



City of Minneapolis Receives National Award of Excellence for Sustainable Community Development for Ripley Gardens

Redevelopment represents historic preservation, affordable housing, and sustainable construction

December 16 (MINNEAPOLIS) — The Home Depot® Foundation, today, recognized the City of Minneapolis and their nonprofit partner Aeon with the Award of Excellence for Sustainable Community Development for Ripley Gardens, located at 301 Penn Avenue N. This national award recognizes the City's and Aeon's thoughtful construction of green affordable housing to create a sustainable community.

The site, a former maternity hospital built in the early 1900s in honor of Dr. Martha Ripley, was redeveloped to address the City's financial, social and environmental community issues through thoughtful design, land use, and building. The development preserved three historic structures and constructed three new buildings, creating 52 rental units with a range of affordability and 8 for-sale townhomes. Ripley Gardens' green building strategies revitalized a prominent corner that stood vacant and boarded for several years.

"Minneapolis is on the cutting edge of both its commitment to affordable housing and its commitment to building a sustainable world," said Mayor R.T. Rybak. "This National Award of Excellence for Sustainable Community Development recognizes that we are also on the cutting edge when we do both at the same time. Ripley Gardens is a stellar example of how Minneapolis is building a sustainable city."

"Ripley Gardens illustrates that there's a direct relationship between community/social change and the physical environment around us. Building green affordable homes has a positive impact on our community – both now and for generations to come," said Alan Arthur, president of Aeon. "Ripley Gardens strengthens the lives of its residents, and is an asset to the broader community."

"Ripley Gardens is a social, economic, and environment oasis," said Don Samuels, Council Member (Ward 5). "The redevelopment turned a blighted corner into life and is a model for other areas in the city," Samuels said.

Minneapolis and Aeon's Ripley Gardens development was selected based on a number of criteria, including resource conservation, resident/pedestrian connectivity, environmental sustainability and green infrastructure, as well as how well the needs of the local community were met while maintaining affordability for the residents.

A video on the development is posted at <http://www.homedepotfoundation.org/sus>

"Many cities across the country are finding successful ways of dealing with financial, social and environmental issues through thoughtful design and land use, resulting in the construction of healthy, safe neighborhoods like Ripley Gardens," said Kelly Caffarelli, president of The Home Depot® Foundation. "We are excited to recognize the city of Minneapolis and Aeon for their outstanding work and hope that their public-private partnership will serve as an example to others working to find long-term solutions to the issues facing our cities."

The Home Depot® Foundation also recognized the City of Minneapolis' Comprehensive Plan, "[The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth](#)," which encourages integration of environmental, social and economic goals into decision-making processes at all levels, including sustainable design practices in the preservation, development, and maintenance of its natural and built environments. The Comprehensive Plan incorporates the city's 25 sustainability indicators which track the City's progress to minimize its ecological footprint, use of natural resources conservatively, and continue to build a healthy economy. Key elements of the sustainability plan include: reducing the carbon footprint by 12% by 2012; cleaning up 100 brownfield sites from 2004 to 2014; ending homelessness by 2016; and increasing the percentage of people who enter the city via alternative transportation (bus, light rail, bicycle, walking, carpooling) from 55% in 2003 to 67% in 2013.

The Home Depot® Foundation also presented an award to North Charleston, SC and their nonprofit partner The Sustainability Institute. The nonprofit partners received a total of \$150,000 to further the sustainability goals of their communities.

About Aeon

Aeon is a nonprofit developer, owner and manager of high-quality affordable apartment homes in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. Established in 1986, the award-winning nonprofit has built or renovated 1,705 apartments and townhomes, which provide stability to more than 3,000 people each year – including individuals and families with low to moderate incomes and formerly homeless individuals. The organization's inspiration to create community assets that last for generations is illustrated in its name "Aeon," which means "forever." Its vision is that every person has a home and is interconnected within community. Learn more at www.aeonmn.org.

About The Home Depot Foundation

The Home Depot Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that was established in 2002 to further the community building goals of The Home Depot by providing additional resources to assist nonprofit organizations.

The Foundation is dedicated to building affordable homes for working families that are healthy to live in and affordable to own. To make homes healthy and affordable, the Foundation encourages developers to incorporate responsible design and use durable and quality materials to ensure that homes are more energy and water efficient, have good indoor air quality, and provide a safe and healthy space to live. Since its formation, The Home Depot Foundation has granted \$120 million to nonprofit organizations and supported the development of more than 65,000 affordable, healthy homes.

While focused on building affordable homes, The Home Depot Foundation is also committed to improving the overall health of our communities. Taking a long-term, comprehensive approach to building healthy, stable communities where families can thrive, the Foundation invests in the planting and restoration of trees along streets, in parks and in schoolyards; the building and refurbishment of community play spaces; and the revitalization of school facilities.

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