CHC at CAI Convention

Julie Dymowski and Joe Douglas from Whiteford Taylor & Preston (CHC Counsel) visit Nancy Skinkle and William Kammerer, CHC Board members, at Coalition booth

Smithsonian Tour of DC Cooperatives
Tour sold out quickly!

The DC Cooperative Housing Coalition is pleased to announce that The Smithsonian Associates May 20 tour of several of the District’s housing cooperatives sold out shortly after it appeared in the Smithsonian’s March Program Guide. A full report will appear in the next issue of CHC’s Member News.

Survey Says…
A new members survey coming!

The Coalition’s first survey proved popular among our members and provided insight into what others were facing and how they were addressed various issues. Several members asked that another survey be conducted and also provided topics they wanted covered. A new survey is being developed and will be mailed soon with results reported in the next issue of Member News.

Tax Rate Reduced, Homestead Increased
Check your paperwork

Because of two significant changes, cooperatives should see some relief in their real estate tax bill. The city reduced the taxation rate from 96 cents per assessed $100 to 92 cents per assessed $100 and it increased the value of the Homestead Deduction from $38,000 to $60,000. However, how much is ultimately owed is dependent upon a co-op’s assessed valuation and how many homestead deductions it supplies to reduce its assessed valuation.

District of Columbia law provides that all taxable real property in the District is subject to an annual levy of tax. Property owners receive a property tax bill twice a year. With ever increasing assessments, (see related story, on page 4) cooperatives need to be ever vigilant in maintaining an accurate accounting of their homestead applications especially since cooperatives and condominiums receive an additional tax credit tied to each homestead—a trash credit in lieu of the District having to collect the trash.

This year, a homestead deduction is more valuable as each one supplied by the co-op to the city’s Office of Taxation and Revenue reduces the assessed value by $60,000—that’s a tax savings of $663 for each deduction ($576 in real estate taxes + $87 trash credit). (Continued, Homestead Deductions, Page 2)
For example, a 4-unit cooperative with four homestead deductions can reduce its tax liability by $2,652 and a large, 500-unit co-op can potentially reduce its tax bill by $331,500.

Tax Bill Due Dates

Real property tax bill payments are due twice a year as follows:

1st half covers October 1 through March 31 and the tax for the 1st half is due by March 31.
2nd half covers April 1 through September 30 and the tax due must be received by September 30.

Homestead Deduction

This deduction reduces your real property’s assessed value by $60,000 prior to computing the yearly tax liability (previously $38,000). The homestead deduction is limited to residential property. To qualify:

1. An application must be on file with the Office of Tax and Revenue;
2. The property must be occupied by the owner/applicant;
3. The property must be the principal residence (domicile) of the owner/applicant;
4. In the case of a cooperative housing association, the unit must be occupied by the shareholder (or member) as his/her principal residence (domicile), and the deduction is granted to the cooperative (which will supply and collect the applications).

The Homestead Deduction and Senior Citizen or Disabled Property Owner Application is available on the web on the Real Property Tax forms page.

In the case of property transferred to a trust, the property may qualify for the homestead deduction if:

1. The property was eligible for the homestead deduction before the transfer;
2. The property is transferred to a revocable trust;
3. The transfer is not for money (or other consideration);
4. The property remains the principal place of residence of the applicant/transferor/trustor before and after the transfer.

If a properly completed and approved application is filed from October 1 to March 31, the property will receive the deduction for the entire tax year (and for all tax years in the future). If a properly completed and approved application is filed from April 1 to September 30, the property will receive one-half of the deduction reflected on the second installment (and full deductions for all tax years in the future).

Assessment Cap Credit

The housing market in the District of Columbia has caused a surge in the assessed value of residential real property. In an effort to limit the increase of real property taxes for homeowners, eligible homeowners will be provided an Assessment Cap Credit.

The Assessment Cap Credit currently provides that a real property tax bill will not increase by more than 10 percent above the prior year’s real property tax bill. This credit does not reduce the assessed value of your property on the tax roll or the assessment notice, but it will appear as an automatic credit against your real property tax bill. The credit only applies to the principal residence of the property owner (homestead property) and is based on the total assessment for the dwelling and land associated with the dwelling. For more information, property owners may call the Customer Service Center at (202) 727-4TAX (727-4829).

If you have been denied the Assessment Cap Credit and you believe that you are eligible, please contact the Homestead Unit, PO Box 176, Washington, DC 20044 or call Customer Service at (202) 727-4TAX.

Trash Credit

A trash credit deduction may be issued for owners of cooperative dwelling units, condominiums, or certain homeowners who pay for garbage collection instead of receiving city garbage service. The trash credit is $87 for 2006. In order to qualify, the following circumstances must be met:

1. The property must be a cooperative dwelling unit.
2. The dwelling unit must be located in a cooperative

(Continued, Page 3)
housing association building with more than 4 dwelling units.

3. The cooperative housing association must not receive trash collection services from the District of Columbia.

4. The property must be occupied by the owner and used for nontransient residential purposes.

In effect, therefore, trash credits are linked to the number of homestead deduction applications on file with the city.

