



THE REACH REPORT

Resources Enabling Affordable Community Housing in Virginia

June 2006

REACH EXPANDS INTO NORTHERN VIRGINIA

A reception was held on May 1st 2006 at the offices of the Arlington Housing Corporation (AHC, Inc.) in Arlington County to celebrate the establishment of the full time presence of VHDA in Northern Virginia and a full time VHDA link to the Hispanic community in Virginia. The event was sponsored by AHC Inc, AHOME of Fairfax, the Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance (NVAHA) and VHDA.

During the event, VHDA Executive Director Susan Dewey introduced Michael Scheurer as the Authority's new Community Outreach Officer for Northern Virginia and Jose Paiz as the new Hispanic Outreach Officer. Both Mike and Jose will be located in Northern Virginia and are members of the REACH team. Michael comes to VHDA from Fannie Mae and Jose from PNC Mortgage Inc. Walter Webdale, President and CEO of AHC Inc. and Michelle Krocker, President of NVAHA both remarked how pleased they were that VHDA had shown it's commitment to both high cost Northern Virginia and the Hispanic community by the addition of these positions. *Mike Scheurer*

The Wynter Green Story

On April 7, 2006 Project Faith dedicated their new development in Dalghren which was named Wynter Green Place in honor of former DHCD employee Diesie Wynter. Behind the bricks and mortar of this impressive building, there is a wonderful story about human compassion.

Johnny Johnston worked in the bacon factory in King George County. One cold winter's night after a long day in the factory, Johnny went home,

went to bed and ran out of fuel oil. He suffered frostbite in both lower extremities and both hands. He lost both legs above the knee and 8 of his 10 fingers. Although his situation was bleak, Johnny was befriended by Nadine Hooker who was determined to find him decent, safe, and affordable housing.

I met Johnny about 7 years ago when he lived across the hall from me in the first apartment building that Housing Opportunities Made Economical, Inc. (HOME, Inc.) opened in the summer of 1999. Nadine rented the place for Johnny long enough for her to (as she put it) "**Beg a House for Johnny.**" She spent the next two years on a mission of talking to people in churches, homes, stores and essentially anywhere someone would listen. In the process, Project Faith was born and dozens of volunteers built Johnny a new home on the site of his old home. Johnny moved into his new home in the summer of 2001. (*See Wynter Green Page 2*)



Johnny Johnston at home in King George County

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The Wynter Green Story Con't

On April 7, Johnny was joined by four new neighbors as Project Faith unveiled their new addition to Johnny's House dedicated as Wynter Green Place which features 4 Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units. SRO projects typically require many sources of financing and a sponsoring non-profit organization with strong capacity and a high-risk tolerance. Fronze Wardlaw, Project Faith's Executive Director and the organization's board of directors deserve tremendous credit for undertaking and completing this project. The financing package included funds from the VHDA, DHCD, and construction financing from Union Bank and Trust.

Fronze called me about a week before dedication event to share a story that is among the most touching I have heard. She was showing one of the new residents the almost finished property and in the middle of her protracted apology for the missing decorations and the yet to be hung ceiling fans she realized the fellow was streaming tears of joy. After years of homelessness and shuttling from shelter to shelter, he would finally have a home.

There are few absolutes in this world but I know one. There is and never will be anyplace like home. *Bill Fuller*



Nadine Lucas



Fronze Wardlaw, Diesie Wynter

VHDA participates in Cinco de Mayo Celebration

Hundreds of Latinos and non-Latinos gathered at the United Way/Our Health campus in Winchester to celebrate Cinco de Mayo.

In case you're wondering, "Cinco de Mayo" means 5th of May, and is a day that commemorates a military victory in 1862 of Mexican forces over the French army forces in what would become known as the Battle of Puebla. While historically a Mexican holiday, it has become a day where Latinos of all nationalities and non-Latinos have a chance to get together, celebrate and have a good time.

José Páiz, Community Housing Officer and Frank Curbeira, Contact Center Manager, were on hand to bring information about VHDA products and services to the growing Latino community in Winchester. A family event, the crowd enjoyed plenty of fun, face painting, Mexican food, salsa and bachata music, and other activities and crafts for children.

