



Saint Stephen's Way

A Community for Homeless Families with Schoolchildren

Fall 2021

NEWSLETTER

Issue #10

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OUR MISSION

Saint Stephen's Way provides affordable housing, along with supportive services, to homeless families with schoolchildren in Brevard County.

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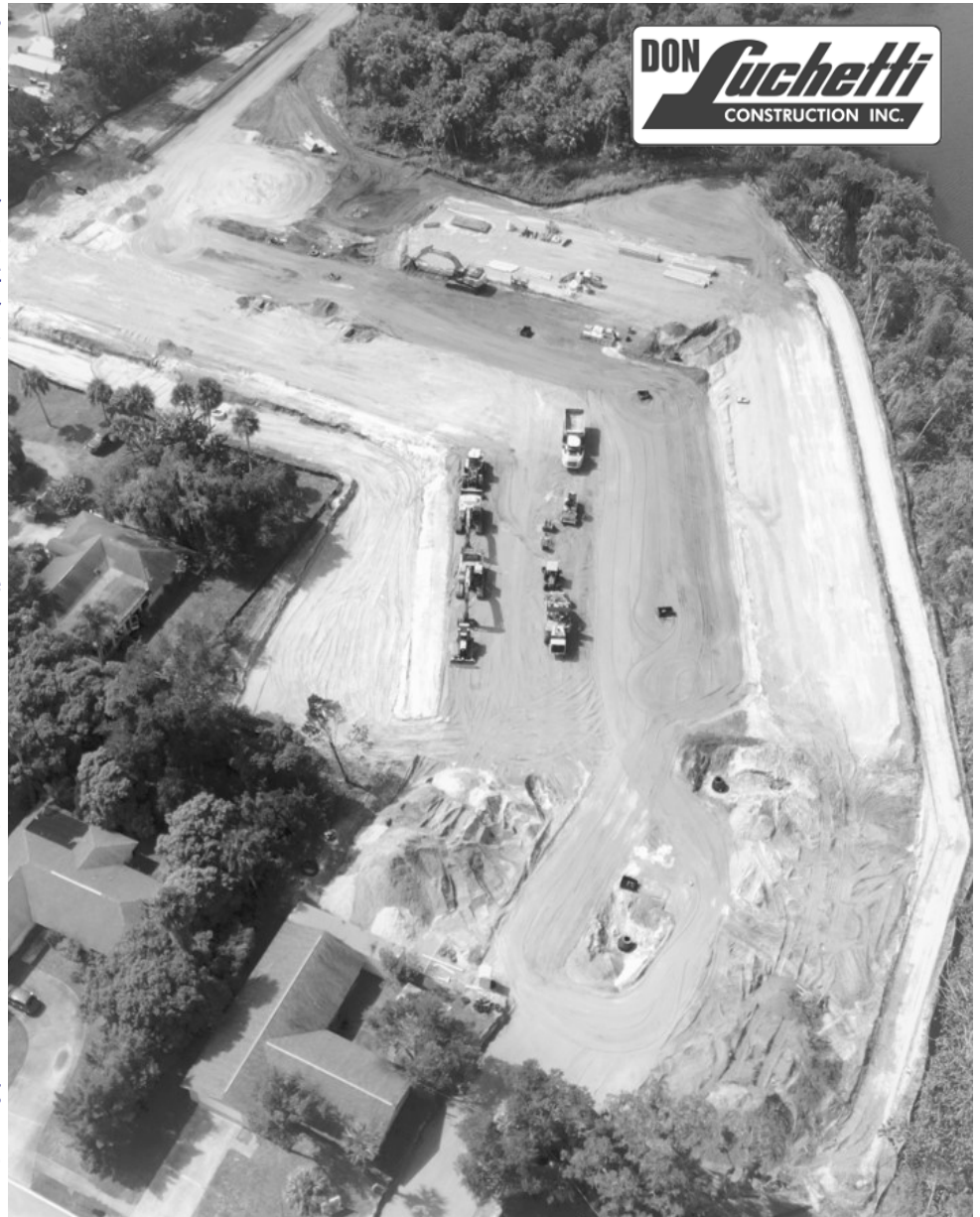
Jock Walker

Phase I Construction: Behold the Progress!

The photo below was taken on **Sunday, 24 October**, but by the time you read this it'll be history. That's because Don Luchetti Construction is making rapid progress. (See **page 3** for **property photos from another perspective and a comparison with the site plan.**) "We start-

ed in July and it's going very well," says Don Luchetti himself. "With good weather this time of the year we are on schedule." The current schedule is for 270 calendar days from start, which puts project completion in March 2022. "With continued good weather, we might be able to accelerate and perhaps be done a month or two earlier," depending, of course, on Mother Nature.

With residential homes on the property's



perimeter, Don is ever mindful of local residents and of public awareness. They are also careful of Crane Creek's wetlands habitat.

