



DC Cooperative Housing Coalition News

Representing the interests of the cooperative community in the District of Columbia since 1984

September - December | 2010

Celebrating 26 years of service to the cooperative housing community

All About the Board Seminar

The September 14 **All About the Board** seminar proved to be an informative, idea-packed seminar about board responsibilities and operations.



Judy Tyrrell (General Manager, Tiber Island), Tom Willis (Vice President, Zalco Realty), and Joe Douglass (Partner, Whiteford Taylor & Preston, and counsel to the Coalition)

Presenters represented many years of knowledge and practical experience in different aspects of board responsibilities and duties:

Joe Douglass, the Coalition's counsel, is a partner in the law firm of Whiteford, Taylor & Preston (<http://www.wtplaw.com/>). Joe has nearly 30 years' experience working with community associations.

Tom Willis is a Vice President of Zalco Realty and has many years' experience managing cooperatives and condominiums (<http://www.zalco.com/>). Tom is active in the Community Associations Institute and has presented programs on leadership, board meetings,

human resources, and communications.

Judy Terrell is the General Manager of Tiber Island Cooperative Homes, the host to the seminar (<http://www.coopdc.org/tiberisland.htm>). Judy has been Tiber Island's manager for 13 years and was instrumental in transitioning the co-op to self management in 2001. She gained her vast knowledge of property management from an 18 year career with the Charles E. Smith Companies.



More than two dozen people attended the seminar

The seminar covered several topics including the role of the board, board members' legal and ethical duties, running board meetings, and issues related to board and management responsibility and their divisions and limits. Many supporting documents were included in the information packets given to each participant. A question and answer period followed the presentations with informal socializing and networking concluding the event.

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The DC Cooperative Housing Coalition is a proud Allied Partner of the Washington Metropolitan Chapter Community Associations Institute (WMCCAI), and invites you to attend the largest community association industry event in the Washington metropolitan area on Saturday, March 12, from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Visit the Coalition web site, www.CoopsDC.org, for more information!

Energy Efficiency

By Robert Thomason

Energy efficiency upgrades for cooperatives and condominiums can be more challenging than for other types of buildings. Unlike single-family homes or investor-owned buildings, co-ops and condos necessarily make decisions subject to majority rule, the difference between individual units and common elements or the need for

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Seminar *(Continued from page 1)*

The Coalition extends its thanks and appreciation to Tiber Island, the



Tiber Island hosted the seminar in its Community Room where participants were treated to food and drink before the presentations

seminar's very gracious host, for the use of its beautiful Community Room (part of the Thomas Law House, an historical landmark on the National Register) and the extensive food and beverages it provided.

Energy *(Continued from page 1)*

individual owners to work as one group to maintain a whole building.

A few people are working to help co-ops and condo board members and officials learn how to approach energy and utility efficiency upgrades more effectively. The goal is to deliver comfort and convenience to residents while reducing energy use in a way that benefits the annual budget and the monthly fees. I have grappled with these issues as a former president and treasurer of my condominium board, and now my association's energy chairman. I join with counterparts in other associations to share knowledge and help board members be more effective based on lessons we have learned from direct experience.

Recently some met in downtown DC to begin discussing the prospects for such an effort. We exchanged tips and stories on air-tight windows, hot water delivery, community education and on locking into natural gas and

electricity contracts.

But more importantly we discussed future programs and activities that can help board members make better informed decisions about energy-efficient building components that can cost tens if not hundreds of thousands of dollars. We considered field trips to buildings that have made good improvements, structured programs about specific ways to save electricity, natural gas or water, and inviting well-regarded professionals in the building science fields to explain the intricacies of new technologies (such as solar) and well-established techniques (such as air conditioning).

In 2011 the goal is to act on these ideas and turn our informal discussions into more regularly scheduled activities. Board members and association members active in energy upgrades in their buildings are encouraged to become involved. If you wish to learn more or to participate, please e-mail me at robert.thomason@gmail.com. *(Mr. Thomason lives at Boston House Condominium. He chairs their energy committee and was a director and officer for 8 years.)*

Trash Credits but No Homestead Exemption?

