



Weinberg Commons: Building Energy Savings into Affordable Housing March, 21 2016



Project Overview

The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Commons is an innovative community that combines state-of-the-art energy performance features with affordable rents and supportive services for low-income and formerly homeless families

Weinberg Commons: Pre-Renovation



Weinberg Commons: Post-Renovation



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Weinberg Commons: Energy Sustainability

- Weinberg Commons will be the nation's first Passive House Multi-family retrofit development, and utilizes elements that are expected to reduce energy use for heating and cooling by up to 90%
- The buildings are largely heated by passive solar gain, by internal gains from people and electrical equipment, leaving a small duty for mechanical conditioning
- An energy recovery ventilator (ERV) provides a well distributed, constant and balanced fresh air supply

Importance of Energy Sustainability

- Reducing energy consumption is fundamental to the economic stability of low-income families
- Rising energy costs, which increased 22.7% nationwide from 2000-2010, were more than three times the increase in rents during the same period
- The lowest income renters saw the largest increase in their utility costs, going from 12.7% to 17.4% of their total housing costs for the same period

THCAH: Providing Affordable Housing for the District

- Weinberg Commons has 36 two-bedroom units: 24 units serve families at 60% AMI (\$1,228 per month) but are offered at rents affordable for families at 40% AMI (\$950 per month)
- Weinberg Commons' low rents, which include all utilities, are only possible with Passive House design

Energy Sustainability and Financial Feasibility

- Weinberg Commons cost approximately 8% more to construct than it would have using traditional techniques and materials
- The project was awarded 9% tax credits, a capital grant from DC's Department of Behavioral Health and project-based rental vouchers from the DC Housing Authority for the 12 Permanent Supportive Housing units