



Metropolitan Housing Coalition NEWSLETTER

December 2010

2010: The Year in Review

Through our research, education, and advocacy work, MHC has been the first to study housing trends in our community. MHC reported on the growing number of families and people on fixed incomes who are facing a housing crisis. We educated the community through our work on foreclosures, our study on homeless children in the public school system, our focus on mortgage lending practices and by coordinating partners committed to fair housing. MHC's current work with neighborhoods on the problem of vacant and abandoned housing through the Louisville Vacant Property Campaign (LVPC), focuses on turning Louisville's vacant properties into opportunities for neighborhood stabilization and revitalization. This work began over two years ago and MHC has helped neighborhood leaders become more educated on measuring and responding to the problem.

At this moment of need, Greg Fischer will become our new mayor in 2011. To help the new administration respond to this crisis, the *2010 State of Metropolitan Housing Report (SMHR)*, released on October 28, provides an overview of policy options available to create affordable housing opportunities and meet the needs of lower-income households. As we look back on the past year, the *2010 SMHR* is just one of MHC's accomplishments that were made possible by the support of our diverse membership.

MHC wrote the *2010 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice in Louisville Metro*, which has been adopted by the city as its official policy. Not only did Louisville Metro government support this work, MHC is already working with the City to see recommendations implemented. The report brings to high relief the need for zoning reform for Louisville Metro to offer affordable housing opportunities throughout the county.

MHC's continued work with a coalition to revamp the local Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) ordinance led to a second ordinance passed by the Louisville Metro Council to establish the Louisville AHTF. MHC's persistence in raising this issue meant it was never forgotten. Louisville now has a local AHTF with a board of directors and action steps with a timetable!

Of course, MHC continues our work of facilitating industry meetings for 21 member organizations through the Non-profit Housing Alliance. Additionally, MHC made low interest loans to non-profit developers for construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing – a program made possible by the Kentucky Housing Corporation.

MHC followed up on the report "*Where Do You Live? Louisville's Homeless Children and the Affordable Housing Crisis*," sponsored by Making Connections Network, by working with partners to have a cross-discipline training of 250 people from the Jefferson County Family Court system, the Jefferson County Public School system and the Kentucky Cabinet For Health and Family Services, Jefferson County Region. The goal of this effort is to improve services for homeless children both within and between each system.

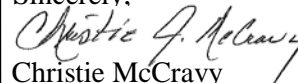
MHC hosted several major events for more than 1,000 community participants, learning about and testifying for affordable housing issues. A highlight was over 270 people attending the MHC Annual Meeting in June with keynote speaker U.S. Representative John Yarmuth.


In a very exciting new area of advocacy, MHC was an Intervener in the case before the Public Service Commission on the sale of E.On to PPL. This was a direct follow-up on the *2008 SMHR* recommendations on utility costs as part of affordable housing. MHC focused on cost containment for low-income households. The Kentucky Resources Council represented MHC in stellar fashion.

MHC appreciates the grant awards of **Louisville Metro Government, Kentucky Housing Corporation, Making Connections Network, Unitarian Universalist Funding Program, Fifth Third Bank Foundation, Gannett Foundation, PNC Bank, Barth Foundation, Catholic Charities, the Louise Judah Irrevocable Trust, Arthur K. Smith Family Foundation, Metro United Way, Presbyterian Church USA, and the special support of Janet Dakan.** MHC also appreciates the in-kind donation of legal services from the Kentucky Resources Council and meeting space from Louisville Urban League, New Directions Housing Corporation and Presbyterian Community Center. This support allows us to maintain a strong focus on safe, fair and affordable housing in the region.

MHC emphasizes the Coalition part of our name. Thank you for your continued support of the Metropolitan Housing Coalition, both financially and with your time and effort. We invite new partners to join us in addressing pressing fair, affordable housing needs in our metro area. Truly, working as a coalition and with the effort of everyone, we can build a healthier and vibrant community.

