

Interfaith Housing Development Corporation, the Oak Park Housing Authority, and Catholic Charities Development of Comcast Building on Madison in Oak Park FAQ Sheet

Many of the questions posed by the neighbors make assumptions about the very nature of the project and more specifically about the prospective tenants and the target population. The targeted populations of all of Interfaith Housing Development Corporation's (herein IHDC) buildings are developed by our local partners and are based in an understanding of the needs of that particular location.

To clarify, the development will not be:

- **A Shelter**
- **A Group Home**
- **Transitional Living**
- **Interim Housing**
- **An Institution**
- **A Prison**
- **A Rehab Center**
- **A Half Way House**

The traditional affordable funding sources for permanent rental housing have two overriding requirements:

1) Income limits. All the tenants will be required to have total family income at or below the Federally set limits for a household at or below 50% of the area median income (AMI) or \$26,400 or less for a 1 person household.

2) Affordable rents. The second restriction is the amount of rent that can be charged, which currently in this metropolitan area cannot exceed the Federally determined rent for someone at or below 50% AMI, currently \$704/month for a one-bedroom apartment.

Questions specific to the proposal

Has IHDC ever put a project like this in a similar neighborhood? Where?

The implication here is clear. All communities where IHDC has developed are unique and the neighbors have many of the same concerns you are expressing. The purpose of the tours we offer is to demonstrate the quality of the buildings we develop and the commitment IHDC has to maintaining those buildings as safe, healthy, and supportive environments for the tenants and to provide not only a resource for the community, but an improvement to the block as well. We want to improve the block. As owners, we will have an investment in the community.

In the Englewood neighborhood of Chicago, for example, absentee landlords were charging as much as \$1,500/month, gouging renters who had few options. In Oak Park, there simply is no affordable housing for people making minimum wage or even what economists say is the "living" wage. While the circumstances are different, the result is the same.

So to answer the question directly, the answer is "no." Oak Park is as unique as are all the communities we work in.

What will be the final height of the new building and what is the height of the current Comcast building? Does the final height of the new building fit current zoning restrictions or is a variance required?

Our proposal is to rehabilitate this square structure into an L-shaped building. The L-shaped building will run along the two streets (Madison and Grove) and will be 55 feet high for a total of 4 stories. The current Comcast building is 29 feet along those same elevations. The current zoning for the site allows for a height of 50 feet. IHDC is asking the Village of Oak Park under the planned development process for the ability to build 5 feet above that standard. While the height is being increased on the south and west sides of the site, the height at the north and east sides of the existing building will be reduced. The existing high point of 57 feet on the north side is being reduced to less than 17 feet. The neighbors to the north of the building will view a four-story L-shaped building that comes down to one story structure along the green space in the back of the building.

What is the reason for a 4-story building and 51 apartments? Would a smaller building, for example 2 or 3 stories and fewer apartments work just as well?

Affordable apartment buildings that are constructed in this metropolitan area using the Federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program need to be a minimum number of units in order to be financially feasible to develop and operate. Like any apartment building, this building will rely on the monthly collection of rent to operate. Between 50 and 70 units is the minimum size for units that accommodate singles, while approximately 40 to 60 units is the minimum size for family units. Our original proposal was for 68 units and a 5 story building, and we decided early on in the process to eliminate the fifth floor in order to keep more in line with the scale of the neighborhood. Bottom line, a 51-unit building is at the low end in terms of capital and operational feasibility.

Why not mixed-income residents?

Most mixed-income developments constructed in the past 10 years were funded using a Federal subsidy called the Hope 6 program. Congress has not appropriated any funding for the Hope 6 program in the past several years. Moreover, even if Congress had appropriated funding, this proposed development would not be eligible unless public housing units were included in the proposed housing mix. Additionally, the production of any market rate rental units stopped well over a year ago due to the high vacancy rate of market rate rentals. The private lending community has no appetite for new market rate rental units. At the present time, the only rental units that are being produced are the ones that make use of public funding. As mentioned above, all of these resources carry two requirements: 1) persons must have income at or below 50% of the AMI; and, 2) the rents must meet Federal affordability guidelines.

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Will any of the units be designed for families or individuals with complex medical issues? This would include the need for handicapped parking, overnight parking for caregivers, and loading zone for Medicars?

