

HUD Secretary Visits Savannah



Secretary Donovan addresses local media in front of Wessels Homes.

HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan visited Savannah on January 9th to roll out HUD's new national Rental Assistance Demonstration Program (RAD). RAD is a pilot program that will allow public housing authorities to convert their public housing properties to long term Section 8 Rental Assistance contracts. RAD is a central part of HUD's rental housing preservation strategy, which works to preserve the nation's stock of deeply affordable rental housing.

HAS applied for the conversion of four of its public housing communities in September 2012 and received approval of all four

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

East Lake Visit	Page 3
PBC Conference	Page 4
ESG Resident Interview	Page 5
Developer for Hitch	Page 6
Partner Spotlight	Page 7

applications in January. Georgia was among the leaders in the nation for number of applications received and Savannah was selected to host the Secretary's RAD implementation event.



For the CNI planning process, this is significant. Two of the HAS neighborhoods, Fred Wessels Homes and Edgar Blackshear Homes, fall within the East Savannah Gateway. Fred Wessels Homes neighbors the as-yet developed Robert Hitch Village property and will be in the epicenter of redevelopment activity to be outlined in the Transformation Plan. East Savannah Gateway residents of the Wessels and Blackshear neighborhoods will become voucher holders with the subsidy tied to their units, similar to the traditional Project Based voucher program.

Continue to Page 2 for more on the Secretary's visit.



Secretary Donovan poses with HAS executive staff following the roundtable discussion on January 9th.

HAS is hopeful and excited about the new program and the potential for additional innovative financing opportunities for these neighborhoods with more flexibility than is provided with traditional public housing. The events of the day included a roundtable discussion at the HAS Neighborhood Resource Center with the Secretary and public, private and housing leaders from across the state of Georgia that included HAS Executive Director Earline Davis and Savannah Mayor Edna Jackson; followed by a local press conference at RAD site Wessels Homes; and a national media conference call.



Secretary Donovan and Mayor Edna Jackson before the roundtable.



Please visit www.hud.gov for more information regarding the RAD Program.

CNI Team Hits the Road

Several members of the East Savannah Gateway Transformation Team spent some time in Atlanta this fall in the name of research. The Transformation Team was hosted by fellow planning partner Purpose Built Communities over a few days in September and October. On September 26th, a group of approximately twenty-five team members, including many East Savannah Gateway residents, took a day trip to Atlanta to visit the Villages of East Lake. In the mid-1990s, Atlanta's public housing community East Lake Meadows was known as "Little Vietnam" because of the rampant crime and violence. Today, thanks to the vision, generosity and planning of Tom Cousins and many others, the Villages of East Lake has been touted by many as *the* holistic model for neighborhood revitalization. The community includes the highest performing charter school in the state of Georgia, the Drew Charter School and a neighborhood YMCA.

After being welcomed by the Purpose Built Communities team and hearing the story of East Lake's revitalization, the team took a tour of the Villages of East Lake and the Drew Charter School. The tours were followed by a question and answer group discussion with Greg Giornelli, the President and COO of Purpose Built Communities.



The team touring a model apartment.



ESG Resident Gloria Richardson is ready to move in.



Team members pose outside of the Leasing Office at East Lake.



Greg Giornelli answers questions.

In Atlanta...



On October 3-5, team members traveled again to attend the Third Annual Purpose Built Communities Conference in Atlanta. Everyone who was a part of these two days left incredibly inspired for what is possible here in Savannah and what the far reaching impact can be for our planning process. The conference included speakers: Erskine Bowles, Governor Roy Barnes, Dr. Bernice A. King and Mike Feinburg. Sessions focused on education, community building, financing and food deserts. Nearly 250 other community advocates from twenty-six cities joined the Transformation Team at the Conference. **Thank you to our wonderful hosts Purpose Built Communities and your partnership in our planning process. Your organization inspires all of us!**



Mike Feinburg, the President of KIPP Schools .



Neighborhood and People staff liaisons Monifa Johnson and Yolanda Fontaine.

Meet East Savannah Gateway Resident Juliet Wade



ESG Resident Juliet Wade poses outside of the NRC after a planning meeting.

Fred Wessels Homes resident Juliet Wade has been living in the East Savannah Gateway for nearly five years. Before moving to Fred Wessels Homes in February, Ms. Wade lived in Edgar Blackshear Homes. She is the proud mother of two boys, 19 and 20 years old. During her five years living in Blackshear, Ms. Wade has been active in her community. She is the current president of the HAS resident organization Neighborhood Residents at Work, Inc., a position she has held since 2011. For the past four years, she has been a member of the HAS strategic planning body, the Resident Advisory Board. She served as Chairman of that Board for the 2011-2012 planning year. She has also been an active member of the Blackshear Homes Residents Association and currently serves as the Vice President. She hopes to get involved in Wessels Resident activities once she settles in.

Ms. Wade shared some of her ideas for the planning process and the new development that is expected in the area. She loves the design of the City of Savannah's Savannah Gardens, located in the ESG on Pennsylvania Avenue. With the streets and park, she says "it looks like a home you want to live in." This simple vision is what captures her imagination for what is possible at the Robert Hitch Village site, next door to her new home. She also looks to Ashley Midtown as another example in the ESG of what is possible in her backyard.