Sincerely,


Christie McCravy
Board President


Cathy Hinko
Executive Director

Louisville Vacant Property Campaign: A Look Back at 2010

The Louisville Vacant Property Campaign (LVPC), staffed by MHC, has had a banner year in learning about the complexity of the vacant property problem and its potential solutions. We have had a number of guest speakers on topics relevant to the issues and solutions. The thought behind having speakers was to further educate the members of LVPC on topics such as urban agriculture/community gardens, Louisville Metro Codes and Regulations, Louisville Metro Landbank Authority, Jefferson County Property Valuation Administration, vacant property registration laws, Abandoned Urban Property Tax, and the Louisville Metro Vacant Property Review Commission. Perhaps even more importantly, we are able to ask questions, have discussions, deepen our understanding, and take our combined knowledge to advocate localized solutions.

Our guests have included members and staff from the Landbank Authority, Property Valuation (PVA), Vacant Property Review Commission, Louisville Metro Codes and Regulations, Louisville Metro Landmarks Commission and the Jefferson County Attorney. Additionally, Rep. Dennis Horlander (D, 40) and Bert May, Dinsmore & Shohl's Frankfort office, told us about their efforts to get legislation on vacant property registration through the last session of the General Assembly.

LVPC has increased the dialogue on the topic and many people are responding. We have members from more than a dozen diverse neighborhoods, current and past public officials, and a number of local nonprofit and for-profit housing and community development organizations coming to our meetings and involved in discussions and actions regarding vacant property. We are interested in visiting other neighborhoods and groups to discuss their concerns and suggestions and our work concerning vacant properties.

LVPC has been meeting monthly on the third Tuesday of each month at the Presbyterian Community Center, 701 S. Hancock Street. We have recently done a survey of our members and contacts evaluating our meetings, times, mission, etc. We have not yet compiled the data. Therefore, if you or anyone you may know who might be interested in attending our meetings or being added to our email distribution list, please contact Doug Magee at doug@metropolitanhousing.org or 584-6858. Doug can provide details about the LVPC and its meeting times and location, in case the survey calls for changes. Please use the same method to request our attendance at one of your meetings.

MHC Director-Emeritus Suzy Post Honored with Carl and Anne Braden Lifetime Achievement Award

The Kentucky Alliance Against Racist & Political Oppression awarded Suzy Post the Carl and Anne Braden Lifetime Achievement Award on Saturday, November 13, 2010 at their 13th Annual Unity Dinner. Over 200 activists, officials, and KY Alliance supporters attended the dinner, held at the Hotel Louisville.

Bob Cunningham, KY Alliance Board Member, introduced Suzy – a champion and lifelong advocate for fair and affordable housing, social justice, and civil rights. Accepting her award with humility and poise, Suzy took a moment to acknowledge the many voices like hers that helped to break down discriminatory practices in the Louisville area. Suzy has been a leading social justice advocate since the 1950s, battling racial and gender discrimination and fighting for fair and open housing. Her professional work includes serving as: a monitor with the Louisville Human Relations Commission; President of the Kentucky Civil Liberties Union; and as the founding Director of MHC. Suzy's response to the question "Why do you do what you do?" was oft-repeated during the evening's events- "Because injustice pisses me off." Suzy continues to work with many social justice organizations, including MHC's Fair Housing Coalition.

Unity Dinner attendees were energized, passionate, and ready to move forward fighting discriminatory practices that affect all walks of life and people in every social and economic category. The event also acknowledged other "fighters" in our community who actively and passionately seek to battle the oppressions of impoverished and discriminated peoples. Those honored were: Dr. Adewale Troutman, Denise Vazquez-Troutman, and Yana Baker. Keynote speaker Dr. Boyce Watkins spoke on the economics of the black community and the importance of advocacy for social justice. Councilwoman Judith Green presented Certificates of Appreciation from Louisville Metro Government to Suzy Post, the other honorees, and Dr. Watkins.

Congratulations Suzy & THANK YOU!

