



Help Strengthen MHC's Voice

Thanks to your participation and support, MHC has been advocating for fair and affordable housing for over 20 years. MHC is strong because of the memberships of people and organizations. As we look at the cuts to federal, state and local budgets, MHC asks for your support, both financially and in helping MHC increase membership. Our need is two-fold: MHC needs to replace funds that have been decreased; but equally important is that MHC wants to make our voice stronger as the same budget cuts affect policy in providing fair and affordable housing for our most vulnerable populations.

We want to increase our strength and this is the perfect time for you to help us grow. We hope that you will mention MHC to a friend or an organization to which you belong. MHC has brochures, reports and an "elevator speech" to give you to help you talk about the important work that this Coalition does. Yes, we do want to increase the financial contributions we receive, but we do not want to exclude people who would like to be members, but cannot afford to give much. People can become members with a donation of any size. After all, MHC is about making sure that all people have decent affordable housing in neighborhoods of choice. Every new member we add to our Coalition strengthens the united voice for safe, fair, and affordable housing.

It was MHC that brought the information to you about children in public school who were experiencing homelessness and the impact on their educational outcomes. It was MHC that, in the *2003 State of Metropolitan Housing Report*, first brought to light the alarming increase in foreclosures in our community. And it was MHC that created work groups that continue to provide information on these issues and work on implementing solutions.

In just the past six weeks, MHC coordinated three forums with our partners on such varied issues as how zoning affects fair housing and the growth in areas in need of services; housing issues of persons with disabilities- including delving into the housing needs of disabled veterans and of disabled immigrants and refugees; and on the sale of property tax liens and how it impacts re-use of vacant properties.

In this short timeframe, MHC also worked on coordinating energy-efficient rehab services in Louisville, reviewed plans on how to spend federal housing money, commented on criteria for selecting a public school superintendent, presented on issues for Merger 2.0, participated in planning processes for a successful summit on vacant properties, and continued to serve on a committee to create a new health impact assessment for examining development in our community.

The MHC Annual Meeting is May 19 and the keynote speaker, Dan Kildee, has a well-deserved national reputation as an expert on the re-use of vacant properties, resulting from his work in Genesee County, Michigan. It is MHC members and sponsors who are making Dan's visit possible- a visit that includes extra time to meet with elected officials, advocates and administrators and talk about local strategies. We hope you will attend the Annual Meeting and invite people you know to join you for this important presentation.

Of course, MHC is also doing research and producing reports that are used by agencies and organizations as they set priorities and look for funding. The *2011 State of Metropolitan Housing Report* will focus on environmental issues that affect fair and affordable housing and will take its place with reports that focused on energy-efficient rehab, transportation and land development.

The breadth and intensity of this work is only possible because of the support that you give and the impressive membership we have. We are asking you to help us. Please contribute to MHC. But also talk to your friends about MHC. Get MHC on the agenda to talk to the groups to which you belong. We want to reach as many people as possible and will happily respond to invitations.

A place to live is a basic need. Stable, safe housing allows children to thrive, the elderly to maintain health and everyone to participate in our community. Please help MHC continue to inform and advocate on issues of fair and affordable housing.

Thank you for your commitment to affordable housing in greater Louisville and your continued support of MHC.

Sincerely,

Christie J. McCravy, President

Signing on behalf of the MHC Board of Directors:

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2011 Annual Meeting Speaker Dan Kildee Will Help Us Continue to Strategize Solutions to our Vacant Property Crisis

On Thursday, May 19, MHC will host Daniel T. Kildee as the speaker for the 2011 MHC Annual Meeting, to be held at the Downtown Hyatt. Mr. Kildee is Co-Founder and President of the Center for Community Progress (www.communityprogress.net). Prior to founding the Center, Kildee served as Genesee County, Michigan Treasurer from 1997-2009. Before his election as Treasurer, Dan served for 12 years on the Genesee Board Commissioners, including five years as Chairman.

Dan also has served as President of the Genesee Institute, a research and training institute focusing on smart growth, urban land reform, and land banking. Dan was a member of the Executive Committee of the National Vacant Properties Campaign. The Center for Community Progress is the successor to the Genesee Institute and the National Vacant Properties Campaign (NVPC). NVPC held its national conference in Louisville in June 2009. Many citizen activists, elected officials and government employees attended the conference. Most of the citizen activists were from Louisville, many on scholarships made available due to funding from nine Metro Council members. Of those attendees, many continue to work on vacant properties both in their own neighborhoods and city-wide.

Dan initiated the use of Michigan's new tax foreclosure law as a tool for community development and neighborhood stabilization. He founded the Genesee Land Bank – Michigan's first land bank, and a model for others around the nation. In 2007, the Land Bank program was named winner of the Harvard University/Fannie Mae Foundation Innovations in American Government Award for Affordable Housing.

