



Washingtonville Housing Alliance Newsletter

Spring/Summer
2009

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View from the Executive Director's Desk

The past nine months have seen some of the worst business conditions anyone now working has experienced. As summer has finally arrived there are reasons for cautious optimism that the economy will recover – but certain parts of the business landscape will have been changed for ever. Washingtonville Housing Alliance intends to be among the survivors that come out of the recession stronger and more focused on delivering effective services to our core clientele.

We started cutting costs a year before the recession hit and have not had to lay off staff. In fact we hired an associate director – a position that had been vacant for two years – to manage day to day office operations and grants, strengthening our management team to be able to take advantage of new funding opportunities.

Federal stimulus funds are beginning to reach our community and WHA is actively seeking opportunities to bring them home. United Way has awarded WHA a grant for additional back rent and mortgage assistance funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. We have been awarded Community Development Block Grant funds for a heating system upgrade at our oldest building – 725 Old White Plains Road.

We have continued with our building upgrade program, with one apartment renovation completed and another planned for later this year. We saw real energy usage savings in all buildings this winter as a result of the energy audit work done last year. We have taken care of landscaping and plantings at all of our properties. With the help of donated labor and materials we have landscaped the back yard at 136 Library Lane and installed a new stone walkway. All of this work is done by local contractors.

We are grateful for the tremendous support that we have received from our donors. Contributions to this year's Annual Campaign doubled over last year. These donations help fund our client service work and WHA's general office operations. Thank you for your generosity. The 2009 Places of Worship Appeal – which supports the WHA Housing Crisis Fund – also generated a very strong response, ensuring that the Housing Crisis Fund will be able to meet local needs for emergency rent assistance this coming winter.

May 17, 2009 Donor Reception



Senator Suzi Oppenheimer
and Shirley Romney

The Washingtonville Housing Alliance (WHA), based in Mamaroneck, NY, hosted a wonderful donor reception on Sunday, May 17, 2009. The reception, attended by over 75 supporters, elected officials and honored guests, was held to thank WHA's loyal donors and to honor Shirley Romney, recently retired Director of Mamaroneck Village's Community Services Department.

The reception, graciously hosted at the Mamaroneck home of a long-time WHA supporter and board committee member Gladys Pickett, featured guest speakers NY Assemblyman George Latimer, County Legislator Judith Myers and NY State Senator Suzi Oppenheimer.

Meet Our New Associate Director



Washingtonville Housing Alliance is proud to announce that Richard Winslow has joined the WHA staff as our full time Associate Director. Richard came to WHA this spring with a plethora of community and economic development experience. Most recently, he was the Executive Director of the Inglewood Neighborhood Housing Services agency in Inglewood, CA.

Richard, a graduate of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, began his career with JP Morgan Chase, matriculating through the bank's highly esteemed Management Development Program. This experience led to a successful stint with the well regarded Chase Community Development Group. Richard's career includes Director level work with the New York City Housing Partnership and the Abyssinian Development Corporation in Harlem.

As the Associate Director at WHA, Richard will be responsible for the agency's day-to-day operations, including Program Management, Marketing & Public Relations, Fund Development/Grant Management, Human Resources and General Administration.

Richard states *"I am thrilled and excited to be part of the Washingtonville Housing Alliance team and cannot wait to meet and work with all the wonderful folks in Mamaroneck and surrounding areas."*

Richard may be reached via email at rwinslow@washingtonville.org or via phone at 914-698-4299 ext. 13.

Property Update

General Operations - WHA went through the winter with energy usage substantially down at all properties. We attribute this to savings accomplished through the Empower Program and installation of programmable thermostats in all buildings.

258-266 Waverly Avenue - WHA has added plants and flowers in the courtyard section of 258 and 266 as well as installing a new fence at the back of the property.

230 Center Avenue & 725 Old White Plains Road - WHA has filed applications with the New York State Weatherization Program to replace all windows to improve building comfort and energy efficiency. We have also installed new steps at 230 Center Ave.

731 Old White Plains Road - WHA removed and replaced carpet and tile on the second floor of the building and installed lighting in the back yard

136 Library Lane - WHA now has a beautiful front and backyard for staff and tenants to enjoy. Three apartments in this building have been completely renovated.

11 Madison Street - WHA has applied for a Westchester County Property Improvement Program Loan for a new roof and apartment upgrades. One apartment will receive complete renovation, with work beginning in late summer.

In the spring WHA began adding plantings and flowers to many of our properties. As well as beautifying the building and the neighborhood, this leads to an immediate reduction in trash at the property. A well cared for property brings out the best in tenants and passers-by.

WHA Property Improvements



11 Madison Street (Before)



11 Madison Street (After)



Waverly Ave (Before)



Waverly Ave (After)



(new steps) 230 Center Ave

Funding News

WHA was recently awarded a \$2,200 Local Presence grant by **United Way of Westchester & Putnam Counties** to support Tenant Eviction Program staff and program operating costs.

