

Report to Steering Council – Nov. 9, 2006
Update on Affordable Housing Legislation in Baltimore City

Attach 4.2

There was a tremendous “kick-off “ to the Affordable Housing campaign in Baltimore City when City Council members held a hearing on October 4, 2006, to help them gauge what level of support there was for the recommendations of the Inclusionary Zoning and Housing Task Force Report. Members of the Murphy Initiative joined with pastors and Beyond the Boundaries parishioners from throughout the city, with clergy and members of other faiths, and with community representatives to support the Task Force’s recommendations. City Council members, in turn, expressed a willingness to incorporate these recommendations into legislation they will craft to provide quality, affordable homes in mixed income neighborhoods. As Chair of the Steering Council, Br. Jerry O’Leary spoke on behalf of the Murphy Initiative to urge the Council to adhere to the Task Force recommendations and presented a letter to all Council members that gave special emphasis to proposals affecting lower income households.

Right now, some key members of the Inclusionary Zoning and Housing Task Force (which was chaired by Michael Sarbanes, Executive Director of the Citizens Planning and Housing Association) are meeting with City agencies to craft legislation which will be introduced at a City Council meeting some time in late November or early December. **Through their web sites and emails, the Murphy Initiative and Beyond the Boundaries will keep people informed so they can support Inclusionary Housing legislation by attending hearings and contacting members of the City Council.**

Bishop Rozanski and Bishop Madden held an Urban Workshop on Affordable Housing on Oct. 24 for pastors, parish staffs, and housing advocacy leaders from throughout Baltimore City. The 100 people in attendance heard from CPHA’s Michael Sarbanes an overview of Inclusionary Housing and the proposed legislation. They then mapped out a parish strategy to promote an inclusionary housing policy. This included sample parish bulletin articles and pulpit announcements on the two referendum questions dealing with affordable housing – the bond issue, and the creation of an Affordable Housing Trust Fund (which we hope were approved on election day, Nov.7), and on developing support for inclusionary housing legislation.

Promotion of Affordable Housing in the City and Surrounding Counties

Baltimore City is the only area in which legislation for inclusionary housing (affordable housing in mixed income settings) is being introduced. In Howard County the Interfaith Coalition for Affordable Housing (www.ica.net) has been actively working on building support for inclusionary housing for over three years. Other counties are beginning their campaigns.

The Murphy Initiative is one of the co-sponsors working with Beyond the Boundaries to present a workshop on Saturday, Nov. 11, which deals with the promotion of inclusive housing policies. Bishop Rozanski will open it by connecting the principles of our faith with working for justice in housing issues. David Rusk, a nationally respected expert on inclusionary housing, is the keynote speaker; his topic is “Housing – an Opportunity for Justice”. Table groups, sitting with people from their city district or county, engaging in respectful dialogue, will consider how they can promote inclusionary housing policies in their county or in the city. Facilitators will provide helpful suggestions, and help keep table groups on track as they move toward coming up with practical steps they can take.

Jerry O’Leary
Chair, M.I. Steering Council

MORE

Reminder: “Building Our Community” Workshop with David Rusk

**November 11th, 2006
Saturday
8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

Bishop Rozanski opens the workshop with a reflection connecting our faith with advocacy. We're also delighted to have David Rusk, a nationally known expert on inclusive housing policy, will give the keynote presentation, describing the housing issue and how it provides opportunities for the vitality of the entire region. He'll highlight how the housing affects each area and offer ways to work with others on this issue. David, the author of "Baltimore Unbound," serves as the national expert on the Baltimore City Task Force for Inclusive Housing Policy, so he's very familiar with the housing situation in this entire area.

Fr. Rich Bozzelli and Fr. Martin Burnham will facilitate the workshop. Participants, seated at tables for their county or Baltimore City , will consider how housing issues affect the quality of life in their area. We'll hear from some parishioners who have developed successful techniques to inform and engage others in housing advocacy. Table groups will have a chance to consider adapting these strategies or other actions for their area. And, we'll close with a prayer service to renew us for this important work.

The workshop will be held at St. Gabriel's School Hall, 6950 Dogwood Avenue , Woodlawn (just off Beltway Exit 17, Security Blvd). The fee of \$20 includes a light breakfast and lunch. Reservations are necessary. To reserve a space, please call 410/947-7215 or send an email to: Beyondtheboundaries@archbalt.org or register online at <http://www.pfmjpi.org/eventreg-form.htm> . In addition to your contact information, please indicate if you live in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Howard County or Baltimore City .

The Murphy Initiative for Justice & Peace is one of the sponsors...

Look forward to your participation in the workshop next Saturday!

Harriett Kesler
Beyond the Boundaries
Program Manager
443/623-1355
hkesler1@comcast.net