



# Metropolitan Housing Coalition

## NEWSLETTER

February 2010

### From Eyesore to Eye Catching

MHC acknowledges three of its longtime members: River City Housing (RCH), Louisville Development Group (LDG) and Phoenix Hill Neighborhood Association (PHNA). Together they saw a vacant property and turned it into a well-built affordable place to call home.

As a nonprofit affordable housing developer, River City Housing has been rehabilitating houses since 1992 and has recently completed their first full-gut rehab. Showing complete dedication for the project, PHNA researched and discovered a solution for the vacant house at 939 East Liberty Street. RCH contacted LDG who, in return, donated the property because it was of so little value to the original owners. LDG unites with governments, communities, and neighborhoods to develop, renovate, and manage communities affecting moderate income families.

The brick camelback shotgun house was headed for demolition until RCH restored the property making it a major asset to the neighborhood. Before LDG donated the property to RCH, the place was a blighted eyesore. Funded by HUD through Louisville Metro Government, the remodeled design includes polished easy-care hardwood floors, beautiful architectural detail, a new HVAC system, and a new roof. The Phoenix Hill Neighborhood Association, as well as close neighbors of the house, is pleased to see the eyesore become a home. In fact, shortly after the community showing, the proud new owner will close on the house.

RCH believes affordable well-built housing should not be restricted to low-income neighborhoods but should be everywhere. "It is important, in the current housing market, for RCH to shift from new construction to rehab. Louisville doesn't need more housing inventory. The city and would-be homeowners benefit from inventive rehab of existing vacant structures. We'd put the quality and attractiveness of this affordable home up against any urban home in Louisville," says RCH Executive Director Becky Roehrig.

Congratulations to River City Housing, Louisville Development Group, Phoenix Hill Neighborhood Association, and Northcutt Builders for your model collaboration which makes Louisville one more house closer to affordable housing for everyone.



### The People's Forum

*Last month we asked you to write this event in your calendar.*

*Today, we are reminding you to come!*

*The People's Forum*, a mayoral candidate forum to be held the evening of **Tuesday, February 2, 6-8 p.m.** (Note the new date) on the second floor of the Metro United Way Building, 334 E. Broadway. (Parking is located in the gated lot a block behind the building.)

All mayoral candidates, regardless of party, have been invited to participate. Candidates will share their views on a variety of issues by answering questions posed by the partnering organizations.

Dependent on time constraints, audience members may have the opportunity to ask questions of their own based upon the forum topics. Admission to *The People's Forum* will be free and granted on a first come, first served basis.

#### ***The People's Forum***

Tuesday, February 2, 6-8 p.m.

#### **Note the New Date!**

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and Seating is Limited  
Meet and Greet Reception to Follow  
Metro United Way Building, 334 E. Broadway  
Community Room, Second Floor  
(Parking is located in the gated lot a block behind the building.)

Partnering organizations of *The People's Forum* are: **ACLU of Kentucky, Community Farm Alliance, Fairness Campaign, Hispanic/Latino Coalition, Kentuckians For The Commonwealth, Kentucky Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, Kentucky Jobs with Justice, Making Connections Network, Metropolitan Housing Coalition, and Women In Transition.**

## Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice in Louisville Metro

As part of the Consolidated Plan process, which determines our priorities in spending the expected \$75 million of federal housing monies over the next five years, Louisville Metro government must produce an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. This document and its recommended action steps will be used to inform the Consolidated Plan.

MHC is thrilled to announce that we are doing research, analyzing findings and writing this document, which needs to be completed by March 15. MHC wants your participation. You will be notified of an online survey that you can complete. We are still working on it, so please wait for the announcement in early February.

MHC will also be conducting interviews with stakeholders to determine what barriers we have inadvertently codified in our laws, policies, regulations and procedures that cause impediments to fair housing in our area and what action steps we can take.

Your input is important. If you have views on this, you can always write to MHC at [Theresa@metropolitanhousing.org](mailto:Theresa@metropolitanhousing.org).



## Welcome Two New MHC Interns: Erin and Josh!

MHC is lucky to have two dedicated interns working with us over the next several months. **Erin Raidt**, from U of L's Communication Department and employee of Habitat for Humanity's ReStore, is helping write grants, plan special events and will play a huge role in making this year's Annual Meeting a success. **Josh Poe**, a graduate student in the U of L School of Urban and Public Affairs, is helping research land development code use for the homeless shelter Task Force and will help research the Impediments to Fair Housing document that MHC is writing for the Consolidated Plan.

We look forward to working with both Erin and Josh and invite you to get to know them too!

## Lifetime Achievement Awards

January 20<sup>th</sup> was the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Race and Relations Conference held by the Louisville Metro Human Relations Commission. Invoking the spirit and theme of the day, which was "Moving Forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," attendees participated in workshops topics such as: hate crimes, legal updates of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, housing, and economic recovery.