The proposed development will require all residents to live independently. The one-bedroom units are not designed for persons needing extensive medical attention. Handicapped parking is always required in any new development, no matter the target population, and is included in our proposal.

Are there other vacant apartments in the area that offer the same types of services?

No. Our market study shows several apartment buildings in Oak Park with vacancies, but none that charge affordable rents. The existing affordable apartment buildings in Oak Park all have long waiting lists, plus all of these apartment buildings target specific subpopulations such as low-income elderly and low-income persons with chronic physical and mental disabilities. There are no apartment buildings in Oak Park that simply require persons to be low-income.

How will this proposal be different from an individual landlord that owns a large apartment building in Oak Park?

What makes this apartment building different is that all of the units charge affordable rents. The proposed development will look and feel like any well maintained apartment building that charges market rate rents. Like any apartment building of this size, it will be overseen by a property agent who hires staff that oversees the day-to-day maintenance and operation of the facility. Unlike market-rate landlords, applicants for the proposed affordable units will undergo several additional levels of scrutiny. In addition to credit and criminal background checks that are common in the private market, our applicants will also be screened by social service staff to determine whether they are appropriate for this housing setting. Social service staff working with property management staff will have to determine that the applicant has the ability to live independently with basic case management services.

What commercial tenants are being sought?

The partners in this development are interested in commercial tenants that local residents would patronize. The partners are in the process of hiring an agent who will assist with this process. It is too early in the process to specifically identify who that tenant(s) might end up being.

What is the zoning for this segment of Madison and how does the building fit those requirements?

The site of the Comcast Building is zoned C – Commercial. Mixed-use residential and commercial buildings are permitted in commercial districts. The proposed redevelopment of the Comcast Building will require three variances (height, density,

and required parking) under the Village’s planned development ordinance. The area north of the Comcast building is zoned multifamily residential, which is consistent with our proposed plan.

How does this building fit into the overall plan for the Madison Street corridor?

The Comcast Building site is located in Madison Street Segment 2 – Home to Oak Park Avenue. According to the Madison Street Corridor Plan, this segment is characterized as a Neighborhood-Oriented and Mixed-Use District. The plan calls for this segment to incorporate mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail and upper floor residential or office use. The proposed commercial uses for this district include restaurants, coffee shops, small specialty retailers, home office services, professional service, museums, renovation retailers, or a small local grocery store. The proposed redevelopment is consistent with the Plan.

Financing of Building

Specify the long term funding sources and budget projections.

The long term funding source for the building is the same as any apartment building, the tenant rents. The capital sources require owners to limit the rent charged to the 50% AMI rents. Additionally, all tenants must be low income. The income limits and limits on the amount of rent charged are the only requirements. The building operating budget is developed over time with input and requirements of the various lenders. The affordable rents are published annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and are the basis for the income side of our operating statements. All of our lenders have minimum and maximum guidelines for specific operating expense line items. The total operating budget is generally between \$5,500 and \$6,000 per unit per year.

The long term budget should include detailed information about current tax incentives and tax breaks and demonstrate that the budget will not be adversely affected by the termination of these benefits.

We are not seeking any ongoing tax incentives or tax breaks. The building must operate on the rental income it receives monthly. The allocation and sale of the Low Income Housing Tax Credits relates to the development budget and reduces the amount of other “soft” (no interest) loans. The presence of these funding resources eliminates a monthly mortgage that is typical in market rate housing developments.

The risk long term would be a violation of the requirement under Section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code governing the use of Low Income Housing Tax Credits (renting to tenants who are over income or charging higher than the 50% standard). The “soft” mortgages that fund the majority of the development costs require minimal or no debt service. This is what makes it feasible to charge these lower rents and still maintain housing quality

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standards. The required commercial space will need to be funded with a traditional bank loan and will be the only debt on the building.

Will the management be seeking additional vouchers from the Housing Authority? The target income level is \$26,000 or less with the tenant paying no more than 30% of their income for rent. This results in tenants paying \$650 a month or less. Since this is below market rate, will the tenants be seeking additional vouchers from the Housing Authority?

