October 2, 2020

Chester County Provides Update on Support for North Coventry Fire Victims

Specific affordable housing now tops the list of needs

WEST CHESTER, PA_ Chester County's Department of Community Development provided an update today on the progress of the 45 families displaced from their apartments by the devastating fire at Ashwood Apartments that took place on July 30th in North Coventry Township.

"Twenty of the families that lived in the apartments still need to find a new home, with ten of these families continuing to be in hotels," said Pat Bokovitz, Director of the Chester County Department of Community Development. "The County has been providing hotel stays for the impacted families since the beginning, to the amount of $50,000, in order that no household finds themselves homeless due to this tragedy."

Kelly Raggazino, Executive Director of Open Hearth, Inc., said, "We have some specific housing needs right now, including a three bedroom home for a family – preferably in the Owen J. Roberts School District. In addition, we need a few one-bedroom units that are handicapped accessible – preferably first floor apartments." Phoenixville-based Open Hearth, Inc. is one of the community organizations working with the County to support the needs of every family that lost its home to the fire.

Landlords with properties to rent in the Pottstown tri-county area are asked to contact the Housing Authority of Chester County via e-mail at ashwoodapartments@haccnet.org or via phone at 610-235-4484.

Monetary donations to support the families have been collected by Pottstown-based community support non-profit Tri County Community Network (TCN). "Not surprising, the community has been tremendous in their response. In fact, through community donations, we are able to provide each family impacted by the fire with $2,000 to assist them in the transition into their new homes," said Holly Parker, Executive Director of TCN.

The Community Warehouse Project of Chester County has been providing furniture to the impacted families and will continue to do so. Details of the how to make furniture donations can be found at http://communitywarehouseproject.com/donate/ or by calling 484-473-4360.

Chester County government acknowledges the great work being done by the following community organizations, which have continued to provide on-going case management services to the impacted families. They include Branch Life Church, Open Hearth Inc., Orion Communities, Friends Association, Handicrafters, Home of the Sparrow, Housing Authority of Chester County, North Star and Salvation Army of Pottstown.

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