



For Immediate Release:

State College Community Land Trust receives \$35K from West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund

*Monies will be used to research energy efficiency upgrades
currently being made to existing homes*

January 7, 2020 -- The State College Community Land Trust (SCCLT) has been awarded a \$35,000 grant from West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund (WPPSEF) to engage technical advisement and public outreach on a pilot project to improve the energy performance of existing affordable homes in the Borough of State College. Other key partners are the Borough of State College, the Penn State Hamer Center for Community Design/Energy Efficient Housing Research Group (EEHR), Housing Transitions, Inc., and the Pennsylvania Housing Research Center (PHRC).

Vicki Fong, SCCLT president, said, 'For over 20 years, we have expanded affordable homeownership for low to moderate homeowners in the Borough. Through our Energy+ project, we will be able to enhance a home's affordability by reducing the energy burden of existing homes and cutting energy bills for homeowners. The WPPSEF grant enables our team to capitalize on a series of energy-focused retrofits currently taking place across three affordable housing programs in the Borough of State College. Our team will be able to evaluate project properties before and after renovations, and make recommendations for future renovations in existing housing throughout the region.'

Joel Morrison, Director of West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund, said " WPPSEF is pleased to support SCCLT's Energy+ program to reduce the energy costs of its affordable housing programs. The funding can provide long-term impact through technical support and the communication of the program findings and recommendations for program standardization for future phases of the Energy+ Program."

Thanks to Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) funds awarded by the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency to the Borough of State College, Housing Transitions, Inc and SCCLT in July, physical work has already begun on the 17 pilot units. Efforts will begin immediately to catalogue the scope of work at each unit, the type of architecture and building materials used, and to create energy models demonstrating the changes made in

energy performance at each site. EEHR and PHRC are providing technical support, and Envinity, Inc. is completing energy audits at each site before and after renovations. Energy+ will benefit not only the people who reside in the renovated units, but also will serve as a reference point for builders, developers, architects and individual homeowners seeking guidance in reducing energy costs across the region.

Maureen Safko, Senior Planner at the State College Borough, said: “In the pilot phase of Energy+ we will focus on incorporating energy efficiency into our usual scope of rehab work. In a community where most of our affordable housing is older and often expensive to heat and cool, Energy+ will help us think about things we can do to reduce energy cost burden for occupants. We are proud to once again partner with WPPSEF in this town-gown collaboration to further address one of our community’s most well-known challenges: affordable housing.”

More information is at: [www.http://www.scclandtrust.org/energy-initiative](http://www.scclandtrust.org/energy-initiative)

About

The **State College Community Land Trust (SCCLT)** is an independent nonprofit organization that works to sustain the vibrancy and diversity of State College’s neighborhoods by preserving affordable housing, and promoting first-time homeownership. The land trust has enabled nearly 70 first-time homebuyers to purchase homes near employment, schools, entertainment, and transit since 1996. With the median price of a home in the Borough at \$329,800, many individuals from low, moderate, *and* middle-income levels face challenges in purchasing a home in the Borough. With a small staff and many dedicated volunteers, SCCLT works to bring more community members home to the Borough. Visit <http://www.scclandtrust.org> for more information.

The **West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund (WPPSEF)** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that invests in the deployment of sustainable energy technologies that benefit West Penn Power ratepayers in Pennsylvania. WPPSEF investments are focused in three broad categories:

- ✓ Deployment of sustainable and clean energy technologies;
- ✓ Deployment of energy efficiency and conservation technologies; and
- ✓ Facilitating economic development, environmental betterment, and public education as they relate to sustainable energy deployment in the WPP service region.

Visit <http://www.wppsef.org> for further information. [YouTube](#) – Listen to what our project partners have to say about us.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Anna Kochersperger, State College Community Land Trust, 814-867-0656,
anna@scclandtrust.org

Barbara Robuck, West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund, 814-865-7380
WPPSEF@ems.psu.edu