While we have had some discussions with the Oak Park Housing Authority about subsidies, it has not yet been determined if subsidies will be available for this development. At this point we are not relying on any project based rental subsidies. The market study is clear about the need for affordable one-bed room units. Some applicants with incomes below the 50% limit will have tenant based rental vouchers.

While some lenders still adhere to the 30% rule (not to exceed 30% of a households adjusted gross income) others do not. We have been successful in other locations at increasing that standard to 35-38%. A typical family today spends 40% of their adjusted gross income on housing. While the rent must remain at 50% of the AMI, raising the affordability standard by 5% would allow a person at 40 to 45% of the AMI to qualify. The current allowable rent at the 50% level for a one bedroom apartment is \$704/month.

Is the budget for the building dependent on having commercial tenants?

As stated earlier, the only portion of the development budget to carry traditional financing will be the commercial space. The square footage of the commercial space cannot be funded with government loans. We will need to segregate that cost from the housing costs. The rent for the commercial space will have to cover that portion of the cost of construction and any related ongoing operating costs.

Do you offer any tax incentive or other financial incentives to the commercial tenants?

Commercial tenants will receive no tax incentives. The advantage this property would have in terms of the commercial rate would be the fact that the building will not have to realize a profit. The space could lease for cost, which should make it highly competitive.

What is the long-term financial strength of the company or organization supplying the building management and overseeing the apartments?

The owners recently selected the property management agent. The Oak Park Residence Corporation (OPRC) has a long history of managing a variety of properties including residential, commercial and mixed use buildings. The OPRC has many years

of successful property management experience. The partners are excited about OPRC's interest in the project.

Is there any reliance on funding from the State of Illinois? If so, what is the dollar amount and percentage of the organization's overall funding?

No. Although much of the proposed capital funding for this project will stem from the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA), none of these funds are subject to appropriation from the State of Illinois. All funding resources being sought are Federal resources that are passed down through IHDA and the Cook County Department of Planning and Development.

Tenant Screening

Provide specific criteria for the screening of residents, who will make the decisions.

The Tenant Selection Plan (TSP) lays out all the criteria for the screening of potential residents. This document must be agreed upon by all parties (property management and social services) and be approved by all lenders prior to closing on the financing and commencing with construction. Under normal circumstances, the TSP would not be developed until all funding was conditionally approved.

Neighbors have asked the partners to alter our typical process so that the TSP can be drafted now. We are willing to draft the TSP prior to zoning approval with the understanding that it does not become final until all of our lenders have reviewed and approved it. Our lenders will not be willing to review this document until we have made an application for funding which cannot happen until we have zoning approval.

IHDC typically invites a community representative to sit on the committee that develops this document. We would ask the neighbors to select someone who will represent their interests at these meetings.

How will the representations made on the applications verified.

Applicants for housing must provide source documentation that demonstrates their income, household composition, and prior living circumstances. Property management staff reviews these documents and requests additional documentation to verify accuracy. In addition, property management staff conducts home visits to verify the information presented in the application.

If all the information is verified by property management, the application is passed over to the social service staff. The social service staff reviews the application and conducts a service evaluation with the applicant. The applicant is assessed in person for their ability to live independently. The service staff does a full

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social service assessment in order to determine if the person possesses sufficient skills to live in an independent setting.

Upon completion of the individual reviews conducted by property management and social services, the two parties meet together to compare their findings. Typically these two parties present before an independent third party (typically a staff member from IHDC) and together make a final decision as to whether to accept, reject, or request more information about this individual.

Who or what groups will make the decision about who becomes a resident?

As is explained above, the final decision is made by the three parties involved in the screening process. The parties must concur whether to accept, reject, or request additional information on the applicant.

Does the Interfaith Housing Development Corp mandate ongoing drug testing for its residents? What are the consequences to the resident of violating any drug and alcohol policies at the proposed property?

As developer, we do not mandate ongoing drug testing, but many of our social service partners require random drug tests. Catholic Charities conducts random drug tests at their current supportive housing facilities. Based upon the proposed tenant profile, random drug testing may not be required. This determination will be made when Catholic Charities develops their social service plan for the building.

What criteria will be used to exclude tenants?

We cannot “exclude” anyone. We can reject applications based upon the criteria set forth in the TSP. The TSP will spell out the criteria.

