

Newman Homes

Custom Home Builder and General Contractor



Good afternoon,

My name is Brandon Roberge, President of Newman Homes, an Augusta based general contracting company with a focus on building custom homes and multi-family construction projects. We've built numerous custom homes in subdivisions like Fieldstone Place, next to Cony High school in Augusta as well as large multi-family projects, like the 14 townhouses we are currently building in Waterville. I'd like to briefly discuss with you a low-income development project that we are planning to build in Winslow, Maine, as well as Maine's dire need for projects like this one.

According to our current plans for this low-income housing development project in Winslow Maine, the site will consist of 18, 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom duplex style apartments. Each unit having a garage, heat pumps, and paved parking. We will have some solar and electric vehicle charging infrastructure for future use, as well as a playground and an on-site daycare facility. We intend to work out an arrangement with the daycare facility, wherein they receive a financial discount on their lease for accepting daycare vouchers offered by state programs for low-income families, which are all too often not accepted by daycares. We also intend and are hopeful to have a 25-50% Section 8 tenant occupancy, in order to help those most in need.

Maine's housing shortage has become increasingly concerning in recent years. Maine's vacancy rates of less than 1% is just one sign of the extent of this housing shortage. Those most adversely affected by this housing shortage are Maine's low-income families. When landlords are faced with so many potential tenants due to the shortage of available housing, it is all too often the lower income families that lose out on the opportunity to acquire housing. This is why I believe that programs like the Rural Rental Program are so important to low-income families in Maine.

The largest barrier to developers building low-income housing projects is funding, which is why programs like the Rural Rental Program are so vital to remedying the shortage of affordable housing for low-income families in Maine.

I'm aware that 30 million dollars allocated from the general fund for developing affordable housing in Maine isn't in and of itself going to solve the affordable housing shortage, but it is a much-needed step in the right direction and each and every low-income family in Maine that is able to acquire housing built by funding from the Rural Rental Program will be far better off because of it.

I appreciate your consideration in approving the allocation of these funds for the development of housing for the low-income families of Maine.

Thank you!