

For Immediate Release

Once the Blight of Chicago's South Side, the Grant is Now Star Attraction

POAH Wins Affordable Housing Finance 2014 Readers' Choice Award

Chicago - *The Grant at Woodlawn Park*, the second new construction phase of the Preservation for Affordable Housing's (POAH) multiyear revitalization effort, has been chosen as the overall winner and the master-planned winner in Affordable Housing Finance magazine's 2014 Readers' Choice Awards for the Nation's Best Affordable Housing Developments.

Located at 6129 S. Cottage Grove, *The Grant* marks the completion of 350 new and rehabbed mixed income apartments in the neighborhood where the former Grove Parc Plaza Apartment's 504 units are being replaced by 420 residential units of mixed income housing and 80,000 square feet of retail, a youth center, community and commercial space. The revitalization is being made possible through a partnership between the federal government, the City of Chicago and POAH.

Only four years ago, the aging 500 plus-unit Grove Parc Plaza Apartments stood as an eyesore on Cottage Grove Avenue. Today, all the buildings have been demolished, the former residents relocated and a new mixed-income neighborhood – Woodlawn Park – is rising on the site where the blighted buildings once stood.

Thirty-four nationwide inspiring developments were selected as finalists; the 33-unit *The Grant at Woodlawn Park*, which serves families earning 30 percent and 60 percent of the area median income, was chosen based on the transformative changes and positive community impact the development is having on Chicago's Woodlawn neighborhood.

“By replacing a physically deteriorated development with a successful mixed-income housing development, we not only made the Cottage Grove corridor more pedestrian friendly but through our design and investments we are changing the character of the community and planting the seeds for additional investment across this historic community,” said Bill Eager, Vice President, POAH Chicago.

In 2011, the City, in partnership with POAH, received \$30.5 million as one of the first recipients of a HUD Choice Neighborhoods Initiative grant to support new and renovated housing, as well as programs and services for Woodlawn residents, broader investment in community schools, public safety, infrastructure and job training. Introduced by the Obama Administration in 2010, The Choice Neighborhoods Initiative is a strategic approach intended to help transform high-poverty, distressed neighborhoods into communities with healthy, affordable housing, safe streets and access to quality educational opportunities.

“The strategy that has guided POAH’s work since our founding has been a marriage of common sense and complexity - build new mixed-income housing to replace outmoded, all low-income housing, and acquire and transform vacant or distressed buildings into well-managed, well-appointed properties throughout the community,” said POAH president Amy Anthony. “With the help of the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative we have also had the resources to involve community leaders and the private sector to ensure that Woodlawn can also develop the fundamental resources a healthy community needs to thrive.”

The formal public presentation of the 2014 Readers’ Choice Awards will take place in Chicago at a ceremony scheduled for Thursday, November 20, 2014, during the Affordable Housing Finance conference.

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