

# HOUSING MATTERS

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## DATES TO REMEMBER:

Next Meeting is Tuesday  
March 3, 2009 1:00at  
1:00 p.m. at Habitat for  
Humanity 107 Depot  
Street Georgetown

DHC Day for Hous-  
ing is May 5, 2009 in

## In Attendance:

Lucia Campos, NCALL

Kevin Gilmore, SCHFH

Lisa Fitzgerald, SCHFH &  
USDA

Kelley Steed, RC&D

Marlena Gibson, Dela-  
ware State Housing Au-  
thority

Brandy Bennett, SCCDH

Sandy Spence, League  
of Women Voters

Gina Miserendino, Dela-

## SHG TO PRESENT PRESSING HOUSING ISSUES BEFORE NEW SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

The group has planned an informational orientation meeting for the Sussex County Council as three of the five members have only been serving in their posts since January. Gina noted that the DHC, Kent County Habitat, and NCALL had done a similarly educational workshop for some incoming members of the Kent County Levy Court a couple of years ago that proved beneficial. The group discussed location and a possible agenda for this event, which will likely take place in March. We would like to invite the entire council to come and listen to a brief presentation. This presentation will have two

objectives. The first is to use statistical information to impress upon the council the lack of affordable rental and owned residential property in the county due to the affordability gap between the average wage-earner's salary and the median rental and home prices. The second objective is to prepare some "take away" binder with literature about the organizations that serve people with housing needs. This will be a great reference tool for the council members when their constituents call asking for information. We will also present strategies and end the meeting on a positive note.

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## UPDATE ON NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION PLAN (NSP)

Brandy Bennett outlined some of the high points regarding the Neighborhood Stabilization Act recently enacted by the federal government. Sussex County has been awarded \$2,000,000.00 to use towards the program. The legislation is still evolving,

but the money will be used to purchase and rehabilitate blighted or abandoned homes in foreclosure. The money can also be used to rehabilitate the homes and later sell them to qualifying homeowners and to reduce the closing costs by up \$50,000.

## SYNOPSIS OF THE REVAMPED MODERATELY PRICED HOUSING UNITS (MPHU) PROGRAMS

Brandy also spoke about some updates in the MPHU. This program was designed in 2006 as a pilot program to serve working professionals who could not afford to purchase homes at the inflated asking prices. The project benefits developers who pledge to construct new housing developments with moderately priced units by giving them an expedited review through the approval process. The County has now launched a similar program for developers of multi-family



We need to assist working fami-

rental properties as well. The premise is similar in that the units will be integrated with market rate units. The developers will get expedited reviews as well as a density bonus, but they cannot exceed the density standard of 12 units per acre. The goal is to be able to charge families no more than 25% of their monthly income for rent.

## SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL EVALUATES NSP

On February 17, 2009, the Council passed a non-binding letter to use the leveraged funds from the Neighborhood Stabilization Act for certain zip codes in Sussex County (Greenwood, Milford, Seaford & Georgetown). The \$2 million dollars will be available in mid-April, and Sussex County will have eighteen months to obligate the funds, which will all be designated as a finance mechanism. The goal is the reach 27 foreclosed properties and be able to

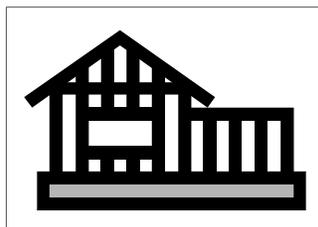
benefit families under 120% of AMI, with a certain percentage for families at 50% or less of AMI. The partners involved include SCHFH, MHDC, Diamond State Land Trust. NCALL and First State Community Action Agency will provide counseling to potential homeowners.

*“A house is a home when it shelters the body and comforts the soul.”*

*Phillip Moffit*

## NCALL ANNOUNCES MORE SESSIONS

Lucia noted that NCALL is giving more foreclosure prevention sessions in order to meet elevated need. These are given in all three counties and are offered in both English and Spanish. She gave the group sample flyers to take back to our offices. Please contact the Georgetown office at 855-1363.



# MEET OUR MEMBERS: BRIEF INTRODUCTIONS TO THE GROUPS IN OUR SUSSEX COUNTY NETWORK

Delaware Housing Coalition (DHC):

United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA RD):

National Council on Agricultural Research and Life (NCALL):

Milford Housing Development Corporation (MHDC):

Sussex County Crisis Housing Services (SCCHS):

La Esperanza:

Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (SCFHF):

First State Community Action Agency, Inc. (First State CAA):

First State Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. (RC&D):

Interfaith Housing:



## I AM INTERESTED IN:

Sign up for:

- Email Newsletter
- Attending SHG Meetings
- Joining DHC
- Learning About Advocacy
- Help with Obtaining Housing
- Other:

### A Publication of

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Date

*“Remember  
the poor; it  
costs nothing”*

A Publication of  
the Sussex  
Housing Group

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We're on the Web!  
[www.housingforall.org](http://www.housingforall.org)

*A Committee  
of the  
Delaware  
Housing*

The Sussex Housing Group was formed as a committee of the Delaware Housing Coalition in order to address some of the most pressing housing and home-ownership related issues facing the citizens of Sussex County. The SHG is made up of a myriad of different county, state, and federal governmental entities as well as non-profit organizations. The members represent those serving a continuum of housing needs for low-income people. These include but are not limited to advocacy, emergency and transitional housing, homelessness abatement, helping tenants find affordable rental units, lobbying for a living wage, homeowner education classes, financial, credit, and homeownership counseling, purchasing of a home and/or participating in the construction of one's own home, emergency home repairs to make a

If you are interested in housing issues and would like to join our group, please contact Gina at [grass-roots@housingforall.org](mailto:grass-roots@housingforall.org). We generally meet once a month in a rotating Sussex County location. We'd love to have you!

