



VT AFFORDABLE HOUSING COALITION NEWSLINK – January 18, 2008 EDITION  
a bi-monthly newsletter dedicated to Affordable Housing issues.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS

### --VAHC 2008 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Check out the final version on our website at

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/documents/resources/55\\_2008\\_legislative\\_priorities\\_1-14-08.pdf](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/documents/resources/55_2008_legislative_priorities_1-14-08.pdf).

### --VHCC LEGISLATIVE DAY

**February 27, 2008** at the Vermont Statehouse. This event is focused on full funding for VHCB. For more information contact Erhard Mahnke at [erhardm@sover.net](mailto:erhardm@sover.net) or 802.233.2902.

### --VAHC MONTHLY MEMBER MEETING

**February 13, 2008** from 9:30am-11:30am, at the Vermont Center for Independent Living, 11 State Street, Montpelier. For more information contact Danielle Rose at 802.660-9484, or [danielle@vtaffordablehousing.org](mailto:danielle@vtaffordablehousing.org).

### --REGISTER NOW FOR THE NLIHC ANNUAL HOUSING POLICY CONFERENCE & LOBBY DAY!

Visit <http://www.nlihc.org/conference/e-blast.html> for more information.

### --FREE ONSITE LAND USE WORKSHOPS

Interested in sharpening your skills as a local land use official? The Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs has reauthorized the Municipal Education Grant program. This program allows municipalities to apply for up to \$800 for use in onsite land use training and education. Staff from the VLCT Municipal Assistance Center are available to provide training in your community. To learn more or to schedule a training, please contact Dominic Cloud, at [dcloud@vlct.org](mailto:dcloud@vlct.org), or call 1-800-649-7915. For more information on the MEG program, call or email Wendy Tudor at the DHCA Planning Division: 802-828-5249, [wendy.tudor@state.vt.us](mailto:wendy.tudor@state.vt.us). VAHC encourages you to advocate locally for your town's volunteer board members to apply to receive these trainings.

### --HRC FAIR HOUSING MONTH BROWN BAG LUNCHES

The Vermont Human Rights Commission would like to sponsor a brown bag lunch gathering each week during April (Fair Housing Month) around Vermont. They are not sure if they would do 1 or 2 each week on a specific day –depending on the interest. It would be hosted by a staff HRC staff member and would be a quick intro and Q & A. Some handouts would be available. If your organization would be interested in having one of these events please let them know or if you know a place in your

community that would be a good place to hold a gathering that would also be helpful. Contact Ellen Maxon, [ellen.maxon@state.vt.us](mailto:ellen.maxon@state.vt.us), (802)828-2494.

--CITIZENS BANK FOUNDATION 2008 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM

Grants for \$3,000-\$8,000 to support community development. See more information here

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/documents/resources/46\\_technical\\_assistance\\_grant.pdf](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/documents/resources/46_technical_assistance_grant.pdf).

--VCDP GRANTS MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE TRAINING

**February 21, 2008** in White River Junction, VT, and **March 13, 2008** in Rutland. These workshops are for grantees and administrators to learn more about managing and working with current grants and on-going projects. To provide opportunity for more of one-on-one basis to get your questions answered. These training will be focused for newer staff to guide them through the VCDP Grant process from Requisitions, Progress Reports, Monitoring Expectations, and Program Closeouts. To attend contact Coleen Krauss, 802.828.5211, [coleen.krauss@state.vt.us](mailto:coleen.krauss@state.vt.us).

--HUD CONSOLIDATED PLAN HEARING

**January 23, 2008**, 2:30 PM-4:00 PM at the DHCA Offices, Calvin Coolidge Room, 6th Floor, 1 National Life Drive, Montpelier, VT. Contact Arthur Hamlin at [Arthur.hamlin@state.vt.us](mailto:Arthur.hamlin@state.vt.us) for more information.

--NAMI LEGISLATIVE DAY

**January 29, 2008** from 8:00-11:30am at the State House in Montpelier. NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Vermont. For more info, contact NAMI at 800.639.6480 or [namivt@verizon.net](mailto:namivt@verizon.net).