A **United Way Eviction Prevention Grant** was awarded to WHA in the amount of \$7,700 to help WHA assist residents facing eviction and/or mortgage default, with funding made available from the American Recovery and Re-investment Act.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) WHA was awarded \$21,900 to upgrade the boiler system at 725 Old White Plains Rd. The CDBG program, a federal program that is administered locally through Westchester County Department of Planning provides annual direct grants to revitalize neighborhoods and expand affordable housing, principally to benefit low and moderate income persons.

Village of Mamaroneck (VOM) Fund Washingtonville Housing Alliance took over this emergency fund in 2008 from the Village of Mamaroneck Community Services Department. The fund provides grants for emergency assistance in a wide range of urgent needs (e.g. emergency utility shut offs, groceries, transportation).

The New York State Division of Housing and Urban Renewal (DHCR) presented WHA with a grant in the amount of \$75,000 to be applied towards our annual operating expenses, together with a three year contract renewal for the Neighborhood Preservation Program (NPP).

The Westchester County Department of Planning renewed WHA's Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) for FY 2009 in the amount of \$8,550 for eviction prevention grants and program operating costs.

Annual Appeal 2009 This year's Annual Appeal received a record total of **\$62,500** in contributions from individuals, businesses and local organizations.

Programs and History

The Washingtonville Housing Alliance (WHA) was formed in 1980 to improve the housing conditions of low and moderate-income residents in the Mamaroneck area. WHA constructs new affordable housing, improves existing housing and undertakes other supportive activities designed to sustain a community that is culturally diverse, multi-generational and of mixed income.

The Washingtonville Housing Alliance is chartered by the State of New York as a Neighborhood Preservation Company. WHA is a 501(c)3 not-for profit corporation and is directed by a 15 person Board of Directors drawn from our service area.

Since our inception, the Washingtonville Housing Alliance has constructed or rehabilitated 115 apartments including 75 units of housing for seniors. In addition, we have developed fourteen homes for first time buyers. We offer other related services to assist area residents in obtaining and retaining affordable and safe housing.

2009 Places of Worship Appeal

This year's appeal for the Housing Crisis Fund was generously supported by:

- Larchmont Avenue Church
- Larchmont Temple
- Mamaroneck United Methodist Church
- St. Thomas Episcopal Church
- Westchester Jewish Center
- Westchester Reform Temple

We thank all the members of these congregations for their support. The Housing Crisis Fund provides emergency back rent and relocation assistance to Mamaroneck area residents and serves the poorest members of our community. We received a total of \$8,796, bringing the current fund balance to \$14,034.

136 Library Lane



Before



After

These before and after photos are of the backyard at the WHA office. Our backyard has been transformed into a beautiful park-like garden for use by tenants and staff. This transformation was made possible through generous donations from Gladys Pickett and in memory of Anne Timmerman for the plantings and materials. The labor was donated by our wonderful landscaper Chris Szymanowski of LBC Landscaping.

A Client Services Story

A long time Mamaroneck resident and U.S. armed services veteran became homeless as a result of a difficult financial situation. His only source of income at the time was receipt of Veteran’s Disability benefits. He was living condition from couch to couch. He applied for a rent subsidy several years ago and was finally approved to receive a Section 8 Voucher. Unfortunately, he did not have the money to secure an apartment and was in jeopardy of losing the one he found. He contacted WHA and went through the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) application process and submitted all necessary paperwork. WHA then connected with a partner agency (The Bridge Fund) and was able to secure the funds he needed to get the apartment. In addition, WHA’s Client Services Department determined that he qualified for a local furniture program (Furniture ShareHouse). He was accompanied to Furniture ShareHouse where he picked out all his furniture. His apartment is now completely furnished and he has a place to call home.



Washingtonville Fuel Corporation

Washingtonville Fuel Corporation was established in 1980 by Washingtonville Housing Alliance to bring affordable heating oil to the Sound Shore region. As a Washingtonville Fuel Corporation customer, you pool your purchasing power with your neighbors to lower your heating costs. Washingtonville Fuel Corporation’s volume of oil sales allows us to negotiate a preferential oil price for our customers. You benefit from our volume. And your heating fuel purchases help support Washingtonville Housing Alliance’s affordable housing programs. Washingtonville Fuel Corporation is a registered H.E.A.P. Vendor. If you have any questions you can call our office at 914-698-4633.

Check us out on the web! www.washingtonville.org or www.castleoil.com.

Van Graphics

Washingtonville Housing Alliance has added graphics to our van which drives around Mamaroneck to maintain properties. This rolling billboard advertises WHA’s programs and services along with information about the Washingtonville Fuel Corporation.

Thank you to Jeff Greenberg of The Cruisers Division for a job well done and to WHA Board member, Kathy Munro for donating the van.



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