

# The Networker

Community Development Corporations Association of Greater Cincinnati  
Winter 2012 Newsletter



*The back office project - helping fill in the gaps in resources for website, HR and accounting.*

## Our Back Office Project is Up and Running!

The Back Office Project is the latest program of the CDC Association, supported by the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, which will provide services to member organizations. This access to services, information and expertise will support community development corporations (CDCs) in building their own capacity and galvanizing their communities.

CDCs can vary in size but they are typically small organizations and a lot of administrative time gets tied up in the day to day functions of payroll, accounting, and employees. Even the larger ones spend much valued time with administrative functions. The time the director spends on Board development, accounting and IT might better be spent in the development of housing or commercial spaces. Through the Back Office Project, CDC developers and directors will be able delegate operational tasks to consultants in these areas of expertise. CDC Association will be able to negotiate savings for back office services, combining needs of member organizations and creating economies of scale.

Needs which have been identified by the CDCs include website design and updating, information technology, accounting and finance, and human resources expertise. Marketing and communications, grant writing / fundraising, legal expertise, and project management services are all ideas which may be added in the future.

Like the vast majority of small non-profit organizations, these Back Office needs are not the core business of

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CDCs. However, when a problem arises, it can cripple the organization for days. Trying to solve these challenges internally can become a major distraction, and other aspects of the business usually suffer. More often than not, these challenges end up costing far in excess of the organization's budget. The Back Office Project will provide affordable support for all these issues.

The CDC Association and members understand that there is a cost associated with this project. A Request for Proposal process has been used to select vendors. The CDCs will be required to contribute a nominal predetermined fee to participate. A separate fee will be accessed for each service area. The CDCs will pay \$250 per year for most services. CDCs have the option of selecting which service areas are of value to their organizational needs. The CDC Association has a major commitment from the Greater Cincinnati Foundation of \$60,000 over three years to initiate this program. Additional funds are being raised for increased program success.

The goal of the Back Office Program is to increase the capacity of member organizations 25%. We are meeting with area funders, including banks, to talk about partnering with us to build this capacity.

Lesley Floyd is Project Manager for the Back Office Project. For further information and to provide financial support for the program, please contact her at [Lesley.floyd@cdcagc.org](mailto:Lesley.floyd@cdcagc.org).

**BREAKING NEWS:** PNC Bank will provide support for the Back Office project in the sum of \$10,500 for 2012. They are also a CDC Association Platinum Sponsor for 2012.

## The Annual CDC Association Bus Tour



*Photo courtesy of Brittany Skelton*

Amid a week of gray days and showers, the chosen Annual

HURC



Model Group



### January 30th, 6pm

Film Screening:  
Urbanized by Gary  
Hustwit at the  
Contemporary Arts  
Center

### February 4th, 8am-1pm

Greater Cincinnati Shared  
Services Summit,  
Sharonville Convention  
Center

### Homebuyers Classes 2012:

February 4, 8am-5pm @  
WIN

March 3 & 10, 8:30am-  
1:30pm @ WIN

March 31, 8am-5pm @  
College Hill Presbyterian  
Church

April 28, 8am-5pm @  
WIN

May 19, 8am-5pm @  
Elmwood City Hall

### February 21, 1-4pm

Main Street Finance:  
Mixed-Use Real Estate  
Online Course

### April 7

Working in  
Neighborhoods' Annual  
Run for the American  
Dream

CDCAGC Bus tour date of Friday, October 21st proved to be a stunningly sunny and mild day. Multi-colored autumn leaves sprinkled the chosen sites, as we weaved our way through various CDC projects throughout Over-the-Rhine.

The tour started at Grammer's where The Perfect Brew Catering Company once again provided fresh and delicious lunches. From this point we moved on to Pendleton for a view of the Horseshoe Casino site. Ed Ratterman of Bridging Broadway explained the size and scope of the \$400 million project while highlighting transformations to be expected in the surrounding land parcels. The crowd was quite aware that the surface parking lot where they were standing, and those surrounding them, would soon be transformed into an important piece of intricate city fabric. Bridging Broadway has been instrumental in providing vision for the surrounding sites, and kicking off the dialogue that will guide the re-development of this corner of the central core.

We subsequently moved to Rothenburg School, where we heard an inspiring story about the fight to save the school from demolition, and the true grit demonstrated by Keep Cincinnati Beautiful in securing the adjacent land parcels, in addition to others in the area, cleaning them and making them viable greenspaces. In addition to the School's restoration, the renovated building will see the insertion of a green teaching roof, where students will be allocated a small plot of soil where they will learn about plant biology and gardening, a geo-thermal heating and cooling system, photovoltaic solar hot water system, LEED silver classification, a new gymnasium, expanded playground and a community learning center.

North Rhine Heights was our next stop. David Thompson of Model Group presented us with a scattered site renovation of 14 buildings and 56 units of existing affordable housing units. The finished products were pristine, and truly accomplished the goal of being indistinguishable from market-rate housing. All buildings are historic renovations and LEED certification is being pursued. Community Views, Friar's Court and St. Anthony's Village were the next properties to view, and all kept with the theme of meticulous, successful restoration while adding to the stock of low-income housing in OTR.

Our tour of City Home came complete with a presentation about the neighboring Washington Park where park development could be seen in full swing. The masterful staging of City Home units only contributed to their undeniable charm. The Washington Park presentation was given on a balcony as we peeked over the fence into what will be a gem in the heart of our city. Plans for the park include a performance stage, dog park, playground, water feature and underground parking. From there we moved on to Westfalen Lofts, where bus tour attendees browsed the building, and were struck by the distinct interior design features. After passing by way of Parvis Lofts, we returned to Grammer's for food, fun and libation.

### **AHA Membership Meetings**

are held the Fourth Tuesday of each month at noon at the United Way Building, 2400 Reading Road, Cincinnati.

### **KEEP IN TOUCH:**



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This year, we were able to share the experience with some keen students Dr. David Edelman's undergraduate introductory planning class at UC's School of Planning. Dr. Edelman felt that the tour was a great benefit to students, who had the opportunity to see the real end products of community development efforts.

The 2012 Bus Tour will take place in Bellevue, Kentucky.

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## Roundtable Sessions: Homegrown Experts



*Thank you to the Urban League for hosting our RoundTable Sessions*

Every year, the CDC Association, with the support of the City of Cincinnati, produces a variety of RoundTable training sessions, where participants from the entire community development industry are able to share knowledge, advice and success stories. This year, we've covered a variety of topics, including Loan Funds for Community Development and Working with Foreclosures and REO Properties. The November 28th RoundTable featured representatives from Hamilton County, City of Cincinnati and Port Authority staff who updated us on the Hamilton County Land Bank, which begins operating early this year. Our final RoundTable of 2011 challenged common conceptions about fundraising, and gave insights on how we can do it all more effectively.

The most recent January 19th RoundTable related directly to the Back Office project, and we introduced the consultants who have signed on to the project.

## **Congratulations to Over-the-Rhine Community Housing!**



OTRCH has been awarded a HUD 202 grant for their 15-unit senior citizens housing project at 1500 Elm Street. This was their third application in four years, thereby proving that the third time is a charm!

And more congratulations are due as OTRCH celebrates the first-year anniversary on December 3 of the Jimmy Heath House on Odeon. The national Corporation for Supportive Housing awarded Over-the-Rhine Community Housing the "Perseverance Award" for the project, which the Award stated had overcome many setbacks and challenges: securing a partnership with a service provider, compressed development timeline to meet a funding requirement, addressing concerns of the neighborhood, the corporate community and the City of Cincinnati, and historic preservation challenges for five contiguous buildings in a historic neighborhood. "Over-the-Rhine Community Housing withstood the setbacks and challenges to complete the project. It is a beautiful facility that has won over those who initially opposed it and is now providing quality supportive housing to formerly homeless adults," says the Award Plaque.

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## **News & Notes**

### **Staff Changes at the CDC Association**

Jocelyn Gibson, who just graduated from the Masters in Community Planning program at DAAP, UC, is our new Director of Community Relations, with Rhys Reynolds of Howard, Reynolds and Associates, providing accounting services. Lesley Floyd, who recently supported the creation of the new Avondale Comprehensive Development Corporation, is Project Manager for the Back Office Project. Sarah Hayes, after five years of service, is returning to photography and other creative endeavors. We wish her all the best!

### **Another Fabulous Holiday Reception!**

Lots of merriment and cheer filled the reception room at Mecklenburg Gardens on December 13th for the annual

CDC Association Holiday Party. Our new members of City Council, Yvette Simpson and P.G. Sittenfeld were our guest speakers and highlighted their thoughts on Community Development. The musical entertainment was provided by the Brian Garry Band. We thank all of those who were able to attend, and share in the night's festivities. Due to technical problems, no pictures are available.

**Congratulations to Habitat for Humanity for the Completion and Dedication of Phase I of the G2OTR Project**

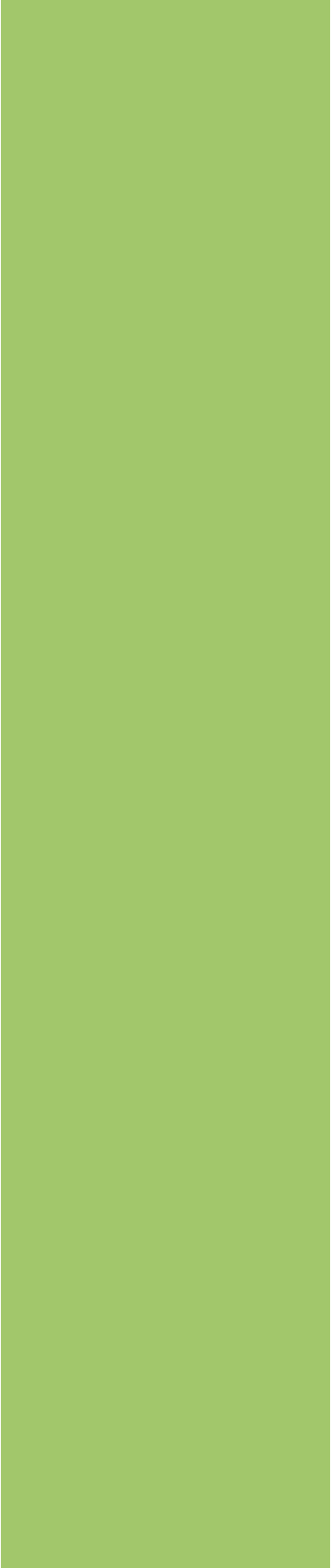


*The dedicaton ceremony of 1522-1524 Elm Street, photo by Adam Nelson*

The 1522-1524 Elm Street full gut rehab was noted as Habitat's most ambitious rehab project to date as attendees of the dedication ceremony filled the living room of 1522 Elm Street to meet the home's new residents and honor those who helped with the project. The project is considered to be an historic renovation and it is LEED-certified. A big congratulations to Habitat for this extraordinary accomplishment.

**Four Hamilton County Projects Receive \$3.4M in Tax Credits**

Four properties in Hamilton County were among the seven Historic Preservation Tax Credit awards given by the Ohio Department of Development in December. The projects receiving the credits are Haddon Hall in Avondale, St. Michael Complex in Lower Price Hill, two properties at 15th and Republic in Over-the-Rhine and The Crown Building near Findlay Market, Over-the-Rhine.



## WIN Honors Outstanding Citizens



*Steve Smith, with Sister Barbara Busch and Lori G. Nuckolls, was honored at the WIN Hall of Fame induction*

WIN held its Annual Hall of Fame Celebration on November 15th, recognizing the Honorable Nathaniel R. Jones and Mr. Steve Smith. Judge Jones has promoted social justice and public service throughout his illustrious career. Lori G. Nuckolls received the Judge's award on his behalf. Steve Smith, CEO of the Model Group, received the Community Builder Award. Model Group has been a regional and statewide leader in the affordable housing industry.

## CDC Single Family Support Fund

The CDC Single Family Support Fund provides \$50,000 in HOME funds for purchase or rehab of properties by CDCs through a quick and simple application process. The CDC Association is working with City Officials, trying to maintain the 2011 level of funding for 10 homes.

