

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS



Neighborhood Preservation Coalition
of New York State, Inc.
www.npcnys.org

FEBRUARY, 2009

NPP/RPP Funding At Stake If Gov's Budget Is Passed; Legislature Needed To Help Save These Programs!

The headline may sound overly dramatic, but the circumstance is very real. Funding for the Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Programs is once again being threatened as part of budget-cutting methods proposed by Gov. David Paterson. And, once again, housing advocates across the state are coming to Albany on Feb. 24 to tell our local legislators that they cannot let that happen.

"The voices of housing advocates from all over New York State should use this opportunity to be heard loud

and clear - the Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Programs must be fully funded in order to enable N/RPCs to continue to deliver basic affordable housing services desperately needed by this state's low- and moderate-income residents," said Coalition Executive Director Joe Agostine, Jr. "Legislative Action Day is the perfect opportunity for our members and friends to come to Albany, meet with their local representatives, and educate them about the important and vital

work they do in their neighborhoods and communities," he added.

Information packets will be distributed to all participants and key talking points will be discussed. Participants are encouraged to make their own appointments with their local legislators for the afternoon hours.

Guest Speakers will include *NYS Assembly Housing Committee Chair Vito J. Lopez*, *NYS Senate Housing Committee Chair Pedro Espada*, and

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LEGISLATIVE ACTION DAY

Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009

Gathering At

Emmanuel Baptist Church Hall

275 State St., Albany

(1/2 block west of L.O.B.)

Beginning at 11 a.m.

**Be Here To Show Your Support For Full Funding
Of The Neighborhood Preservation Program!!**

Pass-Through Funding Available For CHDOs

Through a contract with the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of NYS is able to provide pass-through funding for Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) and prospective CHDOs in eligible downstate service areas and those with designations from New York State, regardless of location.

The objective of the pass-through funding is to build the CHDO or prospective CHDO's capacity to complete HOME set-aside projects.

A prospective CHDO is defined as a nonprofit organization (501c-3) that qualifies for CHDO status and plans to enter into a written agreement with a participating jurisdiction (PJ) to own, develop, or sponsor HOME-assisted housing within 24 months of their CHDO designation.

Complete eligibility requirements and application instructions are detailed in the Pass-Through Grant Application packet which can be found on the Coalition's website, www.npcnys.org, or by calling Christine Hmiel, Program Manager, at (518) 432-6757. Any questions regarding the application process or your organization's eligibility can be directed to Ms. Hmiel.

Applications are due to the Coalition office, 40 Colvin Ave., Albany, NY, 12206, by March 10, 2009.

A Gentle Reminder . . .

The Coalition's 2009 Annual Membership Drive Has Begun!

Please pay your dues ASAP . . . Your financial support helps to keep our Legislative Advocacy on target, strong and united!

Thank You!

NPP/RPP Funding At Stake If Gov's Budget Is Passed; Legislature Needed To Help Save These Programs!

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NYS DHCR Commissioner Deborah VanAmerongen.

Following presentations from the speakers, participants will then proceed from Emmanuel Baptist

Church Hall approximately 1/2 block east to the State Street entrance to the Legislative Office Building in order to visit their legislators.

Each and every Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Company is urged to participate in Legislative Action Day. In addition, legislative activities are also being planned by the NYS Rural Advocates and the NeighborWorks Alliance and participation is strongly encouraged with those groups, also.

The NYS Rural Advocates will meet on Monday, March 9, and the NeighborWorks Alliance will meet on Monday, March 16. More detailed information on those events will be published on the Coalition's website, www.npcnys.org, at a later date.

For any questions regarding your participation in Legislative Action Day, contact Joe Agostine at (518) 432-6757.



Board Position In Manhattan Remains Open

The Neighborhood Preservation Coalition continues to seek a representative from Manhattan to serve on the board of directors.

The board meets bi-monthly and is charged with establishing policy, legislative advocacy, and fundraising to support the Coalition's varied technical assistance activities.

NPC executives and/or executives of CHDO's are eligible.

For any questions, more details, or to express your interest in serving contact Executive Director Joe Agostine, Jr. at (518)-432-6757.

