



# Saint Stephen's Way

A Community for Homeless Families with School Children

Winter 2018-2019

NEWSLETTER

Issue #2

<https://www.ssway.org>

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## 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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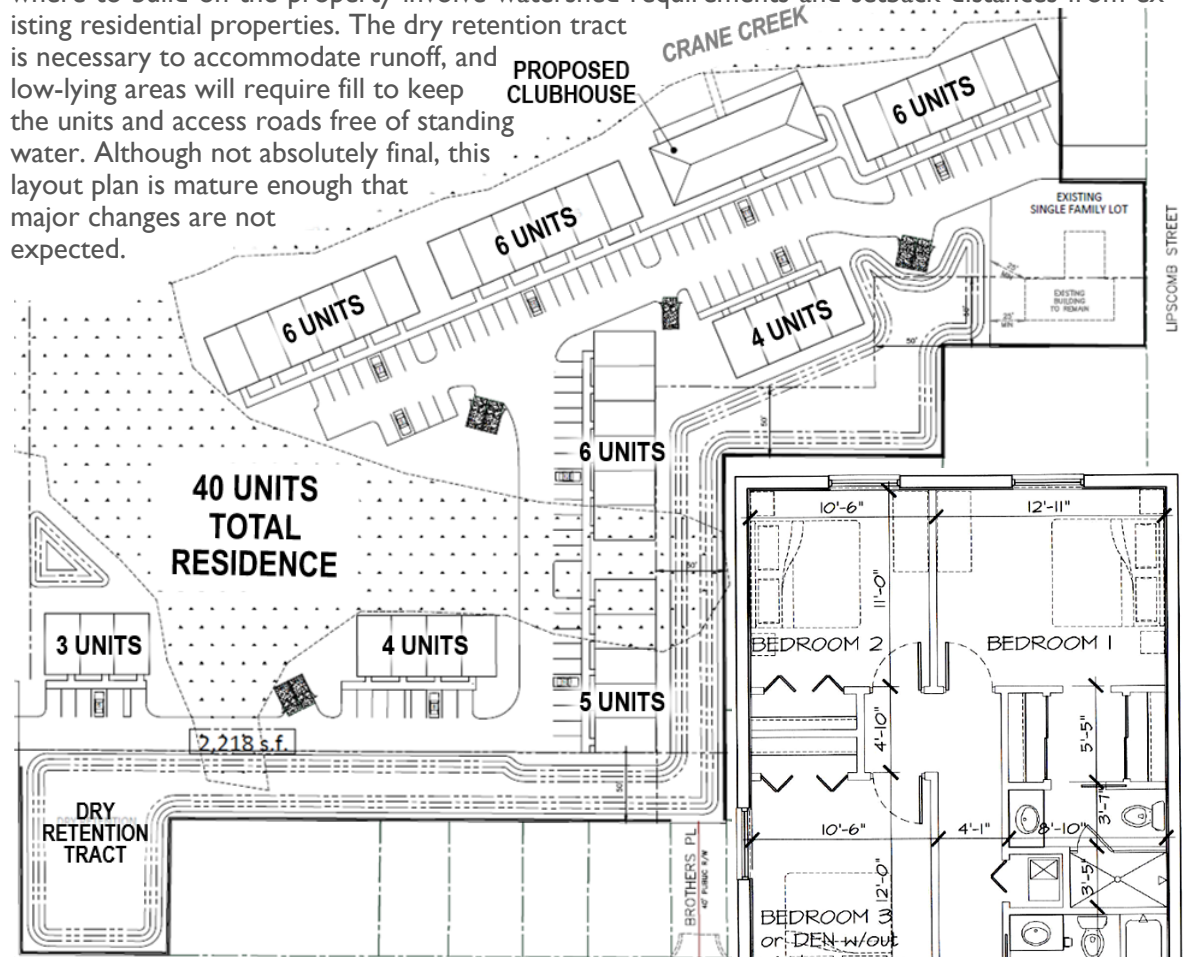
Brian Bussen

Glenda Shirhall

## Building Plan Update: Here's Where We Are

SSWay's overall intent is unchanged: provide affordable housing for homeless families with school children. However, specifics to the build plan have been updated to accommodate factors and constraints with the property and building layouts. This first page describes the current build plan layout and a likely floor plan for each unit. Page 2 provides an update on plan execution.

Immediately below is the current property build diagram. There are 40 housing units planned with parking, street access, and a proposed "clubhouse" to be used as a community center for families and sponsored services organizations to meet privately. Constraints affecting where to build on the property involve watershed requirements and setback distances from existing residential properties. The dry retention tract is necessary to accommodate runoff, and low-lying areas will require fill to keep the units and access roads free of standing water. Although not absolutely final, this layout plan is mature enough that major changes are not expected.



Immediately to the right is a proposed 1,100 sq ft 3-bedroom floor plan. Because each unit must be designed to accommodate a family with several school children, this design maximizes utility without compromising reasonable comfort and privacy. Though modest in size, such a living unit has three private bedrooms with closet space, two full baths, a kitchen with breakfast bar, and a living area.

The purpose for creating such units is to provide affordable transitional housing for homeless families with children in the Brevard County School System. The purpose for building a community of these units in one location is to facilitate much greater efficiencies for providing services and support via community sponsors for the resident families. These services and support will help these families transition out of homelessness through SSWay housing and into a more permanent and stable home of their own.

