



COLUMBUS CITY COUNCIL

TAVARES TIMES NEWS

From the Office of Councilmember Charleta B. Tavares

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WELCOME

As many of our fellow residents continue to struggle with maintaining housing during these current economic conditions, I have included information on several important City social service and housing partners to help keep people in their home. As chair of Council's Health & Human Development, and Housing Committees, I am committed to doing everything possible to prevent relocating and disrupting the lives of families experiencing financial hardships due to loss of jobs or issues of health.

Two important agencies, National Church Residences and Heritage Day Health Centers, have merged to better provide housing and support services to elderly and/or lower-income residents. Read more about how these two City partners help bring stability to peoples' lives on page two. Keeping people in their homes in a safe and secure environment is also a main focus of Visitability.

Recently I recognized a week in May as Visitability Awareness Week. Read more about this important initiative on page three.

Thank you for taking the time to read about the activities from Columbus City Hall. Please remember never to hesitate to contact my office by calling (614) 645-8580 with your comments, questions or concerns.



Sincerely,
Charleta B. Tavares
Charleta B. Tavares

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SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT



Columbus City Council will continue their partnership with COWIC (the Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation) and the Franklin County Board of Commissioners this summer. COWIC aims to break the cycle of low-wage and high turn-over employment for youth, ages 14-24, coming from low-income homes facing additional barriers to employment. Through the Summer Youth Employment Program, they place young adults into high demand/ high growth occupations. Young people can then transfer their newly acquired skills into year-round academic and vocational training in pursuit of advance training and skill

certifications after their summer program is complete. The program has two tracks, one for students still enrolled in school, and another for youth and young adults who are not enrolled in school.

This program gives young people opportunities to work in structured environments - such as community camps, senior centers, schools, libraries, recreational facilities, and with private sector employers representing high growth industries. These experiences have promoted the youth's understanding of work ethics and employer expectations. These internships also serve as a vehicle to develop strategies for post-secondary opportunities, link academic and occupational learning, and connect youth to the local job market.

If you are a young person, or your organization is interested in hosting a student intern, please visit www.cowic.org or call (614) 559-5052.

COMMONS AT LIVINGSTON



east elevation phase 1
0110-0110

Rendering of Commons at Livingston

In May 2010, Columbus City Councilmember Charleta B. Tavares sponsored legislation that authorized the Director of the Department of Development to enter into an agreement with The Commons at Livingston Housing Limited Partnership and will be developed by National Church Residences (NCR).

"This project emphasizes our commitment to our community to end homelessness and support those who have supported and defended our democracy," said Tavares. "In the week before Memorial Day it is only befitting that we honor and support our Veterans

with the groundbreaking of this new permanent supportive housing facility".

The proposed project will consist of 50 one-bedroom apartment units designated for low-income, single and disabled veterans, with rent subsidy coming from the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority's (CMHA) project-based "housing choice" vouchers and 50 formerly homeless residents.

"The Commons at Livingston will be NCR's fourth permanent supportive housing community, all of which serve the people of Columbus," said NCR President and CEO Thomas W. Slemmer. "The Commons at Livingston will be operated in conjunction with the Veterans Administration, and in partnership with CMHA. NCR is proud to serve the housing and social service needs of our community's veterans."

The Commons at Livingston is being developed as part of the Rebuilding Lives initiative to provide permanent supportive housing for homeless persons and those at risk of being homeless. The Commons at Livingston is the first project under the City of Columbus' new five year commitment to provide \$6 million in funding over a five year period for the development of additional units under this program. It is anticipated that \$3 million of the \$6 million commitment will be provided from bond funds with the remaining funds to come from the City's allocation of HOME Investment Partnership Funds and/or Neighborhood Stabilization Funds. Funding is from the Rebuilding Lives Fund – 2010 Capital Improvements Budget.

The Commons at Livingston will be located adjacent to another City of Columbus supported social service provider, Heritage Adult Day Services' Livingston Avenue campus. NCR and Heritage merged operations in 2008.

HERITAGE DAY HEALTH CENTERS

Heritage Day Health Centers (HDHC) provide comprehensive adult day services Monday thru Saturday to adults with cognitive and physical impairments. This important City partner is part of a continuum of community based care that strives to keep frail, elderly and/or impaired adults in their own homes instead of nursing homes. Adult day services are an effective alternative to nursing home placement and a cost-effective alternative to home care and assisted living.

HDHC has been providing services to the central Ohio community for over 20 years enabling clients to live more independently, while providing relief to their caregivers. Agency activities and services are designed not only to maintain adults' physical health, but to add new dimensions to their lives by helping them rediscover avenues of social, creative and recreational enjoyment. "Columbus has been a national leader in Adult Day care/services through Heritage Day Health and its founder Bonnie Walson," said Health and Human Development chair, Council member Charleta Tavares.

HDHC has a commitment to intergenerational programming. The elderly and young can have special connections that broaden their daily and life experience. They believe in fostering relationships between youth and clients in a variety of ways and through appropriate programming. HDHC encourages and organizes intergenerational activities as part of service learning with our area schools and universities.

For more information on Heritage Day Health Centers and services offered, please visit www.heritagedayhealth.org or call (614) 236-0586.

VISITABILITY AWARENESS WEEK



Mayor Michael B. Coleman, Visitability Strategy Workgroup Member Brent Simmons, Councilmember Charleta B. Tavares and Councilmember Priscilla R. Tyson with Visitability Awareness Week Resolution.