It is the hope of MHC and the Louisville Vacant Property Campaign (LVPC) that Mr. Kildee's visit will spark more creative ideas and commitment by local activists and Louisville Metro as the foundation for continued collaboration between Louisville Metro and the LVPC is strong. This collaboration led to the all-day Vacant, Abandoned and Underutilized Property Summit held at Memorial Auditorium on April 28.

The Summit brought together over 200 people from local governments, for- and non-profit developers, neighborhood associations, community-oriented farmers and gardeners, and community activists. The day began with a call to action and involvement from Dr. James Mims, Director of Louisville Metro Codes & Regulations. Following Dr. Mims, morning session speakers discussed problems and challenges; code enforcement, court and lien processes; and the Land Bank Authority. These presentations were followed by small group discussions, focusing on ideas and solutions to be forwarded to Mayor Greg Fischer for policy consideration.

During the lunch hour, a session was held which concentrated on preventive strategies. It was pointed out that the best way to prevent vacant properties is to keep the property inhabited. Various methods of prevention include homebuyer education, foreclosure counseling and prevention, not privatizing the sale of unpaid property taxes, neighborhood planning and mapping, and retrofitting older homes for energy conservation and cost savings. Another aspect of prevention occurs after a property has become vacant, but before it becomes a neighborhood problem and eyesore. Some of these preventive strategies include organized and caring social networks such as neighborhood associations, specially-formed nonprofits, temporary green spaces and community gardens, private side-yards, public art, public or private parks and an active, strategic Land Bank with expanded staff and resources.

The afternoon session included presentations on the privatization of tax lien sales and for- and non-profit developers regarding the current economy and opportunities for development of vacant properties. One concern expressed was the lack of many attendees from the financial sector. From where will the money come to help address the vacant property problem at a time of governmental budget cuts and diminishing loan opportunities for developers? After the presentations, the remaining participants again broke into small groups for discussion and brainstorming.

Sadiqa Reynolds, Chief of Community Building for Louisville Metro Government, made closing remarks and indicated that the top policy recommendations would be gathered from the small group discussion notes, put into policy formulations and forwarded to the Mayor. These same recommendations also will be put on the web at www.louisvilleky.gov/ipl, along with available notes and links.

Of course, the real test for the impact of this Summit will occur after the recommendations are sent to Mayor Fischer, he makes his selection of policy recommendations and begins to put them into effect. The Louisville Vacant Property Campaign (LVPC) will continue to meet and monitor the proposed policy recommendations and review those which were not sent on to the Mayor. The next meeting of LVPC will be Tuesday, June 21 from 5:30-7:30 PM at Presbyterian Community Center, 701 S. Hancock Street. Join us for the third Tuesday of each month for the LVPC meetings and come hear Mr. Kildee on May 19. For more information or to be added to the email distribution list, please contact Doug Magee at 584-6858 or doug@metropolitanhousing.org.

Schedule of Events

May 10- Fair Housing Coalition Meeting. New Directions, 1000 E. Liberty, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

May 19- MHC Annual Meeting. Features vacant property and land bank expert Dan Kildee as Keynote speaker. For more information, contact Curtis Stauffer at 584-6858 or curtisstauffer@metropolitanhousing.org. Hyatt Regency Louisville, reception and registration, 5:00 p.m., dinner 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

June 21- Louisville Vacant Properties Campaign. Please note that the 2011 MHC Annual Meeting on May 19 will be the May event for the LVPC. Presbyterian Community Center, 701 S. Hancock, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Now through June 30- Free GED Testing and GED Prep Classes for Kentucky Residents from Kentucky Adult Education.

Kentuckians taking the GED before June 30 will not have to pay the usual \$55 fee. For more information, contact the adult education center in your county to discuss how to get started. To find the local adult education center, call 800-928-7323 or visit www.kentuckyged.org.

May 10 - May14- Fifth Third eBus comes to Louisville. The eBus is a mobile classroom that provides free access to comprehensive financial services information and free homeownership and credit counseling programs. For more information, contact Adam Hall at 368-3357 or Adam.Hall@53.com. 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. daily.

May 10- Spirit of Love Church 4107 W. Market St., Louisville;
May 11- Americana Community Center, 4801 Southside Dr., Louisville; **May 12-** St John's Church, 1307 E Elm Street, New Albany; **May 13-** Unique Thrift Store, 2540 W Main St., Louisville; **May 14-** Sunset Gardens Neighborhood, S. Crums Ln. @ Greenwell Ln., Louisville.

May 13- YouthBuild Day of Service. Volunteers are needed to help with gardens at YouthBuild's new campus. To volunteer or for more information, email joeweston@gmail.com. 812 S. Preston St., 12:00 p.m.

