

Media Contact: Deanna Fay
Harborlight Community Partners
978-922-1305
dfay@harborlightcp.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rendition Attached –

Firehouse Place Groundbreaking Ceremony Scheduled for Willow Street Affordable Housing Project

Harborlight Community Partners to Begin Construction on Town's First Community Preservation Fund Supported Affordable Housing Project

Hamilton, Mass., June 3, 2010 – A groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled at the site of Firehouse Place, 69 Willow Street, Hamilton at 10 a.m., Monday, June 13, 2011. This is the Town's first Community Preservation Fund supported affordable housing project and will be developed and operated by Harborlight Community Partners, a North Shore non-profit affordable housing operator and developer.

Harborlight Community Partners was originally approached in 2008 by Hamilton community members concerned with how to preserve the building at 69 Willow Street as a space for the Acord Food Pantry. First Congregational Church parishioner, Jared Ward, had the idea to preserve Acord's space and utilize the upper floor apartments as affordable housing. That idea is now coming to fruition after three years of perseverance. "As a lifelong resident of Hamilton and Wenham I am pleased to have been able to see my original concept come to fruition through the hard work of so many people." said Ward.

The building that once served as the Town's fire station, now named Firehouse Place, will be the location of Acord Food Pantry for years to come while also serving as a great example of using local Community Preservation funds to leverage regional and statewide resources for affordable housing. "We were committed to making sure that Acord would remain as a community asset and to demonstrating that small scale, well designed affordable housing is possible on the North Shore." said Harborlight Community Partners Executive Director Andrew DeFranza.

Following a process of meetings with the neighbors, the Town committees and boards, and other local stakeholders, a plan by North Shore architect Siemasko and Verbridge was designed. This plan called for a change to the entire exterior with an attractive gable end facing Railroad Avenue and a

refreshed façade on Willow Street without the current garage doors. The final product will be a great improvement to a visible part of downtown Hamilton. The building will eventually house the Acord Food Pantry with a new side access door. It will also provide a new one bedroom affordable apartment for a disabled elderly person on the first floor facing Willow Street and an additional three studio apartments on the second floor. The building footprint will not be expanded.

“The project is a great community partnership that addresses a tremendous need.” said Michael Lombardo, Hamilton Town Manager.

In addition to the critical local partnerships and input financing, funding, and support was provided by a variety of other sources including the Hamilton Community Preservation Fund, North Shore HOME Consortium, North Shore United Way, Beverly National Bank, MassDevelopment, MA Department of Housing and Community Development, Boston Community Capital, Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation, Beverly Cooperative Bank and the MA Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Construction will begin the week of groundbreaking and the building should be completed for occupancy late in 2011. For further information about the project, the groundbreaking or potential rental please email dfay@harborlightcp.org or call 978-922-1305.

About Harborlight Community Partners, Inc.

Harborlight Community Partners (HCP) provides a wide range of housing with services primarily for low and moderate income people living in Southern Essex County. HCP provides single, family and elder housing and assisted living in a variety of communities. By anticipating the housing needs of the region's increasing underserved population and creating, preserving and operating safe, affordable housing units and supportive services, Harborlight Community Partners, Inc. strives to make homes available to all North Shore citizens, regardless of means. For more information, visit www.harborlightcp.org.

#