# Why is Saint Stephen's Way Needed?

**“Without community involvement, homeless children’s school experience would be minimal.”** As the Homeless Liaison for Brevard County Schools the previous 5 years, Sally Shinn knows. “We have almost 2,900 homeless kids in our schools. And while federal law ensures homeless children access, they need much more support to succeed academically.” Working with community partners to provide that support was very rewarding for Sally. “They provide the additional help needed for these students to truly feel a part of their school.” However, there are some needs that exceed available help. “Fewer than 120 of those 2,900 kids had a consistent place to sleep—that inconsistency is devastating to children. They worry about their parents, about where they will sleep tomorrow, and that really impacts their performance in school.” Sally is enthusiastic about SSWay because it directly addresses this need. “It is a terrific model that can be accomplished, duplicated, and will help solve the problem of homeless families with school children needing a consistent place to live.” Sally added that most families facing homelessness are back in a stable home within a year. And yet, “Everyone has a breaking point. Just ‘one more thing’ can push a family over the edge where they break the law, or turn violent.” All the more reason for SSWay to provide affordable transitional housing for families in need. “SSWay is a role model for all of Brevard County and a great step forward to making our community healthier.”

**To everyone who is considering supporting SSWay, Sally offers this:** “People want to contribute to things that really make a difference—Saint Stephen’s Way is a worthy investment of your time, energy, and support to help meet an unmet need in our community.”

## Services and Support: Tailored to Each Family

**For each family served, SSWay will tailor specific services and support needed to achieve a better, more stable future.** First, Brevard County Schools will refer homeless families to SSWay. That information will be combined with what SSWay gains from interviewing each family to assess their particular needs. SSWay will work with participating agencies to find the right help for addressing a family’s problems and issues, set goals for where they want to be, and then track their progress. While in SSWay housing, a family pays an affordable \$600 per month rent. This will allow them to save a significant sum over, say, a year and have a nice nest egg when they move forward into independent living. None of the Trans4mational Program elements is *required* of families, but the emphasis will be on families willing to work with SSWay to achieve their goals.

## What Does It Take to Stand Up SSWay? Hard Work & Love!

**To fit the names in,** here are *lightning-brief highlights* of those who got SSWay from then to now! On 5 May 2012 **Eddie Struttman** began the concept of SSWay with **Mary Broderick** and **Mike Sullivan**. Fast-forward to Sep 2017, **Roderick & Mary Whelan** and **Jan Pridmore & Pridmore Foundation** made significant financial gifts to SSWay which accelerated Executive Board (EB) work to find land to build housing. Also, **John Farrell**, former Executive Director (ED) of Daily Bread, accepted a call to join the team as SSWay’s ED. Oct 2017, **Don McGee** joined the Advisory Board (AB) and hosted board and committee meetings in his office’s conference room. Also joining the AB was **Sally Shinn, Ph.D.**, who was instrumental in SSWay’s formative years, and **Jock Walker** who hosted the first Golf Tournament (GT) fundraiser in Oct 2018. **Johnny Lascha, videographer**, volunteered to produce SSWay’s video to recruit vols, participants, & donors. Jan 2018, **Dave Myler, CPA**, joined the EB (and elected Treasurer), as did **Ed Wickey** (on *multiple* committees, created the first Ops Manual, website, and Supportive Services Program) and **Glenda Shirhall** (Director of Development and worked fundraisers GT & Jan 2019 500 Club Raffle). Feb 2018 **Bob & Jan McCarthy** and **Don & Linda Lees** joined the EB (arranged for the gift of 8 acres of land at Crane Creek (CC) to build housing) as did **Brian Bussen, civil engineer** (coordinated engineering & survey companies to develop a site plan, the CC land, and a financial development plan). Apr 2018, **Tom Boyle** retired lawyer, joined the EB and obtained support of the law firm **Seyfarth Shaw, LLC**; under **Christa Dommers’** direction, they did all legal work to procure the CC land & an adjoining parcel. Early 2018, **Jeff Hartnett** and **Art Berger** joined the AB and worked the budget for building EB-selected housing units. **Joe Mayer, civil engineer**, volunteered to help develop the site plan and review all engineering info & test results for the CC property. **Ken Lebron, Architect**, and on the AB since Jan 2018, provided drawings for three different housing unit floor plans and is the acting liaison with City of Melbourne Planning & Zoning officials. Apr 2018, **Amy Irwin, Bonnie Armstrong**, and **Roger Kendall** volunteered time & talent to be the first staff members for SSWay. 11 Apr 2018, **John Farrell, Eddie Struttman**, and **Brian Bussen** met with **Hugh and Art Evans of Forte Macaulay Land Development Company** where Hugh Evans volunteered to assist with plans for developing the Crane Creek land. June 2018, **Larry Sills** volunteered to be the Editor of the Newsletter for SSWay, with the 1<sup>st</sup> issue published December 2018. **This brings us to now, and the hard work and love continue!**

**500 CLUB RAFFLE WINNERS!** 1<sup>st</sup> Prize (\$10,000) to Paulette Paradiso who then generously donated it all to SSWay! And 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize (5 nights for 2 people at a Barbados resort) to Mike Erdman . Congratulations to Paulette, Mike, and SSWay! 2

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