

The PARTNER

A NEWSLETTER *from*
THE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Spring 2007

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National Officials Visit Housing Partnership Projects



*Congressman Melvin Watt, Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
Secretary Alphonso Jackson, and Congressman Robin Hayes*

The Housing Partnership led Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Alphonso Jackson, Congressman Mel Watt, and Congressman Robin Hayes on a tour through Greater Statesville Avenue Corridor last Fall to view HUD's investment in Charlotte's inner-city neighborhoods.

HUD dollars, with additional private and public dollars, redeveloped key Corridor communities, many of which are seeing not only the development of attractive affordable housing opportunities but also the building and encouragement of neighborhood leadership to support lasting change. The visit began and ended at The Park at Oaklawn, which received a HOPE VI grant.

The \$34.7 million Park at Oaklawn Hope VI grant was obtained by the Charlotte Housing Authority in their commitment to revitalize the old Fairview Homes site. The grant acted as a catalyst to turn the dilapidated public housing into a seamless neighborhood that consists of single-family homes, apartments and elderly housing opportunities.

The residents and management of Anita Stroud Senior Complex, the result of HUD's

Section 202 program, played host to a reception to honor the Secretary's and Congressmen's visit. Also on hand was Mayor Pro Tem and Housing Partnership Board Member Susan Burgess, Charlotte Housing Authority officials, Crosland, Saussy Burbank, and the Senior Centers. Anita Stroud residents enjoyed the interaction with their government representatives. Anita Stroud is the first HUD Section 202 funded in Charlotte in two decades. The investment has proven its need with a long waiting list.

Secretary Jackson cited The Park at Oaklawn as one of three HOPE VI projects in the country that he holds up as an example of the project's intent of creating safe, decent, and affordable housing. Pat Garrett, President of The Housing Partnership, welcomed the compliments on The Park at Oaklawn regarding its dramatic transformation from the former Fairview Homes. "This project was ambitious, because it focused on a particular community and yet its potential effects were on an entire corridor," said Garrett.

This premise for development creates a quality standard of living for everyone where families at a variety of income levels can reap the benefits of transit opportunities and affordable housing.

South Oak Crossing, the First New Affordable Rental Development on City's New Rail Line

Rich red dirt is abundant as the site of a new affordable rental project, South Oak Crossing, is prepared off Old Pineville Road at Arrowood. South Oak Crossing is a transit oriented development that is located within walking distance of Arrowood Station. The Arrowood Station is now under construction and will be a stop on the new South corridor light rail line, which is slated to start service this Fall.

The project, designed according to the new transit standards, includes 192 units conveniently close to South Boulevard and downtown. Rents will range from \$247-\$790 with a successful mix of affordable and market units available. This project has been eagerly anticipated as an opportunity to combine transit with affordable housing. It also builds on the success of Rivermere Apartments, a mixed-income rental complex at Mt. Island Lake.

The Housing Partnership specializes in building quality products that combine both attractive and affordable elements. These developments further the vision of everyone in Mecklenburg County living in a decent, affordable home. It is crucial that these

opportunities be available throughout Charlotte and not concentrated in any one area. This ensures that families can retain easy access to employment opportunities while not paying a disproportionate amount of their income for housing costs.

By locating this development along the light rail passenger line, The Housing Partnership also has the opportunity to be the first affordable housing developer in Charlotte to create a walkable, mixed-income, and transit-supportive development. This premise for development creates a quality standard of living for everyone where families at a variety of income levels can reap the benefits of transit opportunities and affordable housing.

The site is quite impressive with an elevation that will allow for a view of the surrounding area. Staff overseeing the project's physical progress have been impressed as have those involved with securing financing. Investments in this project include exempt bonds, Housing Trust Fund, tax-credit equity, CMHP loan, Hope VI funds, and Neighborhood Reinvestment funding.



