Takoma Park Preservation Project Nears Completion
Senator Ben Cardin Invited To Cut Ribbon at October 17 Ceremony

MHP will hold a ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the success of the Takoma Park Preservation (TPP) project on Friday, October 17, 2008 beginning at 10 a.m. at 1001 University Blvd.

Senator Ben Cardin has been invited to speak at the ceremony and will cut the ribbon to the newly renovated building. Attendees will be able to tour a newly renovated apartment that features an array of amenities and sustainable green features. Chesapeake Catering Company will provide a continental breakfast.

The TPP project began construction in January of 2008 and consists of 75 rental units at three sites in Takoma Park. This event will celebrate the completion of Merrimac Gardens and The Crossroads at Flower and the near completion of Sligo View Apartments which are expected to be completed in November, 2008.

If you would like to attend the ribbon cutting, call Michael at 301-622-2400 X10 to RSVP or by e-mail at mscheidt@mhppartners.org.

The October 17th ribbon cutting will be held at Merrimac Gardens located at 1001 University Blvd in Takoma Park

Circle of Builder’s Breakfast

The next Circle of Builders Breakfast Meeting, MHP’s on-going breakfast series, is scheduled for October 29. This will be one of the first opportunities to hear about and discuss Park & Planning’s recommendations for affordable housing. Panel members will include Mike Knapp, Montgomery County Council President, and Rollin Stanley, Planning Director for the Montgomery County Planning Board. For more information, contact Michael at mscheidt@mhppartners.org. A list of Circle of Builders members is on page 7.
Message from the President

As a local non-profit, Montgomery Housing Partnership has a keen eye on legislation and policies that effect affordable housing. We were most pleased with recent national housing legislation that will have an immense impact in Montgomery County and throughout the nation.

In July, Congress passed the American Housing Rescue and Foreclosure Prevention Act of 2008, one of the most comprehensive pieces of housing legislation since the Great Depression of 1929. This bill creates a permanent Housing Trust Fund to increase and preserve the supply of rental housing and homeownership opportunities and targets funds for very low income families.

The bill also expands and improves the low-income housing tax credit, which is the largest source of federal support for the rehabilitation and construction of affordable rental housing. Also included in this bill is $3.92 billion in assistance to states and cities for the redevelopment of abandoned and foreclosed homes. These funds would be very helpful in efforts like ours to stabilize neighborhoods such as Connecticut Avenue Estates and Glenmont in the Wheaton area, neighborhoods facing a difficult foreclosure problem.

As we talk to local legislators, one recurring theme is that they don’t hear from residents in support of affordable housing; all too often, they are deluged with e-mails and letters from residents in opposition to affordable housing development or bills.

As a result, MHP has recently formed an e-mail advocacy alert system that is sent out every month highlighting upcoming legislation and zoning issues impacting affordable housing. If you would like to receive these alerts, send an e-mail to mscheidt@mhpartners.org. These e-mails are a great way to stay informed of legislation effecting affordable housing and letting your voice be heard.

MHP Advocacy Alerts

Everyday, decisions and policies concerning affordable housing are made in city, county and state governments as well as on the national level. Frequently, those who support affordable housing are not even aware of the issues being considered and their input is not heard by legislators. Politicians have told us time and time again that they don’t often hear from constituents that support affordable housing.

To alleviate this problem, MHP has created e-mail Advocacy Alerts which explain affordable housing issues and link directly to the elected officials so your voice can be heard.

This is a quick, easy way to assist us with expanding and preserving affordable housing. To begin receiving these alerts, send an e-mail to mscheidt@mhpartners.org.
The spring and summer was a busy time for MHP's Community Life Programs. In May, Family Day Fun Festivals were held at Great Hope Homes and Amherst/Pembridge. In June, the preschoolers at Amherst/Pembridge and Greenwood celebrated with graduation ceremonies. Community Life finished the summer with backpack giveaways at Amherst/Pembridge, Great Hope Homes, Greenwood and Glenville.

AmeriCorps Intern, Julian Hargrove, tends the grill at the Amherst/Pembridge Family Day Fun Festival. Residents enjoyed food and games as well as educational booths.

A young resident of Great Hope Homes enjoys an apple and a gold medal as part of the Family Fun Day.

The preschool class at Pembridge Square Apts. throw their mortar boards in the air as they celebrate graduation from the MHP preschool class of 2008.

Nataly Diaz shows off her back to school look with her new pink backpack at the Amherst/Pembridge Family Fun Day.
Steve Sprecher vividly recalls the first time he walked into the apartment buildings located at 8508 and 8510 Flower Avenue in Takoma Park, Maryland in the fall of 2006. These multi-family brick buildings had 160 code violations and were constantly being “flipped” by landlords intent on making a profit. The conditions were terrible with severely outdated bathrooms and kitchens, cracking and falling ceilings, duct tape holding in windows and rodent infestation. “Caught in the middle were the 21 families who were paying to live in such deplorable conditions,” explains Sprecher, Director of Real Estate for Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP).

The MHP team of real estate professionals immediately got to work. MHP purchased the building in 2006 and started applying for funding to rehabilitate the properties. In June, 2008 their hard work paid off when this project, now known as Gilbert Highlands, received an award of 9% low income housing credits from the State of Maryland. These funds combined with funds from NeighborWorks, NSHA/CDFI and a financial institution (TBA) will enable MHP to complete a full rehabilitation of the building.

MHP will work with the residents to make arrangements for alternative housing during the renovation which will begin in 2009. Each dwelling unit will receive new kitchens, refurbished bathrooms, window & door replacement, new finishes and individually controlled mechanical systems. MHP has also made a commitment to integrate many of Enterprise’s Green Communities Criteria into the Gilbert Highlands buildings including energy efficient appliances and lighting to reduce electricity consumption, energy efficient windows and doors to reduce energy loss, low-flow toilets and plumbing fixtures to reduce water consumption, environmentally friendly paints and floor coverings, and landscaping with native plants.

Updates and Successes

- **Beall’s II** - The plan to build 109 apartments in downtown Rockville is one step closer to becoming reality. On July 23, 2008, the Rockville Planning Commission approved a use permit by a vote of 4-1.

- **Takoma Park Preservation Project**—75 units in Takoma Park are 85% complete. A ribbon cutting will be held on October 29, 2008. See page 1 for more information.

- **Silver Spring/Nolte** - 19 units in Silver Spring are 50% complete. Renovations include new baths and kitchens.
The 20th Annual MHP Golf Tournament was held on May 19th, 2008 after heavy rains delayed the tournament by one week. For the first time, the event was held at Hampshire Greens Golf Course in Silver Spring and MHP raised over $50,000 which will be used for community life programs.

Thanks to our 2008 golf committee which was comprised of Craig Pascal, Richard Perlmutter and Stacy Plotkin Silber.

Winners of this year’s tournament were the team from The Bozzuto Group: Craig Swanson, Mike Schlegel, Dan Blatzheim and Brian Grosholz.

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Thanks to Walnut Springs Nursery for providing the centerpieces
Maureen Sarver has joined the staff of Montgomery Housing Partnership as the Apartment Assistance Program Manager. She is a recent graduate of University of Maryland, Baltimore County with a Master’s Degree in Public Policy. Previously, Maureen served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Morocco and as a Shriver Peaceworker Fellow working with the homeless population in Baltimore City.

Praj Kasbekar has been promoted to Project Manager in the Real Estate Department. Praj held the position of Apartment Assistance Program Manager for the last year.

Patricia Heinaman, (1949-2008) a founder and long time employee of MHP passed away on June 9, 2008 after a long battle with leukemia. Pat joined with the Rev. Lincoln “Lon” Dring and housing advocate Peg McRory to found Montgomery Housing Partnership in 1998. She served as MHP’s Executive Vice-President and by the time she left the organization over a decade later, MHP had developed or renovated over 500 units of low, moderate and market rate rental units throughout Montgomery County. Pat is considered the “Mother of MHP” and remembered for her determination, creativity and persistence in creating affordable housing in Montgomery County.

MHP is forming a team of walkers for the annual Walk for the Homeless on Saturday, November 22, 2008. This is a great day to grab the family and walk through Washington D.C. past our country’s greatest national monuments and buildings. The walk concludes on the National Mall with performances from nationally known bands. The cost is $15 for youth under 25 and $25 for adults which includes a t-shirt to commemorate the event. The best part of the day is knowing you are helping the homeless to get much needed services. Can’t walk that day but want to help? Sponsor a walker! Call Patty Reed for details at 301-622-2400 X22 or by email at preed@mhpartners.org.

MHP’s office is going green! A Green Team of employees has been formed and they are looking at ways to reduce the use of office supplies to save money and reduce the impact on the environment. The staff has already implemented policies such as using both sides of the paper, eliminating paper goods in the kitchen and car pooling when possible.

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Montgomery Housing Partnership’s work is made possible by the generous donations of corporations, individuals, and the state and county government. We would like to recognize and thank the following donors, who have contributed to MHP from March 15, 2008 to August 15, 2008. If there is an error or omission, please contact Patty Reed at 301-622-2400 extension 22

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MHP Volunteers Needed!

Are you looking for a volunteer experience that is meaningful and fun? Whether you want to work a few hours, a few days or want to become a full time volunteer, MHP has a variety of great volunteer opportunities including:

Gala Committee—Are you an organizer? MHP is planning a 20th Anniversary gala and needs volunteers to help with the planning and implementation of this event.

Festivals—We need individuals to help with face painting, games, food and logistics for spring and fall festivals. This is a great way to get Student Service Learning hours.

Office Help—MHP is always looking for volunteers to help with mailings and other administrative work. Office experience preferred.

Holiday Toy Drive—We need individuals and groups to help us wrap and sort hundreds of toys. MHP is also looking for businesses and organizations that are willing to collect toys and hold holiday parties for communities.

Adult Computer and ESOL classes—We need volunteers to help adults improve their computer and language skills.

Clean up and Beautification Activities—From April through November, MHP holds clean ups and beautification activities throughout Montgomery County.

If you see a volunteer opportunity that interests you, call Maureen Sweeney Smith at 301-622-2400 X38 or reach her by e-mail at msmith@mhppartners.org

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