Annual Report Available For Public Comment

In accordance with the provisions of the National Affordable Housing Act, the State of New York is making a draft of its Consolidated Annual Performance Report (CAPER) for Program Year 2008 available for public comment. The CAPER analyzes New York State's progress in implementing its HUD-approved Annual Action Plan for 2008.

The public is invited to review the draft New York State CAPER and to offer comments on the document. The draft 2008 CAPER, as published for public comment, will be available during the public comment period on the New York State D H C R website at www.nysdhcr.gov. In addition, copies can be requested by e-mail at DHCRConPln@nysdhcr.gov or by calling 1-866-ASK-DHCR (1-866-275-3427).

The public comment period will begin on Friday, February 27, and end on Friday, March 13. Written comments must be postmarked no later than March 13, 2009. E-mail comments must be sent by that date. Comments should be addressed Brian McCarthy, NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal, Hampton Plaza, 38-40 State Street, Albany, NY, 12207 or e-mailed to DHCRConPln@nysdhcr.gov.

Coalition To Sponsor March Workshops For CHDOs, N/RPCs, Other Nonprofits

The Neighborhood Preservation Coalition, in collaboration with the U.S. Dept. HUD, will sponsor two technical assistance workshops in March designed to help build capacity in the not-for-profit arena.

Needs Assessments and Strategic Plans will be held **March 3** at Enterprise Community Partners, NYC, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. In this workshop, participants will learn to

Funding Round Apps Increase By 18%

DHCR announced that applications for its 2009 Unified Funding awards increased by 18 percent over last year - from 106 applications in 2008 to 125 applications for this year's round of awards.

Commissioner Deborah VanAmerongen said all but one of the applications was filed electronically, utilizing new technology ushered in at the agency by her administration. "Filing electronically not only conserves natural resources," she said, "it is also far more efficient. It saves time and money for our clients and reduces paperwork and human error."

The agency's electronic filing system was put to the test on Feb. 11, when 110 applications were submitted online and almost a thousand documents were uploaded in a single day. The system slowed only slightly by the high volume.

VanAmerongen said her agency is focused on efficient management of the Unified Funding process. Last year, awards were approved six weeks ahead of the 2007 schedule. The agency's Office of Community Development continues to seek new ways to streamline the process, allowing projects to begin earlier in the construction season and helping revitalize local, state and national economies.

Some points of interest in the

use concrete steps and tools to organize an assessment of your community needs and assets. You will walk away with a clear understanding of how the needs assessment findings can guide your strategic planning process and how to create a strategic plan that will serve as a powerful management tool for you and your board of directors. This is a great chance for NPCs and RPCs to acquire additional training in order to successfully navigate the DHCR Certification Process.

Staying Afloat in Tough Times will be held **March 31** the DHCR New York City Regional Office from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This workshop will explore various approaches to surviving the economic crisis by strengthening capacity. A panel of experts will present a multi-pronged strategy for "weathering the storm." Topics will include Strategic Positioning for Long-Term Sustainability; Collaboration and Relationship-Building; Advocacy: Resisting Budget Cuts; and, Identifying Alternate Funding Sources.

Visit the Coalition website, www.npcnys.org, to download workshop brochures and for registration information. Both workshops are being offered at no cost. Contact Christine Hmiel at (518) 432-6757 for questions or concerns.

2009 applications:

- ◆ Requests for funding through the Housing Trust Fund program increased by nearly 50 percent—from \$105 million to \$155 million;
- ◆ Requests for funding through the HOME program increased by nearly \$10 Million; and,
- ◆ Requests for both the Federal and State Low-Income Housing Tax Credit programs increased by approximately 50 percent.

NYRL Coalition Calls For Moratorium

The Steering Committee of New Yorkers for Responsible Lending (NYRL), a coalition of 143 not-for-profit organizations statewide, has called for a temporary moratorium on foreclosure actions on all primary residences in New York State. The group called on all mortgage lenders and servicers to halt foreclosure filings and actions until at least eight weeks after the Obama Administration's anticipated foreclosure mitigation plan goes into effect.

