

## Chicago Rehab Network E-Newsletter December 2006

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In this issue

- **HOT STUFF:** Mayor introduces proposed changes to Affordable Requirements Ordinance
- CRN co-sponsors first Affordable Housing Tax Camp
- Bickerdike wins national awards
- City concrete ban slams non-profit developers
- Takin' note
- Training Days for 2007
- LSNA saluted for work with Low Income Housing Trust
- Tell CHAC to reverse new 'vacant lot' rule

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**Chicago Rehab Network marks decade of training**

State Representative Art Turner, who is also president of the Lawndale Christian Development Corp., and Pat Abrams, CRN board president, at celebration marking a decade of Chicago Rehab Network trainings.

The Chicago Rehab Network, the city's leading voice for affordable housing, held a celebration at Opera, the chic downtown restaurant. About 250 people attended the gathering, where participants in CRN's training programs for affordable housing developers were honored and the non-profit marked a decade of effective training. CRN member organizations have built and preserved thousands of units of affordable housing in the city.

State Representative Art Turner, a longtime supporter of affordable housing programs and board president of the Lawndale Christian Development Corp., was on hand. Pat Abrams, CRN board president and executive director of the Renaissance Collaborative, made remarks.

The event drew members of the coalition of community-based development organizations, former training program participants, instructors, well-wishers, and financial supporters. The lead sponsor for the celebration was Washington Mutual Bank and other contributors include Federal Home Loan Bank, Harris Bank, Holsten Real Estate Group, JP Morgan Chase Bank, Landon Bone Baker Architects, and the Northern Trust Bank. Look for more pictures online soon!

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**\* HOT STUFF: Mayor introduces proposed changes to Affordable Requirements Ordinance**

Mayor Richard M. Daley introduced his proposed changes to the Affordable Requirements Ordinance at the Nov. 15 city council meeting. The changes expand the situations in which affordable housing must be included in residential development.

The city Department of Housing's Third Quarterly Report is out. The city hearing on the report was held Thursday, Nov. 30, and the Chicago Rehab Network release its analysis at the hearing. Read the analysis at [www.chicagorehab.org](http://www.chicagorehab.org). Call Pia at 312-663-3936 to receive a copy via fax.

Check out the Affordable Housing Fact Book on-line ... The Affordable Housing Fact Book and Preservation Clearinghouse links are back up on the Chicago Rehab Network, Affordable Housing Factbook.

**\* CRN co-sponsors first Affordable Housing Tax Camp**

The Chicago Rehab Network's first Affordable Housing Tax Camp, hosted Nov. 9 by the Cook County Assessor's Office, brought affordable housing advocates from diverse fields together to learn more about the Assessor's Affordable Housing Initiative, the assessment and appeals process, and the property tax classification system.

CRN executive director Kevin Jackson opened the workshop by reflecting on the many years of collaboration between CRN and the Assessor's Office in promoting property tax fairness in affordable housing. Deputy Assessor, Mike Stone, welcomed the participants and introduced the day's speakers which included Dana Marberry, Community Relations Manager; Jessica Zgobis, Affordable Housing Specialist; Dan Benoit, Chief Commercial-Industrial Hearing Officer; and Gwen Thomas, Manager of Specific Properties.

Participants were able to interact with these key staff on property tax issues and touched on important issues leading many discussions in the housing field such as Community Land Trusts and tax burdens on low-income homeowners. A special thank you to Assessor James Houlihan and staff for sharing their expertise to affordable housing advocates in Cook County. We hope to continue to provide learning forums such as the Tax Camp to the community development industry.

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**\* Bickerdike wins national awards**

Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation, a CRN member, was recently recognized with two prestigious national awards. Bickerdike received the 2006 Maxwell Award for Excellence, Most Impressive Overall Affordable Housing Benefit, from the Fannie Mae Foundation, which recognized the agency's reclamation of vacant land in southeast Humboldt Park through development of the Harold Washington Unity Cooperative.