May 14- Free Spring Shredding Event Hosted by 9th District Councilwoman Tina Ward-Pugh. Items that can be brought for shredding include: documents, discs, hard drives, credit cards, and other confidential materials. All paper materials will be shredded on site and recycled to make materials such as compost, tissues and toilet paper. Volunteers are needed to help with the event. To volunteer or for more information, contact Kyle Ethridge at 574-3908 or kyle.ethridge@louisvilleky.gov. Crescent Hill Library, 2762 Frankfort Ave., 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

May 18- Louisville Free Public Library Job Help Fair. Designed to put job seekers in touch with over 40 community resources and services that can help remove barriers to finding employment. It will also have sessions on business etiquette (11:00 a.m.) and resumes (12:30 p.m.) For more information, contact Rachel Smith at 574-1638 or rachel.smith@LFPL.org. Louisville Free Public Library Main Branch, 301 York St., 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

May 21- On the Street: Improving Walkability and Bikeability in Your Neighborhood. A tour hosted by the New Directions Housing Corporation Neighborhood Roundtable ReciproCity Project. For more information or to RSVP, contact Lydia Comer at lydiac@nhdc.org or 719-7169. Location TBA, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

June 2 & June 14- Volunteers Needed for Outreach Campaign.

Join a coalition of organizations working to reach older and low - income people with information about property tax clinics, estate planning and other services. Help connect homeowners to opportunities to get out of tax default debt before their tax liens are sold to investors. Volunteers with cars are needed, if possible. All volunteers will travel in pairs and will receive a brief training before conducting outreach. To volunteer or for more information, contact Giselle from the Network Center for Community Change (Making Connections Network) at 618-5975. 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

June 11- NDHC Southern Indiana Repair

June 18- NDHC Metro Louisville Repair Affair. New Directions' Repair Affair mobilizes community-wide resources and volunteers to support the home repair needs of elderly and disabled homeowners of low income in Louisville and Southern Indiana. Homeowners who need assistance, call 719-7143. To volunteer, call 719-7130 or go to <http://www.ndhc.org/givetimera.htm>.

June 25- Through the Grapevine: Urban Gardening for Community Strength. A tour hosted by the New Directions Housing Corporation Neighborhood Roundtable ReciproCity Project. For more information or to RSVP, contact Lydia Comer at lydiac@nhdc.org or 719-7169. Meet at 1000 E. Liberty Street, 4:00 - 8:30 p.m.

June 27- New Directions Housing Corporation Neighborhood Roundtable "Green Meeting." For more information or to RSVP, contact Lydia Comer at lydiac@nhdc.org or 719-7169. 1000 E. Liberty Street, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

July 9- Creative Commons: Enhancing Your Community with Public Art. A presentation and tour hosted by the New Directions Housing Corporation Neighborhood Roundtable ReciproCity Project. For more information or to RSVP, contact Lydia Comer at lydiac@nhdc.org or 719-7169. 201 E. Spring Street, New Albany, time TBA.

Help for Homeless Veterans

Call the VA Homeless Veteran Hotline
1-877-4AID VET

2011 MHC ANNUAL MEETING - *Saving for Our Future*

THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2011

LOUISVILLE HYATT DOWNTOWN

SOCIAL HOUR: 5:00PM PROGRAM & DINNER: 6:00PM

The 22nd MHC Annual meeting features **keynote speaker Dan Kildee**, a nationally-recognized expert on **vacant property** and **land banks**. See page 2 for more information about Mr. Kildee.

There were **7,268 vacant properties in Louisville Metro** as of January 1, 2011. This shows the great scope of our community's vacant property problem and the threat it poses to our neighborhoods. Attend MHC's Annual Meeting and learn from a vacant property expert how Louisville can better address our vacant property crisis. We can work together to save for our future by turning vacant properties into assets – not liabilities.

Tickets: \$55 (before May 13), **\$60** (after May 13).

Table Sponsorships: \$500 (for 8 seats)

Reserve your ticket or table now! Consider sponsoring tickets for low-income attendees.

All proceeds support MHC, the united voice for safe, fair, and affordable housing in Greater Louisville.

Thanks to our 2011 Annual Meeting Sponsors!

Fifth Third Bank, PNC Bank, American Founders Bank, Janet Dakan, Kentucky Housing Corporation, Beacon Property Management, Carpenters Local 64, Habitat for Humanity of Metro Louisville, Johanna Bos, Louisville Metro Housing Authority, Louisville Urban League, Network Center for Community Change, New Directions Housing Corporation, Oracle Design Group, River City Housing, and Volunteers of America

Event Sponsorships and ads in the 2011 Annual Meeting Program are still available!

Call 584-6858 or email curtisstauffer@metropolitanhousing.org for tickets or more information.



Metropolitan
Housing
Coalition

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