

With a long-standing love for the Hill District, especially because Mr. Darby was born and raised in the Hill District, the Darbys made a commitment to find solutions that would positively impact the Hill District. To this end, they obtained properties, preserved them and marketed them as affordable rent units. In 2016, they formed Catherine Terrace, LLC whose mission is to provide affordable housing in the Hill District neighborhood, specifically Perry Street, of Pittsburgh, PA. Catherine Terrace is named for Catherine Graham, Mr. Darby's mother and a longtime resident of Perry Street. She was known for her dedication for encouraging a "neighborly loving" environment on Perry Street. Catherine Terrace proposes to provide affordable rental housing for individuals who want to reside in the Hill District neighborhood. Eight affordable rental units are proposed as new construction along Elmore and Perry Streets in the Hill District neighborhood.

The proposed project will be constructed on five parcels that extend from Perry to Elmore Streets and includes eight (8) units: ground level – four units, two are handicap accessible and first floor – four two-story units, three bedrooms, 1½ baths. Off-street parking will be included for several of the units. Parcels cited are under the full control of the owner, without additional party involvement. An application has been submitted to acquire another parcel that is situated south of currently owned parcels. If acquired this will be used for additional off-street parking spaces. To date there is no indebtedness associated with these properties. Catherine Terrace will manage the properties through the services of a management company. Lavelle Realty manages currently owned properties. The property is 14,000 square feet and is located near recent developments by KBK and Allies and Ross Development. The proposed new construction is located across from properties renovated by the Darbys. The drawings have been submitted to the City of Pittsburgh Zoning for review and adjustments are being made per their recommendations. The architect is Milton Ogot and the general contractor is Shawn Taylor of Taylor Construction and Development Inc.

This development project is in the Middle Hill neighborhood of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ward and is approximately ¼ mile northeast of the City's Central Business District (CBD). The Middle Hill is bounded by similar neighborhoods on all sides: on the north by Bedford Dwellings, on the east by Upper Hill, on the south by Skyline Terrace, and on the West by Crawford Roberts, which separates the Middle Hill from the CBD. Mixed-income units were constructed in Phases I and II of Skyline Terrace. Immediately adjacent to the proposed Catherine Terrace development site are newly constructed units by KBK Enterprises and the Pittsburgh Housing Authority. Another housing development, Bedford Hill, was constructed by McCormick Barron. Save for these developments, the Middle Hill was marked by an aging, declining population with a below average income.

In 2015, Pittsburgh had a shortage of 18,000 affordable units. At that time, City Councilman Daniel Lavelle introduced legislation to create an Affordable Housing Task Force. The Task Force reported that a gap of approximately 17,241 affordable and available rental units exist for households at or below 50% of Pittsburgh median household income. Although lower than other cities, rental rates are accelerating. The Hill District experienced mass displacement in the 1950's; however, new developments are providing more choices. Displacement is a key advocacy issue; some residents who left the Hill have

been unable to return. Catherine Terrace responds to the need for more units for individuals who want to stay or return to this community.

### **Target Population**

The target populations are individuals and families who desire to live in the Hill District. Of significant importance is the fact that the percentage of Hill residents living below the poverty line is substantially higher than those for the City and County: 26.4% vs 22.8% respectively. By providing affordable housing the community benefits from the project. The Hill is experiencing a long-awaited renaissance and affordable housing is needed for those individuals who want decent, comfortable housing that is reasonably priced. As mentioned earlier, the City of Pittsburgh has a severe shortage of affordable housing. Rents in some areas of the city are increasing faster than in others, and this is true of the Hill District, with a contributing factor being its location to CBD.

The completed units will be offered to qualifying tenants, especially those in the Hill District. Contacts have been made with the following in an effort to identify resources that may assist to identify tenants: Bethlehem Haven, City of Pittsburgh Housing Authority (vouchers and veteran housing), and County Area Agency on Aging. These resources will assist us to reach residents who need affordable housing and want to be in the Hill District. Efforts will be made to interact with tenants as need to encourage their connection to supportive services.

During discussion with Pittsburgh's elected officials, participants noted they were afraid that developers were making communities unaffordable. Additionally, they expressed a need for information and education to address such issues, including staving off gentrification. Catherine Terrace understand the need for fulfill these needs and making connections with local agencies to share information re this development and its mission.

The Hill District Master Plan identifies family friendly housing development, including rental units, as a community goal. These units which can contribute to economic and community development must be of sustainable quality. The proposed project will be built on vacant land; thus displacement is not an issue. This project is located within one block to other development projects of Hill CDC and Omicelo Development.

### **The Greater Hill District Master Plan**

The Darbys were actively involved during the entire process including community meetings and small group discussions that led to the creation of Master Plan in 2011. The Catherine Terrace project is a continuation of the Darby's commitment to enhance the stability of the Middle Hill. As with their previous development plan, the Darbys converted neglected properties into affordable rental units in 2011. The current development will be constructed on vacant parcels. These properties have been maintained with the grass cut and litter collected. The construction of these units will enhance the appearance of this section of Elmore and Perry Streets. The construction design fits with the existing structures in this area.

NOTE: Since receiving letters of support from State Representative Wheatley and Councilman Lavelle, the Darby have received additional funding to support this project.