

## Senior housing up and running

### Saugerties facility developer's third

The Birches at Saugerties was officially declared complete during ceremonies Monday.

**By Paul Kirby**  
Freeman staff

SAUGERTIES – For the third time in two years, developer Steve Aaron on Monday proclaimed the completion of an affordable housing project built by the company he founded, Birchez Associates.

Aaron, whose company has also built affordable housing projects in the town of Ulster and Kingston, told an audience under a tent on the grounds of the Birches at Saugerties that his firm will continue to provide senior housing in Ulster County.

The developer has used a mix of government funding, tax credits, and private financing to build three affordable housing projects.

Aaron said, that while the Birches at Saugerties, a 60-unit facility off U.S. Route 9W just north of Glasco Turnpike, was officially opened Monday, it has already filled up with tenants. Construction started 10 months ago.

Aaron told the gathering that the Birches at Saugerties got built despite what were “insurmountable odds, enormous challenges, and never ending obstacles.”

But Aaron called the project “the right thing” to do for senior citizens.

“These are folks who have lived in Ulster County and want to stay in Ulster County,” said Aaron, who added they can now call their new apartments home.

One of them, Betty Legg, 69, who sold her house six years ago because it got difficult to maintain, said she could not be happier with her dwelling, particularly because it has its own entrance surrounded by neatly groomed grounds.

“It is like a country club,” Legg said.

U.S. Rep. Maurice Hinchey, D-Hurley, who grew up in Saugerties, and Sen John Bonacic, R-Mount Hope,

were on hand and told the gathering that the Birches at Saugerties was badly needed in Ulster County. Aaron has built two other complexes, Chambers Court, a 72 unit senior facility in the town of Ulster, and Birchwood Village, an



The Birches at Saugerties, off U.S. Route 9W south of the village, offers one- and two-bedroom apartments along with facilities that promote a healthy and active lifestyle for senior citizens.

80-unit family-oriented project on Flatbush Avenue in Kingston.

Hinchey, as well as Bonacic, lauded Aaron's effort.

“Steve Aaron has taken it on his part to try and meet a specific need of this community, probably the most critical need up and down the valley,” Hinchey said.

Bonacic said that the Birches at Saugerties will be a place where seniors can “live with dignity.”

Aaron also announced Monday that the community room at Birches at Saugerties is named after the late Joan Feldmann, a former Ulster County Legislator.



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