

## Spring Grove Wetland Restoration in Progress

Spring Grove is a scenic 4-acre parcel located just west of Downtown Flint. This unique community asset includes a spring fed wetland over an acre in size and is home to numerous species of wildlife including duck, geese, deer, turtle, muskrat, groundhogs, rabbit and a great blue heron has often been sighted there. A fully accessible crushed limestone walking path will be installed from the Second Street entrance just west of Ann Arbor and will connect to both water areas. This collaborative project has been in motion since 2004, EPA funds were used to clean the site of the remains of former heavy commercial uses and Ruth Mott Foundation funds were used to re-shape the wetland areas and plant native wetland plants. From 2009 onward the property has been maintained under the direction of the Stockton Center at Spring Grove and Grand Traverse District Neighborhood Association (GTDNA). The Grove is owned by the Genesee County Land Bank and maintained through a 5-year vacant land lease agreement with the GTDNA. Future plans for Spring Grove include additional ADA accessible pathways, more wetland plantings, and the creation of the Grand Traverse Greenway Trail on the old abandoned railroad line that runs adjacent to the property.



*View of Spring Grove from Upper Garden*

GTDNA has a regularly scheduled gardening day every Tuesday evening from 5:00 – 6:30 pm. Volunteers are welcome and can call Heidi Phaneuf at (810) 444-2202 or email to or [hphaneuf@thelandbank.org](mailto:hphaneuf@thelandbank.org).

## Southside Reunion Home Tour

On August 18, 2012 the Genesee County Land Bank hosted a Home Tour of two fully renovated homes in the South Parks Neighborhood in partnership with the Southside Reunion going on that day in Brennan Community Park. 2026 Maybury Avenue and 2026 Winans Avenue were open for tours. We are excited to say that we now have a purchase agreement for one of these homes. Buy now they are selling fast! Buyers get a 20% discount off the purchase price and all homes include energy saving appliances and monitored alarm systems.



**2026 Maybury**



**2026 Winans**

### From The Board Chair

**Deborah Cherry**



### County Tax Foreclosure Auctions Are Scheduled

This year's auctions of tax-foreclosed properties have been scheduled for September 10 and October 30. Both auctions will be held at the Holiday Inn Gateway Centre off Hill Road near the US-23 freeway.

At the September auction prices will start with a minimum bid equal to the taxes, interest and penalties that had been assessed on the properties. While these properties will be available for a fraction of their assessed value, interested buyers should be aware that the properties are sold in "as is" condition and most of them will have been sitting vacant for up to two years prior to being foreclosed.

There will be a total of 1,138 individual properties in this auction along with another 302 properties that will be offered in small bundles. The properties offered in small bundles are groups of vacant lots in various subdivisions or condominium developments that were not completed.

The October 30 auction will be a "no minimum bid" auction where the opening bid starts at \$100 and goes up as individuals make competitive bids.

For more information on the September auction go to:  
[http://www.gc4me.com/departments/treasurer\\_s/tax\\_sale\\_auction.php](http://www.gc4me.com/departments/treasurer_s/tax_sale_auction.php)

*Genesee County Treasurer*  
Genesee County Land Bank Authority

## Urban Alternatives House: A Partnership Between Genesee County Land Bank Authority & University of Michigan-Flint



### OVERVIEW

The Genesee County Land Bank partnered with the University of Michigan-Flint to establish an Urban Alternatives House (UAH) at 924 Eddy Street in Flint's Central Park Neighborhood.

This renovated house maximizes energy efficiency and introduces sustainable, innovative ways to manage energy and water use. Specific features include a geothermal heating and cooling system, enhanced insulation to create a tight house envelope, on demand hot water heating and a building monitoring system to gather data on the operation of house systems. The Alliance for Environmental Sustainability is insuring that the UAH meets the LEED (green building) for Homes Certification for the project. A vegetable garden will encourage more active and healthy living and both the garden and the landscape vegetation are supported by a rain water collection system.

The Land Bank is supervising the construction and will continue as the owners and property managers of the home. UM-Flint will lease the new learning space; the UAH also houses two newly rehabilitated residential units to be leased this fall.

### UAH ADDRESSES IMPORTANT ISSUES

#### 1. Teaching sustainable living and green building

The UAH is a laboratory for learning about energy efficiency, alternative energy systems and sustainable lifestyles and "sensors" will monitor mechanical system performance, energy use and outside temperature. This complete learning environment supports the new Energy and Sustainable Systems major in the Department of Earth and Resource Science and other academic units at UM-Flint.

The UAH extends the reach of the University into a Flint neighborhood providing an identifiable "place" for programs that support community-centered general education for students and provide important educational opportunities for area K-12 students on the critical issue of sustainable living and climate change. UM-Flint will offer community workshops on energy efficiency that highlight the systems present in the building and will apply for designation as a Michigan Energy Demonstration Center when the renovation is complete.

