

Neighborhood WINTER 2017 UPDATE

THE MUNICIPAL HOUSING AUTHORITY FOR THE CITY OF YONKERS

RAD Brings New Life to Municipal Housing Authority

The Municipal Housing Authority for the City of Yonkers, New York (MHACY) and the City of Yonkers are embarking on a bold new plan to renovate thousands of units of public housing.

Over the next three years more than \$175 million will be invested to renovate 1,773 units of housing in Yonkers through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program with support from New York State. RAD uses private funding from investors to complete maintenance and renovations of public housing. While the properties would be partially owned by investors, MHACY would continue to manage and residents would remain in their homes and continue to pay 30% of their income towards their rent.

Depending on the locations, these renovations include new heating, roofing, bathrooms and kitchens, flooring, windows and other

upgrades that will make housing more livable for residents.

MHACY has been conducting a series of meetings with residents to prepare them for the renovations. While the ultimate result will be beautiful, upgraded housing, there may be some inconvenience during the construction period.

MHACY's Executive Director Joe Shuldiner said it is important that residents stay involved in the process by attending meetings, asking questions and sharing their concerns. Check for a schedule of upcoming meetings in this newsletter and on MHACY's website at mhacy.com.



SUCCESS STORY Cottage Place Gardens



A sure sign that public housing is on the move in Yonkers, this fall the Municipal Housing Authority and the City of Yonkers celebrated the opening of 188 Warburton Ave.

Developed by the nonprofit group, The Community Builders with the Housing

Authority, the five-story, \$27 million building provided 51 Yonkers families with brand-new energy-efficient apartments. It is the second phase of a six-phase redevelopment of Cottage Place Gardens.

"I love it -- the fact that it's all new is what I like. I feel like it has boosted the morale of everyone living here," said Alicia Hudson, who shares a two-bedroom unit with her two daughters. "We're in the process of starting a tenants association, which will help keep things nice."

The new building has free parking, dishwashers, air conditioning, a courtyard, laundry facilities, and excellent river views. It replaced two distressed 1940s buildings at the Cottage Place Gardens complex and remediated a contaminated brownfield as part of a broader effort to revitalize Southwest Yonkers.

The handsome new building -- along with new landscaping, community spaces on the ground level, and the acquisition and development of vacant property on Warburton Avenue -- will bring a welcome increase in foot traffic on the avenue and reconnect Cottage Place Gardens to the larger community.

"Now I have the chance to show my children that there is opportunity in the world, and in Yonkers," said Anita Whittle, who lives in a ground-floor unit at 188 Warburton with her three children.

Phase I of the redevelopment of Cottage Place Gardens, the \$63 million Schoolhouse Terrace development on Ashburton Avenue, was completed in April 2015. It has one new 50-unit building for low-income seniors as well as a new 70-unit building for low-income families.

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A MESSAGE FROM JOSEPH SHULDINER

I am happy to announce that we are launching a new publication, which we hope will keep you informed about all the exciting developments at the Municipal Housing Authority.

In this edition of our new newsletter you will also find an important guide introducing you to your Site Managers, ROSS Service Coordinators and your Resident Council Officers and Designated Representatives, as well as a listing of upcoming meetings. Please retain this information for your convenience.

The biggest news, of course, is the launch by The City of Yonkers and the Authority of the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. With strong financial assistance from the State of New York, we are hoping to make approximately \$175,000,000 of capital improvements over the next two to three years, spending an average of \$100,000 per apartment.

While this work will improve the quality of life for all of our residents and provide a better place for you to raise your families or enjoy your senior years, the work will cause some disruption. Elevators may be taken out of service, kitchen and bathroom fixtures will be replaced and wall cabinets removed. This work may be especially hard on family members with respiratory problems or mobility challenges. We want to avoid even temporary relocation, but we have to plan for all possibilities. Family Service Society of Yonkers will be available to provide additional case workers to deliver assistance.

Another challenge RAD presents is that we have to leave the public housing program and share ownership and control with investors, but MHACY staff will continue to manage and share in decision making. And I can't stress enough, that residents can stay in their apartments and they will continue to pay 30% of their income towards their rent.

RAD is not the only activity taking place. This past summer the second phase of the Cottage Place Gardens redevelopment opened with 51 new family units at 188 Warburton Avenue. With our partner, The Community Builders, we held a grand opening on September 27th. You can read more about it in this issue.

