

Ripley Gardens

Minneapolis, Minnesota (opened October 2007)



Developer/Sponsor Aeon

Architect LHB

General Contractor Watson-Forsberg

Units 60

Project Description Ripley Gardens is the redevelopment of the former Ripley Maternity Hospital in the Harrison Neighborhood of Minneapolis. The development includes the restoration of three historic buildings and the addition of three new buildings to provide 52 rental and eight home ownership units.

The site is listed on both the National and Local Registers of Historic Places in recognition of its important place in the history of both women and medicine. In 1886, Dr. Martha Ripley, one of the few female physicians at that time, decided to address the exceptionally high mortality rate for women in childbirth by founding a women-operated maternity hospital. From the beginning, she insisted on welcoming everyone who came to its doors, regardless of financial means, marital status, age, or ethnicity. The Maternity Hospital closed in 1956 and the property was transformed into Queen Care Nursing Home, which operated until 2000. The site was vacant until Ripley Gardens opened in October 2007.

The plans for the site were developed with extensive participation by the Harrison Neighborhood Association, which has become a strong supporter of the project.

A Green Advantage The Ripley Gardens development incorporates a wide range of sustainable design elements, including:

- Adaptive re-use of existing historic structures.
- Clean-up of asbestos, lead, and petroleum contamination.
- Density exceeds 30 units per acre, while preserving one acre of green space.
- Pedestrian-friendly site design located next to public transportation with direct service to downtown Minneapolis and the western suburbs.
- New construction apartments take advantage of passive solar heating.
- Energy-efficient lighting and controls.
- Energy Star appliances.
- Storm water retention through the collection of water in three rain gardens.
- Two levels of underground parking creates a more walkable site, reduces need for impervious surfaces and reduces heat island effect.



Project Financing

Minnesota Green Communities	\$78,000
Limited Partner Equity, LIHTC	\$5,091,851
First Mortgage	\$2,730,000
City of Minneapolis (CPED-CDBG, HOME, AHTF, Seed)	\$1,145,000
Historic Rehab Tax Credits (HTC)	\$1,067,149
Pending HTC Adjustment	\$50,000
Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	\$600,000
Hennepin County AHIF	\$550,000
Hennepin County ERF	\$542,600
Minnesota Housing	\$478,000
Met Council—LCDA	\$450,000
Aeon Gap Loan	\$318,898
Neighborhood Revitalization Program	\$300,000
Federal Historic Save America's Treasures Grant	\$295,000
Foundation/Other	\$235,128
General Partner Deferred Developer Fee	\$149,841
Investment Account Interest	\$107,922
Family Housing Fund	\$100,000
Historic Preservation Grants	\$65,000
Private Donations	\$62,043
Hennepin County Lead Grant	\$42,000
CPED—Non-profit Admin	\$30,000
Hennepin County TOD	\$10,000
Total Project Financing	\$14,498,432

A Green Advantage
(Continued)

- Continuous ventilation of bathrooms and direct ventilation of range hoods to the exterior.
- Low-VOC paints, sealants, and adhesives.
- Interior finish materials using recycled content.

Rents Rents are affordable to families at or below 50% of area median income in twenty of the rental units, and six of the rental units are affordable at or below 30% of area median income. The eight ownership units are affordable to buyers at 50% of area median income. Four units are designated for previously homeless individuals.

Amenities Ripley Gardens includes a community room with a kitchen and patio, central courtyard with a tot-lot playground, and roughly one acre of green space throughout the site.

Social Services Central Community Housing Trust is partnering with People, Inc. to provide services to residents in the four units for previously homeless individuals. People, Inc. uses the Assertive Community Treatment model as a starting point for the residents and makes program adjustments as needed to tailor their services to the needs of the residents.

Developer Aeon is a private, nonprofit, community-based provider of affordable housing in the Twin Cities. Incorporated in 1986, the organization began as an effort to replace housing units lost through construction of the Minneapolis Convention Center. Aeon has developed more than 1,500 units of housing. The median annual income of the residents in Aeon housing is approximately \$16,200. Aeon emphasizes development, management, and maintenance of quality affordable housing that strengthens lives and communities. Ripley Gardens is Aeon’s second partnership with Enterprise Social Investment Corporation (ESIC); the first was the St. Barnabas Apartments, which restored a historic hospital wing to provide housing for homeless teens.



Lessons Learned “Ripley Gardens involved partners who had their own areas of focus, and sometimes their interests conflicted. For example, the city required an aggressive approach to remediating lead and asbestos hazards, but this conflicted with the architectural requirements of the historic rehabilitation as enforced by the National Park Service. Rather than trying to mediate this conflict, we found it most effective to bring the parties together in a face-to-face meeting to hammer out a compromise that everyone could agree to.”

—Matthew Hendricks, Project Manager, Aeon



Ripley historical photos



Minnesota Green Communities, a collaboration of the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund, the Family Housing Fund, and Enterprise, is an initiative designed to foster the creation of affordable, healthier, and more energy-efficient housing throughout Minnesota. The initiative will support the production of affordable housing with markedly reduced energy costs, use of materials beneficial to the environment, conservation-minded land use planning, and attention to the creation of healthy environments and lifestyles for individuals, children, families, and communities. For more information, please visit www.mnngreencommunities.org.

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