--WILLARD MILL RIBBON CUTTING

**January 29, 2008**, 1:00pm at 25 Stowell St., St. Albans, VT. CHT and Housing Vermont would like to invite you to the Willard Mill Ribbon Cutting. For more information and to RSVP, contact Dot Bechard at 802.863.8424 or [Dot@hvt.org](mailto:Dot@hvt.org).

--NEW PARTNERS FOR SMART GROWTH: BUILDING SAFE, HEALTHY, AND LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

**February 7-9, 2008**, at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, D.C. For more information contact Michele Kelso Warren, Local Government Commission, [mkwarren@lgc.org](mailto:mkwarren@lgc.org) or visit [www.newpartners.org](http://www.newpartners.org).

--PUBLIC HEARING: FISCAL YEAR 2009 STATE BUDGET

**February 11, 2008** from 4:30p-7:00p. The House and Senate Appropriations Committees will hold a joint public hearing on Vermont Interactive Television (V.I.T.) to give Vermonters throughout the state an opportunity to express their views about the State budget for fiscal year 2009. All V.I.T. sites will be available for the hearing: Bennington, Brattleboro, Castleton, Johnson, Lyndonville, Middlebury, Montpelier,

Newport, Randolph Center, Rutland, Springfield, St. Albans, Waterbury, White River Junction and Williston. V.I.T.'s web site at [www.vitlink.org](http://www.vitlink.org) has an up-to-date location listing, including driving directions, addresses and telephone numbers. For information about the format of this event, interested parties may call the House Appropriations Committee office at 802-828-2251.

--2008 ANNUAL HOUSING POLICY CONFERENCE AND LOBBY DAY

**February 25-26, 2008** in Washington, D.C. join hundreds of advocates, including residents and NLIHC's state partners, at this important gathering in the nation's capital. Detailed conference information and registration materials are available at [www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org).

--USDA-RD GUARANTEED FINANCING ONLINE TRAINING SEMINAR

**February 26, 2008, 10:00 AM** More information: Sharon Lafley, USDA-RD, 802.828.6015 or [Sharon.lafley@vt.usda.gov](mailto:Sharon.lafley@vt.usda.gov).

--BUILDING BARRIER FREE ENVIRONMENTS: A CONFERENCE ON UNIVERSAL DESIGN

**April 24, 2008**, at the Doubletree Hotel, South Burlington, VT. For more information contact Joyce Werntgen, Vermont Center for Independent Living, 802.229.6414, [joywert@vcil.org](mailto:joywert@vcil.org).

--2008 VERMONT STATEWIDE HOUSING CONFERENCE

**November 18, 2008**, at the Sheraton Hotel & Conference Center, South Burlington, VT Vermont's biennial gathering of housing professionals. For more information contact John Fairbanks, VHFA, 802.652.3424, [jfairbanks@vhfa.org](mailto:jfairbanks@vhfa.org) or visit [www.vhfa.org/conference](http://www.vhfa.org/conference).

Have an Announcement or Event you'd like to see here? Email it to [danielle@vtaffordablehousing.org](mailto:danielle@vtaffordablehousing.org)

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## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Have a Job Opportunity you'd like to see here? Email it to [Danielle@vtaffordablehousing.org](mailto:Danielle@vtaffordablehousing.org)

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## FEDERAL NEWS

--SIDE BY SIDE OF SENATE AND HOUSE TRUST FUND BILLS

A side-by-side comparison of S. 2523, the Senate's National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act, with H.R. 2895, the House version, has been posted to NLIHC's website. The Senate bill was introduced on December 19, 2007 (see *Memo*, 12/21/07) and has been referred to the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs. The House passed its bill on October 10, 2007 (see *Memo*, 10/12/07).

The House and Senate bills are very similar, but there are a few key differences.