Bickerdike also received the 2006 Jim and Patty Rouse Award for Excellence in Community Development, from Enterprise Community Partners, Inc., which recognizes Bickerdike's well-rounded and comprehensive approach to neighborhood revitalization by and for local community residents. Learn more at [www.bickerdike.org](http://www.bickerdike.org)

**\* City concrete ban slams non-profit developers**

Editor's note: Kevin Jackson, executive director of the Chicago Rehab Network, was quoted in a Chicago Tribune article, "Concrete blocked in new city buildings," Oct. 28. The Chicago Rehab Network also submitted a Letter to the Editor outlining why the troublesome measure needs to be repealed.

The concrete block ban handed down by Planning Commissioner Lori Healey and discussed in a recent Chicago Tribune article ("Concrete blocked in new city buildings," Oct. 28) makes building places people can afford to live in much harder and more costly. The ban can increase building construction costs by \$30,000 and will hurt affordable housing efforts. (Read the entire article at [www.chicagorehab.org](http://www.chicagorehab.org).)

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**\* Takin' note**

Chicago Agency Says Zoning Enhances Accessible Housing The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities says new zoning code features provide incentives for builders who construct accessible single-family homes and accessible dwelling units in small-scale residential businesses. For more information call, the MOPD Architectural Services Unit at 312-744-4441.

*\* Training Days for 2007*

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT SERIES WORKSHOPS

- \* Community Building, March 8-9
- \* HP 12-C and Spreadsheets, March 22-23
- \* Proforma Development and Analysis, April 5-6
- \* Sources of Development Financing, April 19-20
- \* Single Family Development, May 3-4
- \* Multi-Family Development, May 17-18
- \* Project & Construction Management, June 7-8
- \* Property/Asset Mgt. & Tenant Services, June 21-22

*PRESERVATION OF RENTAL HOUSING*

(Four different workshops offering best practices and tactics for preserving expiring, converting, or troubled properties.)

- \* March 9, May 11, Sept. 21 & Nov. 9

Other upcoming workshops include Green Development and Lead Abatement Strategies.

*Chicago Coalition for the Homeless hosts 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Mayoral Candidates' Forum*

The Chicago Coalition for the Homeless is hosting a mayoral candidates forum Dec. 7 at 6:30 pm, Fine Arts Building, 410 S. Michigan Ave., 10th floor, Curtiss Hall. Invited candidates include Mayor Richard M. Daley. Bill "Dock" Walls and Clerk of the Circuit Court Dorothy Brown. A dinner and reception is planned at 5:30 pm, followed by an Annual Meeting. For more information, call 312-435-4548.

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**\* LSNA saluted for work with Low Income Housing Trust**

The Logan Square Neighborhood Association was recently commended by the Chicago Low Income Housing Trust Fund for its outreach to tenants and landlords. The program, administered by the city Department of Housing, provides rental assistance to landlords to curb housing costs for low-income residents. LSNA distributed information to tenants and landlords, and provided technical assistance by helping smaller landlords fill out applications for the program. LSNA focused on two to six unit buildings in the area. For more about LSNA visit [www.lsna.net](http://www.lsna.net).

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**\* Tell CHAC to reverse new 'vacant lot' rule**

CHA's Public Comment Period ends Dec. 7, 2006

The Chicago Housing Authority has released its proposed revisions to the Housing Choice Voucher Program's Site and Neighborhood Policy, which prevents voucher holders from moving onto blocks with three or more "unsafe" vacant lots and buildings on either side of the street. While the revisions exempt buildings "actively under construction,"

these still leave behind tens of thousands of vacant properties across Chicago's communities.

The Chicago Rehab Network has called for this policy to be reversed. Take action today! Draft your comments immediately and send them to these government monitoring agencies:  
HUD's local Office of Fair Housing is currently receiving comments and complaints. Call (312) 353-7776 (ext. 2453) or write to:

Chicago Regional Office of FHEO  
Department of Housing and Urban Development  
77 West Jackson Boulevard, Room 2101  
Chicago, Illinois 60604-3507

Chicago Housing Authority  
Management Analyst & Planning Office  
626 West Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60661  
or the

Commission on Human Relations  
740 North Sedgwick Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Chicago, IL 60610

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