



Press

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Green House Living project for seniors has backing of Wyo.'s U.S. delegation

By Kristen Salamon

kristen@thesheridanpress.com

Doug Osborn, president of Green House Living for Sheridan, announced earlier this week that the Wyoming congressional delegation signed a letter of support for the Sheridan project.

According to a Green House press release, a loan request was made to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Community Facilities Loan Program in late December for \$4.7 million in long-term financing. The congressional letter was sent to the secretary of agriculture on Jan. 7 and was signed by Sens. Michael

Enzi and John Barrasso and Rep. Cynthia Lummis.

According to the release, the letter states that the "Green House approach is a new, non-institutional model that reinvest(s) the experience of long-term care for elders.

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Long-term care

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“Under the model, elders receive needed assistance and care in small homes that meet all required state and regulatory and reimbursement criteria for licensure as skilled nursing facilities.”

The letter adds that the Sheridan Green House project to be built at the Village at Cloud Peak Ranch is a result of the support and involvement of multiple stakeholders across the state, according to the release; these stakeholders include the Wyoming Legislature, which in 2007 adopted a measure to create a pilot program to develop a culture-changing alternative elder-care nursing home.

The release states that the project received \$75,000 from the Aging Division of the Wyoming Department of Health and has been endorsed by the national Green House Project, an initiative of Arlington, Va.-based NCB Capital Impact with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

“While the Sheridan Green House project has progressed through its design and planning

stages, the current financial environment has limited opportunities for privately financing the construction of the project,” the letter continues.

The Sheridan project has identified the Community Facilities Loan Program as a fitting source of financing for construction.

Osborn thanked the congressional delegation for its timely efforts and said that he has “high hopes that it will persuade the USDA to support our request. ... It is wonderful to see this level of cooperation among the three offices.”

Osborn also addressed state legislators as part of the Chamber of Commerce-sponsored annual Legislative Forum on Thursday at Sheridan City Hall. Osborn said Green House still needs to raise about \$847,000 for the approximately \$7.6 million project.

He added that because at least one of the organization's grants will expire March 31, that is the "make or break" date for fundraising.

According to the release, Green House cottages will enhance this community's elder-care

alternatives. It is based on a concept developed by Harvard graduate and gerontologist Dr. Bill Thomas and will allow elders to choose their daily living experiences.

The release states that 12 elders will live in each home, where the centerpiece is a hearth and open kitchen. A small self-managed staff will provide personal care and meals, joining the elders at the table. Nurses and other professionals will provide clinical care.

Family, friends, pets and plants will be a part of daily living, as residents would expect in their own homes. These homes are licensed nursing homes, accepting private payments, private insurance, as well as Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements. The cost is the same as, or in some cases somewhat less than, a traditional nursing home, according to the release.

The Sheridan project would include four cottages, with room for an additional four cottages if needed.

Kay Wallick is overall coordinator for the Green House project in Sheridan and can be reached at 674-1607, or access the Web site www.sheridangreenhouse.org.