



## Legislative Update

In our January newsletter, MHC alerted you about bills of interest and important issues facing the Kentucky State Legislature this session. We want to update you this month on few of these bills and issues. For more information about any bill's status or to read it, go to <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/record/12RS/record.htm>. If you have questions regarding MHC's legislative agenda or would like to discuss it, please email [info@metropolitanhousing.org](mailto:info@metropolitanhousing.org) or call 584-6858

If you'd like to make a comment to your representatives or any House or Senate committee on any of these bills, call 1-800-372-7181 to leave a message for a legislator or an entire committee.

**House Bill 123** will allow a second class city to set up its own Board of Zoning Adjustment (BoZA), separate from a merged city. We were initially concerned about this bill because it could possibly limit fair housing choice and the development of affordable housing if second class cities within a merged county seek to use more restrictive zoning regulations. We have since learned that this bill is a priority for Jeffersontown. The Jeffersontown Mayor's office, through Mike Kmetz, spoke with us about their need to speed up the zoning process to bring new business to the area. Jeffersontown is more diverse than most of the smaller cities so there is not an anti-diversity agenda. This bill only applies to Jeffersontown, the only City of the Second Class within the boundaries of a merged government in Kentucky. The bill does not eliminate the need for Jeffersontown to go through the Planning Commission for zoning changes and detailed district development plans, so there is no harm. If many other small cities start to request their own BoZAs, we will be concerned. HB 123 was passed 84-7 by the House and is now before the Senate State & Local Government committee.

**Senate Bill 120** will amend the state Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The uses of the money- mostly for bricks and mortar- remain the same, but the provision on priorities for the fund has outlived its usefulness. The bill amends the priorities and we are working with KHC to get an acceptable provision, as are other organizations around the state. There is also a change to allow more participation by for-profits, but always with a partnership with a non-profit. SB 120 is now before the Senate Licensing, Occupations, & Administrative Regulations committee.

**House Bill 332**, introduced on January 27 with 17 co-sponsors, will put a 36 percent cap on the annualized interest rate of payday loans. The information collection mandated by prior legislative sessions show that the outrageous cost of getting a payday loan eats up the income of low-income people. MHC is one of 68 member organizations of the Kentucky Coalition for Responsible Lending (KCRL). KCRL is a statewide coalition of consumer groups, institutions, and faith-based and non-profit agencies united

in support of reform protecting working families by capping payday lending interest rates. This bill has a broad range of supporters beyond KCRL, including the Kentucky Baptist Convention. HB 332 was assigned to the House Banking & Insurance committee. However, LEO reports that the committee chair, Rep. Jeff Greer, is refusing to give the bill a hearing despite the broad range of supporters it has. We encourage you to call the Kentucky Legislature hotline at 1-800-372-7181 and leave a message for Rep. Greer asking that the Banking & Insurance committee grant a hearing for HB 332.

**Clean Energy Opportunity Act of 2012 (House Bill 167):** MHC is working with a state-wide group, the Kentucky Sustainable Energy Alliance (KySEA), to promote this bill, which would require utilities to diversify their energy sources by increasing the use of alternative energy and increasing the impact of energy efficiency programs- in part by targeting low-income rate payers. This type of policy, called a renewable and efficiency portfolio standard (REPS), is already at work in 29 other states. A key part of the act will require utilities to offset 10.25% of their retail sales through energy efficiency savings by 2021. A portion of the efficiency offset equal to at least 10% of residential sales must be achieved by improving the energy efficiency of low-income households at or below 200% of federal poverty level. A study released in January also showed that a REPS in Kentucky would create 26,000 clean energy jobs.

**House Bill 187**, a companion bill to HB 167, will expand net metering. "Net metering" means measuring the difference between the electricity supplied by the electric grid and the electricity generated by a customer through solar, wind, biomass/biogas energy, or hydro energy sources. In conjunction with HB 167, this bill would allow customers to sell back the excess energy they generate to the utility through "Feed in Tariffs." Both BH 167 and HB 187 are currently before the House Tourism, Development & Energy committee.

KySEA is organizing the **Clean Energy Lobby Day at the Capitol on February 28** to support these bills. For more information about the lobby day, email [lisa@kysea.org](mailto:lisa@kysea.org).

**Senate Bill 69** and **House Bill 188** both include a prohibition on discrimination because of sexual orientation and gender identity in Kentucky's Civil Rights laws and will ensure fair housing rights for everyone throughout the state. HB 188 is before the House Judiciary committee and SB 69 is before the Senate Judiciary Committee. The **Statewide Fairness Rally & Lobby Day** is scheduled for February 22. For more information about the lobby day, email [Laura@fairness.org](mailto:Laura@fairness.org) or call 893-0788.

There are several other bills of interest before the legislature that we referenced in our January newsletter. You can contact MHC or go to the legislature's website for more information about them.

## Local Options for Kentucky Liens

We want to update you on the work of Local Options for Kentucky Liens (LOKL), a coalition of community-based organizations advocating for policies that will help our communities restore Kentucky's vacant and abandoned properties with a new approach to tax-delinquent properties, land banking, and tax foreclosure. MHC is a LOKL member agency.

