

Celebrating 70 Years

Affordable Housing Breaks Ground at Ocean Pointe



Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy greeted an enthusiastic audience of City, State and HUD officials, public housing leaders and neighborhood residents who gathered at an empty lot on the corner of Ocean Avenue and Dwight Street to celebrate the breaking of ground for the construction of 58 new affordable rental apartments. Mayor Healy and Councilman Michael Sottolano spoke of the development as one more positive step in addressing the City's need for affordable housing for the seniors of our community.

Councilwoman Viola Richardson's address put emphasis on the importance of hiring local workers for construction jobs so that long-standing city residents of Ward F and other areas of the City benefit from the area's construction boom.

In turn, Maria Maio, JCHA Executive Director praised Mayor Healy and other local officials for the critical contribution of land and financial support which made the project possible and for the Mayor's long-standing support in so many other ways of the public housing families of Jersey City.

Called Ocean Pointe East and West, the mid-size buildings will rise on two corners of the intersection, constructed with amenities and community space on the ground floors, and using environmentally friendly (green) technology. Ocean Pointe is the most recent of the JCHA's "HOPE VI" developments, which replace obsolete public housing "projects" with affordable and mixed-income communities that include senior and family-friendly homes, carefully designed to blend into neighborhoods and encourage surrounding economic development. Construction of Ocean Pointe will be well underway this Fall, with expected completion by Fall 2009.

Employment Training Classes Now Underway

The Jersey City Housing Authority recently received a Literacy Skills Training Grant for \$97,800 from the New Jersey Department of Labor. The program is a joint initiative between the JCHA, Hudson County Community College and Jersey City Employment and Training. The grant enables the JCHA to give residents the skills which can help them attain financial self sufficiency.

The JCHA applied for the grant to help residents achieve employment and receive promotions in the workplace. The classes are offered in basic communications, mathematics, English as a Second Language and computer skills. The classes will be taught by qualified instructors from Hudson County Community College while the JCHA continues to provide case management, social services and answers to employment-related questions.

Classes are open to residents of both public and Section 8 housing. Classes are held at the Community Revitalization Center at Curries Woods. To enroll, e-mail bda-vis@jcha.us or kburnett@jcha.us or call Kevin Burnett at 201-547-3721.



Resident Leaders Reviewed New "House Rules"

Thank You to the ever faithful and hard-working **Resident Leaders** who gave serious and meaningful comments to staff about proposed changes to the Admissions and Continued Occupancy (ACOP) Policy. These rules, which affect every resident in our public housing communities, were discussed at RAB and TAB meetings over the last few months. Here are some of the important changes:

Excess Utilities Charges

This policy applies only to those buildings where the Jersey City Housing Authority pays the utilities.

Air conditioners: The charge for use of an air conditioner is \$20 per month for the first air conditioner and \$25 per month for each additional unit. For senior citizens (62 or older) and disabled heads of households, the charge is \$5 per month for the first air conditioner and \$10 per month for each additional unit.

All air conditioner units must be installed properly and can only be installed in a room with two windows. For rooms with one window, a doctor's note must be submitted to the JCHA before installation.

Clothes washers: The charge for use is \$15 per month or \$180 per year. For senior citizens and disabled heads of household, the charge is \$7.50 per month or \$90 per year.

Pet Policy for JCHA-Owned Properties

Ownership fee: A non-refundable ownership fee of \$200 shall be required for each dog and cat. The JCHA reserves the right to change this amount consistent with federal guidelines at any time.

Repayment Agreements

The JCHA will offer a six-month amnesty period for all residents to declare any unreported income received. If it is determined and verified that the head of household owes the JCHA rent, whether as a result of this unreported income or for other reasons, the head of household will be required to remit an initial lump sum payment in the amount of 15 percent of the total outstanding balance owed upon issuance of a 30-day notice to the resident.

After this six-month amnesty period, and for all other residents, the head of household will be required to remit an initial lump sum payment in the amount of 25 percent of the total outstanding balance owed upon issuance of a 30-day notice to the resident. Failure to remit this lump sum payment by the end of the 30-day period will result in legal action to terminate tenancy and collect the entire amount owed.

In either situation, after the initial lump sum payment is made, the head of household will be required to make 24 regular payments if

the balance is \$10,000 or less. If the balance is more than \$10,000, the head of household will be required to make 36 regular payments.

For those tenants entering into a repayment agreement, two rent receipts will be mailed out: one for rent payable by the 10th day of the month and one for under-reported rent payable by the end of the month.

