

Housing Research & Advocacy Center
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For Immediate Release: June 10, 2008

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**Cleveland Fair Housing Group Reaches Agreement With
Cleveland-Area Architect, Developer, and Engineer
Warrensville Heights Housing to Be Retrofitted to
Allow Increased Access for Disabled Tenants**

The Housing Research & Advocacy Center, a Cleveland-based non-profit fair housing organization, has reached an agreement with the owner, architect, and engineer of Newport Square, a Warrensville Heights, Ohio, housing complex for senior citizens, that will result in retrofitting to allow increased access for disabled tenants.

Jeffrey D. Dillman, Executive Director of the Housing Center, stated, “We are pleased with the outcome of this agreement, which will help to make multifamily housing accessible to people with disabilities.”

The parties to the agreement included the owner and developer of Newport Square (Newport Square Ltd.); the architect (G. Herschman Architects, Inc.); and the engineering firm (Chagrin Valley Engineering, Ltd.) who participated in designing the housing complex.

Under the terms of the agreement, which resolves a dispute between the parties, a number of changes will be made to Newport Square so that it will be more accessible to individuals with disabilities. The changes include installing ramps, curb cuts, and additional sidewalks; reconfiguring mailboxes; modifying interior bedroom doors; and making certain modifications to the bathrooms.

Newport Square also agreed to include additional “super-accessible” features in future construction they may undertake in Cuyahoga County. These features go beyond current state and federal requirements and would allow disabled individuals even greater access in the future.

Cheryl Williams, a resident of Newport Square, was happy with the agreement, and noted that the changes will help her disabled husband, who uses a wheelchair.

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, and disability. Under the Act, certain types of housing with four or more units that are built after March 13, 1991, must include accessible common and public use areas. In addition, the ground-floor units in non-elevator buildings in such housing must include accessible routes into and through the dwelling, doors wide enough to accommodate persons who use wheelchairs, outlets and environmental controls at accessible heights, bathroom walls that have reinforcements for the installation of grab bars, as well as bathrooms and kitchens that are large enough for people who use wheelchairs to maneuver within them. In buildings with elevators, all of the units must contain these features.

The Housing Research & Advocacy Center is a nonprofit fair housing organization whose mission is to eliminate housing discrimination and assure choice in Northeast Ohio by providing those at risk with effective information, intervention and advocacy. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against in obtaining housing may contact the Housing Center at (216) 361-9240.

The Housing Center is a member of Greater Cleveland Community Shares. Community Shares supports local nonprofit organizations working for long-term, sustainable solutions to build a stronger Cleveland. Learn more about Community Shares and supporting social justice through workplace giving at www.communityshares.org.