



Rendering of the Community Green neighborhood, which is designed to achieve net-zero energy use.

## THE VALLE GROUP, INC.

BY ZACH BALIVA

PRIOR TO OPENING THE VALLE GROUP WITH his son, Christian, and wife, Joan, Joseph Valle was president of a large Massachusetts residential homebuilder. Now, as chairman and CEO of The Valle Group, Inc., he often works with nonprofit organizations on affordable housing communities with a focus on energy efficiency and sustainability.

The Valle Group is based in Falmouth, Massachusetts, and has many facets. The design-build firm offers interior design, landscape design, and consultation services. Valle's decision to start his own company came after noticing a niche demographic in the industry. "The affordable market wasn't being served. The potential to see a person finally move into his first home was much more appealing than building someone's second home on the Cape," Valle explains.

Six employees comprise the business, with everything except architectural services handled in-house. The experienced group, which typically works on two or three projects at a time, has developed a 200-acre, 23-lot subdivision on a seacoast in New Hampshire, and a 164-unit assisted-living facility in Connecticut. In 2004, Valle completed an 11-home community in Mashpee, Massachusetts, called River Hill. For River Hill, Mashpee's first affordable-living community, Valle needed to work with a local nonprofit to secure public funding for the project that consisted of four "work-force" homes eventually featured on Bob Vila's *Home Again*. Housing Assistance Corporation joined the project, and the two organizations forged a lasting partnership.

Now, The Valle Group serves as Housing Assistance Corporation's fee-based

contractor involved in design, planning, permits, and construction. Their current project is Community Green, an innovative community designed to achieve net-zero energy usage. "The whole idea of affordable housing is to develop and empower people to help a community, and being environmentally friendly and energy efficient fits with that," Valle says.

The mixed-use community, currently in early stages of development, will feature 5 single-family homes, 20 apartments, 26 townhomes, and 10 single-resident occupancies attached to a 20,000-square-foot enterprise center. The low-rent, single-resident occupancy units are designed to house a formerly homeless population that will work at Community Green's enterprise center, gardens, or animal stables until they earn enough money to move into the campus' apartments or townhomes.



### CONTRACTORS & BUILDERS

Real estate development and construction

LOCATION:  
Falmouth, MA

USGBC MEMBER SINCE:  
March 2009

EMPLOYEES:  
6

YEAR FOUNDED:  
1997

“We want [Community Green] to show that you can create mixed-use housing that is eco-friendly and sustainable with a minimal footprint.”

*Joseph Valle, Chairman & CEO*

“We’re trying to provide viable long-term living solutions in one neighborhood,” Valle explains.

The development’s sustainable features will help The Valle Group and Housing Assistance Corporation move toward their net-zero energy goal. In addition to Energy Star appliances throughout, Community Green will utilize 12-inch super insulated exterior walls, high-efficiency HVAC systems, photovoltaic panels, triple-pane windows, non-invasive landscaping, and other green design techniques.

Housing Assistance Corporation hopes the large enterprise center, intended as a business and information hub, will attract and grow companies already involved in energy conservation efforts. The vision is to use the space to further develop the people and structure of Community Green. “We want to show that you can create mixed-use housing that is eco-friendly and sustainable with a minimal footprint,” says Valle, adding that empowering residents to improve their

lives is another important benefit of creating sustainable environments.

The Valle Group and Housing Assistance Corporation previously worked on The Homesteads, a green and energy-efficient 16-home community in Sandwich, Massachusetts that recently won the NHBA’s Best in American Living Award for affordable homebuilding. The community, which cost \$3 million to develop and was subsidized by \$1.17 million in federal and local public funding, was built on donated land, and its homes were sold by lottery to low-income first-time homebuyers.

The Valle Group now implements green practices into all of its projects, using advanced insulation, highly efficient mechanical and electrical systems, and bio-retention storm water treatment to further increase a building’s energy efficiency while reducing environmental impact. “We think it’s what the world needs,” Valle says, “because [green design] is out there, and we want to be known as developers

who are following the right course for viable communities.”

Housing Assistance Corporation is also working with The Valle Group on several current projects including a 12-unit senior living facility, a 28-unit community designed around an open YMCA recreation area, and a 117-home mixed-use community in Bourne, Massachusetts. “Earth friendly practices have become important to Housing Assistance Corporation, and to us, too,” Valle says, adding that low-income and moderate-income housing can be beautiful and sophisticated, as well as efficient and affordable. Energy-efficient homes, Valle says, are not only affordable to purchase, but cost less to maintain.

The Valle Group knows that they’re not just building structures—they’re building homes and communities. As they do, the focus remains on providing results to sustain both residents and the environment. GBQ



The VALLE GROUP, Inc.  
Real Estate Consulting and Development

The Valle Group, Inc.  
70 East Falmouth Highway – Suite 3  
East Falmouth, MA 02536  
Phone: 508-548-1450  
Fax: 508-548-1950  
Website: [www.vallegroup.com](http://www.vallegroup.com)