

A FIRST FOR FLINT: LEED CERTIFIED RESIDENCE NEARS COMPLETION

Renovations of the Urban Alternatives House (UAH) in Flint’s Central Park neighborhood are nearly complete. The UAH, owned and operated by the Genesee County Land Bank Authority (GCLBA) is a rehabilitated 3,054 square foot home at 924 Eddy Street with two apartment units and an educational space. The Urban Alternatives House is the first Flint residence achieving LEED certification; the most recognizable standard to demonstrate that a building is truly “green.”



The LEED program was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council and is an internationally recognized certification that provides third-party verification that a building was designed and built to a high “green” standard. Performance strategies are designed to improve energy savings, water efficiency, carbon emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and resource management and impact.

The UAH models energy saving technologies with its geothermal system that takes advantage of the relatively constant temperature of the ground; pumps push a liquid refrigerant carrying heat from one area to the other to heat or cool down the house. Geothermal systems are extremely efficient to operate and are widely considered to be the most sustainable source of heating and cooling available. Additionally, the costs of operating geothermal systems are extremely low once the system is installed, thus minimizing costs for the UAH in the long run.

The UAH also has a utility monitoring system that tracks energy and water usage. With this data, occupants of the house can pinpoint the conditions and specific days or times that energy and water usage are highest, and modify their behavior to reduce their consumption and in turn their utility bills. The presence of this system in the UAH will add to the demonstration ability of the house; seeing the functionality of the system and the resulting cost savings could become the first step toward a visitor purchasing a similar system for their own home.

The UAH will include a large deck for outdoor classroom space, a garden plot, nursery space, rain garden, greywater rain barrels, and other plantings. The parking spaces on the property are constructed with porous paving in order to minimize the amount of impervious surface added to the lot and a bike rack is provided for students. The GCLBA is accepting applications (information below) to lease the two bedroom units and the University of Michigan – Flint (UM-Flint) leased the educational space. In January, UM-Flint students will study renewable energy, redevelopment of urban areas, policy analysis, and climate change analysis at this off-campus location.

From The Board Chair

Deborah Cherry



Avoid tax foreclosure by paying delinquent taxes now

The due date for current winter taxes is February 28, 2013. I can’t stress enough the importance of people paying their property taxes on time in order to avoid unnecessary delinquent fees and, ultimately, tax foreclosure on your home. If taxes are not paid on time at your city or township office, they are transferred to the County Treasurer’s office where additional fees will be added to the payment due.

For those at risk of losing a home to tax foreclosure, we offer a Tax Foreclosure Prevention Program. The program emphasizes the responsibility and commitment of the taxpayer to maintain their ownership of the property. The program requires home owners to develop a realistic understanding of home ownership expenses. Often a payment plan is established that will ultimately return the home owner to current tax status and break the cycle of ongoing delinquent taxes. Appointments must be made in January to make special arrangements. Appointments can be scheduled or questions can be answered by calling 810-257-3054.

This year, roughly 8,000 homes are in jeopardy of being foreclosed upon due to unpaid taxes for the 2010 tax year. Nearly 1,000 potential foreclosures were able to be postponed due to the Tax Foreclosure Prevention Program in 2012.

Genesee County Treasurer
Genesee County Land Bank Authority, Chair

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Most students will come from UM-Flint's Earth and Resource Science Department's new Energy and Sustainable Systems (ESS) major. This program prepares students for careers and graduate work in the rapidly growing environmental disciplines. Other potential users include First Year Experience, gardening, botany, engineering, sociology, and anthropology students and neighborhood residents who may help the UAH track data produced by the utility monitoring system and tend the community garden.



The home's location offers distinct advantages; it is located half a mile from the UM-Flint campus and on the edge of both the Flint Cultural Center and the Central Park neighborhood. The Cultural Center includes the Flint Institute of Music, the Flint Institute of Arts, the Alfred P. Sloan Museum, the Longway Planetarium and the Flint Public Library. Many Central Park residents were engaged in the planning process and are excited to see the Urban Alternatives House contribute to a livelier community.

The Land Bank funded the project with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority's (MSHDA) Neighborhood Stabilization II Program grant funds. UM-Flint successfully funded classroom and site improvements, including solar panels, with donations from the Rotary Club of Greater Flint, the C.S. Mott Foundation, Consumers Energy and the Kresge Foundation.



 **Leasing Information** for the Urban Alternatives Home - 924 Eddy St., Flint, MI. Two units available with 2 bedrooms and 1 bath in Central Park neighborhood near UM-Flint, Mott College and Cultural Center. Newly renovated with energy efficient appliances, washer, dryer and security system. \$473/month plus utilities. Must meet NSP income guidelines based on household size (for example a 2-person household must be under \$23,400 per year). Call Jennifer at (810)257-3088 ext.530 or go to website www.thelandbank.org to fill out application. Genesee County Land Bank is an equal opportunity housing agency.

Some text from FLIPPING THE SWITCH: Establishing the Urban Alternatives House; Urban & Regional Planning Program, Taubman College of Architecture & Urban Planning, University of Michigan April 2011

By Kathy Roberts

New Homeowner Enjoying New Home in Downtown Flint



Flint is welcoming one of its newest homeowners. A young professional who is excited about living in Downtown Flint, Dan Moilanen, 26, a first time home buyer, purchased 407 W. 5th Street. "Living close to work is a big factor for me. I'm very environmentally-conscious and want to reduce my carbon footprint as much as possible," he said.