Presented by the United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley, this was the 2nd year Cinco de Mayo was celebrated in Winchester. This year the date coincided with the celebration of the traditional 79th Annual Apple Blossom Festival. *José Páiz*



The REACH Team partners with Richmond Redevelopment Housing Authority

Promoting Homeownership and Community Revitalization

The REACH Team has partnered with Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority to promote new housing opportunities at the Fulton Community in Richmond's East End. VHDA allocated \$2 million in SPARC (Round 5) resources to support homeownership and community revitalization. These funds will provide low interest rate permanent mortgages to 1st time homebuyers purchasing a home in the Fulton Community, as well as other targeted "Neighborhoods in Bloom" communities.

Sheila Hill Christian, Executive Director of RRHA, kicked off this initiative at the Fulton Hill community home fair in March. At the event, Toni Ostrowski, Senior Community Housing Officer provided information on VHDA's affordable loan programs to the more than 100 potential homebuyers in attendance. *Toni Ostrowski*



Promoting Mixed-Use/Mixed-Income Development

During the last several months, REACH team members have met on several occasions with staff from the Richmond RHA to discuss the redevelopment possibilities for Jackson Place, a 5.3 acre site in the Jackson Ward area of downtown Richmond owned by RRHA. After unsuccessful attempts in the past to advertise the site for redevelopment, the housing authority submitted an application to the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Advisory Services Panel. This panel assists with the analysis of the market potential and the creation of development goals for potential redevelopment projects.

VHDA and other sponsors provided financial support to host the ULI Panel on March 21-24, 2006 at the Virginia Biotechnology Conference Center in Richmond. REACH Team members were invited to serve on one of the panel's focus group where they expressed the importance of providing affordable housing as part of a mixed-use/mixed-income development in the downtown Richmond area. Upon conclusion of the three-day session, the panel recommended a mixed-use/mixed-income development for the site. The RRHA plans to advertise a Request for Proposal (RFP) in the summer of 2006 for a developer. The REACH Team looks forward to the opportunity to meet with the interested developers to discuss how VHDA's Mixed-Use/Mixed Income financing opportunities can be utilized for Jackson Place. *Costa Canavos*

Housing Seminar Hits Winchester



VHDA and Access Independence sponsored a two-day program, **Creative Housing for the 21st Century** on May 23-24 at Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia. The training featured nationally and regionally recognized experts in the fields of Universal Design and Green Building.

The program was attended by an array of participants including design professionals, developers, housing officials, lenders, and others involved in the built environment process.

The two-day seminar enabled Architect's of Record to meet the criteria necessary to qualify for the 5 points for Fair Housing and 5 points for Universal Design on the Qualified Allocation Plan for Virginia's Low Income Housing Tax Credit application process administered by VHDA. Architects also earned 6 AIA/CES HSW Learning Units for the 2-day seminar.

For more information about future training sponsored by the REACH Team, contact Gail Braham at 804-343-5512 or gail.braham@vhda.com. *Gail Braham*

Mixed-Use/Mixed-Income Symposium

On January 12, 2006, the Virginia Center for Architecture, along with co-sponsors VHDA and Virginia LISC, held a symposium entitled, "Livable Communities: Mixed-Income, Mixed-Use Developments." The keynote speaker for the day was M. von Nkosi AIA, Director, Mixed Income Communities Initiative of Atlanta (MICI), which conducted studies in the Atlanta metro area on "the region's inability to provide housing for all income levels, particularly in areas convenient to jobs." The conclusion of the studies: *mixed-income and mixed-use communities provide an opportunity for a solution for both affordable housing and transportation concerns.*

VHDA Senior Community Housing Officer and REACH Team member, Chris Hilbert, gave a presentation on VHDA's Mixed-Use/Mixed-Income product and served on a panel discussion on "Investing for Diversity and Equity."

Other panelists included Neal Barber, Executive Director of Virginia First Cities and Dan Tater from the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. Commenting on the audience of approximately 75 people in attendance, Hilbert noted, "It is great to see so many people here from outside the affordable housing arena. Opportunities abound for new investors with new resources to make mixed-use and mixed-income communities the norm for future development activity."

Chris Hilbert



Bayberry Homes Phase III

Virginia Beach Community Development Corporation acquired and rehabilitated ten townhouse units for low-to moderate-income families in the City of Virginia Beach. SPARC and HIP resources totaling \$881,000 were used to finance this scattered site development. *Monique Johnson*



Meadows Phase II Groundbreaking in Pembroke, VA

Even though it was a cold March day with overcast skies, a high level of enthusiasm brightened the atmosphere at the Groundbreaking of the Meadows Phase II development in Pembroke, VA. The 11-unit rental development, which consists of newly constructed detached houses, rests on a hilltop with great views of the surrounding mountains. Giles County Housing and Development Corporation (GCHDC), a non-profit organization, is the developer. VHDA has issued a commitment for \$105,000 for the permanent financing and provided an allocation of Low Income Housing Tax Credits during the 2004 competitive round.

