



ADA+

Mission-Driven Developer Creates Apartments To Promote Self-Sufficiency

People who have disabilities from diseases like multiple sclerosis, while able to live quite independently, sometimes need some extra assistance with day-to-day activities. Recognizing this need, Regan Development is working on a specialized housing effort in Simsbury, Connecticut.

The project hits close to home for the company, as Vice President Ken Regan was diagnosed with MS in 1993. Since then, he and the Regan Development team have been dedicated to helping others with the condition reach new levels of independence.

In 2011, the company began working with the Connecticut Chapter of the National MS Society to move forward with the innovative Simsbury effort.

“For Regan Development, this is a dream come true,” Regan says. “This will be the first project in New England that will specifically address this population – people with disabilities who need services coordinated by the National MS Society. As a result of this housing, we can keep people out of nursing home facilities and out of assisted living, and take them from housing that is not fully accessible and give them the opportunity to have a fully accessible apartment. It will allow them to remain independent in the community with the proper support the MS Society is going to provide alongside us.”

Regan Development’s relationship with the MS Society has grown over the years, and Mr. Regan actually wrote a handbook for the organization outlining the development process for creating affordable housing specifically for indi-

viduals with the condition. The 15-month project began in late 2013, and it’s currently ahead of schedule. When complete, it will offer 40 units to people with disabilities needing services coordinated by the MS Society and an additional 7 units for other disabled residents.

“The way we look at this type of facility is that it is ‘ADA-plus,’ meaning that it meets all of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and then goes well beyond that to specifically help people with MS live in their apartments in an independent fashion,” Regan says.

SPECIALLY DESIGNED UNITS

Regan Development developed a similar community in Freehold, New Jersey. Prior to breaking ground, its team spoke with residents and staff from a similar facility in Minnesota to identify the most pressing needs. The company employed a number of these strategies in its Freehold effort and is now doing the same in Simsbury to create barrier-free apartment units.

“All of the entrances to the apartments are going to be on an automatic door opener setup. People will have a remote control to operate it,” Regan says. “Rather than have difficulties getting in and out of their apartments, they are going to be able to push a button and access their apartments. Additionally, all of the apartments have 42-inch doors, so people in wheelchairs and scooters will have easy access throughout the apartment and the building. We have a hard-

wood floor setup so that people won’t have difficulties with carpeting.”

Some of the other features include fully-accessible kitchens and bathrooms, cabinetry with slide-out drawers, easy-to-open windows and available wiring and structural components to accommodate the future installation of bedside lifts.

THE COMMUNITY COMPONENT

Both Regan Development and the MS Society believe that a significant social component is important in a community of this type, so the developer has implemented a number of community bonding amenities and common areas.

“We were able to find a product that is a raised gardening approach,” Regan says. “They are gardening boxes that are all fully accessible to people in wheelchairs and scooters. It is really exciting for people who have in the past had that as a hobby or as something they liked to do, but really have not been able to do it again before coming to us.”

Most of Regan Development’s other efforts feature an exercise facility. To include a similar space in Simsbury, the firm met with MS Society rehab specialists to identify the best equipment to benefit people with the condition. Plus, the building includes a fully stocked library and media center, as well as a unique communication component. “One of the things we did in our Freehold complex that we will do here is set up Skype telecon-



Regan Development

Vice President :: Ken Regan | Location :: Ardsley, New York



ferencing for the residents so they can speak directly to other facilities of this type around the country,” Regan says. “The residents will probably do monthly health conferences with similar populations and similar buildings to create a network that is social and supportive for people living there.”

The team at Regan Development believes that the Simsbury apartment community will offer a place where people with disabilities can live independently for many years. The firm hopes to embark on similar efforts in the future.

“Disabilities cause a lot of uncertainty,” Regan says. “By providing a stable and successful place for people to live with support services they may need, our hope is that we are going to really change peoples’ lives. Moving forward, we hope to be able to show the State of Connecticut and other government entities that this is something that’s a real need.”

AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONCEPTS, LLC

A.H.C. is proud to partner with Regan Development Corporation on the Simsbury Specialty Housing project. We have been a long-standing partner with the region's largest property developers and building owners throughout the Tri-state area for three generations. This endeavor is sure to be a shining example of what can be created when brilliant ideas, intelligent design, and skillful execution combine with environmental responsibility and advanced technology. We extend our best wishes to Regan Development Corporation for continued success and are honored to be partnering with them.

BARTONPARTNERS ARCHITECTS PLANNERS

BartonPartners Architects Planners is proud to support Regan Development and their MS Society partners in providing safe and secure housing for residents with MS. In collaborating with Regan Development, our firm has helped create affordable and accessible communities that provide for the special needs of the MS population, a population under served by existing housing models. These new communities allow persons with unique needs to live independently in an age-appropriate, home-like environment. With six MS projects either completed or on the boards, BartonPartners has established a unique expertise in the design of homes that provide dignity yet meet the specialized accessible design needs of those challenged by MS. BartonPartners' multi-disciplined practice provides integrated professional services from planning and urban design to landscape architecture through architecture and interior design. We are particularly proud of our contribution to the quality of life for some of the many people challenged by MS and hope that this new housing model becomes the standard across the country.

Development | Construction | Consulting

15 Steves Lane | Gardiner, NY | 12525
 T. 845.255.3853 | F. 845.255.3861
 www.ahcllc.net



700 E MAIN ST. 3RD FLOOR NORRISTOWN, PA 19041

BARTONPARTNERS
 ARCHITECTS ■ PLANNERS

- PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN
- ARCHITECTURE
- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
- INTERIOR DESIGN

WWW.BARTONPARTNERS.COM

610-930-2800