

News Release

Westmoreland Community Action

Jeannette South Sixth Street Revitalization

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For Immediate Release

Jeannette's South Sixth Street Neighborhood begins to develop

Incentives for first time homebuyers make now a good time to buy in spite of economy New homes will feature all new Energy Star Rated appliances

Jeannette, Pennsylvania – After months of demolition and site development, the first signs of a revitalized neighborhood are taking shape on South Sixth Street in Jeannette. In the next few weeks, the first 5 of the planned 25 single family homes developed by Westmoreland Community Action will be constructed. They join a home which is close to completion at 605 Bullitt Avenue which will serve as a model home as the neighborhood evolves. In addition to the 25 new single family homes, 18 townhouses (developed by Homes Build Hope) will eventually be built and available for rent on the 400 block of South Sixth Street.

The 5 homes in the first phase (located at 301, 303, 305, 307, and 309 South Sixth Street) are 1500 square feet with three bedrooms, 1.5 bathrooms and a rear parking pad. To reflect the site's history, Housing Development Coordinator Jack Brown says, "Each of the homes will have a distinct look reminiscent of the row homes that were built on Sixth Street near the turn of the century. The brick we are using on the new homes are almost a perfect match to the original," says Brown.

Brown says that once the first 5 homes are sold, plans are to continue building an additional 10 homes in Phase 2 and 9 more in Phase 3. In the later phases, three accessible homes will be built that will feature four bedrooms with a master bedroom and full bath on the first floor.

The modular homes were constructed by New Era Building Systems in Strattanville, PA located near Clarion. Brown notes that the modular home construction offers several advantages. The homes are all Energy-Star Rated with all new appliances including, refrigerator, range, microwave, dishwasher, garbage disposal, washer and dryer. To gain extra energy savings, two of the homes will include solar hot water systems.

"The factory-built modular homes give us greater control over costs and quality, environmental conditions, insulation and other energy saving features. Construction on site is much quicker too," adds Brown. The interior finishing work on the homes should be completed in November with occupancy available as early as December for interested buyers.

Income Guidelines for potential buyers

Potential buyers must meet income guidelines and other qualifications. In general, the program is open to first time homebuyers or people who have not owned a home in the last three years. A family's total household income may range between \$25,000-\$50,000 depending on the number of people living in the household.

Jack Brown, Housing Development Coordinator for Westmoreland Community Action, says new buyers must also participate in an education program through the Westmoreland Community Action Homebuyer Resource Center. "The program is designed to give the homebuyer every opportunity to succeed in home ownership," says Brown.

"It's a program that every home buyer would benefit from," adds Brown. "Potential buyers learn everything from budgeting to debt management. Even after purchase, we stay in touch with the buyer and continue to be available for guidance and assistance."

Vicki Pilato with Northwood Realty is marketing the homes for Westmoreland Community Action, the developer of the new homes.

Pilato says people shouldn't be discouraged by everything they hear on the news. "For first time homebuyers there are a number of incentives available making now a good time to consider home ownership."

Pilato lists a number of opportunities including help with money for down payment and closing costs and the new \$7500 tax credit for first time homebuyers which was part of the Housing Rescue Bill passed and signed into law last July. That program is good for homes purchased by July 1, 2009. Veterans are also eligible for some programs.

The model home on Bullitt Avenue should be available in November for interested buyers to view. For more information about the homes, contact Pilato at Northwood Realty Services, 724-838-9644, Ext 161. Information is also available on a new website **www.AffordableHomesWestmoreland.com**.

The South Sixth Street Revitalization Project, considered one of the largest revitalization efforts in Westmoreland County history, is one phase of a large scale revitalization plan for Jeannette which also includes the business district and industrial park area. It is a cooperative project of the City of Jeannette, Westmoreland Community Action, Homes Build Hope and the Westmoreland County Department of Planning and Development.

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