**Senior Citizen or Disabled Property Owner Tax Relief**

When a property owner turns 65 years of age or older, or when he or she is disabled, he or she may file an application immediately for disabled or senior citizen property tax relief. This benefit reduces a qualified property owner's property tax by 50 percent. If the property owner lives in a cooperative housing association, the cooperative will supply and collect the applications. The following guidelines apply:

1. The disabled or senior citizen must own 50 percent or more of the property or cooperative unit;

2. The total adjusted gross income of everyone living in the property or cooperative unit, excluding tenants, must be less than $100,000 for the prior calendar year; and

3. The same requirements for application, occupancy, ownership, principal residence (domicile), number of dwelling units, cooperative housing associations and revocable trusts apply as in the homestead deduction.

The Homestead Deduction and Senior Citizen or Disabled Property Owner Application is available on the web on the Real Property Tax forms page.

For 2006, this tax relief measure will be applied to the first-half 2006 tax bill of those applicants who file by May 1. Applications filed after that date will be eligible for tax relief beginning with their second-half 2006 taxes.

Thereafter, if a properly completed and approved application is filed from October 1 to March 31, the property will receive the deduction for the entire tax year (and for all tax years in the future). If a properly completed and approved application is filed from April 1 to September 30, the property will receive one-half of the deduction reflected on the second installment (and full deductions for all tax years in the future).

**Homestead Deduction/ Disabled or Senior Citizen Tax Relief Confirmation**

Properties will continue to receive the Homestead Deduction and/or disabled or senior citizen tax relief as long as there is no change in eligibility, such as property ownership or owner-occupancy status. Owners of properties receiving these tax benefits are responsible for notifying the agency when eligibility ceases. Written notice, including the square and lot of the property, must be sent within 30 days of a change in ownership or owner-occupancy status to:

Office of Tax and Revenue
Real Property Tax Administration
941 North Capitol Street, NE,
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 727-4TAX

The Office of Tax and Revenue conducts periodic verification and compliance checks by requiring property owners to confirm their eligibility for the homestead deduction and/or disabled or senior citizen tax relief. Owners who receive a reconfirmation form should complete the form and return it to Office of Tax and Revenue. Failure to return a completed and signed copy of the reconfirmation form will result in the cancellation of the Homestead Deduction and/or disabled or senior citizen tax relief benefits.

Anyone with questions about the reconfirmation process or their eligibility should contact the Office of Tax and Revenue's Customer Service Center at (202) 727-4TAX.

On the web: [http://cfo.dc.gov/otr](http://cfo.dc.gov/otr)
Co-ops Continue to Increase in Value

Since 2002, the Coalition has been tracking the assessments of 66 DC housing cooperatives. For the most recent five-year period (Tax Year 2003-2007), these cooperatives collectively saw their assessments increase from $705 million to $1.6 billion dollars. They first topped $1 billion in tax year 2004 and have since increased in value by an additional half billion dollars since then. As described in the article on page 61, “Tax Rate Reduced, Homestead Increased,” cooperatives have some ability to control the amount they ultimately pay in real estate taxes by making sure they track homestead exemptions and timely report these exemptions to the Office of Taxation and Revenue.

### Assessment Survey: Cooperatives for Tax Year 2007

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**Subtotal: Ward 1**

$123,440,116 | $162,883,350 | 32% | $183,241,090 | 12% | $222,165,640 | 21% | $263,469,260 | 19% | 213%

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DC/CHC, Inc.-- The cooperative housing community speaking in a single voice.
Percent Change in Co-op Values Tax Years 2003 - 2007

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**Wards 6 and 7**

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<td>$60,513,732</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>$129,724,770</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>$169,519,300</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Survey Total** | | $705,149,591 | 38% | $1,116,644,840 | 15% | $1,315,821,290 | 18% |

DC/CHC, Inc.-- representing the interests of its cooperative household members in the District of Columbia since 1984
Board of Directors

President
Michael O’Dell
Harbour Square, 447 units

1st Vice President
Carl Gerber
The Cathedral Avenue, 145 units

2nd Vice President
Barry Moss
The Westchester, 520 units

Secretary
Art Leabman
1870 Wyoming Avenue, 28 units

Treasurer
Nancy Skinkle
The Broadmoor, 194 units

Directors
Desmond Foynes
The Presidential, 43 units

William Kammerer
The Chesterfield, 66 units

Jill Golden
3028 Porter Street, 11 units

JoAnn Wells
Potomac Plaza Apartments 249 units

Madelin Evanek
Naylor Gardens 318 units

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CooperativesDC@aol.com

DC/CHC
C/o Harbour Square
520 N Street, SW Suite South 616
Washington, DC 20024

Energy Costs

We had planned on including an article about fuel alliances in this issue of Member News including a profile of how one of our member cooperatives saved over $30,000 in one year by participating in an energy alliance. Unfortunately, tax issues and preparation for the Smithsonian Tour overtook those plans. We will include that information in an upcoming issue in addition to offering an energy seminar for our members to meet and talk with energy alliance representatives.

Recent GAO Reports Covering the District

GAO exists to support the Congress in meeting its Constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and ensure the accountability of the federal government for the benefit of the American people including studies about the District of Columbia operations and programs.

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Annual Meeting
October

Members were notified in a separate mailing that the Coalition’s annual meeting has been rescheduled for October. The final date and place will be included in the official announcement mailed for that meeting 3 weeks prior to the meeting.

Reproducing CHC Member News Articles

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Need a web Site?

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