

RRHA OCTOBER 2008

MASTER PLAN NEWS

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE MASTER PLANNING OF THE NORTH JACKSON WARD COMMUNITY

WELCOME TO THE MASTER PLAN NEWS

Welcome to the premier issue of RRHA's Master Plan News monthly newsletter! RRHA is excited to introduce this publication specifically for providing information about the Revitalization of Gilpin Court, Fay Towers and North Jackson Ward. While we hope this newsletter, public meetings and www.rrha.org will keep you well informed, we need you to become an active partner in this process. Ask questions, write us and call us! We rely heavily on your feedback and suggestions. RRHA is committed to working with you so that together, we build vibrant, new communities!

RRHA UPDATE—MASTER PLANNING MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

September 30, 2008 • • • • • Residents Gather to Hear RRHA Revitalization Plans

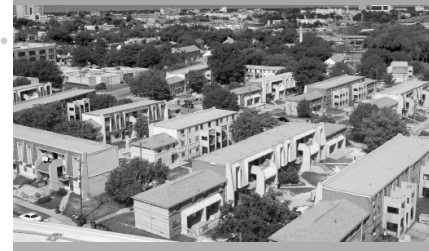
Over 200 residents, community members and stakeholders gathered recently at the Calhoun Family Investment Center to remain informed and involved in the revitalization process for North Jackson Ward. The purpose of the meeting was to provide information and listen to the ideas and questions from the community as part of the Master Plan process.

Opening remarks were made by RRHA Executive Director, Anthony Scott whose comments set the tone for participation and understanding. Mr. Scott also emphasized how critical it is that we realize and embrace this exciting opportunity for the community.

RRHA Project Manager, Eric Leabough introduced ICON Architecture, Inc. of Boston, Massachusetts who will lead RRHA's Master Planning process for the revitalization of North Jackson Ward. The ICON team shared before and after photos of successfully revitalized public housing communities in other cities along the East Coast and assured those in attendance that Richmond has the potential to be equally successful. The ICON team also shared a brief presentation on the history of Jackson Ward in which attendees were able to hear the report on resident surveys and focus groups recently conducted.

The meeting continued with spirited group break-out sessions discussing topics such as: Housing for Seniors and Families, Parks and Open Spaces, Schools, Retail and Community Facilities, Relocation and Human Services as well as Neighborhood Access and Connections. Residents and community members together brainstormed and offered suggestions on replacement housing options, new amenities, public transportation and how to maximize participation and communication.

As the meeting closed RRHA opened the floor for questions from the audience. One important question posed by an attendee was "Where will we go?" RRHA shared information regarding its commitment to replacement housing for all families and that a personal Relocation Specialist will be assigned to each resident to work on a one-on-one basis regarding relocations. "We know that there will be many things you hear out there." Executive Director Scott told the group, "We cannot stress enough to please come to us with your questions. We will give you accurate information," he affirmed.



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UPCOMING MASTER PLANNING FOR NORTH JACKSON WARD MEETINGS:

Design Charette Sessions:
Tuesday, October 28, 2008
Wednesday, October 29, 2008

Public Meeting # 2:
Thursday, October 30, 2008

All meetings will be from
6:00p.m. to 8:00p.m.

All meetings will be held at:
Calhoun Family Investment Center -
436 Calhoun Street.

A Message from RRHA Executive Director, Anthony Scott

As many of you know, it is the vision of RRHA to provide safe, affordable, quality housing and build vibrant communities we all can be proud to call home. In an effort to make this vision a reality, RRHA is dedicated to revitalizing the North Jackson Ward community. Directing our vision for vibrant communities is a strategic plan; a plan that will redefine public housing in the Richmond Region. As part of the overall strategic plan, it is the goal of RRHA to seamlessly implement the Master Plan for revitalization of North Jackson Ward. As we go through this process together, it is vital that our residents understand these key points:

- Each resident of RRHA will be provided safe and affordable housing. With the development of new housing, no resident will be moved until a replacement housing plan has been established.
- A Personal Care Manager will help you and your family with relocation benefits and transition services which will be provided to you through RRHA. Your Personal Care Manager can be contacted at 780-4835.
- RRHA will continue to provide public housing for the city of Richmond. Although we will be making changes in our communities, this agency's goal is to continue to provide 4,100 public housing units throughout Richmond.
- Master Planning is the first step in what we know will be a long redevelopment process. Actual demolition of any units will not take place for at least three years, while the construction of new units is anticipated to start in the next two years.

As we move through the stages of this planning process we are encouraging residents to be involved and stay informed. We want to be the first source of information for you. As we work together to build these vibrant communities we invite you to share your thoughts, suggestions, and questions with our staff. Please feel free to call us at 780-4344 or email us at info@rrha.state.va.us.

We look forward to your participation in this exciting opportunity for our families and City!

Anthony Scott
Executive Director



What is a Master Plan?

A Master Plan is a vision for a community. It's a comprehensive outline that will detail and describe new housing units, future land use, and illustrate how together we can create mixed income housing in a safe affordable environment.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can community members participate in the planning process?

A: Community participation is at the heart of our master plan. We want to hear your comments, questions, and suggestions. RRHA encourages community members to attend public meetings, read the master plan newsletter, and be involved!

Q: How long will the master planning process take?

A: RRHA anticipates that the planning process will vary by neighborhood. However, we expect the planning phase to last between 3-6 months.

Q: Who will lead the planning process?

A: RRHA will carry the torch in the planning process, as well as lead the way for public housing in Richmond. As the recognized leader of this initiative, RRHA will work closely with architects, community leaders and stakeholders, so that together we can build vibrant communities.

Need more information?



For more information on the Master Planning process:

Call the RRHA Communications Office at:
780-4344
Or e-mail: info@rrha.state.va.us
Or visit our website: www.rrha.org

For more information on Resident Services and Transition Planning:

Call the RRHA Capacity Building Office at:
780-4835
Or visit **200 Hospital Street**

RUMOR CONTROL!

Change can sometimes result in misunderstanding and misconceptions. This section was created to put the rumors to rest! Our goal is to give readers the hard facts of the revitalization planning process. During the 90-minute meeting on September 11th, several residents asked about rumors they heard regarding RRHA's plans for revitalizing Gilpin Court, Fay Towers and North Jackson Ward. Representatives from RRHA delivered the facts and dispelled many of the rumors.

Rumor:

RRHA is getting rid of all public housing and residents will have no place to go.

Fact:

RRHA will continue to provide public housing for the city of Richmond. Although there will be changes in public housing, RRHA's goal is to continue to provide 4,100 public housing units in the City. RRHA would not, and by regulation, cannot demolish public housing without a place for residents to relocate.

Rumor:

RRHA will tear down Gilpin Court very soon.

Fact:

The soonest RRHA will begin demolition will be in approximately 2 years (2010 to 2011). RRHA will first complete the Master Plan for the area before any redevelopment will take place.

Rumor:

Once this revitalization is complete, public housing units will look different from the units rented at market rate.

Fact:

With the revitalization plan, the public housing units will be mixed in with all different types of housing, so public

housing residents will live next door to people of other income levels. You will not be able to tell which unit is home to a public housing resident and which unit is home to someone paying the market rate.

Rumor:

No one will be able to come back to the Jackson Ward neighborhood because the brand new neighborhood will be too expensive.

Fact:

The new revitalized neighborhood will be a mixed income neighborhood which means there will be public housing through market rate rents. The goal is that the revitalized housing is affordable for a range of income levels.

Rumor:

When public housing residents move, they'll be on their own. They have to find a place, pay deposits and pay a moving company.

Fact:

RRHA provides all relocation assistance including: utility, cable and home telephone reconnection fees; moving and storage fees along with the service of a Personal Care Manger.

Resident Benefits & Services

RRHA is pleased to announce the Capacity Building Office, designed to assist residents during the revitalization process. This office will offer residents transitional services and relocation benefits, provided by a personal Case Manager or Relocation Specialist.

Specifically, transitional services counseling is designed to support each resident's personal goals by connecting them to RRHA programs and community partner services to help ensure their success. Some of the services residents can expect to receive are: job/career preparation and training, referral for financial counseling and literacy services, referral for GED preparation/educational services and many more.

In addition to transitional services, residents affected by RRHA's revitalization efforts will have access to a variety of relocation benefits. These benefits include: support for ensuring residents receive all HUD relocation benefits, notice of community meetings and letters to keep residents informed of relocation activities and the development of an individual relocation plan.

For more information about the Capacity Building Office or to schedule an appointment please call 780-4835 or visit the office at 200 Hospital Street.

IF YOU HEAR A RUMOR, STOP A RUMOR! CALL 780-4344 FOR THE FACTS!

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

RRHA'S GOALS FOR NORTH JACKSON WARD AND RRHA

- RRHA is committed to creating a vibrant new mixed-income and mixed-use community in North Jackson Ward. This new community will include quality housing for a variety of household types and income levels.
- RRHA's goal is to develop communities that integrate public housing residents socially, physically and economically into Richmond's neighborhoods.
- RRHA's goal is to continue to provide 4,100 public housing units throughout the city.

COMMITMENT TO AN OPEN AND TRANSPARENT PROCESS

- RRHA commits to the involvement and engagement of the residents throughout the master planning process. RRHA will also seek to maximize employment opportunities for residents during the redevelopment effort by implementing a strong Section 3 plan.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE AND WHEN WILL IT START?