Don is also glad to be a part of helping bring SSWay to life. "I got a briefing on the program, the way the property originated and the progress with charitable donations. Being a company in the local community, it's always a very positive experience to see something like this be constructed and made available for those less fortunate." Don also appreciates this particular property. "The location is unique and will provide a pleasant ambiance for those staying there."

Partner Group Preparing to Serve SSWay

“Four organizations make up our new Partner Group,” announced John Farrell, SSWay’s Executive Director. **“They are Catholic Charities, Brevard Family Partnership, Brevard C.A.R.E.S., and Family Allies.** They will be referring qualified families to SSWay, helping with case management, and offering loans to cover initial move-in expenses.” You can think of these very professional and experienced organizations as the gateway for families to enter SSWay’s program. Each of these partner organizations will have a separate Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SSWay on how to work together.

“This is going to be an amazing partnership!” So says Emma Peña, the Director of Family Stability for Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Orlando. “It will serve the best interests of the clients that will be coming to



Saint Stephen’s Way.” Catholic Charities performs all the services SSWay needs and more. “We also have 20 grants for rapid re-housing and financial assistance for people who are homeless. We work with them on creating budgets, and how to manage



Emma Peña

their lives, assisting with what they most need every step of the way.” However, qualifying and recommending families to SSWay is a somewhat unique service for Catholic Charities. “I think their idea is amazing, that is why we want to partner with SSWay. Together, our goal is to make sure we help families with schoolchildren gain stability.”



Valerie Holmes, Ph.D., is Brevard Family Partnership’s Vice-President for Operations. “In general, we are the lead welfare agency



Brevard Family Partnership

Protecting Children, Strengthening Families, Changing Lives.

in Brevard county for getting children reunified with families and for working with families at risk. Brevard Family Partner-

ship works with a network of community and service providers. For example, we have an agreement with Community of Hope to help with housing for families we work with. With some we have MOUs; with others we have contracts.” Housing in central Florida is so expensive and a big challenge, which SSWay will help answer. **“We are really excited about the partnership and thankful for the opportunity that SSWay will provide for families.”**

Kathryn Parker is Executive Director of Brevard C.A.R.E.S., which is associated with Brevard Family Partnership. “We work the prevention side of families in need before there is any involvement with the courts. We provide ‘wraparound’ case management by talking with families to learn their needs, goals, plans, and then work with them to create an overall plan for improvement.” **Kathryn immediately saw the unique value SSWay offers**



Brevard C.A.R.E.S.

for underserved needs in our community. “There are few housing options for Dads with children, or families with boys over 12 years old, which is what SSWay is focused on addressing. Also, housing affordability is another factor, and we are excited about what SSWay offers. I don’t know if any other program allows families to pay rent as a percentage of their income to make it affordable.”

Kathryn stresses a supremely important point: “Community support for SSWay is critical. We greatly appreciate the support SSWay has received from the community. I’m looking for SSWay to continue getting the community funding it needs to stand up the program.”



Kathryn Parker

The fourth partner in the group is Family Allies, also under the umbrella of Brevard Family Partnership. Family Allies was founded in 2017 to bring case management under local control within Brevard County. This organization is dedicated to children in out-of-home care.



Family Allies™
Your Community of Care

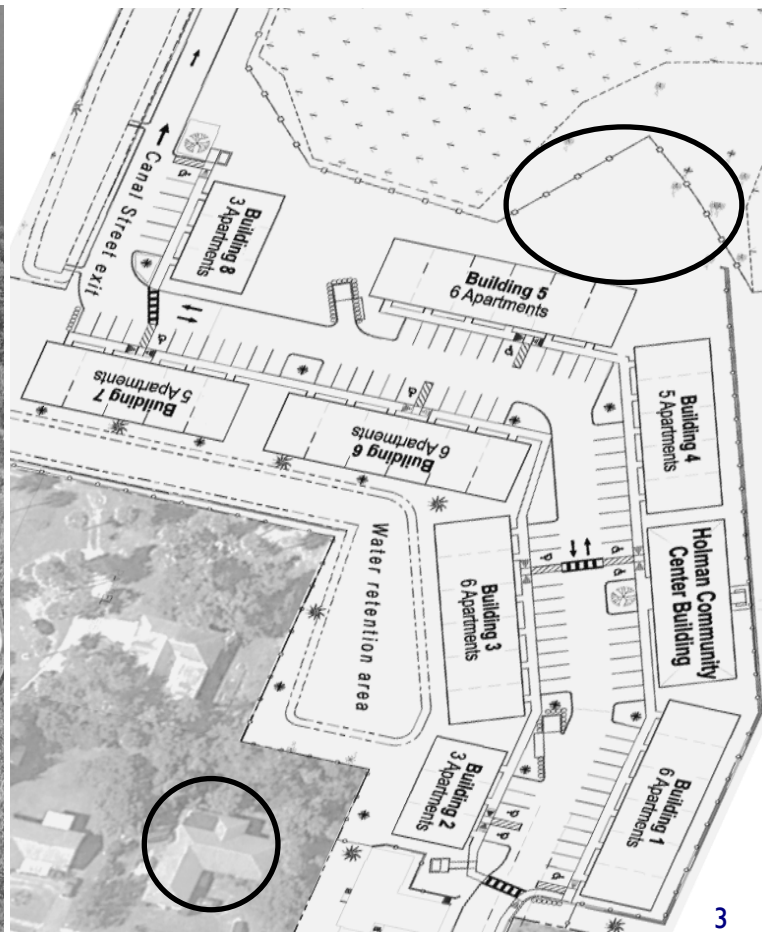
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Construction Site Perspectives & Comparison with Site Plan

