

Group turning building into 'place of hope' Tabor Community Services plans apartments for poor senior citizens



Intelligencer Journal photo by Barry Zecher

Gathered for a "wall breaking" ceremony area, from left, Edwin Miller, Progressive Investments; Eric Hinderliter, city housing director; Nevin Horst, Tabor president; Grace Byler, Tabor chairwoman; and Paul Lewandowski, E.G. Stoltzfus project manager.

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Tabor Community Services Inc. held a symbolic "wall breaking" Thursday on East King Street, where work began to convert a brick building into 26 apartments for the county's poorest senior citizens.

The \$1.25 million project is Tabor's first venture in home building in the city.

Tabor is a non-profit group that has been offering mortgage assistance funds and consumer credit counseling for 25 years. The group is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development approved housing counseling agency for Lancaster and Lebanon counties and southwestern Chester County. In 1992, Tabor helped 1,057 area families make mortgage payments and reduce credit card debts.

Tabor Place Apartments at 439 E. King St. will be ready for renters in June. The 20,000 square-foot apartment building is the rear section of Tabor's home office.

Preference will be given to prospective tenants who are at least 62 years old with individual annual incomes of \$8,700 or

less, and elderly couples with maximum annual household incomes of \$11,500.

"This represents working at making justice roll like a river here in the city of Lancaster," Tabor chairwoman Grace Byler told a small gathering. "The justice is every human being having a right to a decent place to live."

Nevin Horst, Tabor's president, said the apartments will be a place of "light and hope" for seniors who need permanent housing.

Tabor officials were proud to announce that all but a small portion of the money for the building project came from private investors. The only public capital involved is a \$100,000 grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank through the Bank of Lancaster County.

The private funds came from 52 city and county businesses, banks and insurance firms, which contributed \$600,000, and a single investor group that chipped in \$550,000.

Byler and Horst declined to identify any of the private investors, except to say six local banks each donated between \$25,000 and \$30,000.