

# ~ Medford Home Update ~

~ Summer/Fall 2007 ~

For more information on the stories below, contact Affordable Housing Specialist Erica Schwarz at 781-393-2480 or 781-393-2520 or [eschwarz@medford.org](mailto:eschwarz@medford.org)

Affordable ownership and rental in 2-family Home on West Street!



The 2-family home at 26-28 West Street in Medford will become an affordable home! The building, now being renovated, will be sold to an income-eligible household who will live in the larger 3-bedroom unit and rent the 2-bedroom unit to another income-eligible family. This property is an incredible opportunity for a family that is ready to take on the responsibility of being a landlord. The project is a collaboration between the North Suburban HOME Consortium, the Medford Office of Community Development and Robert Landers Construction Corporation.

This project not only provides much needed affordable housing for Medford families, but it also helps meet other City goals by preserving a rental unit, updating an older home and creating deeded housing units.

A lottery will be held to find the buyer for the home. Families must earn less than 80% of the Area Median Income (see page 4) and there will be a preferences for families who live in or work for the City of Medford at the time of application and families that can

demonstrate a need for 3 bedrooms. After the lottery is held, the Office of Community Development will work with the selected buyer to find an income eligible tenant for the rental unit.

The deadline is October 12, 2007. Application Packets are now available from Room 308 in City Hall, at the public library or online at: [www.medford.org/Pages/MedfordMA\\_Afford/opps](http://www.medford.org/Pages/MedfordMA_Afford/opps).

Information Session: Thursday Oct 4th, 7:30 pm at Medford City Hall. Contact Erica Schwarz in the Office of Community Development for more information: 781-393-2480 or [eschwarz@medford.org](mailto:eschwarz@medford.org).

Affordable Housing Task Force now in Action

Housing in the City of Medford should be affordable for all families, regardless of income. The Affordable Housing Task Force will work for the preservation and creation of housing throughout the City so that the mix of housing costs in Medford reflects the mix of incomes of our residents. To accomplish this goal we will: Compile data on local need and best practices, conduct outreach and educate public officials and the public at large, and support and advocate for appropriate policies and programs.

The statement above outlines the mission of Medford's newly formed Affordable Housing Task Force.

The Task Force will play an advisory role in the City around increasing Medford's housing affordability. The group's early meetings have focused on analyzing a list of potential programs and policies to determine which might make the most sense for Medford.

The Task Force includes representatives from local business, social service and non profit housing agencies, the real estate field, local clergy, Tufts and the Medford Housing Authority. The group has a wealth of knowledge about Medford and about affordable housing.

If you want to learn more about the work of the Affordable Housing Task Force, contact the Office of Community Development.

## Upcoming Affordable Housing Lotteries

Many residents have been asking when they can apply for 2 upcoming rental lotteries: at Wellington Place and the former Hillside School. The State is now reviewing materials for both developments—the last step before applications become available!

At this time the only other lottery in Medford is for the 2-family home on West Street (see page 1). The deadline to apply is Oct. 12.

Paperwork for the rental lotteries at Wellington Place and the Hillside School is now with the State Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), which must approve the projects before the lottery process begins. If you have received this newsletter directly from the Affordable Housing Specialist, you are already on the list to automatically receive notice when these applications are available.

If you are not already on the list to receive affordable housing notices, send an e-mail with your contact information to: [eschwarz@medford.org](mailto:eschwarz@medford.org) or call 781-393-2480.

## Worried About Being Able to Afford Your Mortgage Payments? Act Now!!

We all know that foreclosures are on the rise. What many homeowners don't know is that if they are concerned about being able to afford their payments, there are resources to advise them. You stand a MUCH greater chance of preventing foreclosure by getting help early.

If you are already behind on your mortgage, call your lender and/or one of the numbers below right away. Your lender doesn't want to foreclosure—this costs them a lot of money! Most reputable lenders would much rather collect smaller payments that you can afford, than have to spend time and money on foreclosure.

If you are okay for now, but are worried about the future, you should also seek advice. There are options out there for you. The earlier you act, the better the outcome will be.

1-888-995-HOPE: foreclosure prevention  
1-800-495-BANK: if you are facing foreclosure  
1-800-342-5297: if you are facing foreclosure

## Did You Know?

While home prices in Greater Boston have come down by 3% since their peak, the median price of a single family home for Greater Boston of \$402,200 is still 5.4 times the median household income for a household of four (\$74,773)\*. A home is likely to be affordable if it costs no more than 3.5 times a household's income. The fact that median home prices in Greater Boston are too expensive for households with the median income means that HALF of our families cannot afford to buy the median priced home in our area.

Renters may be even harder hit. The Center for Housing Policy's 2007 study, "The Housing Landscape for America's Working Families", found that our country's deepest housing needs exist in the West and Northeast, and that the need is growing most seriously for renter households. Over time, more and more homeowners are spending more than 50% of their income on housing, but this study revealed that in the last 10 years, there has been a much higher increase of renter families who are forced to spend more than 50% of their income on housing costs. Housing is considered affordable if a household does not spend more than 30% of its gross income on total housing costs.

\*Boston Globe 6-11-07

## Workshops & Assistance for Tenants from the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership (MBHP)

MBHP is a regional housing agency whose service area includes Medford. MBHP provides advice and services ranging from assistance in helping tenants get housing vouchers to finding affordable day care or legal assistance.

MBHP also provides regular workshops on a wide range of topics relevant to renter families, including credit and budgeting, tenant-landlord relations, applying for college, doing a housing search, avoiding a utilities shut-off and more! Sign up to receive e-mail notices of upcoming MBHP workshops by sending an e-mail to: [tenants-subscribe@lists.mbhp.org](mailto:tenants-subscribe@lists.mbhp.org)

To learn about MBHP's many services, call their Housing Consumer Education Center at 617-425-6700.