#### 2. Support for green building in the renovation of Genesee County Land Bank properties

The Genesee County Land Bank was established to manage and return tax foreclosed properties to productive use. Since 2004, the Land Bank has leveraged more than \$20 million for brownfield redevelopment and demolition, initiated or completed development on five downtown buildings generating more than \$29 million in investment, renovated more than 75 homes for rental or sale, and partnered with local community development corporations to build more than 150 housing units. This project will provide the Land Bank, home owners, landlords, non-profit housing developers and local contractors with a new model for renovating abandoned properties into environmentally sustainable homes. With an aging housing stock, rising energy prices and a troubled economy, lower energy costs may help to prevent foreclosures while reuse of existing housing stock promotes sustainability and maintains the character and integrity of neighborhoods.

#### 3. Promote Neighborhood Stability

A key aspect in the revitalization of central Flint involves connecting the resources and activity of downtown Flint with that of the Flint Cultural Center. The opening of the Kearsley Street corridor through the UM-Flint campus is a key element in realizing this objective. The UAH strengthens this link by adding students, faculty, staff, residents and visitors to the flow from the neighborhood to the University and from there into downtown. With its location in the Central Park Neighborhood, mid way between UM-Flint and Mott Community College, the UAH offers another link between the two institutions

### IMPLEMENTATION

The Land Bank is financing the residential components of the renovation with funds from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP2). UM-Flint received support from a number of lead partners, including the Rotary Club of Flint, C.S. Mott Foundation, Kresge Foundation and Consumers Energy.

For More Information, please contact:

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(810) 257-3088 x 539  
[kroberts@thelandbank.org](mailto:kroberts@thelandbank.org)

## Another Successful Garden Tour

For the past four years *edible flint* has sponsored a garden tour. This year more than 200 people gathered at Flint's Farmers Market to visit urban gardens in the city of Flint on Thursday, August 9th. The Garden Tour has become such a popular event that four buses and two group bike tours were implemented to accommodate residents from the city of Flint and surrounding communities to visit local gardens.

Each guided bus tour consisted of stopping by six gardens that were nominated to be a part of the tour in different parts of the greater Flint community. Attendees had a chance to get off the bus to walk in the gardens and to talk to the Gardner. Each one of these Gardner's received an engraved stone from *edible flint* that read "edible flint 2012". These stones could be placed in their gardens to mark this year's event. There were also a number of gardens that were recognized as part of the "Out the Window" tour.



The bicycle tour consisted of riding and stopping by gardens that were located in the Grand Traverse and Carriage Town neighborhoods. The Gardner's on this tour also received a stone to place in their gardens. The rain did not deter the 31 bicyclists.



Each attendee enjoyed a light meal prepared with local foods before leaving on the tour. When they returned to the Farmers Market dessert was waiting for them prepared from a local creamy. For their enjoyment music was provided by "**Common Interest**", a local group. The legendary **Sherwood Pea** was a part of this musical entertainment. I have been asked more than once by attendees to bring back "*Common Interest*" for next year's tour.



The tour is designed to bring public awareness to the urban agriculture movement in Flint, build civic pride and celebrate the summer harvest. The tour is free, but donations are graciously accepted. For more information about *edible flint* visit our website at [edibleflint.org](http://edibleflint.org).

By Raynetta Speed

## City of Flint Kicks off Master Planning Process

The City of Flint officially initiated a Master Planning process after receiving a \$1.57 million Community Challenge Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The last officially adopted city master plan, which was completed more than 50 years ago, was created at a time of economic expansion and population growth. The new plan will enable the city to create a guide for the future within the context of current challenges and opportunities based on the vision, goals and priorities defined through community input. The Genesee County Land Bank actively supports the planning process and looks forward to using the resources and tools it has available to support the implementation of the Master Plan.



Master Plan Summer Kickoff Event, June 19, 2012  
Photo from <http://steeringflintforward.com/>



Master Plan Summer Kickoff Event,  
June 19, 2012  
Photo provided by the City of Flint

During the next two years, the City of Flint will work closely with stakeholders, including city residents, to create the plan along with an updated Zoning Code, and a Capital Improvement Plan. Residents, business and community partners will have lots of opportunities to share their vision and input throughout the process. To provide input and learn more about how to get involved in the master planning process, go to the City of Flint's Master Planning Steering Committee's web site, <http://steeringflintforward.com/>, or, send an email to: [masterplaninfo@cityofflint.com](mailto:masterplaninfo@cityofflint.com).

By Christina Kelly

## The date of the 2012 Genesee County Treasurer's Auctions of Tax Foreclosed Properties is as follows:

### ◇ Monday, September 10, 2012

Registration begins at 11:30 a.m.

Auction to begin at 12:00 noon

### ◇ Tuesday, October 30, 2012

Registration begins at 11:30 a.m.

Auction to begin at 12:00 noon

The auctions will be held at the Holiday Inn Gateway Centre off Hill Road near the US-23 freeway.

**Location: Holiday Inn Gateway Center**  
5353 Gateway Center  
Flint, MI 48507

Listings for the auction will be available around 30 days prior to the auctions as well as on the website [www.tax-sale.info/genesee-county](http://www.tax-sale.info/genesee-county).



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