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**CFH TO TAKE OVER OWNDERSHIP OF EAST END MOBILE HOME PARK**

**Council Vote Brings an End to Years of Uncertainty, Saves Manassas Almost $2 Million**

 **and Spares the Eviction of 300 Park Residents**

 **Manassas, Va., October 17 –** A local nonprofit is now in a position to take ownership of a mobile home park in Manassas whose future has been uncertain for more than eight years, enabling all residents of the East End Mobile Home Park to stay in their homes.The Manassas City Council has voted to enable Catholics for Housing, Inc. (CFH), a Northern Virginia nonprofit, to purchase the 58-unit park and resolve the significant water, sewer and management issues that have plagued residents for years.

 “We are thrilled that our skills, expertise, resources and commitment to preserving housing opportunities will not only keep all of these families in their homes, but also enhance their quality of life,” said CFH Executive Director Karen DeVito. This was the outcome the park’s residents had been hoping for as they shied away from other prospective buyers in recent months in favor of the commitment and solutions CFH brings to their situation.

**Agreement Saves Some 300 from Homelessness; Preserves and Improves Affordable Community Important to the City**

 This stretch of Centreville Road has been home to residents of three mobile home parks for many years. The original owners sold all but this park, East End, which was kept in the family and managed by an agent for the last 10 years.

 In 2009, the City of Manassas began notifying the agent of sewer leaks and excessive usage through the domestic water system. As a result of not correcting the problems when first notified, the systems became severely damaged and replacement became necessary. Discussions then began regarding the feasibility of selling the property to the City of Manassas. In April 2016, the City and the managing agent got as

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far as executing a sales contract for $1,864,700. One of the conditions of the purchase required the park owner to evict all tenants and remove all mobile homes from the property.

 Suddenly and without warning, approximately 300 people were about to be homeless. This was unacceptable to the park’s residents, many of whom owned their homes and most of whom had been there for many years, with children well established in the local schools. With the ensuing publicity and the intervention of some advocates, the residents connected with an attorney who filed an assertion action on their behalf. This led to a ruling that the residents could pay their monthly lot rents into an escrow account until the water and sewer situation was resolved.

 At this point, local advocates reached out to Dumfries-based CFH, a non-profit with 38 years of experience helping individuals and families create sustainable homes, to see if they could provide any resolution in which the families would not lose their homes. After much research and much discussion, the CFH Board of Directors determined that acquiring the East End Mobile Home Park would fit within the CFH mission. CFH committed to fixing the water and sewer issues and offered a purchase contract of $1.4 million, pending approval of the sale by the Manassas City Council.

**CFH Resources and Expertise Promise Bright Future for East End Residents**

 The CFH Board of Directors is a diverse group that includes members with financial skills, real estate expertise, business management, legal and development skills as well as the faith community. Board member Daniel Woodward, president of The Woodward Group, gave a great deal of his time to research the issues, develop a plan to replace the systems and estimate the costs involved.

 DeVito herself has over 27 years of experience managing affordable housing programs. She is excited about the ability to not only preserve East End homes but also to bring the organization’s highly successful comprehensive life skills program and other resources for the benefit of the community. “CFH’s vision is to create a safe, secure and comfortable community at East End where children thrive and adults can reach their potential,” explained DeVito. CFH’s proven management procedures will be implemented, including a standardized lease agreement and park rules that will be implemented upon acquisition.

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 CFH was initially created by Father Gerard Creedon and a group of passionate Catholic parishioners in 1979. CFH provides housing opportunities in 21 counties to eligible applicants regardless of race, ethnicity, creed, gender, familial status or religious affiliation. Recognizing the various barriers people in Northern Virginia face to find affordable and sustainable housing situations, the scope of the programs CFH offers is wide-ranging.

 The CFH continuum of housing includes: security deposit assistance; senior rental subsidies (in Fairfax County); rental homes (in Vienna, Arlington, Fairfax and Fredericksburg); homeownership opportunities throughout Northern Virginia; and an original proprietary comprehensive life skills program known as *Choices*, that empowers individuals and families to successfully create a sustainable home in which they can achieve goals and allow their families stability. CFH has been recognized throughout their history by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, as well as the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, the Virginia Housing Development Authority and was named one of the area’s best small non-profits in 2005, 2010 and again in 2011 by the Catalogue for Philanthropy.

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