Director Mike O'Dell, Coalition Counsel Joe Douglass, and Julia Sayles, a Harbour Square co-owner, were originally scheduled to meet with OTR officials on December 15 to discuss how co-ops can get a trash credit (\$96) for each unit that is ineligible for a Homestead Exemption but is not an investment property (for example, a second home or an adjacent unit added to an existing unit used as a primary residence). At the request of the OTR representative, that meeting will be rescheduled for sometime in January.

For many Coalition members, the additional trash credits can help further offset the cost of their trash

collection. For one member co-op, potential savings exceeds \$12,000.

District Specialists Cover Impervious Area Charge (IAC)

Guest speakers at the October 26 Annual Meeting talked about the Impervious Area Charge (IAC), describing its purpose and what discounts are available to reduce the charge to residential owners, including cooperative.



Jeffrey Seltzer (DC Department of the Environment), Yvette Downe (DC Water), and Carlton Ray (DC Water)

The purpose of the IAC is to recover the costs of the \$2.2 billion federally mandated Combined Sewer Overflow Long-Term Control Plan (<http://www.dcwater.com/workzones/projects/longtermcontrolplan.cfm>). The 20-year plan is intended to reduce the discharge of excess flows into local waterways from DC WASA combined storm and sanitary water systems. A major part of the Plan includes building massive, underground water pipes rivaling Metro's tunnels. This new system will divert water for treatment, eliminating the dumping of polluted water into our public waterways, a major source of contamination, especially noticeable in the Anacostia River.

Impervious surfaces include rooftops, paved driveways, patios, pools, tennis courts, parking lots, and other paved areas-- all major contributors to rainwater runoff entering the District's sewer system and

significant pollutants to the Anacostia and Potomac rivers and Rock Creek.

The IAC distributes the cost of maintaining storm sewers and protecting area waterways based on a property's contribution of rainwater to the District's sewer system. The IAC applies to all lots, parcels, properties and private streets in the District of Columbia. Because charges are based on the amount of impervious area on a property, owners of large office buildings, shopping centers and parking lots will be charged more than owners of modest residential dwellings.

All residential and commercial customers will be billed for IAC. Effective 2011, all residential customers will be assessed based on an Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU), the statistical median of the amount of impervious surface area in a single-family residential property, measured in square feet. The FY 2011 monthly ERU value is \$3.45 (and applied to property in a 6-tier rate structure). All nonresidential customers will be assessed ERUs based on the total amount of impervious surface on each lot. A property's ERU was established using the geographical information system data from the DC Geographic Information System (GIS) (<http://octo.dc.gov/DC/OCTO/Maps+and+Apps/Geospatial+District>) and the Office of the Surveyor (<http://dcra.dc.gov/DC/DCRA/Permits/Surveyor+Services>).

If property owners do not agree with the square footage for which DC Water is billing the property, an appeal/billing dispute process is described on the reverse side of the bill.

Currently, there is no credit or incentive program, but steps are being taken to develop credits and/or incentives to help residential owners to reduce the IAC. Coalition members are encouraged to monitor the DDOE website. The Coalition will

also notify members of any changes affecting the IAC.

If You Have Questions or Comments:

Email info@dcwasa.com

Phone 202-354-3600

Mail Customer Service
810 First St., NE, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20002

Following their presentations, the presenters answered an extensive number of questions from the audience.

Heat Survey Results

When do co-ops begin and end their heating season? Are there policies that specify target temperature ranges? How are heating complaints addressed? The answers to these questions plus additional comments related to heating are in and have been distributed to Coalition members via e-mail. While the answers varied, collectively, they can help our members in establishing or refining their own heating policies and procedures.

The Coalition appreciates how responsive members are in answering these short e-mail surveys. Surveys are done at the request of a Coalition member to help their co-op address a particular issue or problem. It begins with the requesting co-op providing the question(s) and the Coalition e-mailing the question(s) to member co-ops' Presidents, Representatives, and managers. Results are compiled and e-mailed back to all members. Members helping members!