Removing a Member of the Household

The head of household may opt to remove a member of the household (whether adult or minor) from the lease by submitting a written request to the Asset Manager that indicates the member to be removed, the reason for removal, where the member will be residing and the effective date of the change. The head of household is required to provide the following proof of new residency of the member being removed from the lease:

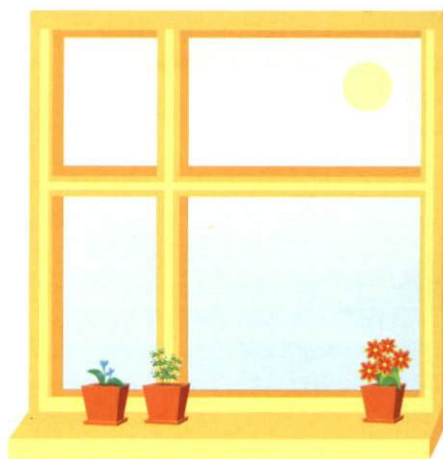
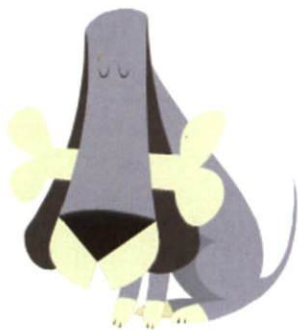
- Legal papers documenting a spouse-instituted a divorce action
- Order of protection/restraining order obtained by one family member against another
- Proof of another home address, including utility bills, a cancelled rent check, driver's license, or lease of rental agreement
- Statements from other agencies such as social services
- If the adult family member is incarcerated, a document from the court or prison stating how long the member will be incarcerated

Window Guard Policy

The JCHA and its agents are required by state law to provide, install and maintain window guards upon written request by a tenant in a unit in which a child 10 years old or younger resides or in building halls above the first floor which are accessible.

Exceptions to the rule are pursuant to state law. For example, no window guards may be installed on windows providing access to a fire escape or which are located on the first floor.

Households may not remove, tamper with or destroy the window guard and will be charged by the JCHA for any resident-caused damages. A resident's failure to report the repair in a timely manner shall be considered to contribute to any damage that occurs.



Honoring our past... Pride in our accomplishments... Confidence in our future...



Maria Maio recently met with U.S. Congressman Rothman, Keith Kinard, Executive Director of the Newark Housing Authority and Tory Gunsolly, NHA Chief Administrative Officer to discuss the challenges of HUD funding cuts and operating rules under HUD's new "asset management" model.

On May 17, 2008, the JCHA will celebrate its 70th Anniversary! And like most anniversaries we want to recall the past, celebrate our successes and plan for meeting the future challenges of providing quality affordable housing for our community.

The Public Housing Program has changed significantly since it was created under the Federal Housing Act of 1937, which was originally created to first provide construction jobs to unemployed workers and secondly to provide temporary housing. Through the years, due to federal policies, and the lack of affordable housing, Public Housing became permanent housing and viewed by some, unfortunately, as "housing of last resort".

During the last 10 years, with the initiation of the Curries Woods HOPE VI Revitalization Program the Jersey City Housing Authority has embarked on the transformation of its public housing to best ensure that it will provide quality, sustainable housing by creating mixed income communities. Today the New Curries Woods, Lafayette Village, Lafayette Senior Living Center, Barbara Place, Woodward Terrace and Gloria Robinson Court Homes stand as testimony to achieving our goal. For the future we will look to continue our innovative and progressive strategies to develop

and maintain the best affordable housing.

But these grand ideas need the support of our federal officials in Washington D.C.! I recently met with our Senators and Congressmen and Newark Housing Authority leadership to discuss the critical need for the federal government to restore the Operating, Capital Fund, Section 8 vouchers and HOPE VI monies lost over the last several years of funding cuts. We commend and thank Senators Frank Lautenberg and Robert Menendez, and Congressmen Steven Rothman, Albio Sires, and Donald Payne for their unflinching support; they are fighting for our future!

Finally, we never forget those supporters closer to home – our Commissioners, Mayor Jerramiah Healy, City Council, County Freeholders and other Public Officials and Residents, as we enter the next chapter of Public Housing.

*Thank you,
Maria T. Maio
Executive Director*

New Community Rising



The empty lot at the foot of Duncan Avenue, once the site of obsolete and distressed "project" towers, is the site of new, beautifully designed and constructed townhomes built as part of the revitalization of A. Harry Moore Apartments community. The first phases, scheduled for completion in the Fall of this year, will include three-story brick townhomes and an elevator building with community space, and will house families with a mix of incomes levels. Meanwhile, families from the three remaining buildings are being relocated to make way for demolition, and then construction of additional new housing.

Jersey City Housing Authority Board of Commissioners

Edward Cheatam, Chairman
Lori Serrano, Vice-Chairperson
Irene Carson, Commissioner
Elba Perez-Cinciarelli, Commissioner
John Garvey, Commissioner
Bobbie D. Morgan, Commissioner
Sheila Mosby, Commissioner



Mission Statement

The mission of the Jersey City Housing Authority is to offer and provide qualified lower income families and senior citizens with the best opportunities for gaining affordable housing within reasonably safe, working neighborhoods and simultaneously promote economic self-sufficiency for families, continued independent living for senior citizens and maximum accommodation for persons with disabilities.

"Building Communities...Creating Opportunities... Transforming Lives"

400 U.S. Highway #1 (Marion Gardens)

Jersey City, NJ 07306

Tel: (201)547-6750 Fax: (201) 547-6702

www.jcha.us