

# ARC of Southington breaks ground on new addition

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SOUTHINGTON – The ARC of Southington held a groundbreaking recently for its new addition, and accepted a \$75,000 check from the Main Street Community Foundation to help pay for it.

Sandy Amato, ARC executive director, said the donation specifically came from the Bradley H. Barnes and Leila U. Barnes Memorial Trust, administered through the foundation.

“We’re very excited. We also got a grant from the state Office of Policy and Management for \$504,000,” she said. “Between the two, that should cover most of it.”



Photo by Susan Corica The ARC of Southington held a groundbreaking Tuesday morning for its new 18,000 square foot addition at its 201 West Main St., Plantsville, location.

She credited the town, former State Sen. Joe Markley (R-Southington) and current State Sen. Rob Sampson (R-Southington) and State Rep. John Fusco (R-Southington) for their help with the project.

If there are any unforeseen expenses at the end of the project, they would have to be covered by fundraising, she added.

The 18,000 square foot addition is in the back of the building at 201 West Main St., Plantsville. It will include more office and storage space, and two upgraded handicapped accessible bathrooms.

“We have accessible bathrooms now, but they’re not up to code as much as they should be,” Amato said. It’s an old building and they really need renovating.”

“We’re also expanding our conference area to accommodate more individuals in our program,” she continued. “We have a self advocacy group, which started off with seven people and is up to 30-something now, so there are too many people to meet here. We rent space at Plantsville Congregational Church for a lot of our training, meetings, things like that, but that’s an extra expense. So we’ll have ample space to be able to provide the services here.”

The work on the addition began about three weeks ago and the framing should be finished before the first snowfall, she said. “We’re also expanding the parking lot and taking down a garage and putting up a shed. The extra parking is very needed, right now we have 25 spaces and they will make 41 all together.”

Amato explained that the ARC building was originally an old house now owned by the town, which rents it to ARC for \$1 a year. The upstairs housed Catholic Family Services at one time, but now ARC uses the whole building and there’s still not enough room, she said.

ARC is a human service agency that provides advocacy, education, information and referral, and an array of quality and individualized services and supports to people of all ages with intellectual disabilities, and their families. The agency operates seven licensed group homes in Southington, Cheshire, and Wallingford and provides services to individuals living in their own homes.

“We serve approximately 41 individuals with disabilities, in Southington, Cheshire, Wallingford, Hamden, Meriden, and New Britain,” Amato said. “It’s a pretty big area, but most of our people are in the Southington area.”

It started in 1954 as a family-run support group and volunteer organization, which met in people’s basements. Amato said it then was housed in an old schoolhouse nearby, before moving to its current location.

For more information, visit [www.arcsouthington.org](http://www.arcsouthington.org).

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