Ms. Wade sees the necessity of community resource and counseling centers in the new community and organizations like St. Pius, which provide services to youth, seniors and those in need. Ms. Wade especially stresses the importance of having centers that meet the needs of youth to build their self-esteem. She sees healthy competition such as sports leagues in the area helping youth to grow in a beneficial way. Ms. Wade encourages her friends and neighbors and fellow community members to attend meetings in 2013 to let their voice be heard.

Master Developer for Hitch Village Announced

HAS is extremely excited to announce that the Hunt Development Group and TCG (The Communities Group) Team will be the master developer of the former Robert Hitch Village property, a cornerstone of the Transformation Plan. The Housing Taskforce will begin to move in a new direction as the development team comes on board.

The contract was awarded in November 2012 and the HUNT-TCG team is eager to get to work in Savannah. The vision for the former Robert Hitch Village public housing neighborhood is to be a vibrant mixed-use, mixed-income community providing connectivity between the Wheaton Street Corridor and the historic Savannah downtown.

The team led by Sinclair Cooper (the Hunt Group) and Jaime Bordenave (TCG) will be in Savannah on February 13th for a meet and greet with the Transformation Team. Mark your calendars and plan to drop by between 4:00-5:30 PM at the HAS Neighborhood Resource Center.



Hunt Companies, Inc. is a real estate company dedicated to building values through development, investment, and management. Hunt is focused in the core areas of public private partnership, military housing, community development, real asset investment management and multifamily housing. Founded in 1947, Hunt is headquartered in El Paso, Texas, with 1,100 employees in regional offices throughout North America and Europe. Together, Hunt and its affiliates have more than \$13 billion in assets under management, including 144,583 multi-family housing units and 8.3 million square feet of office, retail and industrial properties. Hunt has also developed 89,000 housing units, over 1 million square feet of commercial space and thousands of acres of land. Development project costs have totaled more than \$6.3 billion with more than \$8.2 billion in construction costs. Visit www.huntcompanies.com to learn more about Hunt, its heritage and commitment to values that build.



Established in 1984, The Communities Group (TCG) is a professional consulting firm specializing in the provision of housing and urban development-related training and technical assistance services. TCG works both in the United States and overseas in developing countries-bringing its domestic experience to developing countries, and vice-versa. TCG is unique in the field of affordable housing because it actively engages on all levels—from financial resource identification, sourcing, and mobilization, to master planning, undertaking redevelopment projects on the ground, and policy formation with HUD Washington, D.C. TCG has led the planning and implementation of 15 HOPE VI redevelopment efforts, and has assisted eleven public housing authorities receive a Choice Neighborhoods Planning grant.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



For 123 years, Savannah State University has been an important part of higher education. As the oldest public HBCU in Georgia and the oldest institution of higher learning in the city of Savannah, SSU has served this community with distinction while meeting the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population.

The 200+ acre campus is by far the most picturesque in the state of Georgia. The moss-laden sweeping oak trees, expansive marsh and historic architecture create a resplendent yet tranquil atmosphere. Beneath the beauty and splendor is a vibrant residential campus bursting at the seams with the vim and vigor of quality collegiate life: relevant academic majors, engaging lectures, cutting-edge research, quality student-faculty engagement and a nurturing environment.

SSU carries out its mission and purpose through three colleges and other support offices: Business, Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, and Science and Technology; the University Library, the Office of Enrollment Management, the Office of ACCESS Programs, the Office of Graduate Studies and Sponsored Research, the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Academic Support, and the Campus Radio Station.

Information provided by SSU Website www.savannahstate.edu

Dr. Deden Rukmana is an Assistant Professor at SSU and has been an invaluable resource in the Choice Neighborhoods Planning process. Dr. Rukmana has continued to serve on the Neighborhood and People Taskforces in preparing and providing guidance in survey and data collection. Thanks to Dr. Rukmana for your insight and time.

YOUTH COMMISSION

HAS Development Services Assistant Jermaine Durham has created a Youth Commission to address planning issues with young people living the East Savannah Gateway. The first event was a pizza party held at Blackshear Homes Community Center in December.

Please contact Jermaine at (912) 235-5800 ext. 150 or jdurham@savannahpha.com to get involved!





**CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE PLANNING GRANT
FOR EAST SAVANNAH GATEWAY NEIGHBORHOOD**

**CNI PLANNING TASKFORCE MEETINGS
HAS NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCE CENTER
1407 WHEATON STREET**

The Housing Authority of Savannah is a FY 2011 Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Planning Grantee and in the process of developing a Transformation Plan for the East Savannah Gateway target area that includes Fred Wessels & Edgar Blackshear Homes. Monthly Taskforce meetings are ongoing in the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Planning Grant process in the areas of Housing, People and Neighborhood. All meetings take place at 1407 Wheaton Street. Regular meetings are held as follows: Housing on the first Thursday of the month at 9:00 AM; Neighborhood on the second Wednesday of the month at 9:00 AM; People on the second Wednesday of the month at 10:00 AM. Come get involved!

Urban Collage, Inc.
Qualtel Consulting Corporation
The Communities Group
Housing Authority of Savannah
OCTOBER, 2012



1407 Wheaton Street
Savannah, GA 31404
912.235.5800
www.savannahpha.com
Earline Wesley Davis, Executive Director

*For more information about CNI, contact Tammy Brawner.
(912) 235-5800 ext. 116 | taltizer@savannahpha.com*