

Affordable housing opens in Cherrydale area

Federal money for future Homes of Hope projects threatened

By Ron Barnett

STAFF WRITER
rbarnett@greenvilleonline.com

Kathy Wilkie is happy to be one of the first residents in the new affordable housing units just completed by Homes of Hope – but the federal funding that helped build the 11 dwellings is either gone or threatened, housing officials said Tuesday.

“There’s a lot of people that do need things like this,” the 55-year-old disabled Greenville native said

as she cut the ribbon on a home off Old Buncombe Road. “And I, as one speaking for a lot, I do appreciate it.”

Most of the approximately \$1 million that went into the West Park development came from the Neighborhood Stabilization program under the federal stimulus spending law.

“There is none left. We put it all in housing. We put it all in infrastructure,” said Martin Livingston, executive director of the Green-

ville County Redevelopment Authority. “Everything that we’ve done, we’ve been able to retain construction jobs while we’re going through the recession.”

GCRA put up \$700,000, from stimulus money and another federal source. Altogether, the \$2.2 million in stimulus money his agency received paid for construction of about 50 units, he said.

Homes of Hope borrowed 20 percent of the cost from Pinnacle Bank. Quinn Satterfield Builders, RCS Grading Inc., and CCAD Engineering were

the construction partners.

Homes of Hope, a Greenville-based nonprofit organization, has provided affordable housing for 324 families or individuals and job training and mentoring for 264 men overcoming addictions, says Don Oglesby, president and CEO. This is the first such development in the Cherrydale/Sans Souci area.

But proposed cuts in federal funding for Community Development Block Grants could have an indirect negative impact on the organization’s ability to continue transforming blighted neighborhoods in-

to more livable communities, Oglesby said.

The nonprofit gets \$20,000 for each home it builds in Greenville County or \$10,000 for those built inside the city of Greenville – at least some of which comes from those grants, he said.

“We can’t do urban infill in Greenville at the cost of land without that support,” he said.

The new units, near the intersection of Old Buncombe Road and Verner Springs Road, are 704 square feet, and all are built according to Energy Star guidelines. The develop-

ment consists of 10 two-story duplex units and one single-family unit.

To qualify for Homes of Hope housing, a person’s income must be at or below 60 percent of the area median income. The area median income for Greenville County is \$40,600 for one person or \$52,200 for a family of three, according to Jordon Weldon, director of community relations for Homes of Hope.

Rent on the West Park units is \$495 a month.

Homes of Hope has a waiting list of more than 100, Oglesby said.