granted out for workforce housing,” she said. “You can’t just take the money.”

Housing Partnership Development Corp. will work with developer Kearney Realty & Development Group to construct 18 one-bedroom units, 44 two-bedroom units, and 18 three-bedroom units. Rents will be set based on the income of applicants who earn 90% or less of the Area Median Income.

The project is planned for 23.3 acres owned by Northern Dutchess Hospital between Astor Drive and the town Highway Department property on Rhinecliff Road.

The location is considered significant because it is considered pedestrian-friendly at less than a half-mile to the village.

Northern Dutchess Hospital has a history of funding community projects intended to benefit Rhinebeck residents who have struggled to have wages keep up with the cost of living.

“Right now you hear about the social determinants of health, where if people don’t have housing, their health suffers and they come to the hospital. And that creates a drain on resources,” Colomello said.

Northern Dutchess Hospital was founded based on principles of the Thompson House, which was established in 1903 as a 14-bed infirmary through a trust established to provide support for the “seamstresses, needle-women and shop girls” in Rhinebeck and in Brattleboro, Vt., where

Elizabeth Rowell Thompson lived. The trust had been established by her husband Thomas Thompson, with the goals of the infirmary ultimately evolving into a hospital and then other projects that included Wells Manor.

Colomello said having workforce housing is important in attracting employees for local business and services.

“When we want to hire a cleaner, housekeeper or tech, they can’t necessarily afford to buy a house in Rhinebeck,” she said.

Hospital President Denise George also acknowledged that having affordable places for residents to live in the town is important.

“The question of workforce housing is a persistent issue, not only for seniors and people with disabilities who want to live independently, but also as the hospital recruits personnel,” said hospital President Denise George in a press release. “The Hamlet at Rhinebeck is a significant factor in addressing that need.”