- Small state minimum. The House bill requires that each state get at least one-half of 1% of the total funds allocated no matter the amount formula distribution would give to smaller states. The Senate bill requires 1%.
- Formula factor. The Senate bill adds an additional factor to be considered in devising the allocation formula: the relationship between the median family income for the area and the fair market rent.
- Income targeting. Both bills require that at least 75% of funds benefit households with income at or below 30% area median income, and the remaining can be used for households with income up to 80% of AMI. The House bill requires that at least 10% of the funds be used for households with income of 50% AMI or more. The Senate bill does not contain this requirement.
- Income targeting when fund is less than \$2 billion a year. In the House bill, the upper limit of income targeting is 60% AMI in years in which the fund is less than \$2 billion; in the Senate bill, it is 50% AMI.
- Review of income targeting requirements. Both the House and Senate bills require a review of the income targeting by the HUD Secretary with a report to Congress, but the Senate requires the review by 2010, and the House by 2012.

The side-by-side can be accessed at [www.nlihc.org/doc/NHTF-side-by-side-Sen-House.pdf](http://www.nlihc.org/doc/NHTF-side-by-side-Sen-House.pdf).

Jan 11 2008—NLIHC Memo to Members  
<http://www.nlihc.org/pubs/issue.cfm>

--WRAP UP OF LEGISLATION IN FIRST SESSION OF 110<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

This Memo to Members provides an excellent wrap up of legislation for key housing topics. View it here: <http://www.nlihc.org/doc/Memo13-1.pdf>

--HAC LAUNCHES NEW RURAL HOMELESSNESS CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM.

Offering technical assistance, audio-web trainings, and online information for organizations serving rural homeless populations, RHCB is operated by HAC with help from the National Alliance to End Homelessness. Selected organizations working in high need communities will also receive grants to pursue capacity building activities. Visit <http://www.ruralhome.org/rhcbindex2.php> or contact RHCB staff at 1-877-842-RHCB or [RHCBinfo@ruralhome.org](mailto:RHCBinfo@ruralhome.org).

Jan 16 2007—HAC News  
<http://www.ruralhome.org/infoNews.php>

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TOP 20 HOUSING NEWS STORIES

--GOVERNORS PUSH BROAD AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLANS

Vermont Governor James Douglas in his State of the State address [proposed](#) implementing new programs to boost affordable housing by making it easier to have new homes permitted and give tax incentives to first time homeowners who want to reinvest in redevelopment of the upper-floor space in commercial/office buildings in urban centers.

Jan 17 2008—Progressive States Network

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=113&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=113&category=)

#### --BALTIMORE FINDS SUBPRIME CRISIS SNAGS WOMEN

Single women have been among the fastest-growing groups of homeowners in recent years, and in Baltimore they accounted for 40 percent of home sales in 2006, twice the national average, according to the [National Association of Realtors](#).

Jan 15 2008—New York Times

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=119&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=119&category=)

#### --WHY HOUSING TRUST FUNDS AREN'T JUST ABOUT HOUSING

In 2004, more than 80% of home ownership tax subsidies went to the top two-fifths of this country's earners. We're already spending tons of public of money on housing — that is, housing for those who already have it.

Jan 15 2008—Movement Vision Lab

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=114&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=114&category=)

#### --LEAK AT PARK FORCES WATER BOIL ORDER

The Green Mountain Mobile Home Park is under a boil order until further notice after a leaky pipe left residents without water for six days. According to Antoinette Todd, a park resident and member of the local affordable housing committee, the leak sprung Jan. 4, a Friday morning.

Jan 14 2008—Bennington Banner

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=103&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=103&category=)

#### --DEALING WITH THE FORECLOSURE CRISIS AT THE STATE LEVEL

The statistics are shocking. The current mortgage crisis is expected to result in the [foreclosure](#) of 3 million homes. In Stockton, CA, one in every 27 homes [has been hit by](#) the foreclosure crisis. And, Countryside, the largest U.S. mortgage lender, [just released](#) figures showing that foreclosures and late payments rose in December to the highest on record.

Jan 14 2008—Progressive States Network

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=112&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=112&category=)

#### --VT DODGES WORST OF HOUSING SLUMP

Economists are giving fifty-fifty odds that the United States will slip into a recession this year. Recession is defined as two consecutive quarters of negative economic growth. As Vermont has grown closer to national economic trends over the past few decades, it means that we'll feel the pain all the more at times when the economy turns down. And that's what's happening right now.

Jan 11 2008—WCAX-TV News

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=104&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=104&category=)

#### --VT LAWMAKERS WILL LOOK TO EASE HOUSING CRUNCH

With home ownership increasingly out of reach for many Vermonters, key lawmakers are pledging to consider proposals aimed at spurring the development of affordable housing in Vermont. But as the 2008 legislative session begins, so too does the push-and-pull between environmental advocates and would-be developers seeking to find a middle ground that will allow Vermont's housing stock to expand.

Jan 08 2008—Times Argus

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=105&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=105&category=)

#### --HOUSES AVAILABLE IN MIDDLEBURY PROJECT

Ludy Biddle has 24 more houses to move. The executive director of NeighborWorks of Western Vermont said Wednesday that three of the 27 houses the organization is building in the Middlebury South Village have sold. The affordable housing project is one of several in which NeighborWorks is involved.

Jan 04 2008—Rutland Herald

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=106&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=106&category=)

#### --STATE CALLS FOR MORATORIUM ON HOME FORECLOSURES

Not surprisingly, the Bush Administration's proposal for fixing the subprime lending crisis is [an industry-led deal](#) that involves completely voluntary actions to fix the current crisis and will ultimately help only a few of the millions of people who have either lost or are in danger of losing their homes.

Jan 03 2008—Progressive States Network

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=99&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=99&category=)

#### --VERMONT BANKRUPTCIES UP SHARPLY IN 2007

Bankruptcies in Vermont are on the rise again, surging 40 percent in 2007, reflecting in part the mortgage crisis that has swept the country with its resulting foreclosures, according to several bankruptcy lawyers in the state. As of the close of business on Friday, U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Rutland reported 871 cases filed in 2007 compared to 620 cases filed the previous year. While bankruptcies increased significantly in 2007, the number of cases remain far below the record year of 2005 when 2,616 cases were filed.

Jan 03 2008—Times Argus

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=100&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=100&category=)

#### --‘HOUSE LUST’ HITS HOME

Down the block from my home, workmen are finishing a new house. It replaces a bungalow that had measured about 1,500 square feet. The new home has a covered front porch, two fireplaces and a finished basement. It comes in at just under 5,700 square feet. What is it with Americans and their homes?

Jan 02 2008—Washington Post

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=102&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=102&category=)

#### --APPLETREE POINT HOUSING PROJECT DRAWS FIRE

Plans for big, new housing developments in urban areas have always generated opposition from neighbors -- and Burlington's New North End is no exception. But Bill Niquette says his plan to build senior housing makes sense, and that his experience redeveloping Winooski's downtown makes him confident this controversial project will be built.

Jan 02 2008—WCAX-TV News

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=107&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=107&category=)

#### --ARCHITECTS BRING HIGH DESIGN TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Public housing used to mean fortress-like blocks and soulless rows of cheaply built townhouses. But now there's a new model: privately developed homes and apartments that are well-designed, well-built and attractive enough to win over wary neighbors. A growing number of architects, from established stars to ambitious up-and-comers, are looking to such projects as an opportunity to do innovative work.

Dec 31 2007—Wall Street Journal

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=116&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=116&category=)

#### --THE END OF SPRAWL?

The collapse in the housing market and high gasoline prices are bad news for middle-class homeowners left to sift through the wreckage. But if there is consolation to be found amid the rubble, it may be that the inexorable spreading out that has characterized American life since World War II might finally be coming to an end. Given the connections between car-dependent suburban development and social ills from climate change and the destruction of wetlands to obesity and social isolation, the end can come none too soon.

