April 21, 2014

Re: STARS Innovation Credit Letter: Habitat for Humanity Eco-Village 1 & 2

Dear STARS Review Committee,

I am writing to reinforce the innovation credit value of the St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity (SCVHfH) Eco-Village 1 (EV1) Project currently under construction, and the initiation of Eco-Village 2 (EV2) in the neighboring community of Prescott, WI. Both of these ground-breaking projects are and continue to be in partnership with the St. Croix Institute for Sustainable Community Development (SCISCD) and the University of Wisconsin – River Falls (UWRF).

EV1, which was also noted as an innovation credit in last year’s STARS report, has made very significant gains in the speed and completion of the project. We had six families in their homes by the end of 2013 and will soon add another four families to their ranks by the end of May. The final eight foundations will be in by the end of this summer and those eight families in their homes by the end of 2015; almost two years ahead of schedule.

SCISCD and the UWRF partnership have been instrumental in the conceptual design and overall progress from the beginning.

In addition, SCVHfH and SCISCD at UWRF are now actively in discussion with city officials and pertinent land owners in Prescott, WI for the development of EV2 which will be easily twice the size of EV1 and innovate even further on the holistic systems approach to low income self-sufficient lifestyles, neighborhoods, and community development.

It is safe to say that without the partnership of SCISCD and UWRF, these two projects would likely have never emerged and/or would have struggled to achieve the rate of success currently demonstrated.

Please let me know if you have concerns or questions about the truly innovative nature of these projects.

Sincerely,



Dave Engstrom, Executive Director

St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity