



Community Connection



February 2021

ALLEGHENY COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

HAWKINS VILLAGE REDEVELOPMENT

Being one of the oldest family developments in the Allegheny County Housing Authority's (ACHA's) housing stock, the ACHA had plans to modernize the Hawkins Village community by replacing roofs, siding and windows to help address the much-needed capital improvements at the site. When the ACHA and its architectural team starting looking at the scope of the work, it was determined there needed to be more work than just roofs, siding and windows. This evaluation led to the submission of a low-income housing tax credit application to the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency for a low-income housing tax credit allocation.



Partnering with Pennrose Properties, LLC, PHFA announced at their August 13th Board Meeting that the application was 1 of 44 applications to receive a PHFA low-income housing tax credit allocation.

The scope of the project has dramatically changed with the demolition of the 192 units to be developed into a two-phase development which will total 54 units in the first phase and a yet to be determined number of units in the second phase. As the tax credit application was being evaluated and scored by PHFA and because the development was being proposed to be demolished, ACHA and Pennrose engaged a relocation company (Housing Opportunities Unlimited, Cameron Professional Service Group, LLC and Cameron Professional Management to assist families find housing through our Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher Programs (Section 8). ▲

~ Ed Primm

Concept - Hawkins Village Townhouse Elevation



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PERSPECTIVES

by the ACHA
Executive Director
Frank Aggazio



Dear friends, colleagues, & partners,

Who would have ever thought that in 2020 we would have to deal with a pandemic? Through it all, we were successful in meeting our core mission. Our Maintenance employees performed admirably in these uncertain times. Emergency work orders were completed. Units were made ready. Property managers determined eligibility and filled the units with families off the waiting lists. Approximately 3,000 Housing Choice Voucher landlords were paid on time on a monthly basis covering about 6,850 homes.

The ACHA recently moved its Central Office to 301 Chartiers Avenue, McKees Rocks, PA 15136. The building was funded through a grant under the Pennsylvania Redevelopment Assistance Program (RACP).

The Housing Authority was successful in 2020 obtaining tax credit funding from the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency as well as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) commitment from Allegheny County for the revitalization of Hawkins Village.

I hope that you and your families have a healthy and rewarding 2021.

Frank Aggazio



Frank Aggazio visiting with
G.W. Carver resident, Gloria Weatherspoon

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT - KEEPING IT CLEAN

The year 2020 has been a test to all ACHA departments. The Facilities Department has worked non-stop since the beginning of COVID-19 sanitizing buildings 7 days a week; these essential employees provided excellent service completing vacant units when unfortunate individuals lost the ability to afford their homes due to this pandemic. These workers truly have lived up to the Allegheny County Housing Authorities mission statement by providing a safe and affordable place to live. Residents and employee's safety are the #1 priority of the ACHA Facilities Department. ▲

~ Joe Simon



Frank Hinkle



Mike Johnson



John Schwartz



Rick Jones

CONGRATS TO A NEW HOME OWNER!

CONGRATULATIONS to Rena Wagner, a former resident of an ACHA property in Penn Hills, is now a first time new homeowner. This homeowner transaction was assisted by Lisa Baldwin, ACHA Resident Coordinator. Following this real estate deal, the home on 246 Calmar Drive went on the market. The three Bedroom home was sold to Habitat for Humanity and the closing was held on October 15th, 2020.



THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY CENTRAL OFFICE RELOCATES TO McKEES ROCKS

The Allegheny County Housing Authority Central Office has relocated to a newly constructed two-story office building on Chartiers Avenue in McKees Rocks. It's located at the intersection of Chartiers Avenue, Linden Avenue, and Furnace Street Extension - the site of the former Eat-n-Park restaurant. The new 20,000 square foot office building is now home for all agency departments. All phone contact information remains the same. Please update your records with our new physical address for your mailing purposes. ▲

~ Dean Allen



*Allegheny County Housing Authority
301 Chartiers Avenue
McKees Rocks, PA 15136*

ACHA's HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM RELOCATES TO THE HOMESTEAD WATERFRONT TRAIN STATION

On April 1, 2020 the Allegheny County Housing Authority's (ACHA) Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) was relocated to the old Homestead Train Station located at 500 Amity Street, Homestead, PA 15120 waiting the final construction of the ACHA's new building in McKees Rocks. The train station is a historic landmark and was constructed in 1907 between the railroad tracks at the entrance to the Waterfront which was the former site of US Steel's Homestead Works. Frank Aggazio and the ACHA Board of Directors are committed to servicing the Mon Valley, therefore, once the McKees Rocks facility is ready for occupancy the majority of the Section 8 Department will transfer there but the ACHA will still maintain a presence in the Mon Valley. The Train Station will be staffed by Bobby Gabbianelli the HCVP Associate Director along with five other Section 8 employees. The ACHA looks forward to the continued relationship with the Mon Valley and is committed to the areas HCVP participants.

*Allegheny County Housing Authority
Housing Choice Voucher Program
500 Amity Street
Homestead, PA 15120*

▲ ~ Bob Gabbianelli



NEW DEVELOPMENTS & UPCOMING PROJECTS

INTERIOR & EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS - Jefferson Manor

Although its roof and related equipment is being replaced under a separate contract, the building itself has received few upgrades since it was constructed in 1985. The requested design work encompasses interior Common Area and Unit upgrades such as lighting, floor and wall surface finishes, reconfiguration of kitchens and baths, new plumbing fixtures, cabinetry and Unit HVAC overhaul. The Exterior work will include entry door and related storefront replacement, landscaping and lighting with the possible addition of a new pavilion or covered extension at the Community Room. Modernization work will be bid later in 2021 and 2022.



ELEVATOR CAB IMPROVEMENTS

West Mifflin Manor & West View Tower

With modernization work at these buildings complete, the ACHA has determined the need to upgrade the elevator cab interiors in order to provide (along with new furniture in the common areas) an aesthetically clean and appealing approach to newly finished apartments within their respective buildings.



TRACTION ELEVATOR MODERNIZATIONS

Golden Towers & Springdale Manor

Under HUD procurement regulations and the auspices of ACHA and Lerch-Bates, the contractor for this project was determined to be OTIS Elevator. Construction is scheduled to begin in January 2021. Each site will be worked on simultaneously per elevator. The time of completion for both buildings is one year.



EN VISION CENTER COMES TO ACHA'S HAYS MANOR

On January 11, 2021, a virtual announcement declared the designation of a new EnVision Center for the Hays Manor Community Building located in McKees Rocks, PA. The declaration included Joe DeFelice, HUD Regional Administrator (Mid-Atlantic), Mike Horvath, HUD Pittsburgh Field Office Director, Rich Fitzgerald, Allegheny County Chief Executive Director, Frank Aggazio, Executive Director ACHA, Dr. Beverly Moore, Deputy Director ACHA, and Cindy Haines, Executive Director Focus on Renewal.

The Hays Manor EnVision Center is the 12th designation in the Mid-Atlantic Region - nationwide there are 92 Centers. The EnVision initiative was launched three years ago in an effort to connect local resources to people who need them most. EnVision Centers are centralized hubs providing people with resources and support needed to become self-sufficient and economically independent. EnVision Centers offer support for HUD assisted families access financial programs, healthcare, education opportunities, and higher paying jobs.

For a complete description of the EnVision program and services, visit <https://www.hud.gov/envisioncenters>

A video of the EnVision Virtual Meeting can be viewed on YouTube: search for "EnVision Center Virtual Announcement Hays Manor". ▲ ~ Dean Allen



Cindy Haines



Frank Aggazio & Mike Horvath

HUD SECRETARY BEN CARSON VISITS PLEASANT RIDGE

U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson commemorated the One Year Anniversary of the Foster Youth to Independence Initiative in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he met voucher recipients and held a roundtable with local leaders about the program at ACHA's Pleasant Ridge community.

Since the initiative was launched in July of 2019, 26 states have received FYI funding, equating to 677 individual vouchers, totaling over \$5.4 million in funds to prevent or end homelessness among young adults under the age of 25 who are in, or have recently left, the foster care system without a home to go to.

Secretary Carson was joined in Pittsburgh by U.S. Senator Pat Toomey (R-PA), who stated, "In many cases, those who age out of foster care systems remain in need of a helping hand. I very much appreciate Secretary Carson coming to Allegheny County today to detail the efforts he has led at HUD to make sure these young adults do not go homeless. Secretary Carson's work is to be commended and I look forward to welcoming him back to the commonwealth soon."

~ excerpts from article at www.hud.gov



DEMOLITION PREPARES A NEW TAX CREDIT FAMILY COMMUNITY

On the adjacent site where the Dorchester of Mt. Lebanon was built in 2018-2019, three (3) buildings of the former Toner Institute / St. Vincent DePaul Society remained vacant and standing - chapel, a convent, and a school/gymnasium. From 1908 to 2003, the DePaul Institute operated a nationally renowned school for the deaf and hearing impaired. DePaul relocated to Shadyside after nearly 100 years in Brookline. From 1914 to 1977 the Toner Institute operated a military-type academy/orphanage on the same campus.



The demolition phase of a future tax credit development began on June 1, 2020 with a meeting between the General Contractor, SOTA Construction, his subcontractors, Abatement Contractor, American Contracting Enterprises (ACE), the demolition Contractor, Searight Excavation Incorporated (SEI), and the Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA).



Viable materials salvaged from the buildings prior to demolition included a tall stained-glass window and terra cotta roof tile from the chapel, slate roof tile from the school/gymnasium and structural steel from all the buildings. Demolition work was performed in an organized and discreet manner, using fire hoses as necessary to mitigate dust, and stockpiling/sorting materials by type. A conscious effort was made to minimize any disturbance dust to the surrounding neighborhood. All waste materials and debris were hauled offsite while all concrete, brick, and masonry debris was stockpiled for the final phase of crushing, filling and grading. All work was complete by the end of October 2020.



A time capsule was removed from the 1949 cornerstone of the DePaul school/gymnasium building and opened to a gathering of De Paul associates, former staff & students, and interested locals on Wednesday September 16, 2020. Local WTAE news media covered the occasion.

New construction of a townhouse/apartment family community is expected to begin in the late Summer/Fall of 2021. The development team includes The Community Builders, Tai + Lee Architects, and SOTA Construction. ▲

~ Dean Allen

MASK UP, GLOVES ON:

How the ACHA Department of Resident Services is Stepping Up During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Like many Public Housing Authorities across the country, the Allegheny County Housing Authority has been faced with the challenging task of helping to keep both residents and employees safe during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. With a staff of close to 180 people, and residents across 3,300 units (not to mention the numerous health workers, family and friends, and 3rd party providers who visit ACHA sites on a daily basis), the Housing Authority could not waste any time when it came to putting plans and procedures in place to keep Covid-19 from spreading through its communities.

However, because this pandemic is something that most people have never experienced before, the job of keeping such a large organization safe was going to take creativity as well as discipline. How do you make sure that everyone is following safety protocols? How do you help residents who may not have access to items that they need to keep themselves and their families safe?

The ACHA's Department of Resident Services team, under the leadership of Deputy Executive Director Beverly Moore, isn't new when it comes to finding ways to help residents under extremely difficult circumstances. Before Covid-19 hit, the Service Coordinators were working on programs for digital literacy, financial empowerment, homebuying, and establishing Resident Councils. The pandemic forced the team to put some of those programs on hold, while they focused on helping residents to stay safe and well-informed.

Wearing gloves, masks, and face shields, Service Coordinators have gone door-to-door to hand out personal protective equipment (PPE), such as masks and gloves, to over 1200 residents across 18 different sites. Additionally, taking things a step further, Coordinators have provided a Covid-19 Resource survey to residents which inquire about needs such as food, household items, healthcare, education, technology, and financial assistance. Information on Covid-19 testing sites and where to turn for low-cost healthcare, has been placed in the common areas of family sites and senior high-rises. While it is impossible to provide every resident with everything that they need, the DRS is working to help as many residents as possible navigate our "new normal" and be prepared in the case of another mandatory quarantine.

Although the situation we are facing is serious, a bit of humor is helpful to everyone, so the DRS has found creative and fun ways to make sure that residents (and staff) are adhering to social distancing and mask rules. Anyone caught without a mask on in a common area has been given a "citation" which reminds them to stay safe, wear their mask, and be mindful of social distancing. Meanwhile, those who have made it a habit to wear their masks, have been given small prizes from the Service Coordinators as a token of appreciation.

Additionally, while Service Coordinators have always had an open-door policy with residents, because of the pandemic, they are finding new ways to meet with and assist residents. Socially distant outdoor meetings, Zoom and Google Duo meetings, and email correspondence has been helpful in assisting residents. Coordinators have also been reaching out via telephone to their senior residents and other residents in high-risk populations to do wellness checks. These calls have been something a lot of the residents have enjoyed. No one knows what life will be like a year from now, or even a month from now. But one thing we all know is that in order to beat Covid-19, everyone has to do their part to stop the spread; wearing masks and social distancing, hand washing, keeping their communities clean. The Allegheny County Housing Authority's Department of Resident Services is committed to continuing to do its part in helping to keep residents safe and informed, during this pandemic and beyond. ▲

*~ Jenny Lynn Whitley
Resident Services Coordinator*



ACHA introduces a NEW Rent Payment Option:

PAY MY RENT NOW!

Now accepting Cash App and Venmo currency transfer services.

ACHA POLICE DEPARTMENT BUSINESS

On February 14, 2020 ACHA Police Chief Mike Vogel was presented with a plaque from U.S. Attorney Scott Brady along with his 1st Assistant, U.S. Attorney Stephen Kaufman at Pittsburgh PD Headquarters. Chief Vogel was recognized for his outstanding leadership and contribution to law enforcement for his 2019 Presidency of the Western PA Chiefs of Police Association. ▲ ~ Mike Vogel



On August 5, 2020, Joe DeFelice, Regional Administrator of HUD Mid-Atlantic went for a "ride along" with ACHA's Police Chief Mike Vogel and Executive Director Frank Aggazio.



Joe DeFelice @JoeDeF... - Aug 5
Had the pleasure of joining Allegheny County Housing Auth Police, ED Frank Aggazio/Chief Mike Vogel, for a ride along thru their properties last night. Their rapport w the community they serve was exceptional. Great to talk to officers/residents about the issues they face. #HUDR3



ACHA's "EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH" for 2020

For consistently showing enthusiasm and working with an unwavering positive attitude. You've clearly made a difference. We acknowledge our appreciation. ▲

JAN Kim Evans
FEB Michael Flaherty
APR Dennis Ruffing
JUN Rena Peddicord
JUL Frank Magliocco
AUG Carmella Messmer
SEP Tanya Hunter
OCT Lou Sanchez



THANK YOU!

ACHA NEW HIRES FOR 2019 - 2020

Congratulations & Welcome to the Team!

2019

SEP	Todd Avigliano	Maintenance Aide
SEP	Honesty Baker	Property Manager
SEP	Jonathan Lutz	Maintenance Aide
NOV	John Schwartz	Maintenance Aide
DEC	Ronda Wyno	Property Manager
DEC	Andrew Carter	Police Officer
DEC	Terry McKendrick	Activities Coordinator
DEC	Marissa Catanzaro	Administrative Assistant



2020

FEB	Jacqueline Phillips	Housing Counselor
JUN	Randy Ramsey	Electrician
JUL	Nicole Williamson	Occupancy Coordinator
JUL	Anna Tanner	Criminal Records Analyst
OCT	Johnathan Backers	Occupancy Coordinator
OCT	Shadrae King	Occupancy Coordinator
DEC	Clarence Gunter, Jr.	Police Officer
DEC	Jeremy Siwicki	HVAC Technician
DEC	Dan DelBianco	HVAC Technician
DEC	Robert Gasior	Occupancy Coordinator

2021

JAN	Grant Salak	Electrician
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ACHA RETIREES for 2020

In appreciation of your years of service to the ACHA, for your commitment, hard work, and dedication to improve the quality of life for our residents. Your contributions will be missed.

APR 20 Dennis Ruffing
OCT 20 Susan Druga

THANK YOU!



ALLEGHENY COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY
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