

## Editorial Page



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# The Memorial Homes renaissance comes to life with opening

**T**his wasn't just any apartment building opening.

The ribbon cutting and grand opening of the 40-unit Memorial Homes apartment complex at 1609 Memorial Ave. marked the completion of the first of three phases of a redevelopment odyssey.

Built on a site used for industrial purposes since at least 1912, the Brodart warehouse had been dangerously empty since 2011.

Large, empty warehouses seldom lead to positive scenarios.

They are nests for dangerous fires, vandalism, crime and drug deals.

They do nothing positive for a neighborhood.

While we cannot say that was necessarily the case with this warehouse, it certainly cast a dark shadow on its neighborhood.

Memorial Homes can do great things for the neighborhood, along with the remaining project phases of building townhouses and Habitat for Humanity homes.

The best illustration of the renaissance may be in a resident such as Marie Fye, who worked in the warehouse from 1959 to 1969 and now is living in the apartments.

The project was eight years in the making. The financing needed to raze the warehouse and begin construction came from Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency tax credits and \$1.3 million of Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation funds.

That, we must hasten to add, is gas impact fee money that is used by communities affected by Marcellus Shale industries leading to a jump in rental rates.

The ribbon on the package is that the housing is going to those most in need while also generating \$115,000 annually in real estate taxes to the county.

By the time the whole project is complete, we will have truly witnessed a renaissance, perhaps for the entire neighborhood.