Breaking Ground and Building New Houses

Arbor Glen, the redevelopment of the former Dalton Village, is gaining momentum for affordable homeownership. More than forty homes are being planned with 15 lots reserved for Charlotte Housing Authority buyers. More than twenty percent have contracts to date.

The model home is open, with a craftsman style that homebuilder Saussy Burbank has perfected. The subdivision is adjacent to Arbor Glen Apartments, a 308-unit affordable rental housing development constructed by Crosland.

Arbor Glen is a prime example of how to create affordable homeownership opportunities without compromising style and character. The site is located just off of Clanton Road near West Boulevard with easy access to Interstate 77 and downtown.

Graduates of The Homeownership Center of Charlotte who want to make Arbor Glen home are able to apply for special mortgage products. Prices start at just \$129,500 in comparison to the average price of a home in Charlotte of \$225,000.

The Housing Partnership has created more than 900 homeowners since 1990 and counseled 9,801 families since homeownership education began at The Housing Partnership in 1993. By Arbor Glen's completion, the number of new homeowners created will be 976 - a great and consistent effort toward addressing Charlotte's affordable housing need.



The Housing Partnership received a \$333,032 grant as well as staff training slots from NeighborWorks® America. A portion of the grant award will be used to provide The Homeownership Center of Charlotte's homebuyer counseling and mortgage assistance options. Grant funds will also be allocated in support of The Housing Partnership's commitment to maintaining affordability in revitalized neighborhoods and implementing City-approved redevelopment plans. "The grant from NeighborWorks® is an important part of our overall funding strategy for the provision of homeownership services as well as our ongoing housing development programs," said Pat Garrett, President of The Housing Partnership. "The need for quality, affordable housing continues to grow rapidly in this area, and continued support from the public and private sectors is critical to transforming communities."

The Housing Partnership is committed to collaboration with the private sector, neighborhood and government partners in promoting and developing economically integrated neighborhoods.

The Wachovia Foundation contributed \$30,000 to The Homeownership Center of Charlotte's educational services. The Housing Partnership's Senior Vice-President of Homeownership, Ralphine Caldwell, said, "Wachovia's commitment to helping families interested in homeownership is to be applauded. Unfortunately there are entities who try to entice customers into loans not suitable for their financial situation. Wachovia cares about customers not only obtaining and fulfilling their dream of homeownership but also being able to stay in the home long-term through pre- and post-homeownership education."

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The Housing Partnership: Semi-finalist for Turner Prize

The Housing Partnership was a semi-finalist for the Turner Prize for Innovation and Leadership in Affordable Housing. The Housing Partnership was nominated for its role as master developer of the Park at Oaklawn. The Park at Oaklawn is a successful mixed-income community

with attractive homeownership, rental and senior living opportunities. It is a strong representation of local collaborative efforts.

The prize is given through the University of California. Don Turner was a leading builder of affordable housing.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Housing Partnership, Inc. is a broad-based, private, non-profit housing development and finance corporation organized to expand affordable and well-maintained housing within stable neighborhoods for low and moderate income families in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County with a continuing interest in the ability of occupants to more fully enter the economic mainstream.

Moving to Neighborworks® Mid-Atlantic Region

NeighborWorks® America moved its NC affiliates into their Mid-Atlantic District in 2007. To mark the event, The Housing Partnership welcomed its new liaisons with true southern hospitality. Staff hosted Tim Adams, Mid-Atlantic District Director, and Chris Helmers, Management Consultant III, with a tour of multiple project sites and introductions to community partners.

When asked their impression, Adams noted how impressed he was with the staff's "high

level of professionalism and productivity" that he witnessed in his visit. Staff invited Adams and Helmers to development and all-staff meetings to help them gain an understanding of current projects. Both gentlemen said they're encouraged to see that the organization works so closely with the City that it is viewed as a partner.

Helmers said, "We're becoming more southern." That's a nice contrast to The Housing Partnership losing its southern roots.

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