RAD and the Cottage redevelopment effort are just two of the more visible efforts MHACY is making to provide more and better affordable housing opportunities. Not only are we improving the quality of our housing stock, but we are playing a major role in the revitalization of Yonkers.

Sincerely,
Joe Shuldiner
Executive Director, MHACY



WHAT'S ON DECK

Properties in line for renovation: The Townhomes

Excitement and anticipation are brewing at MHACY's Townhomes, where residents are preparing for sparkling new bathroom fixtures, kitchen cabinets, flooring and a host of other improvements.

Architect Vincent Mellusi of Warshauer Mellusi Warshauer has been working closely with residents of the Townhomes, which will be among the first properties to undergo upgrades.

Mellusi said the renovation has been a challenge as the Townhomes include more than 200 units of housing at seven different locations. Each of the properties is different with different architectural styles and maintenance needs.

In order to do the best job possible, Mellusi said that his team has done site evaluations of each unit, paying close attention to their individual needs. He said he has urged tenants to report any important repairs that need to be

carried out so they can be included in the planning. Residents, he said, have attended several meetings at which they have shared their wishes for their new units, even consulting on bathroom and kitchen faucets and cabinet hardware.

In addition to the new paint, flooring, tiles, windows and kitchen and bath fixtures, there will be many new structural and energy upgrades including new insulation, energy efficient lighting, smoke alarms, heating and hot water heating systems.

He said work could begin as soon as this winter, but most likely will start in the spring and take a total of about 18-24 months, with each unit undergoing between 2-4 weeks of construction.

"For me it's been a very positive experience," he said. "We are very conscious of the fact that this is their home and we respect that, and want their input wherever possible."



DREAM HOMES COME TRUE

New Life for 188 Warburton

Alicia Hudson is delighted with her new apartment at 188 Warburton Ave., a far cry from her old one at Cottage Place Gardens with its tiny stove and cramped, shabby bathroom.

"Everything is brand new," she said. "The setup of the new apartment is good – it's very open," Hudson said. "There's a breakfast bar in the kitchen and I can look over it into the living room and see what my kids are doing while I'm cooking."

Unlike the old Cottage Garden walkup apartments, this new building has elevators, lots of free parking and all new kitchen appliances and bathroom fixtures.

"You have the look of an absolutely modern apartment, but it has the ability to handle people with special needs and disabilities," said Anita Whittle, who uses a cane and crutches to get around. "The floors are pretty. They're vinyl, but they look like wood," Whittle



Gricela Navedo in her apartment 101 at 188 Warburton in Yonkers September 27, 2016. (Photo by Rohanna Mertens)

said. "The old tiles in the projects, no matter how much you scrubbed them, they always looked dull and dirty."

"In the old projects, the heat was very strong and dry," said Whittle, who shares her unit with her son, Tyson, and daughters, Aniya and Anari. "The new heaters have better air consistency and they're more efficient. My bill is lower."

She also likes the new security system. "There are cameras essentially everywhere you go, so you feel safe."

"In the kitchen, we have an electric stove, a dishwasher and countertops that are really pretty," Whittle said. "It's roomy – my daughter and I can cook at the same time."

After decades in a cramped two-bedroom walkup at Cottage Place Gardens, Flossie Vereen is thrilled with the roominess of her new unit at Schoolhouse Terrace.

"I love the bathroom because it's much bigger, much better and I have cabinets in the bathroom," Vereen said. "I have three closets in the hallway and one in each bedroom. And they are very large closets, which I love. The closets at Cottage were small."

Hudson is also happy with her new bathroom at 188 Warburton. "My kids enjoy taking a bath because it's nice and spacious and comfortable. In the old one, the toilet was literally right against the tub, not at all convenient to bathe my kids."

She also likes the convenient free parking. "It was so hard to get a parking space at Cottage Place Gardens," Hudson said. "People were on the waiting list for years."

"I drive, but the bus is right across the street and you can walk to the Metro-North train station," she said.

SUCCESS STORY

Cottage Place Gardens

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"The third phase will be on two parcels," said Jesse Batus, Senior Project Manager for The Community Builders. "There will be 26 units at 209 Warburton Ave. and 44 units in two buildings on the Cottage Place Gardens property."

