

SunStarr opens affordable assisted living center

Northwest side facility received tax credits

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SunStarr Real Estate Group L.L.C., a Fond du Lac real estate developer, has opened a residential care apartment complex on Milwaukee's far northwest side to provide more affordable housing for low- to moderate-income people age 55 and older.

Most of the financing for the 62-unit building at 8425 N. 107th St., called Garden Place, came through tax credits from the Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority.

SunStarr received annual tax credits of \$606,000 for 10 years and created an affiliate company with Richman Group of Cos. in Greenwich, Conn., to get a \$5.2 million investment. SunStarr also received a \$2.3 million loan from Bank Mutual, Brown Deer, to cover the balance of the costs.

Affordable housing options for middle income people in the city are needed, said Stephanie Sue Stein, director of the Milwaukee County Department on Aging. Residential care apartment complexes "generally aren't built with moderate income people in mind," she said.

"We have incredible resources for people with lots of money and then we have lots of low-income housing," Stein said. "What we don't have is that mixture of affordable housing and a place where you can get some services."

The WHEDA financing required SunStarr to designate as "affordable" a percentage of

the units at Garden Place. Scott Stevlingson, chief operating officer of SunStarr, said 57 of the 62 units are set aside for people who earn 60 percent or less of the median county income, or \$47,000 for one person and \$53,800 for a couple.

SETTING RENT

Individual rents are determined by income. For instance, a single resident earning 30 percent of the median would pay \$350 a month for a 680-square-foot, one-bedroom unit. A resident earning 50 percent of the median income would pay \$540. The market rate, which is charged for residents who don't meet the income guidelines, is \$725.

All 10 of the current residents have incomes of 60 percent or less of the median, including two who earn 30 percent, said Ruth Ryshke, director of operations for Garden Place. She is also director of business development for Anew Health Care Services Inc., a Wauwatosa-based home care agency that provides staffing at Garden Place.

Garden Place opened Oct. 21. It is the second residential care apartment complex developed by SunStarr, which opened One Penny Place in Woodruff in 2001.

The three-story complex has patios or decks for each unit and a 36-car underground garage. Each floor has laundry facilities and common rooms. There's also a beauty salon, fitness room and family room with toys for visiting grandchildren. A second-floor library overlooks the lobby and has two computers.

As a residential care apartment complex, Garden Place can provide a maximum of 28 hours of nursing or personal services a week for its residents. Residents can purchase a package of services including medi-



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Scott Stevlingson . . . All but five units are set aside for people who earn 60 percent or less of the median Milwaukee County income.

cation administration and housekeeping for \$1,350 per month or choose individual services such as special nursing care for \$25 an hour. The Milwaukee County Department on Aging's Family Care program pays for the services for residents who qualify and need the basic services.

Garden Place's individually priced services allow seniors who are still capable of doing some tasks to maintain their independence, Stein said.

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