LOKL advocates for fair and humane practices of collecting delinquent property taxes and keeping tax-related revenue in the hands of local government. There is a model that shows that over \$1 million a year is being taken away from local government by the mandated sale of property tax liens to third-party speculators. We also want to erase the complications of multiple lien holders on the title to a piece of property that needs to be put back in use. LOKL has studied the way that our Land Bank is limited in function and want to modernize state laws governing land banks using best practices from around the country. This will also help us in re-use of vacant properties and in helping neighborhoods have more control over land.

A comprehensive bill to change the collection of delinquent property taxes and the way the Land Bank operates is being prepared and has the support of Mayor Fischer. There have been two contracts with the Center for Community Progress (CCP). Vacant property and land bank expert Dan Kildee of the CCP visited Louisville on January 24 and 25 to provide technical assistance on this work.

We are working to see legislation filed this session that will:

- protect homeowners by reducing the wildly-disparate fees private speculators attach to tax liens they purchase and ensuring a fair and uniform schedule of enforcement against tax-delinquent properties;
- allow counties (rather than third-party tax purchasers) to collect the most collectible tax liens and capture the lost revenue which could provide a land bank with funding to maintain and redevelop properties;
- enable counties to retain control over the destiny of their neighborhoods and act strategically when redeveloping currently unproductive property;
- allow counties to efficiently foreclose upon and take title to tax-delinquent properties; and
- update land banks' authority to restore tax-delinquent property to productive use.

When we have a bill number, we will alert you to action.

Also, this spring LOKL will conduct outreach to homeowners at risk of having their tax liens sold to third-party speculators. In May, June and July, LOKL will host clinics where homeowners can learn more about property taxes, obtain legal assistance, and set up property tax payment plans with the County Attorney's Office. For information about how you can help with outreach in your neighborhood, contact George Eklund at 618-5892.

## MHC, Colleagues, Friends, and the Kentucky House Say Thank You to Doug Magee for His Service

On January 31, MHC hosted a wine and cheese gathering to thank Doug Magee for his years of dedicated hard work with our organization. Unfortunately, due to severe to severe funding cuts, MHC could no longer support Doug's position. As a result, our organization lost a tremendous asset.

Lots of friends and colleagues stopped by New Directions Housing Corporation to help thank Doug for his great contributions to MHC's work. State Rep. Reginald Meeks came bearing a gift- a signed copy of House Resolution 90.

Sponsored by Rep. Meeks and passed on January 24, HR 90 adjourned the Kentucky House of Representatives "in honor and appreciation of Doug Magee for the strides that he has made in promoting fair and affordable housing in Louisville, Kentucky." The resolution cited his management of the Non-profit Housing Alliance (NHA), for supporting the production of hundreds of affordable housing units in Louisville. It also lauded his leadership of the Louisville Vacant Properties Campaign for educating residents about vacant properties and helping "ensure that citizens' interests are represented as Louisville Metro government addresses this most important community development issue."

We at MHC want to thank everyone who attended the event. We also want to thank New Directions Housing Corporation for their hospitality. Special thanks go to NDHC's Joe Gliessner, Lisa Thompson, Danny Flanagan, and especially Lydia Comer. She helped with music for the event and stayed late to help us clean.

On behalf of MHC's Board of Directors, staff, and membership, we tremendously thank Doug for his innumerable contributions to MHC's work and for his service to our community.

### Housing Job Opportunities

**Louisville Affordable Housing Trust Fund (LAHTF) seeks Executive Director.** The Executive Director is responsible for the design, delivery and coordination of all LAHTF programs and services. For more information or to apply, go to [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com).

**Habitat for Humanity of Metro Louisville seeks Director of Construction.** This senior staff position directs all facets of its Construction Department. For more information, go to <http://louisvillehabitat.org/AboutUs/CareerOpportunities.aspx>.

### Forum on New MHC Issue Paper

**March 20, Louisville Urban League, 12:00 p.m.**

MHC, in partnership with the Network for Center for Community Change (NC3), will release our newest issue paper exploring the long-term impacts of the 2007 foreclosures we examined in *Louisville's Foreclosure Crisis*, our 2008 issue paper.

## Schedule of Events

**February 21- Louisville Vacant Properties Campaign.** Presbyterian Community Center, 701 S. Hancock Street, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

**March 13- Fair Housing Coalition Meeting.** New Directions, 1000 E. Liberty Street, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

**March 20- Forum to Release MHC's Newest Issue Paper on the Long-Term Impacts of Foreclosure.** Louisville Urban League, 1535 W. Broadway, 12:00 -1:30 p.m.

**April 16- Fair Housing Month Forum on the Impacts of Zoning on Fair Housing Choice.** Centennial Room, Louisville Free Public Library Main Branch, 301 York Street, 5:30 -7:00 p.m.

**Now Until March 30- New Directions Repair Affair Accepting Applications.** Repair Affair make repairs on homes owned by elderly or disabled low-income persons living in Jefferson County, KY, Floyd County, IN or Clark County, IN. For more information or to request an application packet, call the Home Repair Hotline at 371-4906 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**February 15 & 22- Fifth Third Bank Financial Empowerment Workshops.** For more information, contact Adam Hall at ahall@53.com or 562-5584. Shively Area Ministries, 4415 Dixie Highway, 11:00 a.m.

