

CAROLE FELTON

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Norristown Leaders to Celebrate Groundbreaking Affordable New Homes Designed to Revitalize DeKalb Street

NORRISTOWN, PA, September 1, 2011 After years of planning and work by the Municipality of Norristown, construction is set to begin on [Arbor Heights](#), a community designed to foster homeownership on DeKalb Street. A groundbreaking ceremony for community leaders and people involved in the design and development of the 12 new townhomes, located at 1000 and 1010 DeKalb Street, Norristown, will be held at 5 PM on Wednesday, September 14, 2011.

Using funds from a federal HOME grant, a Pennsylvania RACP grant as well as Montgomery County Affordable Housing Trust Fund dollars, the Municipality was able to acquire and demolish two run-down buildings just north of the bend on DeKalb where it intersects East Elm Street. Norristown then searched for a private developer who shared their vision to revive this transitional neighborhood of Victorian homes that was once home to many of Norristown's leaders of business and industry years ago. They found Sarah Peck, president of [Progressive Housing Ventures](#) LLC, a Malvern-based company that specializes in building energy efficient new homes in older towns that have public transportation and services within walking distance.

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“After doing our research, we found Sarah. Her redevelopment work in Downingtown showed us she understood what we were trying to accomplish,” said Kathy L. Phifer, Director of Norristown’s Office of Housing and Community Development. As soon as we saw her plans for these properties, we knew we had made the right choice.” Arbor Heights has already received a Smart Growth Award from the [Delaware Valley Smart Growth Alliance](#)

Barton Partners Architects of Norristown, created plans that look like the large historic homes that line the street, but actually contain six two-story townhomes in each building “I particularly like the traditional designs of Arbor Heights, which will fit seamlessly into the neighborhood and will age well even when fashions change,” said Doug Seiler, president of Seiler and Drury Architects and member of Norristown’s Historic Architectural Review Board. “I have already seen an uptick in applications from people who want to improve their properties in the vicinity of this new project.

Thanks to funding from Montgomery County’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund, these 2 and 3-bedroom homes which start in the \$120,000s are within the financial reach of many people who would otherwise never be able to purchase a new home. Buyers who live or work in Montgomery County and meet prescribed credit and income levels can obtain 10% of the purchase price for closing costs and down payment. In addition, the first 6 qualifying buyers will receive an additional \$5,000 from Norristown toward the purchase of an Arbor Heights home. These monies do not need to be repaid if the buyers stay in their home for at least 8 years. In addition

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special financing is available to help qualifying buyers whose credit or current savings might otherwise exclude them from homeownership.

Every home has dedicated off-street parking, a porch or balcony, modern kitchens with built in microwaves, a powder room on the main floor, family-size full baths, central air-conditioning and energy-efficient features that make them affordable to own and operate. The homes will be completed early in 2012. All homes will be owner-occupied. Two homes are already sold.

"After so many years of planning and working to secure funding for this project, it is exciting to see these new homes finally go forward," said Linda Christian, Norristown Council President in whose ward Arbor Heights is located. The 1000 block of DeKalb Street is a key gateway into our Municipality and the historic Victorian houses are iconic for Norristown. We can already see how the investment here is having a positive ripple effect in the immediate vicinity as homeowners and landlords are beginning to fix up their properties. We look forward to welcoming community-oriented individuals and families to this location."

Arbor Height's on-site sales center is open Thursday through Sunday from 12:30 to 4:30 or by appointment and can be reached at 610-239-1350 or visit

www.arborheightsdekalb.com

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