



# DC Cooperative Housing Coalition News

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

September - December | 2011

Celebrating 27 years of service to the cooperative housing community

## Annual Meeting

-Art Leabman, Secretary, CHC  
1870 Wyoming Avenue Cooperative

The Coalition held its annual meeting on October 25 at The Broadmoor Cooperative. Prior to the start of the business meeting, a brief social hour was held. Following the welcome by Coalition President, Carl Gerber, Art Leabman, the Coalition's Secretary, introduced the evening's guest speakers – Brook Myers, Principal Broker and Owner of City Houses, LLC, and Larry Mathe, Senior Vice President at the National Cooperative Bank. Each spoke to a number of issues relating to marketing and promoting cooperative housing in Washington, D.C., and entertained questions from the floor.



The evening's guest speakers, Brook Myers (City Homes) and Larry Mathe (NCB)

A number of points and suggestions emerged from the panel discussion: (1) It is important that a cooperative's procedures for transfer of ownership, including the requirements for approval of the purchaser, be clearly established. (2) The cooperative  
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## A Must Attend: 2012 CAI Expo!



The DC Cooperative Housing Coalition is pleased to announce that it will once again be partnering with the Washington Metropolitan Chapter Community Associations Institute (WMCCAI) at the largest community association industry event in the Washington metro area **March 31, 2012**, at the [Walter E. Washington Convention Center](#), 801 Mount Vernon Place NW, Washington, D.C.

The 2012 WMCCAI Conference & Expo will feature 15 educational sessions on pertinent topics that affect those who live in and work with community associations. Approximately 190 companies and organizations will be on the exhibit hall floor showcasing goods and services of interest to community associations. More than 1,700 attendees are anticipated at the 2012 Conference & Expo.

For the latest information, go to: [http://www.caidc.org/cal2/EventShow.asp?event\\_id=401050&event\\_batch=1](http://www.caidc.org/cal2/EventShow.asp?event_id=401050&event_batch=1).

## Large Co-ops to Submit Energy Benchmark Data Starting February 2012

-Nancy Skinkle, Director, CHC  
The Broadmoor Cooperative

The District of Columbia has passed two pieces of legislation that establish requirements for the environmental performance of public buildings over 10,000 square feet. This legislation includes the Green Building Act of 2006 and the Clean and Affordable Energy Act of 2012. The tool required to document this performance, or benchmark the energy and water usage, is the Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager, available online (<http://energystar.gov/benchmark>).

(Continued page 2, "Energy")

## Congratulations to Tiber Island Cooperative! Winner of RiverSmart Grant

-Jill Golden, Treasurer CHC  
3028 Porter Street Cooperative

DCCHC member cooperative Tiber Island is one of three DC communities that will receive funding from the District Department of the Environment (DDOE) as part of the RiverSmart Communities program. McLean Gardens and Logan Condominiums were also selected. An extension of the RiverSmart Homes program, RiverSmart Communities offers incentives to multi-family residences to improve stormwater management practices  
(Continued page 3, "Tiber Island")

## Annual Meeting *(from page 1)*

should have a standard package of materials to guide member-sellers and real estate agents through the various steps and procedures that will be required in selling a unit and transferring ownership. (3) It is helpful to provide a list of lenders who have Recognition Agreements with the cooperative. (4) Pertinent financial information on the cooperative – e.g., monthly fees, special assessments, underlying mortgages, reserves – should be made available. (5) The cooperative's board of directors needs to process documents, schedule interviews, and act on applications from prospective member owners quickly and expeditiously (and not hold to rigid, inflexible schedules). (6) The real estate agent needs not only to understand how cooperative ownership is generally different from ownership in a condominium, but also to know the various steps and requirements for transfer of ownership in a particular cooperative. (7) It is critical to use a good settlement agent.



*Attendees gather in advance of the annual meeting*

Following the panel discussion, a draft document, entitled "Cooperative Housing Ownership in Washington, D.C.," was distributed to each of the attendees. The document was prepared by a Coalition Board committee comprised of Arthur Leabman, Stephen McKevitt, Sue Stephens and Paul St. Hilaire. Mr. Leabman indicated that the document would no doubt undergo revision before final dissemination.

## Energy *(from page 1)*

This benchmarking is an annual requirement and the first year of data is available online for review (<http://ddoe.dc.gov/service/energy-benchmarking-results>).

Starting in 2012, private buildings will be required to document the environmental performance through Portfolio Manager. The city plans to phase this benchmarking requirement over the next several years according to the following schedule:

Building Size (000s of square feet)	Utility Year Data	Benchmark Report Due
Over 200	2010*	2/2012***
Over 150	2011*	4/1/2012**
Over 100	2012*	4/1/2013**
Over 50	2013*	4/1/ 2014**

\* and each year that follows

\*\* and annually thereafter on April 1 for the previous year's data

\*\*\* The deadline for reporting 2010 benchmark information for private buildings is extended pending release of final regulations. The deadline is expected to be 30 days after finalization of the regulations

Cooperatives will need to know the overall square footage of their properties, the square footage heated and cooled, number of units, total number of bedrooms, number of laundry hookups and dishwashers and a variety of other issues. Additional information can be found on the District Department of the Environment at <http://ddoe.dc.gov/service/energy-benchmarking>. While the draft regulations for the proposed ENERGY STAR® Benchmarking guidance were issued on October 21, 2011, the public comment period is over and

final regulations are still pending. DCCHC has learned that once these regulations become final, residents will have 30 days from publication to report their results. DCCHC will keep members abreast of any updates and forward information as it is learned.