How will the population of the development contribute to, enrich, and be involved in the existing neighborhood?

In all of our developments, we invite neighbors into the building and we encourage the residents to participate in the community. The proposed tenant meeting room on the first floor will be available for use by the community for neighborhood meetings and other types of community gatherings. As in any private residential setting, individual tenants will make their own decision about how much or how little they want to participate in the community. In our experience, some tenants are very private and choose to stay to themselves, while others are active in the tenant council and in activities outside of the building. In terms of this issue, this apartment building will be no different than the two condominium buildings at the other end of the 400 block of Grove.

Provide some guarantee that the target population will not change over time.

The only target the partners in this development have agreed upon is that all residents be low-income (earning at or below 50% of the AMI). At this time, no other target is being proposed. All capital funding sources being pursued only require that persons be low-income. Additional targets (if any) such as veterans and other subpopulations will be established in the TSP. This document must be approved by our lenders even before construction can begin. Once the TSP is established and executed by all parties, its provisions cannot be altered without appealing to our lenders for a revision. The TSP is carefully developed with input from the community and the partners in the development, and as a result, we have never had reason to alter it in any of our buildings.

Management of Building

What budget does the property owner have for ongoing maintenance of the proposed property?

Monthly deposits to a Replacement Reserve are required by all lenders and can range from as little as \$300 per unit per year to as high as \$1,000 per unit per year. The current annual maintenance costs for one of our existing buildings of comparable size is \$51,000, approximately \$750/unit/year.

What will be the specific education, training and credentialing requirements required of staff?

The property management agent will be an Illinois licensed real estate broker. Illinois licensing requirements include significant professional education and training in fields such as property management, budgeting, commercial leasing, fair housing, and other aspects of commercial brokerage. The on-site property manager will have significant previous experience in a multi-family residential setting and should be licensed as a leasing agent or broker.

Will staff be on premises 24 hours a day?

No. The on-site property manager will be on site during conventional business hours. All tenants will be provided with a 24-hour emergency call-in phone number for management problems. Social service staff often have hours in the evening so that they can meet with tenants that work during the day.

Provide a detailed statement regarding who is in charge of the facility, how this person will know when a tenant needs to be evicted, and the procedure by which such a judgment call is made.

This development will be established as a for-profit limited partnership. Under this organizational structure the Limited Partner will have majority ownership but limited management responsibilities. The General Partner or “managing partner” will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the building.

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In all of our properties funded using the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, the social service provider, the local neighborhood partner and IHDC form another entity called a Limited Liability Company (LLC) to act as the General Partner. The member organizations of the LLC then appoint a board of managers. The LLC Board of Managers is directly responsible for building operations. Similar to a Board of Directors, The Board of Managers determine policy, develop procedures, approve budgets, oversee property management, and are responsible for all reporting and compliance requirements. IHDC always appoints one community representative to the Board of Managers.

The majority of our buildings hire third party property agents responsible for marketing and leasing, on site property management which includes repairs and maintenance and maintaining files for tax credit and fair housing compliance. The on site property manager and social service staff are on 24 hour call.

The onsite property manager and social service staff determine jointly whether to pursue eviction. Tenants wishing to appeal the staff decision can appeal to the Board of Managers who will make the final decision. The Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) requires owners to use their standard form of lease which can be found at the IHDA web site. Exceptions to using the IHDA lease are rare and must be justified and approved. All tenants sign leases and are required to adhere to the terms of the lease which includes the house rules. The house rules are developed by the Board of Managers.

Major lease violations are cause for immediate action. Some examples of major lease violations are:

- Non payment of rent
- Violent or disruptive behavior
- Destruction of property
- Falsifying information on initial or recertification documentation
- The use, sale or distribution of illegal substances
- Threats of violence to staff or tenants
- Abandonment
- Multiple, continuing or excessive minor lease violations

Minor lease violations require written notice to the tenant with a copy to social services and the tenant file. Social services and property management then work together with the tenant to correct the behavior.

Does this development have 24x7 security for the building and associated proposed parking lot? If so, does the property owner have a revenue stream that will sustain this security for the foreseeable future?