Thousands of New York homeowners face foreclosure, at the same time that dramatic new action at the federal level is expected to give borrowers and lenders substantially more tools to modify loans and prevent foreclosure. More than 32 percent of all subprime adjustable rate mortgages were seriously delinquent or in foreclosure in New York at the end of 2008.

The Office of Thrift Supervision recently called on the federal savings banks it regulates to halt foreclosures until the Administration's new plan is finalized. Following the OTS' announcement, Citigroup and JPMorgan Chase pledged that they will halt foreclosures until at least early March 2009.

"A foreclosure freeze, in combination with a meaningful federal plan to get borrowers into sustainable loan modifications, is absolutely vital to slowing the escalating foreclosure rates in New York," said Josh Zinner of the Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project, in New York City.

"It would not be in anyone's interest for a lender to proceed with a foreclosure today - and for a New York homeowner to lose her home - when that foreclosure could be averted under the President's new plan," said Kirsten Keefe of the Empire Justice Center, in Albany.

Come To Albany For

LEGISLATIVE ACTION DAY

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Emmanuel Baptist Church Hall
275 State Street, Albany, New York

11:00 a.m.

Featured Speakers:

Hon. Vito J. Lopez

NYS Assembly Housing Committee Chair

Hon. Pedro Espada

NYS Senate Housing Committee Chair

Hon. Deborah VanAmerongen

NYS DHCR Commissioner

* * *

Educate Your Local Legislators About
The *Important and Vital* Work You Are
Doing to Revitalize Your Neighborhood

Call the Coalition For More Details At (518) 432-6757

Sponsored By The

Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of New York State

40 Colvin Avenue, Albany, NY, 12206

www.npcnys.org

**NATIONAL LAW CENTER
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY**

**IS YOUR CHILD UNABLE TO ENROLL IN A LOCAL SCHOOL
OR REMAIN IN HER OR HIS FORMER SCHOOL
BECAUSE YOU DO NOT HAVE PERMANENT HOUSING?**

Is your situation described by the following facts?

You are currently living doubled up with a friend, relative, or other person

You lack a permanent residence of your own, and

Your child is not being allowed to enroll in the local school or to remain in the school s/he attended before s/he started living in a doubled up situation

- OR -

**ARE YOU HAVING TROUBLE WITH A SCHOOL DISTRICT REGARDING
ENROLLMENT OF YOUR CHILD?**

Is your situation described by the following facts?

You are disputing or have disputed a school district's decision not to enroll your child, or allow them to remain, in a particular school,

This decision is based on your lack of permanent housing in the school district, and

You were asked to remove your child from the school before the dispute was resolved

Students without permanent housing have rights:

Children and youth without permanent housing often have problems enrolling and participating in school. As a result, Congress passed the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act in 1987. This law gives these children and youth the right (in most circumstances) to:

Remain in the same school even if they move;

Enroll in a new school without typically required records such as proof of residency, immunizations, school records, or other papers;

Have transportation to school provided for them;

Receive the school services they need;

Fully participate in all school activities; and

Challenge decisions made by schools and districts.

**IF YOU ARE IN ONE OF THE SITUATIONS DESCRIBED ABOVE,
WE'RE INTERESTED IN HEARING FROM YOU!**

**Please contact: Eric Tars, Children's Program Staff Attorney
etars@nlchp.org 202-638-2535**

Assembly Releases Bleak Revenue, Economic Forecast

NYS Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and NYS Assembly Ways and Means Committee Chair Her D. Farrell, Jr., recently released their annual Revenue and Economic Report for New York State. The documents' release is a key step in the Assembly's analysis of the state's fiscal standing and in the process of working with the governor and the Senate to craft a timely and responsible budget.

The revenue report All Funds forecast for 2009-2010 is \$1 billion less than the Executive, reflecting a more pessimistic view of overall conditions in both the state and national economies. The lower revenues are expected primarily as a result of smaller personal and corporate income taxes, and sales tax collections. The report estimates total 2008-09 tax collections at \$178 million lower than the Executive, so total available resources for 2009-2010 are expected to be \$1.2 billion less than the Executive.