Columbus City Council, Franklin County Board of Commissioners, and the Ohio House of Representatives recently recognized Visitability Awareness Week. Visitability is a design approach for integrating three basic accessibility features - a zero-step entrance on an accessible path of travel; doorways that are at least 32 inches clear throughout the floor plan and basic wheelchair access to a bathroom on the accessible floor - into all newly built homes and housing.

"Visitability isn't just for people who are disabled now, it is about building sustainable communities and planning for the future," said Columbus City Councilmember Charleta Tavares who sponsored the City resolution. "Almost everyone will find these accommodations helpful, and they are necessary when you or someone you care about has a mobility impairment that is either temporary or permanent."

Incorporating these features into a home allows a mobility impaired person to be able to get into the house and visit for a time. While not providing full accessibility, these basic

elements can also allow a person who becomes mobility impaired to live in a visitable house until more appropriate living arrangements or modifications can be made.

A number of federal, state and local laws address accessibility in residential structures. Each has its own restrictions, funding peculiarities and limits on the number of accessible units that get built. Visitability can penetrate the barriers of these often overlapping laws and create the more newly accessible units.

There are many myths about basic access in single family housing, e.g.: that the cost is prohibitive; that doors which create a 32" clearance are not available, forcing the builder to use a 36" door, which increases corridor width and drives up costs. But the most common myth is that a ramp is required to provide the no-step entry.

Questions about cost are put to rest in several studies which indicate that the cost of access is less than 1% of the construction cost. Other case studies demonstrate that visitability can be attained for no added cost to up to \$600 dollars. Appropriately sized doors are readily available and ramps are rarely the solution in a new build, but as Councilmember Tavares pointed out during the resolution presentation, "they are often the only solution in a retrofit."

Visitability allows for "aging in place" for those who choose to remain in their homes as increasing disabilities limit their ability to get around in a conventional house. Statistics compiled by the Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University predict that by 2020, the number of Ohioans 60 and older will increase 44%, to 2,822,000 people. Noting that disability increases with age, only 3% of 60-69 year-olds have a severe disability compared with 44% of those over 90 years old. The Ohio Department of Aging supports visitability as a key element in Ohio's public policies. Nationally, the AARP is a leading advocate for the concept.

The cost to design with visitability standards is not significant when compared to the cost of later retrofitting a house with these features, a large portion of which is ultimately borne by taxpayers. In addition to preventing slips and falls that are a hazard to older people negotiating steps, there is also evidence that these features increase the value of the house. Many other states and jurisdictions have incorporated visitability into their housing approval process. Statewide and local visitability initiatives are in place in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Texas, Virginia, Vermont, Minnesota, New Mexico, Kansas, Illinois, Oregon, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Michigan and Toledo, Ohio.

In late 2006, Council member Tavares convened a group of advocates, stakeholders, state staff, and City of Columbus officials together to discuss the idea of proposing a visitability initiative for the State of Ohio. "Since our first meeting we have pursued ways to implement a statewide visitability regulation for all newly constructed homes. Now we are spreading the word, and asking you to help us educate other advocates, stakeholders, and government officials, stated Council member Tavares.

The Ohio Visitability Strategy Workgroup asks you to "spread the word!" If your organization would like to pass a resolution supporting Visitability or to become involved, please visit www.visitabilityohio.org.



COLUMBUS CITY COUNCIL

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OFFICE OF MINORITY HEALTH RECOGNIZED



(L to R) Michael Johnson, Councilmember Priscilla R. Tyson, Councilmember Charleta B. Tavares, Cheryl Boyce, Druelton Bagley, John Tolbert, Karen Jiobu and Columbus Office of Minority Health Program Director Ryan Johnson.

Health and Human Development Committee Chair Charleta B. Tavares recently sponsored resolution 0074X-2010 to recognize the Office of Minority Health of Columbus Public Health for its effort in communicating and addressing health disparities in minority communities. The core functions of the Columbus Office of Minority Health are to work with internal programs and related government agencies to monitor health status; inform, educate, and empower community members.

LEGISLATIVE WATCH

ELIMINATING BLIGHT IN AREA NEIGHBORHOODS: In response to the housing mortgage crisis, the city of Columbus was awarded \$22,845,495 of Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The funds will be used to acquire foreclosed or abandoned properties for redevelopment, rehabilitation or demolition in order to stabilize area neighborhoods and eliminate blight. The Land Redevelopment Office acquired the properties and held the titles in the Land Bank pursuant to the Land Reutilization Program and NSP. Housing Committee Chair Charleta B. Tavares recently sponsored two ordinances that will transfer the titles of these properties to non-profit developers for NSP redevelopment projects. Ordinance 0658-2010 authorizes the conveyance of titles for 102 parcels of real property and ordinance 0659-2010 authorizes the conveyance of title for the vacant property located at 1072 E. Long St. The residential homes and vacant lots will be transferred to seven area housing projects throughout the city for redevelopment.

PROVIDING SAFE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR LOW INCOME FAMILIES: Each year, the city of Columbus receives funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to create affordable housing for low and moderate income families under the HOME Investment Partnerships Act. In May, Housing Committee Chair Charleta B. Tavares sponsored ordinance 0623-2010, which will authorize the appropriation of \$5,006,538.00 from the 2010 HOME Fund to the Department of Development. The funds will assist first-time homebuyers, for-profit and non-profit organizations with grants and no or low interest loans for projects designed to increase and preserve the local supply of decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing for low and moderate income families.

To receive the **Tavares Times News** directly by ground mail or e-mail call (614) 645-8580 or email jcragland@columbus.gov