The photo immediately below was taken from lower height than the page 1 photo for a different perspective.

At the bottom is the page 1 photo next to the site plan for comparison. The circles and ellipses are added to give the reader visual cues for orientation. You can see the roadway, water retention areas, and where the buildings go.

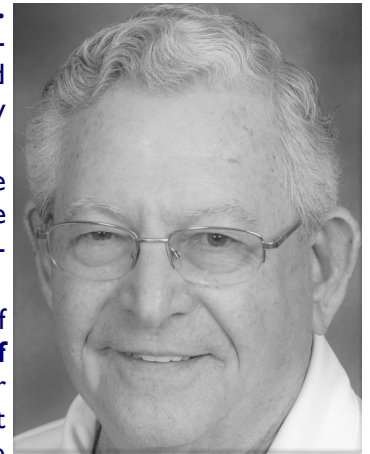


Fundraising Progress: Grants, Donations, and Planning

SSWay continues working all aspects of its fundraising campaign without ceasing. “We received a ‘Matching Challenge Grant’ pledge of \$250,000 in October last year,” John remembers, “and when the campaign ended on the 30th of September this year, we had exceeded the \$250,000 matching donations goal, gathering in more than \$500,000 in cash total.” Now *that’s* a success!

There has also been some success from the grant writing effort. “From March 2020 to the present, we have applied for 18 grants, requesting a total of \$538,965.” John noted. “So far, we have heard from 10 of those and have received funds totaling \$63,965. We hope to receive responses from the 8 outstanding applications in the months ahead.”

Matching Challenge Grants and applying to multiple formal grant programs are only some of the funding approaches in the works. **SSWay is investigating and researching the idea of obtaining someone with the right skills to help with the final planning** necessary for completing the construction of all the apartments and preparing for the separate but important process of phasing into tenancy. “There are a number of things being studied that can help make completing construction and getting qualified families prepared for occupying the new apartments on the campus.” **John has the goal in sight.** “We have much work yet to do, but we are seeing what was just a dream only 5 years ago come to life. **My thanks to so many people for keeping our momentum and spirits high. God willing, our campus will have its first families moving into the apartments in less than 15 months.**”



John Farrell, SSWay Executive Director

SAVE THE DATE! ➡ 28 APRIL 2022!

SSWay Breakfast Fundraiser at the Rialto Hilton, Melbourne

- ▶ \$1,000 per 8-seat table and \$2,500 per table for organizations and businesses to display their materials for attendees to view
- ▶ Speakers: Dr. Sally Shinn, Exec Dir. Space Coast Early Intervention Center, others TBD

Building Contractors Selected for Phases 2 and 3

“We have changed our plan from five construction phases to three,” explains John Farrell. Phase 1 horizontal construction began in July to prepare the property for “vertical construction,” the buildings. Phase 2 is focused solely on building the Holman Community Center building, and Phase 3 will build all eight apartment buildings. **SSWay recently decided which construction companies will be contracted to complete Phases 2 and 3. For Phase 2, the Holman Community Center building, Archangel Engineering & Construction, Inc. was the company chosen. For Phase 3, all the 3-bedroom, 2-bath apartment buildings, M. H. Williams Construction Group was selected.**



“Recommendations for these two companies came from many different groups of people,” John recalls “Our existing Executive and Advisory Boards gave input, and also outside sources from people I talked to about many other reputable contractors.” One of the major factors in choosing these two companies was their willingness to work with each other. “They’ve worked with each other in the past,” John learned, “and they are both experienced in coordinating activities with each other.” As it turns out, Don Luchetti has also worked with both these companies in the past and likes them.

The principals from these companies who are working with SSWay are Mike Williams, Sr. and Mike Williams, Jr., and Tony Owen of Archangel Construction. “We don’t yet have a written contract with them,” John emphasizes, “but we will be doing that soon.”

There is an interesting point about the construction cost increase that was factored into SSWay’s funding plan in March this year. Construction companies were anticipating a 30% increase in construction materials costs, so SSWay increased their projected funding needs by that same amount. Now, John reports some potential good news. “We recently heard that there may be an easing of those anticipated cost increases, but we’re leaving our projected costs as they are for now.”

