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City Planning Approves Redevelopment Plans for Phase IV

Orange, New Jersey – In April, the Township of the City of Orange Planning Board unanimously approved the Orange Housing Authority (OHA) plans to redevelop land to become home to the Walter G. Alexander, IV Redevelopment.

Phase IV's plan include several key aspects, including permanently eliminating five vacant and abandoned structures on Central Place. In the past, the city has experienced serious housing issues – illegal squatters, drug exchanges and uses, and arson as well as unsafe, dilapidated buildings as workforce housing.

The highly anticipated redevelopment plan includes 44 workforce-units on 26 parcels on the site of the former Jerusalem Baptist Church and several vacant and abandoned properties – including three new buildings comprising of 26 units on Central Place and 18 units on Parrow Street, as well as a total of 44 parking spaces. The secured site also contains green design standards, energy efficient appliances, first-floor handicapped accessible units, play area, front and rear entrances and other amenities.

“It has been a long process, however I am proud of what we have accomplished,” said Executive Director Dr. Walter McNeil, Jr. “This development along with Phases I, II and III will improve the landscape of the community. It will make the area look more clean and clear. It will increase security in the area and it will also give our community a project to rally behind. Optimistically, Phase IV will stimulate other projects that will make the area better.”

The Planning Board's approval and the Housing Authority's investment will activate an aggressive effort to revitalize the East Ward, once ridden with violence and crime. OHA, with the support of the city, will be constructing affordable housing financed in part by tax credits.

Regarding a timeline for the project, McNeil said the tax credits application has been completed and we hope to hear from the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA) by late July or early August.

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