Originally from the Fenton Area, Moilanen's new commute is just a 10 minute walk in either direction where he splits his time between Resource Genesee as the volunteer service assistant and Flint Local 432 as the Club Manager.

Moilanen is passionate about the revitalization of Flint through the Master Plan and was pleased to be able to purchase a home in the City of Flint. He has also become a member of the neighborhood association and hopes to get more involved with the group. He has friends that live in the neighborhood. Grand Traverse District Neighborhood Association President, Alycia Socia, said "We are excited to welcome a young homebuyer and excited to have them in our community. It's an exciting time for our downtown neighborhood. The house is absolutely beautiful."

Genesee County Land Bank recently completed renovations on this home with Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP2) funds. Five other homes have been completed in the neighborhood with the program. Only one, 650 Ann Arbor St., overlooking beautiful Spring Grove remains available in the neighborhood. Please check out our website at www.thelandbank.org.

By Heidi Phaneuf

More than 1,200 Lots Maintained, 183 Youth Involved— Clean & Green 2012!

From May to September 43 community-based groups cleaned, greened, and gardened more than 1,200 Land Bank lots in and around the City of Flint, the equivalent of roughly 44 city blocks, through the Land Bank's Clean & Green program. While property maintenance is the focus of Clean & Green, the program is not about maintenance alone. Clean & Green is about recognizing and supporting community groups that want to change the neighborhoods they live and work in, empowering youth, and encouraging residents to re-imagine available land as an asset and opportunity.



Block-clubs, schools, churches, neighborhood associations, and local non-profits are some of the 43 community-based groups that participated in the 2012 Clean & Green program. Each group received a stipend for maintaining at least 25 lots every three weeks. Many groups created greening projects, including urban orchards, food gardens, flower gardens, and even community volleyball courts. Almost all of the groups included participation from neighborhood youth, who live in the neighborhoods where they clean and green. 183 youth participated in Clean & Green in 2012.

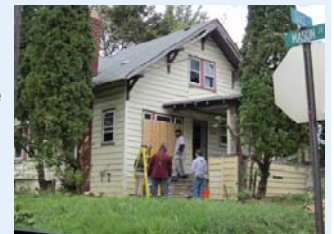
Clean & Green concluded its 9th program with a celebration on Thursday, October 11th at the MTA Conference Center on Dort Highway in Flint. Representatives from Clean & Green groups gathered to connect with each other, review their work over the last year, and receive recognition and awards. Local Clean & Green supporters honored the program at the celebration, including Genesee County Treasurer and Land Bank Chair Deborah Cherry, Representative Woodrow Stanley, Mayor Dayne Walling, funders, Land Bank Board members, Citizens' Advisory Council representatives, and staff. Thank you for an outstanding 2012 Clean & Green program!



By Natalie Pruett

The Gift of Giving

For the past three years The West Flint Church of the Nazarene has closed the doors of their church one Sunday a year to give the gift of service by boarding dilapidated houses that are part of the Land Bank's inventory of properties. This year was no different for the West Flint Church except for the fact that they were joined with representation from 25 other churches who decided that they also wanted to give the gift of service. Along with the addition of more churches, other organizations and individuals were a part of this year's effort which included boarding houses, removing debris, painting and repairing playground equipment, clearing brush, building horseshoe pits and preparing lunches.



This year the "Be the Church" project concentrated on Martin L. King Avenue between Welch and Pierson Road. At the end of the day 86 houses were boarded, 56 properties were cleared of brush and 500 lunches were prepared and distributed to the work teams. The Land Bank provided 700 sheets of plywood and nails to secure the houses.

In addition to all of the manual labor that took place on September 23rd, 61 families representing 147 children received winter clothing including boots, hats, gloves and mittens. The West Flint Church has a traveling clothing closet named "Little Lamb's Closet" that was set up in the parking lot of Salem Lutheran Church on Martin L. King Avenue for the distribution of the clothing items. Salem Lutheran's parking lot was a popular spot on this day because there was also a community meal catered by Faith Tabernacle Church that provided food for 130 people served from this location. The menu included grilled hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and a beverage.

The West Flint Church of the Nazarene has already begun to plan for next year's activities by selecting September 22, 2013, as their date to once again close their doors to give their annual gift of service. If you are interested in helping, I am sure they would welcome your participation.

By Raynetta Speed



**HERE'S
WHAT'S
POSSIBLE**

Led by local resident, Angela Stamps, Berston Bicycle Club is developing young bicycle enthusiasts who for the first time have access to a bicycle and can safely ride throughout Flint.

FLINT MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY WORKSHOP
DECEMBER 13, 2012
7 PM TO 8:30 PM
COMMUNITY ACTION RESOURCE DEPARTMENT (GCCARD)
601 N. SAGINAW ST., SUITE 1B

When we all work together, great things can happen. Imagine Flint is your opportunity to help shape the future of your city. Join us and be part of the Comprehensive Master Plan process. **Imagine Flint. Here's What's Possible.**



Get Involved!
Visit www.imagineflint.com



Can't make the workshop? Participate online.

Matt Williams, Associate Planner / Phone: (810) 766-7426 Ext. 3027 / Fax: (810) 766-7315 masterplaninfo@cityofflint.com
City of Flint, Planning Department - Master Plan, 1101 S. Saginaw St., Main Building Room 103, Flint, MI 48502

Photo: Desiree Duell

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