



May 31, 2024

Jared S. Chicoine, Commissioner
Department of Energy
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Commissioner Chicoine,

Please accept this petition on behalf of Lakes Region Community Developers (and our subsidiary, Bay Street Apartments Corp.) to request a waiver of PUC Rule 303.02 (a) to have one master meter in a newly constructed building of 12 micro-apartments at 17-19 Bay Street in Laconia.

Lakes Region Community Developers (LRCD) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that develops healthy, affordable housing in the Lakes Region. We currently have 365 units of housing in six Lakes Region communities. LRCD has 30 years of experience in developing energy efficient affordable rental housing. Our mission is to create opportunities for the Lakes Region to thrive by developing healthy homes, creating vibrant community assets, and engaging residents.

Our project on Bay Street in Laconia will provide 12 homeless individuals with affordable efficiency (zero-bedroom) apartments and comprehensive supportive services. In addition to the 12 apartments, there will be a community sitting area, and an office for staff of Lakes Region Mental Health Centers (LRMHC) which will be staffed 40 hours per week. LRMHC will provide supportive social services to the residents. It is designed as a 100% electric building, and we hope to raise funds to add solar and batteries at a later date. The project is designed to meet or exceed the requirements of Energy Star 3.1.

The project will house 12 individuals who are currently homeless and who have incomes that do not exceed 30% of Area Median Income. Rental support will be provided by Project Based Vouchers from New Hampshire Housing, allowing residents to hold their housing costs to 30% of their income. The construction of the project is supported with grants from New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority and NH Community Development Finance Authority, with an additional loan from NeighborWorks Capital. Demolition of the existing burnt-out structure is being financed through a grant from Invest NH. LRCD has committed to both NHHFA and NHCDFA to 20-year affordability restrictions, and to the City of Laconia for a 99-year use and affordability restriction.


The rent structure includes payment of tenant utilities, as this very vulnerable population may not be able to manage multiple monthly bills, and/or to establish accounts. The units

are extremely small (under 300 square feet), so it is highly unlikely that large electricity bills would be generated by individuals.

Denial of the waiver will significantly increase the costs of the project, both in terms of construction cost and of operating costs (due to having to pay individual meter fees). A denial of the request would jeopardize our ability to provide this important resource to this very vulnerable population. In addition, waivers have been granted to Laconia Housing Authority projects for similar reasons.

Thank you for considering our request. We are happy to provide any further information you may require.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carmen Lorentz', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Carmen Lorentz
Executive Director