They plan to break ground on Phase III in spring 2017 pending receipt of financing, Batus said.



L to R: RuthAnne Visnauskas, NYS HCR; Councilman Chris Johnson, Resident Anita Whittle, Sen. Andrea Stewart-Cousins; Mayor Mike Spano; Cynthia Miller, Rep. Elliott Engel.



A MESSAGE FROM MAYOR MIKE SPANO



I hope that you are as excited as I am about the monumental housing renovation project that is about to take place in Yonkers thanks to a partnership between the Municipal Housing Authority of the City of Yonkers, the City of Yonkers and New York State.

Although you cannot hear the hammers just yet, plans are already underway to upgrade more than 1,700 units of public housing with new bathroom fixtures, kitchen cabinets, new flooring, lighting

and other improvements which will make life a lot more comfortable for residents. It's very important to us in Yonkers to provide housing that is not only affordable but is also quality housing. This project, along with the new, modern housing units popping up in our city, will surely get us there.

It's all part of the positive momentum occurring right now in Yonkers. Over the last five years, we have had over \$1 billion in private investment in our economic development. Investors are recognizing that Yonkers, in all four corners of the city, has a lot to offer for those who want a quality

place to live, work and play. Our waterfront is taking off more than ever before. We have nearly 4,000 units being built, just in the downtown alone. We are attracting millennials, artists, restaurateurs, more hotels and more businesses.

I applaud the Housing Authority for guiding this ambitious project and for helping me in my quest to make sure all our residents reap the benefits of Yonkers' revitalization.

Sincerely,

Mayor Mike Spano



WILLIAM A. SCHLOBOHM HOUSES (SCHROEDER ST.)

Meet Your Site Manager: Ebony S. Jefferson

Ebony S. Jefferson is not a stranger to MHACY Public Housing having lived with her mother while growing up at Hall Homes, and then again on her own. Ebony’s mother, encouraged her to take the Civil Service exam to become a Tenant Relations Aide for MHACY. At the time she thought it was a “little crazy” to take a test to get a job. However in February 1997, Ebony was the youngest person hired in that position. After another successful Civil Service exam in September 2000, she became a Tenant Supervisor (Housing Manager). Ebony has been with MHACY over 19 years and has worked at many of the family and senior sites. In early July 2016, she completed a one year contract as the Assistant Manager at Grant Park Apartments (former Mulford Gardens’ site) to be trained in Tax Credit & Project-Based Housing. Ebony has obtained various certifications to include: Manager of Housing (CMH), Occupancy Specialist (COS), Tax Credit Specialist (TCS) and most recently the Accredited Residential Manager (ARM). She prides herself on having an open door policy and looks forward to serving the residents at her site. On a personal note, Ebony enjoys spending time with her family, praise dancing and doing research.



Meet Your ROSS Service Coordinator: Elizabeth Acevedo

Angela Hemmings has been with MHACY since February 1997, over 20 years. She started in the former Section 8 Department, now referred to as the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, as a Tenant Relations Aide and within a few years was promoted to a Tenant Supervisor in the Public Housing department. The first site Angela managed was Mulford Gardens and that proved in her words “to be a valuable, memorable experience”. Angela has also managed Troy Manor, Martinelli Manor, Walsh Road Calcagno Homes, Cottage Place Gardens and currently Curran Court, Martinelli Manor and Hall Homes. She welcomes new opportunities and looks forward to new beginnings and challenges as MHACY converts to the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. She really enjoys working with people and “loves” her career choice. Angela is a graduate of Oakwood University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Management.



RESIDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES:

Elizabeth Owens, Andrew Owens & Victor Mairena





CALCAGNO HOMES (SCHOOL STREET)

Meet Your Site Manager: Donna Adams

Donna Adams attended Pace University and Mercy College before becoming both an estate and insurance agent. She eventually joined MHACY in 2004. Her first job at MHACY was in Mulford Gardens where she assisted in relocating all residents due to the Hope VI program. Eventually, Donna became the Housing Supervisor of Calcagno Homes. She has received numerous certifications to include, Property Manager Essentials Specialist, Certified Housing Manager, Reasonable Accommodations, PHAS/Occupancy Specialist, Fair Housing, Supervisory Management Specialist, Housing Choice Voucher and Public Housing Rent Calculation Specialist. She currently resides in Mohegan Lake, NY. Donna looks forward to meeting and working with all of the residents at her sites.