- Given the scale and magnitude of this redevelopment effort, RRHA will utilize a multiphased approach and anticipates that it may take anywhere from 8-10 years to complete.
- The first phase of demolition will not start for at least two or three years. RRHA must first complete the master plan – with community involvement – that will guide the 8-10 year redevelopment effort.

DEVELOP A RELOCATION PLAN TO ENSURE RESIDENTS HAVE REPLACEMENT HOUSING, SERVICES AND INFORMATION

- Every resident of Gilpin Court and Fay Towers that is directly impacted by this initiative will have a safe and affordable place to live.
- RRHA will develop a relocation plan and identify replacement housing options as one of the first important steps in the Master Planning process.
- No one will be moved until HUD has approved RRHA's relocation plan which will describe the relocation process, resident rights, replacement housing options, and reoccupancy standards.
- RRHA will provide a Personal Care Manager to help you with relocation benefits and transition services provided through the RRHA Capacity Building Office. RRHA will provide supportive/transition services to all impacted residents who choose to participate.



Thank You

R RHA would like to thank all residents for attending the recent meetings on the neighborhood revitalization process. Your participation is greatly appreciated and important to the overall success of our mission. We encourage you to remain informed and involved while these exciting changes take place!



Richmond **Redevelopment**
& **Housing** Authority

**Richmond Redevelopment
Housing Authority**
901 Chamberlayne Parkway
Richmond, VA 23220
780-4344
225-0538/ TDD
www.RRHA.org



Master Planning Meeting Report – Public Meeting

September 30, 2008

6PM-8PM

Calhoun Family Investment Center, 436 Calhoun Street

Presented by: **ICON Architecture, Inc.**

Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority

On September 30, 2008, RRHA hosted a Listening Session at the Calhoun Family Investment Center regarding the Gilpin Court/ North Jackson Ward redevelopment. Over two hundred residents and community members participated. Anthony Scott, Executive Director RRHA, opened the evening with a summary of RRHA goals for the redevelopment:

RRHA's Goals for North Jackson Ward and RRHA

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- RRHA's goal is to continue to provide 4,100 public housing units.

Commitment to an Open and Transparent Process

- RRHA commits to the involvement and engagement of the residents throughout the master planning process. RRHA will also seek to maximize employment opportunities for residents during the redevelopment effort by implementing a strong Section 3 plan.

How Long Will it Take and When Will it Start?

- Given the scale and magnitude of this redevelopment effort, RRHA will utilize a multi-phased approach and anticipates that it may take anywhere from 8-10 years to complete.
- The first phase of demolition will not start for at least two or three years. RRHA must first complete the Master Plan – with community involvement – that will guide the 8-10 year redevelopment effort.

Develop a Relocation Plan to Ensure Residents Have Replacement Housing, Services and Information

- Every resident of Gilpin Court and Fay Towers that is directly impacted by this initiative will have a safe and affordable place to live.
- RRHA will develop a relocation plan and identify replacement housing options as one of the first important steps in the Master Planning process.
- No one will be moved until HUD has approved RRHA's relocation plan which will describe the relocation process, resident rights, replacement housing options, and re-occupancy standards.
- RRHA will provide a Personal Care Manager to help residents with relocation benefits and transition services provided through the RRHA Capacity Building Office. RRHA will provide support live/transition services to all impacted residents who choose to participate.



Turn page for more information

In the re-creation of a vibrant mixed-income community, North Jackson Ward will become a community of choice, connected to Downtown Richmond and Jackson Ward. With the potential for community facilities and resources, a combination of housing with retail and commercial uses are envisioned.

Through key stakeholder meetings, design charrettes and workshops, open houses, website postings, newsletters and tours, community and resident participation is encouraged and essential to the Master Planning process. In early October, a number of meetings and Focus Groups discussed resident concerns about the revitalization.



Major themes from the Focus Groups include the following:

- Residents are generally in favor of redevelopment of public housing, but many public housing residents are concerned about affordable housing options that will be available for them
- A new mixed income community should include different types of housing and non residential uses such as a school, a grocery store and community facilities
- There is a need for better/expanded communication by RRHA; include residents in planning
- Develop and integrate human and transition services well in advance of any redevelopment
- Learn from the Blackwell experience
- Understand the historical context of the community
- Be mindful of the impacts on families

A more detailed summary of the Focus Groups will be posted on the RRHA website.

Breakout Groups discussed a number of topics, including Family and Senior Housing, Parks and Open Space, Community and Retail Facilities, Relocation and Human Services, and Neighborhood Access and Connections.

Please stay tuned to the website for information regarding upcoming meetings and workshops. An on-site Charrette/Workshop will be October 28-30. Your involvement is not only valuable but necessary and will help shape North Jackson Ward in the future!