Pembroke Mayor Dana Munsey and other members of the Town Council voiced their strong support for affordable housing during the event. VHDA Senior Community Housing Officer and REACH Team member, Chris Hilbert, spoke about the “great partnerships that made this day possible.” Among the partners represented at the Groundbreaking were: construction lender, BB&T; tax credit syndicator, Virginia Community Development Corporation (VCDC); general contractor, Community Housing Partners Corporation; and DHCD, who provided a \$650,000 HOME loan which was underwritten by VHDA. *Chris Hilbert*

VHDA supports Lease-Purchase Homeownership in Tomcliff Phase III

VHDA closed a \$925,000 SPARC loan to Tomcliff Development, Inc. for six-units of scattered site single-family housing in the City of Richmond. The redevelopment contributes to the revitalization efforts of this neighborhood by diversifying the housing stock and expanding the neighborhood’s housing options through a lease-purchase homeownership model.

Monique Johnson



Chesapeake Redevelopment & Housing Authority 5th Annual Resident Empowerment Conference

VHDA is committed to addressing the housing needs of the African American community through programs which promote homeownership and other housing opportunities. Likewise, the REACH Team works with local governments, lenders, public officials, housing organizations, and other stakeholders across the Commonwealth to create partnerships to help create minority homeownership opportunities. One such recent effort involved co-sponsoring the Chesapeake Redevelopment and Housing Authority’s Empowerment Conference. The conference provided the opportunity to educate Chesapeake residents on the benefits of homeownership. VHDA was able to assist these potential homebuyers with tools and resources to prepare them for owning and maintaining a home. *(See Chesapeake Redevelopment & Housing Authority 5th Annual Resident Page 6)*

Chesapeake Redevelopment & Housing Authority 5th Annual Resident Empowerment Conference Con't

REACH Team member Monica Jefferson facilitated a session on “Building Wealth through Homeownership” which discussed the value of homeownership in promoting household wealth. *Monica Jefferson*

2006 Women & Financial Literacy Workshop

VHDA co-sponsored the 2006 Women & Financial Literacy Workshop presented by Average Girl Magazine at SunTrust Bank in Richmond. The workshop focused on budgeting, investing, small business entrepreneurship, retirement planning, living wills, time management, and homeownership. The keynote speaker was Daphne Maxwell Reid of Millennium Studios. Monica Jefferson, African American Outreach Officer, facilitated a session on the Steps to Homeownership. *Monica Jefferson*



VHDA Revitalization Tools presented at VAPA Conference

VHDA plays an important role in promoting the revitalization of communities throughout the Commonwealth through a variety of housing finance initiatives. The application of these initiatives was discussed during a session entitled “Redevelopment Plans and Affordable Housing” at the Annual Conference of the Virginia Planning Association on March 29th in Portsmouth.

REACH Director Mike Hawkins and a housing official from the Newport News RHA discussed the development and financing of revitalization plans to promote an array of housing and service opportunities in economically impacted communities.

REACH Team participation in the VAPA conference is just one example of VHDA’s efforts to educate local officials about the value of housing diversity in their communities. *Mike Hawkins*

The REACH Team

Mike Hawkins, AICP	Director of Community Housing
Gail Braham	Community Outreach Program Coordinator
Costa Canavos	Community Housing Officer <i>Local Government Outreach</i>
Bill Fuller, Ph.D.	Senior Community Housing Officer <i>Outreach to Persons with Disabilities</i>
Chris Hilbert	Senior Community Housing Officer <i>Non-Profit Organization Outreach</i>
Monica Jefferson	Community Housing Officer <i>Outreach to the African American Community</i>
Monique Johnson	Community Housing Officer <i>Capacity Building & Resource Facilitation</i>
Toni Ostrowski	Senior Community Housing Officer <i>Outreach to Stakeholders and Partners</i>
Jose Paiz	Community Housing Officer <i>Outreach to the Hispanic Community</i>
Mike Scheurer	Community Housing Officer <i>Northern VA Outreach</i>
Shawn Washington	Community Outreach Program Coordinator
Gerard Jameson	Graduate Student Intern
Stefanie Wilson	Graduate Student Intern