After Long Battle, Group Saves Apartment Building

Monday, Oct 15, 2007 - 02:56 PM Updated: 05:14 PM

PROVIDENCE - After a seven-year battle, the Villita apartments in Providence have been restored.

NBC 10's Mario Hilario said the building on Public Street was in disrepair and on the verge of foreclosure.

With the help of Rhode Island Housing and the state and local housing and urban development office, The Women's Development Center was able to renovate the building.

"It's the hallmark of the South Providence neighborhood, and preserving it is very important. It is a gateway project," said Alma Green of the Women’s Development Corp.

Housing advocates said the project is important no only for the people who are living there, but for the neighborhood as a whole.

"Without these homes, the 17 families who live here today would not have a home," said Nancy Castillo of the tenants association. "We might be on the street."

"It's homes, but it's also an anchor and we need anchors in these neighborhoods. Units like these are being lost all over the country and we have fought very had to keep them in Rhode Island," said Richard Godfrey of Rhode Island Housing.