Citing dramatic drops in wage earnings and employment, particularly in the financial services sector, the Assembly Ways and Means Committee staff is predicting the state's economy will need serious help to recover from its current condition.

"New York joins the rest of the nation in the midst of a deep recession, felt by everyone from low-income wage earners, to small business owners, to the largest financial services firms. Without the key revenues collected from Wall Street, this crisis impacts communities across the state," Silver said. "The Assembly is committed to working with the executive and the Senate to craft a budget that fulfills our commitments to education, health, economic development and public protection, while ensuring that the burden of cuts does not fall disproportionately on poor

Economic Stimulus Package Includes Billions For Housing, Community Development/Renewal

Highlights of the federal Economic Stimulus Package, as it relates to housing, community development, and renewal programs - what those dollars mean to New York - are as follows:

- ◆ \$5 billion nationwide for the Weatherization Assistance Program to help make the homes of low income households more energy efficient. **DHCR will receive and administer about \$404 million of this total;**
- ◆ \$2.25 billion nationwide for the HOME and Low Income Housing Tax Credit programs. These funds will help fill financing gaps caused by the economic downturn and get stalled housing development projects moving. **In New York, DHCR will receive approximately \$245 million;**
- ◆ \$1 billion nationwide for the Community Development Block Grant program for community and economic development projects including housing and services for those hit hard by tough economic times. **This will mean \$13 million for DHCR-administered funding for New York State, and approximately \$90 million that**

and working class families."

"Extraordinary declines in consumer spending, huge job losses and an unstable housing market have stretched the spending power for New York's residents and businesses. At the same time, Wall Street and the financial sector cannot generate the income once produced, as it continues to try to survive," Farrell said. "These factors create real challenges that we must address as we ensure all New Yorkers continue to have access to decent education, affordable health care, and other essential services."

will be distributed directly to local municipalities in the State;

- ◆ \$2 billion nationally for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program to redevelop abandoned and foreclosed homes. **This will mean about \$49 million for New York - \$27 million to NY-Homes, and \$22 million to six direct grantees;**
- ◆ \$1.5 billion nationwide for homeless prevention activities. Using the Emergency Shelter Grant formula, this will bring a total of \$142 million for the state and local governments. **New York State program, administered by the Office of Temporary Disabilities and Assistance, will receive approximately \$29.8 million;**
- ◆ The stimulus bill also includes \$4 billion for much-needed capital repairs to public housing across the nation, and \$2 billion for the country's Section 8 project-based rental assistance program, with \$250 million of that amount going toward energy retrofitting and green housing. These funds will be administered by HUD.

The final compromise did not include revenue for the National Housing Trust fund, nor did it allocate funding for 400,000 new Housing Choice Vouchers.

The funding for housing programs fell tremendously short of what advocates had sought. In fact, 547 national and state organizations, including the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition, signed an open letter requesting equity in funding for low income families with the upper class. Specifically, the letter asked that programs for people with low income be increased by at least \$35 billion - the same cost as an amendment accepted by voice vote in the Senate that approved a \$15,000 homebuyer tax credit.

OUR MISSION

The Neighborhood Preservation Coalition will unify, educate, empower, and strengthen community organizations in their provision of affordable housing and community revitalization activities.

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Save This Date
**October 18-
19-20, 2009**

**ANNUAL AFFORDABLE
HOUSING CONFERENCE
& MEMBERSHIP MTG.
OF THE
NEIGHBORHOOD
PRESERVATION
COALITION OF NYS**
at

**The Desmond Hotel/
Conference Center
Albany, New York**

**Watch This Space
For Details As They
Are Developed!**

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Celebrating Our 20th Anniversary!

Coalition Joins SEFA Campaign

The Neighborhood Preservation Coalition is a part of the State Employees Federal Appeal (SEFA), allowing people to donate funds to the Coalition through work-place giving. The Coalition requests that members and friends with connections to state employees encourage those workers to designate the Coalition for their planned work-place giving.