None of our developments have “security” on site. The 24/7 staff at some of our buildings are social service staff or Community Resource Aids (CRAs). They are there to assist tenants with emergency medical or service needs and are paid through service

funding. The need for CRAs is determined by the social service partner and their evaluation of the needs of the tenants. Service staff hours vary and are scheduled around the tenants’ needs. Evening and weekend hours are common primarily because that is when tenants are available. Fewer tenants are home during the day.

Does IHDC have a written security plan to address problems outside the facility?

The Board of Managers will develop a property management plan for the building that will cover a variety of issues, including security.

IHDC always considers the overall safety of the tenants as well as the neighborhood/ block in the total planning and development process. We strongly believe that in order to affect change in individuals and families, we build supportive housing so as to model and teach tenants through supportive services how to be a good neighbor and an active participant in the neighborhood.

IHDC is committed to on-going partnerships with the residents and homeowners of the community, and effectively engage in activities that promote neighborhood improvement, beautification and safety.

What is IHDC’s specific record in dealing with issues outside its facilities impacting the surrounding neighborhood?

All of our buildings have had a positive impact on the neighborhoods in which we develop. There are three main reasons for this:

We always improve the block physically, either by restoring abandoned or vacant buildings to productive use as is the case with the Comcast building, or by new construction on previously vacant lots. Abandoned buildings and vacant lots bring property values down and invite crime.

IHDC develops permanent housing, not transitional, half way houses or shelters. Transitional housing settings have a continuing stream of residents that are there on a temporary basis, usually less than 120 days, as opposed to permanent housing that requires a minimum one year lease obligation and a stable environment. This will be an apartment building with social services, not a service center with housing. None of our on site service providers are allowed to operate programs on site that would create traffic in or around the building. On site social service staff serve tenants of the building.

IHDC seeks out neighborhood involvement. Our tenant meeting rooms are available for neighborhood meetings. We have open houses giving neighbors an opportunity to meet the tenants, staff and LLC Board of Managers. When staffing the building, local residents meeting the position requirements are preferred candidates. IHDC always recruits neighbors for the Board of Managers positions. We encourage participation to avoid misunderstandings and create open lines of communication.

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What specific staff will have authority to address neighbors' concerns?

The on-site property manager will be the primary contact person for building residents and neighbors. To the extent that the on-site manager does not have the capacity to address a specific issue, the issue will be referred to that person's supervisor at the management company.

What authority will IHDC or the other organizations have to seek to address problems related to the facility outside the facility?

Specific concerns about issues affecting the property should be addressed to the on-site building manager. To the extent that the issue is within the ability of management to control or correct, appropriate actions will be taken. Actions occurring outside of the building may be outside of the manager's ability to resolve or control and such matters should be referred to appropriate authorities, e.g., the police or other Village authorities.

Does the plan include a closed circuit TV system that will record activity? Will there be internal as well as external cameras?

No, we do not anticipate a need for cameras.

You have stated that IHDC will be there for 30 years, but what is the obligation of the Housing Authority or Catholic Charities. How do you guarantee their involvement and continued level of support?

As the guarantor of the loans, IHDC will have an obligation to insure the building remains in compliance (serving low-income households) for the term of the various mortgages that finance the construction. Both of our partners have long histories (combined 150 years) and missions that are compatible with the target population. Both the Oak Park Housing Authority and Catholic Charities intend to remain as partners in the property for as long as the building is operated as an affordable supportive housing facility.

What problems has IHDC encountered with their past projects and how were they solved?

IHDC experiences the very same problems that are encountered by market rate landlord, e.g., late payment of rent, loud playing of music, etc. Our problems are no different than those experienced by any landlord.

Management of Tenants

Specify the terms of the lease.

The lease agreement has yet to be drafted; however, it will be a standard residential lease required by IHDA modified by certain

riders that may be required by project lenders and equity providers.

Are there written rules of conduct the tenant must follow? What are the consequences if these rules are violated? Who has the authority to change these rules or the consequences?

Social Services within supportive housing provides several functions, all with the goals of addressing the individual tenant's need regarding (1) maintaining stable housing; (2) establishing sufficient income to maintain basic needs; and, (3) improvement in their ability to achieve self determination. Through an individualized service plan (ISP), these primary areas are discussed and evaluated on a schedule determined by the individual and their social service case manager.

Stable housing includes the ability to pay rent and issues of "good neighbor/good tenant." A typical rider to the lease is the House Rules which outlines required behavior and defines "good neighbor/good tenant" expectations. The House Rules is prepared by the development partners and agreed upon by the tenants at lease signing. Refusal to sign the House Rules constitutes a refusal for housing. There are many approved templates for the House Rules and the partners will develop one using much of the terminology that already exists.

One goal established on the ISP, which identifies expected outcomes per the terms of the lease, is adherence to the House Rules. On a regular basis, these issues will be addressed with each tenant and their case manager. Issues that arise which are violations of tenant rules are identified with the tenants during these meetings. Discussions include tenant responsibility for behavior within the residence and community. Social expectations are emphasized. Ongoing non-criminal violations may lead to nonrenewal of the lease at the annual lease signing.

Will a resident be held responsible for actions in the community? Will such behavior be written into the lease for each resident?

A tenant's behavior in the residence or community, resulting in criminal violations, may lead to eviction. A landlord of any kind must follow the legal eviction process. The final eviction is a decree of the court.

Could a resident be evicted if they are the source of a neighbor's complaints or disturbances in the neighborhood?

Building residents will be subject to all of the terms of the lease, plus a code of conduct that will be specifically developed for this property. Under Illinois law, eviction may only occur for specific violations of the lease. Violations occurring outside of the property may not constitute legal grounds for eviction. Property management and social service staff can use information received from someone outside the building to support the position that House Rules have been violated and corrective action must be taken if this issue were to continue.

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Parking & Traffic

Provide a detailed plan for the parking of not just residents but for the patrons of the businesses the development hopes to attract.

If we had choice in the matter, we would take the current parking lot at 832 W Madison and make most of it into green space. Over the years, even with parking reductions, IHDC has had to build a number of parking lots that sit mostly vacant. If an individual meets the income standards to live in the building, s/he typically will not have the resources to own and operate an automobile. Moreover, the site is surrounded by several public transit options.

At any rate, IHDC has ordered a parking and traffic study from a traffic engineer and we look forward to the results of that report. The 32 parking spots in our current proposal should be more than adequate to address the parking needs of both the residential and commercial uses of this redeveloped building.

What measures will you take to minimize additional traffic on the 400 block of Grove?

We have been given various suggestions by neighbors: create a cul-de-sac, make the street run one-way, and/or make the street narrow by the alley; but to date, no one option has been agreed upon. We will work to achieve the traffic easing measure(s) supported by the neighbors, particularly the neighbors that reside on the 400 block of Grove.

Impact on adjacent property

What is the estimated impact on the value of the properties on the surrounding blocks from the proposed development? Who has or who will do the assessment on the property value impact?

No housing developer or any municipality or any social service agency can be held solely responsible for any one home or neighborhood of homes' increase or decrease in "value." Home values are based on a myriad of factors: age of the structure; personal upkeep; natural weather disasters; and national and even global market fluctuations.

Most housing economists agree that the recent housing bubble (1997-2006) far exceeded any previous historic booms by a factor of five. Normal housing value booms (such as those in the 70s and 80s) have capped at near 120% of normal valuation. The recent 1997-2006 bubble capped at over 200% of normal valuation. The proceeding and inevitable housing crash from 2006-present dropped those values to 150% of normal valuation. Yale economist Robert Shiller notes that the crash's effect on home values will most likely continue to drop toward "normal" rates over the next five years. Simply put, no new housing development in any neighborhood can be held responsible for diminishing home values in such an economic climate.

There have been some questions as to whether homeowners will be compensated for any loss in home values due to the installation of a neighboring new development. There simply is no known precedent for any homeowner ever being compensated by any entity for such a loss. Homeownership is a personal and private investment that comes with both personal rewards and personal risks.

Typically, homeowners might see a slight drop in their property taxes should their homes diminish in value; but that is very seldom and rarely at any comparable rate. More often than not, property taxes are based on many more complex factors than simple property value, not the least of which are the income needs of the municipality levying the tax.

However, there is a factor in local communities that does have a well known effect on neighboring property values; and that is "occupancy." In other words, a property that is vacant and especially one that has remained vacant for a lengthy period tends to lower the value of neighboring properties. Conversely, properties that transition from vacancy to occupancy tends to increase the value of neighboring properties.

