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THE DAILY CALIFORNIAN
Thursday, October 1, 2020

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CITY

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

Local church, affordable housing developer break ground for senior housing in Berkeley



A project to build 34 affordable homes for seniors in the city of Berkeley broke ground on Jordan Court on Wednesday. The project is a collaboration between All Souls Episcopal Parish and Satellite Affordable Housing Associates.

BY [CATHERINE HSU](#) | STAFF

LAST UPDATED 2 HOURS AGO

All Souls Episcopal Parish, or ASEP, and Satellite Affordable Housing Associates, or SAHA, broke ground Wednesday on Jordan Court for a project that will build 34 affordable homes for seniors in Berkeley.

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According to Reverend Philip Brochard of ASEP, the project was first considered as an option for the redevelopment of the parish's property at 1601 Oxford St. in North Berkeley more than five years ago. The parish reached out to SAHA to discuss a partnership in 2016, according to Carrie Lutjens, SAHA project manager, and the project was approved by the city in 2018.

On Wednesday, SAHA, ASEP, Berkeley Mayor Jesse Arreguin and Berkeley City Councilmembers Susan Wengraf, Kate Harrison and Sophie Hahn attended a groundbreaking ceremony at the site.

"The first affordable housing project in North Berkeley in almost 30 years — that's a tremendous thing," Arreguin said at the event. "This project demonstrates our city's commitment to providing needed affordable housing for a growing senior population and ensuring all parts of our city are addressing our housing crisis."

Jordan Court, which is located in District 4, will establish housing units for seniors whose income is between 20% and 60% of the area median income.

According to Arreguin, the Berkeley Housing Authority, or BHA, is providing 24 project-based Section 8 vouchers, which enable low-income households to pay only a third of their income toward rent. Through California's No Place Like Home program, 12 studios are also being set aside for formerly homeless seniors with mental illnesses.

The project was made possible with funding from several departments, including the city itself, Alameda County and the California Department of Housing and Community Development, according to Lutjens.

According to Brochard, the project was very challenging. While some neighbors were very supportive and provided helpful feedback for the design of the building, others were less receptive to inviting new members into their neighborhood, Brochard said.

"I know this isn't easy. For some, this feels like an intrusion and a blockage of views," Harrison said at the event. "But we're all coming together to do something that will make this a stronger, not a weaker, community."

Harrison, who is the Berkeley City Council member for District 4, added that she was excited the project was happening in a part of her district because most housing occurs downtown.

According to Lutjens, the project-based Section 8 units will be referred via BHA or Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services, and the remaining units will be opening up applications in fall 2021. The plan is to complete the construction and leasing of units by the end of next year, said Lutjens.

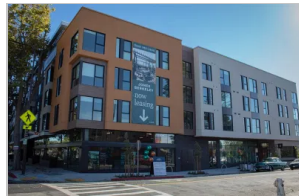
Brochard added that hopefully, the building can officially open in the spring of 2022.

"They're expecting somewhere around 1,000 applications. So while what we're doing is really important. There's a lot more that's needed," Brochard said. "There's a palpable change, both in state law, local governments and, most importantly, in the neighborhoods, in the citizenry of the city. But it will only change with persistence and cooperation."

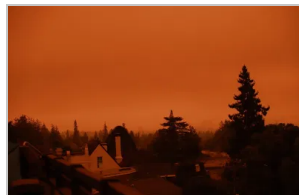
Contact Catherine Hsu at chsu@dailycal.org and follow her on Twitter at [@catherinehsuDC](https://twitter.com/catherinehsuDC).



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