



Saint Stephen's Way

A Community for Homeless Families with Schoolchildren

Fall 2020

NEWSLETTER

Issue #7

<https://www.ssway.org>

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✉ office@ssway.org

Saint Stephen's Way is an active non-profit 501(c)(3) Corporation, Federal Identification Number 45-5390085, providing affordable housing with supportive services to homeless families with schoolchildren in Brevard County, Florida.

OUR MISSION

Saint Stephen's Way provides affordable housing, along with supportive services, to homeless families referred by the Brevard School System.

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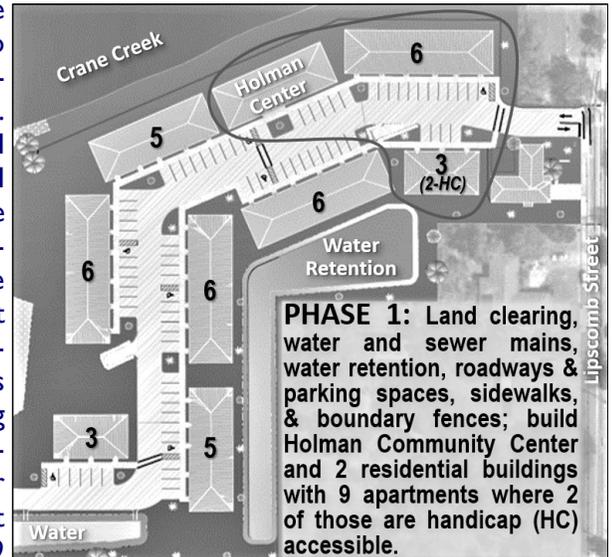
Brian Bussen

Glenda Shirhall

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SSWay Groundbreaking Set: March 2nd 2021!

On 29 September, after much discussion, the SSWay Executive Board voted unanimously to make March 2nd, 2021 the date for the groundbreaking ceremony at the Holman property. **At this same meeting, the Board decided what construction would be completed in Phase I (see graphic at right).** "There are still things left to be done before construction can begin," notes John Farrell, Executive Director. "The St. John's Water Management District has yet to approve the water mitigation plan, and the City of Melbourne Engineers must approve the site plan, but we are making progress!" The next step once approved is calling for bids from construction companies for Phase I. "The horizontal construction to get things ready for residential buildings will take 9 months to complete, and the first three buildings around 3 months more." The expected cost for Phase I is \$2,791,338—just over half the total cost for all four phases. "We have \$937,319 available now," says John Farrell, "which is 34% of the Phase I cost." Obviously, that leaves more than \$1.8 million to raise by next Spring to complete Phase I, but fundraising efforts are well underway and hopes are high that the goal will be met in time! **Immediately below is a rendering of a SSWay 6-apartments residential building, drawn by C.A.G. Architects.**



PHASE 1: Land clearing, water and sewer mains, water retention, roadways & parking spaces, sidewalks, & boundary fences; build Holman Community Center and 2 residential buildings with 9 apartments where 2 of those are handicap (HC) accessible.

Rendering of a building with 6 apartments



Fundraising Efforts: "We have Gone All Out!"



That's from Tony Catanese, Honorary Chair of Fundraising. "We've contacted several donors, are contacting more, and hope to have pledges of \$1.0 to \$1.5 million by the end of 2020." The United Way is also very supportive, and Tony has secured commitments from some people to hold fundraising events, although these will happen once COVID dies down. And there are other funding avenues. "Cindy Dittmer, City of Melbourne's Planning and Economic Development Director, has given us ideas on grants, loans, and rental assistance programs," adds Tony. Another key point is deferral of impact fees normally due when a development is cleared for occupancy. Cindy explains, "SSWay will be one of the affordable housing programs that will use the deferral program for housing units so it doesn't affect up-front construction." Cindy adds, "We are very excited about SSWay—definitely a need, and we're looking forward to it! We're here to work with the new community in whatever ways we can." Tony's conclusion on funding? **"My confidence level is up—I think we can make it!"**

**GOLF BALL DROP
FUNDRAISER:
\$10,000 PRIZE!**

**NOW SCHEDULED 16 JANUARY 2021, A \$50
DONATION IS A CHANCE TO WIN 20-TIMES
THAT! PURCHASE TICKETS AT SSWAY.ORG
OR CALL/EMAIL: 321-306-8873, office@ssway.org**

A First Look at Program Policies for SSWay

Shown here are SSWay's policies and eligibility qualifications & criteria for future family residents. First and foremost, SSWay will only accept families recommended by Brevard County Schools with students who meet the school's homeless or "in transition" criteria. Note also, SSWay will give preference to fathers with children and males over 12 years. This is a primary tenet of SSWay since most shelters only allow mothers and children 12 and under. The "Program Rules" are still being worked out, such as what items are and are not allowed on the premises, restrictions on visitors, parking rules, use of the Holman Community Center, etc. As explained in Newsletter #6 ("Survey of Families Quantifies the Need"), there are hundreds

SSWay will respond to every family referred by the Brevard County School System who seeks entry to the Saint Steven's Way Affordable Housing Program regardless of age, creed, race, color, national origin, disability, or religion.