## Coalition Board Members and Counsel Meet OTR Officials

*-Carl Gerber, President, CHC  
The Cathedral Avenue Cooperative*

On October 24, Coalition President, Carl Gerber, Director Mike O'Dell, and Coalition Counsel Joe Douglass (Whiteford Taylor & Preston) met with Robert McKeon, Deputy Chief Counsel to the Office of Taxation and Revenue (OTR), Robert Farr, Director of Real Property Tax Administration (RPTA), and Robert Worthington, Senior Appraiser. The purpose of the meeting was to address a number of tax issues related to cooperatives.

In 2009, the City Council imposed a sales fee on the transfer of shares in a cooperative in developing the 2010 budget for the District. We learned from OTR that this fee resulted in some \$5 million of additional revenue to the District over two years. The OTR representatives did not know at the time of the meeting whether the fee would be included in the 2012 District budget but we have subsequently learned that the fee was included in the 2012 budget.

Also discussed were the various forms OTR requires cooperatives to file—homestead exemptions, senior citizen refund, and trash credits—and whether it would be possible to merge some of these forms and to clarify what qualified for a trash credit. They promised to look into the matter but it appears that it will not be possible for a cooperative to file a single form as different offices in OTR need their own forms. It was pointed out that we had found three different homestead

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## OTR Visit *(From page 2)*

exemption forms originating in their office.

We also raised the confusion experienced by our members when they receive their annual assessment which shows the full assessment without any homestead or trash credits. They agreed to look into putting a footnote on the initial assessment that will indicate the actual assessment may be lower if the cooperative qualifies for the exemptions.

The Board is continuing to work with OTR to simplify, or at least clarify, the various tax issues related to cooperatives.

### Reserve Seminar – Spring 2012

As part of the Coalition's very well-attended Saturday Seminars, plans are being made for a Saturday Seminar on developing reserve studies—what are they, why are they so important, and how they are developed?

The seminar is tentatively targeted for April or May, 2012. Final details will be mailed to members.

## Tiber Island *(from page 1)*

and reduce stormwater runoff from their properties.

Tiber Island, a southwest waterfront cooperative built in 1965, is an environmental leader among cooperatives in DC. Current practices

include providing low-flow shower heads to residents, composting on the property, using environmentally friendly cleaning products, and installing a solar energy system to generate hot water.



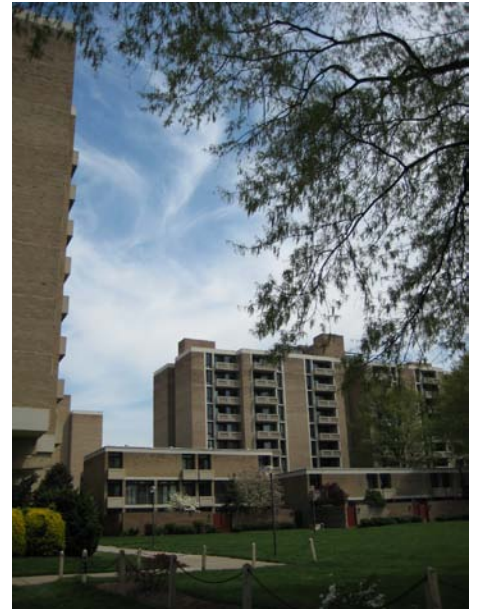
*In addition to four major high-rises and modern townhouses, the Tiber Island complex incorporates the historic Law House*

Colleen Rooney serves on the board of Tiber Island, and is a member of its conservation committee. She and fellow resident Bill Negley and assistant property manager Warren Miller created a comprehensive proposal with a variety of stormwater management best practices.

"In our proposal we offered eight potential projects we were interested in working with DDOE to implement," said Colleen. "I believe it was the fact that we did not narrow our focus, but rather opened ourselves up to a variety of possibilities, that gave us an edge in this process."

The project selected for funding by DDOE for Tiber Island will replace concrete and granite pavers with a porous system that will allow stormwater to infiltrate into the ground, eliminate ponding, reduce polluted runoff from the site, and make the sidewalks more usable for pedestrians and cyclists. The community is now

working on the installation plan with Leah Lemoine at DDOE and consultant Ross Pickford of the Anacostia Watershed Society. In addition to providing the large environmental benefit that DDOE was looking for, Colleen hopes that Tiber Island's project will also "be an opportunity to showcase some of the new technology available to older properties."



*Tiber Island is a combination of townhouses and apartments for a total of 389 units on the Southwest waterfront.*

DDOE is accepting 2012 RiverSmart Communities applications now. DDOE plans to award between \$10,000 and \$30,000 per property in the next award cycle but may consider increasing the amount, particularly if residents are able to provide matching funds. Visit [www.ddoe.dc.gov](http://www.ddoe.dc.gov) or contact Leah Lemoine at [leah.lemoine@dc.gov](mailto:leah.lemoine@dc.gov) for more information.

## 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**

Paul St. Hilaire  
Tiber Island, 389 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

### **Counsel**

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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](http://www.CoopsDC.org/Membership.htm) and click on members with the  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.