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RESIDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES:

Phyllis Harrison





COTTAGE PLACE GARDENS

Meet Your Site Manager: Mio Feliz

Mio Feliz has a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology and joined MHACY 13 years ago. She has numerous certifications to include; Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and Public Housing Rent Calculation Specialist, Certified Occupancy Specialist, Supervisor Management Specialist, Certified Property Manager (CPM), Accredited Resident Manager (ARM) with the Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM) and Tax Credit Specialist. Mio utilizes her educational skills and multicultural background to relate to the residents at the sites she manages. She enjoys interacting with all of her residents and working with her Service Coordinators. Mio is bi-lingual which has definitely proven to be an asset at MHACY. She prides herself on becoming familiar with all of the operational aspects of her site.



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RESIDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES:

Donna Clark & Leona Nelson





WALSH ROAD HOMES

Meet Your Site Manager: Tim Terry

Timothy Terry, a Yonkers native, joined MHACY in April 1994, serving the first four years as a resident Recertification Specialist for public housing and was then promoted to Housing Manager. Tim has earned numerous public housing accreditations and certifications throughout his extensive career with MHACY in the areas of federal compliance, housing administration, asset development and property management. Tim was one of the original Housing Managers to participate in the MHACY Resident Screening/Orientation Committee process. He is always enthusiastic in working with his Service Coordinator to ensure that the needs of the residents at his site are addressed.



Meet Your ROSS Service Coordinator: Robert Vera

Robert Vera is employed by Family Service Society of Yonkers (FSSY) and has a Bachelor of Science degree from Mercy College and a Master’s in Social Work (MSW) from Fordham University. He has been in the social service field for over 12 years. Since graduating, he’s been focused on serving low-income communities and has helped young children with disabilities and their respective families for over eight years, providing play therapy, family meetings and support groups while also serving as an educator, facilitator and case manager. Robert has also provided case management, implementing mental, social, financial, addiction, and housing services to the homeless population, many of whom were diagnosed with mental disabilities and substance abuse. Robert is bilingual and bi-cultural in English and Spanish. He is looking forward to working with all of the Walsh Road residents.



RESIDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES:

Ivette Maldonado, Margaret “Peggy” James & Louise Simmons





KRIS KRISTENSEN (SEYMOUR STREET)

Meet Your Site Manager: Donna Adams

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Meet Your ROSS Service Coordinator: Jilian Acevedo

Jilian Acevedo is employed by Family Service Society of Yonkers (FSSY) and has worked in the health care field for over ten years. She has a Bachelor's degree in Health Sciences and a Masters in Social Work (MSW) from Fordham. She has worked as a recreation therapist in a nursing home and a discharge planner at a short term, rehabilitation center. She began working at an assisted-living facility where she was able to assist residents to adjust to their new environment and meet family needs as well. Jilian is bilingual in English and Spanish and looks forward to meeting more residents and addressing their needs.



RESIDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES:

Sarah Haughton, Migdalia Roman & Inocenia Rosario





FLYNN MANOR

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RESIDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES:

Isabel Gonzalez, Frank Beltran & Dora Paulino





LOEHR COURT (WESTERN AVE.)

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RESIDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES:

Rosendo Figuero





MONSIGNOR TROY MANOR (WILLOW STREET)

Meet Your Site Manager: Donna Adams

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RESIDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES:

Mary Ann Maurer & Benjamin Berrios





CURRAN COURT HOMES

Meet Your Site Manager: Angela Hemmings

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Meet Your ROSS Service Coordinator: Sade Glover

Sade N. Glover is employed by Family Service Society of Yonkers (FSSY) and is a native of Yonkers NY. She graduated from Pace University and started her career in Social Services in 2010. Sade’s background includes working with Domestic Violence Victims, Family in Emergency Housing, Permanent Housing SRO’s, and Guardianship. She enjoys spending time with family and friends. Her passion to help others has been the focus of her career. She is looking forward to serving the residents at her assigned MHACY sites.



RESIDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES:

Anne Prestamo, Amelia Pupchik & Guiditta Nacov





MARTINELLI MANOR (PALMER ROAD)

Meet Your Site Manager: Angela Hemmings

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RESIDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES:

Matthew Petit-Clair





JAMES E. HALL HOMES

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Meet Your ROSS Service Coordinator: Margarita Marriaga

Margarita Marriaga is employed by Family Service Society of Yonkers (FSSY) and is an advocate and social justice leader with over 15 years experience in progressively responsible leadership positions in government and nonprofit institutions. Margarita obtained her Bachelor’s degree in psychology from Hofstra University and a Master’s of Science degree specializing in social justice leadership at Fordham University, Graduate School of Social Service and the Gabelli School of Business. Margarita is fluent in English and Spanish. Margarita specializes in creating partnerships and solutions for under-served/under resourced populations, poverty, health care, domestic violence, and other complex social issues. Margarita is an energetic advocate committed to the overall advancement of the communities she serves.



RESIDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES:

Michael Stephens & Carolyn Arroya





SCATTERED SITES (TOWNHOUSES)

Meet Your Site Manager: La Chonne Clark

La Chonne Clark has worked with MHACY for over 15 years. She also worked in the former Section 8, now referred to as the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Department as a Housing Assistant, Admissions Department as Assistant Housing Manager and most of the MHACY Public Housing Sites in various positions. She has received various certifications to include Certified Manager of Housing, Tax Credit Specialist and Certified Occupancy Specialist. La Chonne was a former resident of Public Housing for over thirteen (13) years and loves working with the residents. Her hobbies include traveling and meeting new people.



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RESIDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES:

Marisel Fontan & Vanella Martin (Not pictured)





SPOTLIGHT

MHACY Wins Senior Housing Award

The Municipal Housing Authority for the City of Yonkers this fall was awarded the 2016 "Best Senior Housing Residences" in the City of Yonkers. The award was presented by the Yonkers Chamber of Commerce.

Housekeeping Training Class

MHACY will be conducting Housekeeping Training classes at all of the housing sites, except the Scattered Sites and the classes will be held at Hall Homes for those residents. Residents will be referred to the mandatory Housekeeping Training Class when they are cited for a failed Housekeeping inspection. Each resident that is referred to the class will watch a video entitled "How to Take Care of My Home, Good Housekeeping Tips" and meet with their assigned ROSS Service Coordinator. The purpose of the Housekeeping Training

Class is to assist with lease enforcement by ensuring all MHACY units are maintained in a "safe and sanitary manner".



Q & A: Everything you need to know about RAD

Q. How old is the RAD program and why was it created?

A. RAD (Rental Assistance Demonstration) was established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 2011 as an affordable housing preservation and improvement strategy for Public Housing Authorities because Congress has not provided adequate funding for repairs and improvements for many years. The program allows these housing authorities to work with private-sector developers and managers to preserve their affordable housing stock.

Q. How will RAD work in Yonkers?

A. Just like it's doing nationwide, RAD will allow the Municipal Housing Authority for the City of Yonkers to leverage public and private debt and equity to reinvest in the public housing buildings and make much needed repairs. "We retain control, we continue managing the properties," explained Joseph Shuldiner, executive director of the Yonkers Housing Authority.

Q. Will my rent go up and am I in danger of losing my low-income apartment?

CALENDAR

Tenant Council Meetings

MONDAYS

CURRAN COURT
3rd Monday, 2 p.m.

KRIS KRISTENSEN
3rd Monday, 5 p.m.

TUESDAYS

HALL HOMES
3rd Tuesday, 5 p.m.

SCATTERED SITES
4th Tuesday, 6 p.m.

WEDNESDAYS

SCHLOBOHM HOUSES
2nd Wednesday, 6 p.m.

LOEHR COURT
3rd Wednesday, 4 p.m.

WALSH ROAD
3rd Wednesday, 2 p.m.

CALCAGNO HOMES
3rd Wednesday, 6 p.m.

MARTINELLI MANOR
4th Wednesday, 3 p.m.

THURSDAYS

FLYNN MANOR
3rd Thursday, 2 p.m.

COTTAGE PLACE GARDENS
3rd Thursday, 6 p.m.

TROY MANOR
4th Thursday, 2 p.m. (except Thanksgiving)

A. No. Public housing residents will continue to pay 30 percent of their income toward rent and will retain the same basic rights they have now in the public housing program.

Q. How long does the program last?

A. In RAD, the units move from a Public Housing program to a Section 8 platform with a long-term contract that by law must be renewed. This will ensure that the units remain permanently affordable to low-income households.