Dec 30 2007—The Washington Post

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=115&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=115&category=)

#### --HIGHLAND OXFORD HOUSE NEEDS HELP

The Highland Oxford House in Barre is facing a financial crisis due to the increased cost of heating oil. We are soliciting donations to insure that the house remains a viable alternative for those in recovery from addiction. The Oxford House is a nationwide nonprofit organization that provides a sober and safe place to live for individuals who are in recovery from the disease of addiction. Residents enjoy a safe and healthy living environment in exchange for a promise to stay clean and sober and be an employed and productive member of society.

Dec 26 2007—Times Argus

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=108&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=108&category=)

#### --AMERICA'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS

With nearly half of the country's lowest-income families at risk of homelessness, the nation faces an affordable housing crisis. Xavier de Souza Briggs and Lawrence J. Vale, professors at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, discuss why the availability of affordable housing is decreasing and explain the drawbacks of — and advantages to — mixed-income housing projects.

Dec 26 2007—NPR

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=117&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=117&category=)

#### --FACING INMATE OVERFLOW, STATE STARTS LOOKING FOR ALTERNATIVES

For almost two decades, the Vermont Corrections Department has grappled with ever larger numbers of inmates being sent their way. New prisons have been built, cutting-edge social programs designed to keep people from needing prison have been implemented and inmates have been sent to other states for long-term, less expensive housing.

Dec 24 2007—Boston.com

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=109&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=109&category=)

#### --DOING WHAT'S RIGHT, NOT WHAT'S EASY

It was, according to Rita Markley, one of the most "pivotal milestones" in the history of the Committee on Temporary Shelter. She was speaking to a crowd gathered last month inside St. John's Hall, which provides housing for the homeless at a converted bingo hall on Elmwood Avenue. People connected to the organization better known as COTS gathered to celebrate the work of Sister Lucille Bonvouloir, Markley's predecessor as COTS executive director during the St. John's Hall project in the late 1980s and early '90s.

Dec 23 2007—Burlington Free Press

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=110&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=110&category=)

#### --HOUSEBOUND: WHY HOMEOWNERSHIP MAY BE BAD FOR AMERICA

For decades, owning a home has been one of the safest and most profitable investments an American could make, and the country has been alive to the fact. Households in the United States, taken together, spend nearly all that they earn, and save next to nothing. It is thanks only to high homeownership and rising home prices that they have seen their net worth grow. The nation's housing has been both its savings and a key enabler of economic expansion: The long boom in house prices powered consumption that would otherwise have seemed unaffordable. That is why falling house prices—something that the country as a whole has not witnessed since the 1930s—are hurting so much, and why they pose such a danger to the economy.

Dec 2007—Atlantic Monthly

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=101&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=101&category=)

#### --LA TO OFFER HOUSING TO 50 'MOST VULNERABLE' PEOPLE

Hidden behind L.A.'s facade of glitz and glamour is one of the worst homeless problems in the country. The surveys are part of the county's most recent attempt to address the issue. "Project 50" is oriented around combating chronic homelessness by identifying the 50 people on the streets who are the most vulnerable and then moving them into apartments.

Dec 19 2007—NPR

[http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news\\_item.php?id=118&category=](http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/news_item.php?id=118&category=)

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## **ABOUT THE VT AFFORDABLE HOUSING COALITION**

The coalition is committed to ensuring that all Vermonters have decent, safe and affordable housing, particularly in the state's low and moderate-income residents, elders and people with disabilities. The Coalition's 65 plus members represent most of Vermont's non-profit affordable housing developers, community land trusts, housing and homeless advocacy groups, public housing authorities, regional planners, funders, state agencies, and other organizations and individuals with an interest in affordable housing.

Thank you to our members and friends for continued support.

If you have not paid dues this year or would like to become a member, please email Sarah Wendell Launderville at [sdwhap@vcil.org](mailto:sdwhap@vcil.org) or call at 800-639-1522.

If you have questions or comments about this NEWSLINK, please email [Danielle@vtaffordablehousing.org](mailto:Danielle@vtaffordablehousing.org) or call at 802-660-9484