SSWay will make supportive services available to all families to ensure their success.

Program eligibility/qualifications/criteria for families:

Must have children enrolled in schools in Brevard County

Must be referred by Brevard County Schools

Preference will be given to fathers with children and male children over the age of 12

Must agree to follow all Saint Stephen's Way Program Rules

Must be U.S. Legal Residents

Must be employed with a minimum family gross income of \$2,000 per month

Must provide proof of income for the monthly rental fee

Must be able to pass drug tests

Must maintain a satisfactory credit rating

Must not have a felony conviction in last seven (7) years

Must not have had more than one bankruptcy or eviction

Must have no pets, or willing to give up pets before entering the program

All leases will be for a period of 8 months and can be renewed twice for a total tenure of 24 months.

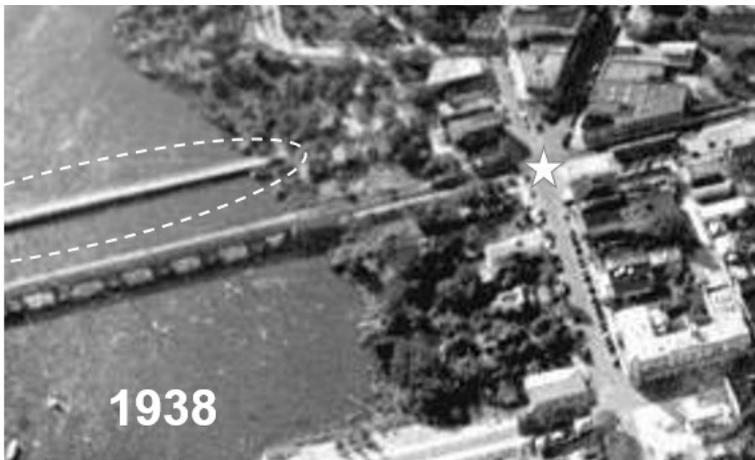
of qualifying families but this first SSWay campus will be able to host only 40 at a time. These policies will, over time, help ensure SSWay helps as many families as possible transition to become permanently self-supporting.

ADVISORY BOARD

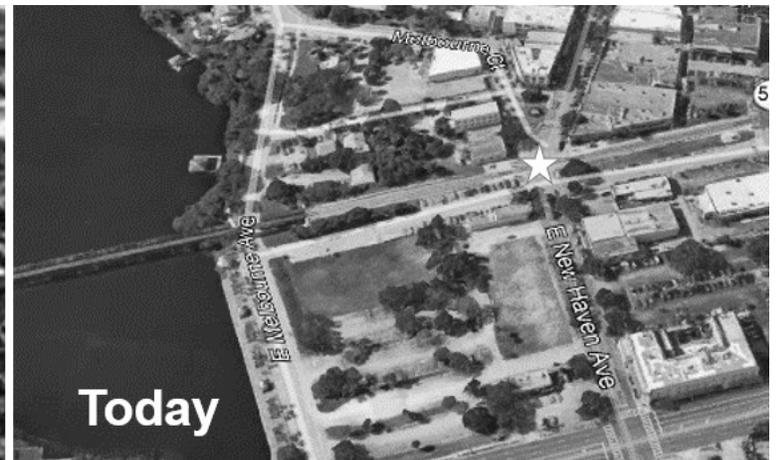
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The Old to be New Again: Crane Creek Pedestrian Bridge

Back in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s there was a pedestrian bridge across Crane Creek, which is dash-circled in the left photo below. The right photo is how that same area appears today with no pedestrian bridge. (For orientation, the white star in each photo is where the railroad crosses E. New Haven Ave in downtown Melbourne.) "The pedestrian bridge has been in the City of Melbourne's 5-year capital improvement program for a few years now," says Cindy Dittmer, Director of Planning and Economic Development. "The city owns property next to SSWay's property at Prospect and Lipscomb, and also on the opposite side of the river, almost in the same location as the original bridge." Cindy emphasized that the 5-year plan does not guarantee it will be built in the next 5 years, but it's in the plan! Something to look forward to . . . some day!



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Today