**DC Cooperative
Housing Coalition**

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Future Member-only Seminars – Have a Suggestion?

The Coalition Board of Directors has started mapping out activities for 2011 to further serve members. Several ideas for seminar topics are being considered including energy-related topics, green roofs, and converting historical paper records into electronic form, among others.

Do you have a topic to suggest that might be of interest to other co-ops? What other activities beyond seminars might be considered?

If you have a suggestion for an activity that might help Coalition members, send an e-mail to CooperativesDC@aol.com. Type "Member Suggestion" in the subject line.

2011 Dues Reminder

Notices for 2011 dues have been mailed. Please review the membership form for accuracy and provide information that is missing. It is very important that we have correct information in order to contact you, especially for time-sensitive notifications (for example when we notified our members about an OTR requirement that few co-ops were aware of and had major penalties for failing to comply).

Check the Coalition Web Site - www.CoopsDC.org

Although it doesn't change frequently, it's always worth checking the Coalition's web site for updates and for new sponsoring providers. Check the site today and click on the link for more information about the March 12 CAI Expo! If you contact a sponsoring provider, let them know that you learned about them from the Coalition web site!

Board of Directors

President

Carl Gerber
The Cathedral Avenue, 145 units

Vice President

Fred Dyda
Tilden Gardens, 170 units

Secretary

Art Leabman
1870 Wyoming Avenue, 28 units

Treasurer

Jill Golden
3028 Porter Street, 11 units

Directors

Jim DeMartino
Capitol Hill Towers, 344 units

Paul St. Hilaire
Tiber Island, 389 units

Art Howland
Naylor Gardens, 318 Units

Stephen McKeivitt
Beverly Court, 39 units

Michael O'Dell
Harbour Square, 447 units

Nancy Skinkle
The Broadmoor, 194 units

Sue Stephens
The Porter, 28 units

JoAnn Wells
Potomac Plaza Apartments, 249 units

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**DC Cooperative
Housing Coalition**
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About DC/CHC, the Coalition

Established in 1984, the DC Cooperative Housing Coalition exists to advance the common interests of cooperative housing associations in the District of Columbia and to promote cooperative housing as a desirable form of home ownership. It is therefore both an advocacy organization that articulates the interests of members before government officials and regulatory agencies and a service organization that provides information and education to members.

Membership is open to all District housing cooperatives, regardless of size. A volunteer board of directors, elected by member co-ops, governs the Coalition. Activities are financed through annual dues, \$1.50 per unit per year (12.5 cents per month)

The Coalition grew out of an ad-hoc group of District cooperatives that formed in response to a judicial ruling that had cast a cloud over many cooperatives by banning proportionate voting. By marshaling the forces of more than 3,000 housing cooperative units, the ad-hoc group persuaded the District's City Council to resolve the matter.

Recognizing the importance to the cooperative housing community of speaking in a single voice and maintaining the ability to respond quickly and knowledgeably to matters affecting cooperative housing, the ad-hoc group decided to form a permanent organization.

The Coalition was established in 1984 and was incorporated as DC/CHC, Inc., a nonprofit, IRS Code Section 501(c)(6) organization in the District of Columbia, May 24, 1993.

Member Profile Page

Does your cooperative have its own dedicated page on the Coalition's web site? It's free and it is one of the Coalition membership benefits. See what your co-op is missing at www.CoopsDC.org/Membership.htm and click on members with the

LEARN MORE +

icon next to their names. Don't let your co-op miss out on this members-only benefit!

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Need a web site or have one that needs updating?

CHC is fortunate to have found a talented web designer to create our web site. Luckier still, he is willing to create sites for our member coops at reasonable rates. Go to our web site, <http://www.CoopsDC.org/services.htm>, and click on "Scott D. Seligman." Scott has done several web sites for co-ops in addition to the profile pages on our web site.