**February 16- Network Center for Community Change Network Nite.** Enjoy a family dinner while networking with your community and learning about events and opportunities. For more information, call 583-1426 or email jpotish@makechangetogether.org. Bates Community Development Corporation, 1228 S Jackson Street, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

**February 18- Kentuckiana Works Youth Opportunity Showcase.** A job fair for young adults (ages 16-21). For more information, call 574-2500. Kentucky International Convention Center, 221 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**February 21- Louisville Sierra Club Annual State of the Commonwealth Meeting.** Tom FitzGerald will discuss issues before the state legislature. For more information, contact Joan Lindop at jlindop@gmail.com. Clifton Center, 2117 Payne Street, 7:00 p.m.

**February 26- "A Musical Afternoon" with the League of Women Voters of Louisville.** This event will launch a community-wide capital campaign for Lang House. The event features a cello quartet and an organist. To RSVP or for more information, contact the League of Women Voters at 895-5218 or Susan Baker at 895-4319 or nonnymomm@aol.com. The Dickenson's Bach Haus, 4607 Hanford Lane, 3:30 p.m.

**February 27- KY Alliance Against Racism and Political Repression screening of *Visions of Abolition*.** This documentary film examines the prison industrial complex and the prison abolition movement. For more information, email K.A. Owens at firstwave9@juno.com. The Braden Center, 3208 W. Broadway, 7:00 p.m.

**February 29- 6th Annual Thomas Merton Black History Month Lecture.** The topic is "Thomas Merton-Then and Now: Merton's writings on race in the context of homelessness in America." Presented by Rosanne Haggerty, founder of Common Ground Community, a nationally-recognized supportive housing provider. For more information, call 272-8177. Bellarmine University, Frazier Hall, 7:00 p.m.

**February 29- *If I Can't Do It- A Documentary Film on Disability Rights Advocate Arthur Campbell.*** Discussion to follow showing. For more information or to RSVP, contact Amy Jones at 589-6620 or ajones@calky.org. Kosair Charities, 982 Eastern Parkway, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Another showing will be held on **March 28** at Douglass Community Center, 2305 Douglass Boulevard, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

**March 3- St. John Center for Homeless Men 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Raisin' the Rent Party.** This fundraiser features dinner, music, magic, and live and silent auctions. For tickets or for more information, contact Jennifer Young at 568-6758 or jyoung@stjohncenter.org. The Olmsted, 3701 Frankfort Avenue, 7:00 – 11:00 p.m.

**March 10- Spalding University Celebration of Social Work.** Features food, entertainment and door prizes, Please RSVP to Susan Grace at 588-7183 or sgrace@spalding.edu. Spalding University, University Center Ballroom, 824 South Fourth Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. During March, which is Social Work Month, the School of Social Work is also offering a series of Continuing Education Units. Contact Susan Grace for more information.

**March 12- Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Training and Accompaniment Program for Aspiring Farmers, Urban Agriculturalists, & Food Justice Organizers Begins.** For more information about this 9-week program and to register, contact Stephen Bartlett at sbartlett@ag-missions.org or 896-9171.

**March 20- Affordable Energy Corporation All Seasons Assurance Plan (ASAP) Annual Board Meeting.** ASAP is a nonprofit, utility subsidy program helping low & fixed income households. All are welcome to attend the meeting. For more information, call 893-7842 or email affordablenergy@att.net. Urban Government Center, front lobby conference room, 810 Barret Avenue, 10:30 a.m.

**March 21- Urban League Louisville Career Expo.** For more information, contact Tina Woods at 566-3371 or ewoods@lul.org. Kentucky International Convention Center, 221 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**March 21- Screening of *Ten9Eight: Shoot for the Moon*.** The Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis- Louisville Branch is showing this documentary that follows inner-city teens from Harlem to Compton and all points in between as they compete in an annual business-plan competition run by the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship. A facilitated discussion follows the screening. For more information and to register, visit [www.stlouisfed.org/community\\_development/events/](http://www.stlouisfed.org/community_development/events/) or call 568-9200. Space is limited, so advance registration is required. 101 S. Fifth St., Suite 1920, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

**April 24- Wellspring's 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Derby Preview Party.** Features "insider" tips for Derby day from Bill Doolittle, speed artist Aaron Kizer, and live and silent auction items including exotic trips, Derby and sports memorabilia, premier tickets, custom-made Derby hats, art, collectables, and more. Cocktails and dinner included. Contact Melissa Kratzer at 753-1457 for more information, including ticket and sponsorship pricing for this fundraiser. Millionaire's Row at Churchill Downs.

## Join MHC or Renew Your Membership Today!

For membership questions, please call the office at (502) 584-6858 and speak with Curtis Stauffer.

Make your donation online at [www.metropolitanhousing.org](http://www.metropolitanhousing.org) or mail this form to MHC, P.O. Box 4533, Louisville, KY 40204-4533.

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Assisting Member - \$1-\$74

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