Schedule of Events

January 11 - Fair Housing Coalition Meeting. New Directions, 1000 E. Liberty, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

January 18- Louisville Vacant Properties Campaign Meeting. Presbyterian Community Center, 701 South Hancock, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

December 7 - Open House at Family Scholar House. Tour their facilities and personalize a holiday encouragement card for one of the families on their waiting list for housing! For more information, call Rachel Foster at 584-8090. Louisville Scholar House, 403 Reg Smith Circle, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

December 11- International Human Rights Day at the U of L Saturday Academy. Drs. Garrett Adams, Joyce Howell, Edgar Lopez, & Syed Quadri discuss: the barriers to quality healthcare for Americans (from 11:00 a.m. -12:30 p.m.); and how national health insurance addresses some of those issues better than the current system (from 12:45 - 2:00 p.m.). For more information, call Marian Vasser at 852-2252. DuValle Education Center Cafeteria, 3610 Bohne Avenue, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

December 14 - Bank on Louisville “Start Fresh” Workshop. Start Fresh is a service to individuals who have been denied bank or credit union accounts due to negative (non-fraud) histories. The program features information about checking accounts, saving money, budgeting, fraud prevention and identity theft. This workshop will get you on your way to establishing a bank account, positive credit and on the pathway to financial success. To reserve a spot in the workshop, or for additional information, call the Urban League at 566-3362. Louisville Urban League, 1535 W. Broadway. 6:15 - 7:30 p.m.

December 14 - Volunteers of America of Kentucky Real³ Journey. A one hour program and tour that shares how VOA helps real people facing real challenges to find real and lasting solutions. Please RSVP to Farrah Ferriell at 636-4639 or farrahf@voaky.org VOA Family Emergency Shelter, 1321 S. Preston Street, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.

December 15 - Coalition for the Homeless Annual Holiday Open House. Come see their new office! For more information, call 636-9550. Ollie Green Building II, 1300 South 4th Street, Suite 250. 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

January 23- Legal Aid Society Foreclosure Conciliation Project- Volunteer Training. Legal Aid Society is performing outreach to those for whom foreclosures have recently been filed to let them know about free clinics available that can help them with housing counseling and legal advice. For more information and to enroll in the training, please contact Sade Jackson at SJackson@laslou.org or 614-3182. Legal Aid Society, 416 W. Muhammad Ali Boulevard, 12:00 p.m. Volunteer Trainings will also be held on **February 19, March 19, & April 9.**

Louisville Metro
Human Relations Commission
15th Annual Race &
Relations Conference
Kentucky Center for African American Heritage
Tuesday, January 25
8:00 a.m – 1:00 p.m.

Entitled “*Leveling the Playing Field*,” the conference will include luncheon keynote speaker Lilly Ledbetter, fair pay activist and namesake of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, and workshops to address social issues in the areas of Civil Rights for Immigrants, United Front in Post-Racial America?, Empowering Youth Today to Build Community Capacity Tomorrow and Beyond, Housing and Employment Legal Updates, Economic Assistance for Small Businesses. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission will also conduct its annual session on legal updates in employment. For more information, please call 574-4631 or go to <http://www.louisvilleky.gov/HumanRelations>. The conference will be held at the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage, 1701 W. Muhammad Ali Boulevard.

To submit your community events, please email Curtis at curtisstauffer@metropolitanhousing.org.

Make the United Voice for Fair and Affordable Housing Stronger in 2011 Join MHC or Renew Your Membership Today!



As an MHC Member you:

- **Support** the creation of long-term solutions to our community's affordable housing crisis.
- **Join** the diverse coalition of over 170 individual and 200 organizational members which make up our far-reaching base.
- **Receive** our monthly newsletter and published reports on timely housing issues that touch the Metro Louisville region and beyond.
- **Advertise** your events in our printed and electronic newsletters and link your website to ours.
- **Most important of all**, you will have your voice heard at this historic and critical time!

For membership questions, please call the office at (502) 584-6858 to talk to Curtis.
To make an online donation, visit us on the web at www.metropolitanhousing.org.



Metropolitan
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Coalition

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