This year participants were fortunate to have a workshop led by the keynote speaker Jane Elliott. In the morning session titled "The Anatomy of Prejudice," Ms. Elliott talked about her personal experiences with the "blue eyed-brown eyed" exercise that she developed in response to the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. This exercise, which labels participants as inferior or superior based on the color of their eyes, is a powerful tool used to highlight the experience of being a minority and exposes the prejudice and racism that continues to exist in America today. She is an internationally known teacher, lecturer and diversity sensitivity trainer who's humor and spit-fire attitude keep audiences engaged and challenged to face their individual prejudices. MHC encourages our members to spend a little time learning about Ms. Elliott and her groundbreaking work for equality.

This year's conference also held a few surprises. This was the first time the Louisville Metro Human Relations Commission, presented one, let alone two, Lifetime Achievement Awards. These awards were given to the surprised and speechless **Suzy Post** and **Senator Georgia Powers**. As you are likely to already know, Suzy Post was MHC's first Executive Director and continues to be involved with our community's ongoing struggle for fair housing by serving as the co-chair of the Fair Housing Coalition, which is convened by MHC. Senator Georgia Powers, was both the first African-American and the first woman to be elected to the Kentucky State Senate in 1967. A longtime civil rights activist, Senator Powers worked for racial justice and women's rights through the state legislature.

Congratulations to both Ms. Post and Senator Powers and thank you to the Louisville Metro Human Relations Commission for another great conference.



## Schedule of Events

**Various Dates this Fall and Winter** - Energy Management Workshops offered by Project Warm. Attendees will receive weatherization materials for their homes along with "how to" training. For the dates and times of these upcoming training opportunities, please contact Project Warm, 502-636-9276, [www.projectwarm.org](http://www.projectwarm.org), [Frank@projectwarm.org](mailto:Frank@projectwarm.org)

**February 2** - *The People's Forum*, a mayoral candidate forum to be held the evening of Thursday, January 28, 6-8 p.m. on the second floor of the Metro United Way Building, 334 E. Broadway. (Parking is located in the gated lot a block behind the building.)

**February 9** - Fair Housing Coalition meeting. New Directions, 1000 E. Liberty, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

**February 16** - Louisville Vacant Properties Campaign Meeting. Presbyterian Community Center, 701 Hancock, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

**February 18** - Nonprofit Housing Alliance Meeting. New Directions, 1000 E. Liberty, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

**February 2** - *The People's Forum*, a mayoral candidate forum to be held the evening of Thursday, January 28, 6-8 p.m. on the second floor of the Metro United Way Building, 334 E. Broadway. (Parking is located in the gated lot a block behind the building.)

**March 13** - Everybody Eats: Ingredients for Change 2nd Annual Louisville Food Summit, Meyzeek Middle School. Anyone who eats is welcome! The event is FREE but all attendees must register or they will not be admitted. Activities for ages 11-18 organized by YouthBuild's Young Money group and childcare for ages 3-10 (children MUST be preregistered). To register or to view the summit events, call 502.775.4041 or visit [www.communityfarmalliance.org](http://www.communityfarmalliance.org).

**April 13** - Celebrating 50 Years of the KY Human Relation Commission! April is Fair Housing month and a great time to remember where we came from and where we are going. Please save the date for this forum which will examine each of the protected classes. 5:30-7:00 p.m. Location TBD.

## Homeless Shelter Task Force

In late 2009, the Board of Zoning Adjustment's (BOZA) ruling that there was no zoning classification in which a homeless shelter had the right to exist as an intended land use left Louisville in upheaval. BOZA did allow the current shelters to go on operating, but no new buildings or even beds are permitted without asking BOZA on a case-by-case basis. This ruling came just as the number and percent of homeless children in the JCPS system is doubling and will, at the current rate, approach 17,000 in this school year, leaving MHC to continue asking, "Where will our community's most vulnerable families and children go?"

A Task Force was convened by the mayor with the charge of finding some way to have homeless shelters in Louisville. Cathy Hinko, MHC's Executive Director, is on this task force, as are about 20 other stakeholders, ranging from neighborhood leaders to the Home Builders.

MHC is fortunate to have Josh Poe, a graduate student in the U of L School of Urban and Public Affairs, helping research land development code information relevant to this issue. Welcome, Josh!

The meetings are being held at 444 South Fifth Street on the first floor and all are welcome to come. The planned meetings are all from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and will be January 29, February 12, February 26, March 12 and March 26.




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To submit your community events, please email Phoenix at [phoenix@metropolitanhousing.org](mailto:phoenix@metropolitanhousing.org).

## Remember MHC in the New Year!

### As an MHC Member you:

- **Support** the creation of long-term solutions to our community's affordable housing crisis
- **Join** the diverse coalition of 200 individual and 150 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 Phoenix or to make an online donation, visit us on the web at [www.metrophanhousing.org](http://www.metrophanhousing.org)



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