If the proposed Comcast building redevelopment has any economic impact on the neighboring properties it will more than likely have a positive one.

Impact on community

What is the expected impact on the Village and Township social services?

A supportive housing development contains its own supportive services. Each tenant of the development is provided individualized social services to assist them in achieving the goals as stated above. With ongoing and regular support, the tenants are able to address issues affecting income and self-sufficiency and ultimately their quality of life is improved. Referrals are made to community resources in an effort to meet the needs of the individual. These resources may include financial resources, employment and food pantries, but also social resources for opportunities to enhance the social well being of the individual. With guidance through their social services case manager, the individual works toward adaptation and success in these areas. As each barrier to these goals is overcome, the tenant is able to achieve higher levels of independence both economically and personally. The need for social services diminishes over time as their personal strengths increase.

What is the expected impact on the Village to increase local police presence to ensure the continuing safety of the immediate neighborhood?

An impact study is expensive and lengthy (over 5 years). We have been able to conduct one impact study for one our buildings and the impact on supportive and city services was negligible.

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There are two reasons for this: 1) tenants were from the community and were using the services already; and, 2) the building itself provides services that are paid for by the building.

Is this property going to be paying taxes to the Village of Oak Park or will it be considered not-for-profit?

Yes, this property will be paying property tax on the building and sales tax on any of the retail activity that occupies the first floor space. The limited partnership that will be holding this development must be a for profit entity, therefore, the building will not be exempt from property tax. The Village of Oak Park will receive the portion of the property tax revenue that it normally receives from the Cook County Treasurer, Same for sales tax.

In comparison to Comcast, what is the expected revenue to the Village on this project?

Comcast currently pays property tax but does not pay any sales tax on the vacant building. Although tax rates for 2012 have not yet been determined, this proposed development undoubtedly will pay more tax to the Village because additional square footage is being added to the building. The Village and the County simply will have more square footage to tax and the assessed value will increase due to the rehabilitation and use. Moreover, the commercial space on the front of the building will generate sales tax revenue from retail activity on the Madison elevation.

Regarding the editorial in Wednesday Journal “Playing on Fears,” August 4th, that addresses several of the criticisms that have been lobbed against the proposed redevelopment of the Comcast building on Madison and Grove into commercial space and affordable one-bedroom apartments.

The partners in this development, all recognize that a number of apartments and condos sit vacant under the current real estate climate. The editorial asks, “Is there a way to convert that existing and widely dispersed stock to use for affordable housing?”

The affordability of these vacant units remains a question. Although rents have dropped in response to the real estate slump, we doubt anyone could find a one-bedroom apartment in Oak Park in an elevator building with all utilities included for \$704/month. A current market study shows that comparable units rent for well over \$704.

Also, rents may be lower today, but will most likely increase once the real estate market regains its footing and vacancies are absorbed. The funding for the proposed redevelopment will require that rents remain affordable for a minimum of 40 years.

Not all condominium associations allow rental units and associations often prefer or require owner occupancy. Even if funding were available to acquire condos outright, the supportive component of the housing would be lost. The low income

individuals that we wish to serve need more than an affordable unit, they need a safety net. They often require the assistance and the sense of community that is inherent in supportive housing. Making use of existing condos and apartments would not provide affordable housing for the long term and would not be suitable for the population we are trying to serve.

In terms of the second question posed in the August 4th Journal, “if a child is allowed in the unit, what would be the impact on already taxed school enrollment?”

Under the Fair Housing Act, we cannot discriminate on the basis of familial status. We can restrict the occupancy to one adult, but if that adult has a child under the age of 18, we cannot reject that household simply because they have a child. The “loft-style” one-bedrooms envisioned by our architect have been designed specifically for single adults. The maximum occupancy of these one-bedroom units will be one adult and one child, but it is unlikely that an adult with a school age child will want to live in the building due to these design factors.

In the remote chance that a single person with a child moved into the building, the property taxes that this new development will pay will more than cover his or her use of District 97 resources. Consequently, any child residing in the development will be fully entitled, as all children who reside in Oak Park are, to enroll in the Oak Park school system.