## City Officials reviewing details for Inclusionary Zoning Proposal

Earlier this year, public officials, housing related agency representatives and local residents had the opportunity to meet with the consultant Judi Barrett of Community Opportunities Group, who has been hired to draft an inclusionary zoning proposal for Medford.

Inclusionary Zoning is a local law that would require developers of certain residential projects to make some of

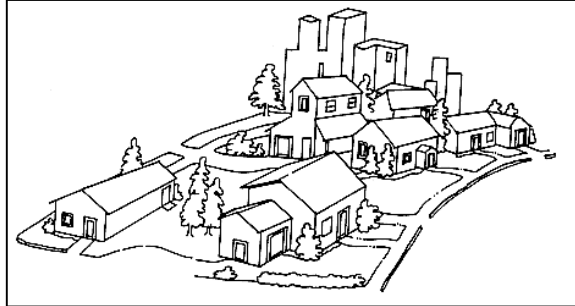
the rental or condo units in their developments affordable. While Medford has negotiated for affordable units in market rate developments in the past, the passage of an inclusionary zoning

would build on past successes by streamlining the process, making the requirement the same for all developers and making it clear to both developers and the City what is expected of each party. If wisely designed, it will also result in new affordable housing for Medford families!

At first, an ordinance like this can seem simple, but there are many complexities that need to be considered, such as: will developments of different sizes have different requirements? Will the requirements be the same in all zones in the

City? How will a developer show compliance with the ordinance? To ensure proper consideration of these kinds of details, representatives from Medford's Building Department, Law Department, Planning Board and Board of Appeals have recently had very productive discussions with the consultant.

Medford residents will also need to weigh in—not only to the Mayor and Office of Community Development but to the City Council. Enacting inclusionary zoning will require a change to our local zoning code (the rules outlining what can be built and where) and zoning cannot be changed without



the approval of at least 5 of our 7 City Councillors. The Mayor will likely bring a proposal for inclusionary zoning to the Council sometime in 2008. At that time, there will be public hearings on the issue. The passage of such an ordinance shows a community's commitment to providing affordable housing for its residents, so it will be important for the public to give input. The Affordable Housing Specialist will keep residents updated as this issue progresses.

## Five More Affordable Units Planned at Station Landing

National Development, the developer of the Station Landing mixed-use development next to the Wellington T stop is now applying for permits for the final phases of the development, including one more high end apartment complex. Five of the 292 rental units planned for this complex will be affordable. These will join the five affordable units already leased in the existing rental buildings, which were developed first on the site.

As it did for the first five affordable units, National Development is likely to partner with the Medford Housing Authority and lease the new units to Section 8 voucher holders. The Section 8 program allows very low income families to lease a privately owned apartment by requiring the tenant to pay 30% of income toward rent. The voucher covers the remaining cost of the rent, up to a limit that is set annually by HUD.

If you have an income below 50% AMI (see page 4) and want to join the Housing Authority's Section 8 waiting list, call 781-396-7200 or go to the Medford Housing Authority office at 121 Riverside Ave to pick up an application.



Check out these sites if you're looking for affordable housing...

Comprehensive list of all affordable ownership lotteries in Massachusetts:  
[www.massaffordablehomes.org](http://www.massaffordablehomes.org)

List of agencies offering First Time Homebuyer Workshops:  
[www.chapa.org/housing.htm](http://www.chapa.org/housing.htm)

Listings of ownership and rental lotteries in Massachusetts:  
[www.chapa.org/housing\\_lotteries.htm](http://www.chapa.org/housing_lotteries.htm)

For more info. and links to other resources: [www.medford.org/Pages/MedfordMA\\_Afford/index](http://www.medford.org/Pages/MedfordMA_Afford/index)

Medford Community Housing to hold Annual Meeting:

If you are interested in affordable housing in Medford, you may want to attend the Annual Meeting of nonprofit Medford Community Housing (MCH) and learn about their work. MCH recently was awarded funding from the North Suburban HOME Consortium to assist in carrying out affordable housing development. The group is starting to search for sites for a small affordable housing development in Medford. They are considering purchasing and renovating an existing building.

The MCH Annual Meeting will be on Wednesday, October 24, from 6:00—7:30 pm at the South Medford Fire Station, Zero Medford Street. Light Refreshments will be served. Contact Kelly Catallo at 781-844-5457 or [kelly@kellycatallo.com](mailto:kelly@kellycatallo.com) or for more information.

Who Qualifies for Affordable Housing? Typically, any household earning 80% or less of the Area Median Income (AMI—set annually by the federal government) qualifies for affordable housing. Many families in this group actually earn much less than 80%, such as nurse's assistants, school bus drivers, legal secretaries, and wait staff. Non-profit developers often create housing to be affordable for families earning below 60% or 30% AMI. This would make sense when developing housing for the 45% of Medford households that rent their homes, and may not be ready or able to buy. See the 2007 income limits below.

INCOME LIMITS	30% AMI	50% AMI	60% AMI	70% AMI	80% AMI	100% AMI
Household of 1	\$17,770	\$29,450	\$35,340	40,513	46,300	58,900
Household of 2	\$20,200	\$33,650	\$40,380	46,331	52,950	67,300
Household of 3	\$22,750	\$37,850	\$45,420	52,106	59,550	75,700
Household of 4	\$25,250	\$42,050	\$50,460	57,881	66,150	84,100
Household of 5	\$27,250	\$45,400	\$54,480	62,519	71,450	90,800
Household of 6	\$29,300	\$48,800	\$58,560	67,156	76,750	97,600



The Medford Home Update is a publication of the  
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 Office of Community Development  
 781-393-2520 (Housing) or 781-393-2480 (General)  
<http://www.medford.org>

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