



End Notes

A Publication of University Neighborhood Housing Program

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What Will Happen With Welfare Reform Now?

More than five years have passed since welfare reform legislation was enacted, and the five year time limits are beginning to take effect throughout our neighborhoods and throughout the nation. Many questions remain unanswered as to the future of welfare, or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), as it is called in its present form.

Congress needs to reauthorize federal welfare legislation by this October. It is unlikely that the current administration will seek to repeal any of the five year lifetime limits on TANF, but rather increase

work requirements. However, it is possible that a number of positive changes can occur with the coming of new welfare legislation, including the extension of housing benefits and an increase in childcare funding.

UNHP has planned a workshop for organizations that work with populations who will be affected by welfare reform, including community groups and housing managers. Two speakers, one from the Hunger Action Network and the

other from the Community Food Resource Center will present on the subject and answer questions regarding the legislative aspects of welfare reform, what we can expect and what community groups can do to influence the outcome.

The workshop will be held on Thursday, May 16 at 9:00 A.M. at Concourse House, 2751 Grand Concourse at 196th St. Please RSVP to Gregory Jost or Nate Slota at 933-3101 or gjost@unhp.org if you are interested in attending.

Notes No More

The publication you have known for the last 12 years as *Notes* is coming to an end with this transitional mini-issue. Starting this summer, University Neighborhood Housing Program will distribute a new, more in-depth publication. The new semi-annual publication will replace *Notes* and will delve more deeply into housing and housing-related issues, with each edition tackling a specific topic. Updates on other events and workshops will still be included. To join UNHP's mailing list, please contact us at 933-3101 or mail@unhp.org.

Fordham University Magazine

Features UNHP's Lending Efforts

Developing the Tremont-Anthony Project took UNHP many years of hard work and required the utilization of an extraordinary number of funding sources. This work, along with other UNHP lending efforts, was recently featured in, *Fordham*, a magazine published by Fordham University and distributed to the thousands of parents, friends and alumni that make up the greater University community.

The article, *Lending Hope: The University Neighborhood Housing Program*, features UNHP's work

developing the 31 units of affordable housing at the corner of Tremont and Anthony Avenues in the Bronx, and describes our organization's close ties to the University, including the story of our formation and the numbers of Fordham graduates who have worked at UNHP.

The article is available in both text and *.pdf* format on our website at www.unhp.org/inthenews.html. If you would like to receive a print copy of the article in the mail, please contact us at 933-3101 or mail@unhp.org.

Water Board Threatens 6.5% Rate Hike

The perennial battle to keep water and sewer rates down continues, as the Water Board has announced that metered and unmetered water rates will increase "by an amount not to exceed 6.5%." Public hearings were held April 17-19 throughout the five boroughs concerning the proposed rates and charges that will take effect July 1, 2002.

Other proposed changes include a Denial of Access Regulation and the suspension of the Board's Leak Forgiveness Program during drought emergencies. The wastewater rate will remain at 159% of the corresponding water charge which is payable on each account.

UNHP Awarded CDFI Status

UNHP celebrated the beginning of 2002 with certification as a Community Development Financial Institution by the United States Department of the Treasury. UNHP has been assisting in meeting the lending needs of the community for a number of years. The certification may open up additional sources of financing from the private sector and will allow UNHP to apply to the federally created CDFI Fund. UNHP is planning a June meeting with banks to discuss the designation and UNHP's current plans.

Those interested in obtaining copies of the Board's Information Booklet describing the rate proposal and the changes to the billing policy and regulatory programs should contact Kevin Kunkle at the New York City Water Board at 718-595-3601.

The Bronx hearing took place on Thursday, April 18 at Lehman College. Since it is too late to testify in person, UNHP is encouraging groups and individuals to submit a written statement to the Water Board. Those who wish to must do so by Friday, April 26. All written testimonies must be sent to the following address:

Kevin Kunkle
New York City Water Board
59-17 Junction Blvd, 8th Fl.
Flushing, NY 11373

The following is excerpted from UNHP's testimony at the Bronx hearing:

At a time when we are being told that the City will not consider a tax increase, the Water Board's proposal of a 6.5% rate increase seems out of line with the City's overall message. Now, as we watch insurance rates soar, a 6.5% water rate increase is particularly bad news to property owners, especially those groups we work with to develop and maintain affordable housing.

The cost of water's impact on affordable housing is great. With this proposed increase, projected costs

since 1988 will have risen from \$85 to more than \$450 per apartment per year through the Multi-family Conservation Program. While the Multi-family Conservation Program is valuable to multi-family owners with large apartments since it provides stable and predictable prices, the cost of water is still consuming too much of the income of buildings.

UNHP has also worked with low- and moderate-income homeowners and homebuyers in the area. The increasing cost of water clearly has an impact on these people, and this increase comes at a time when many of these homeowners are facing greater difficulty due to the economic downturn.

We are not in a position to argue line-by-line the Water Board's budget numbers. We can simply state that the impact of this increase is very negative and we urge the Board to re-think its position and pass a 0% increase for this year.

For more information on the proposed changes, visit our website at www.unhp.org and click on the [Water Board Threatens 6.5% Rate Hike!](#) link under "Recent Announcements."

2002 Tax Lien Sale Scheduled for May

On March 12th, the City published the list of block and lots that were slated for tax lien sale in May. A revised list should appear approximately 10 days before the sale. For more information, you can contact the Department of

Finance Tax Lien Ombudsman Unit at 718-694-0424. Seniors can contact a special unit at 718-694-8260. Questions relating to water and sewer bills can be directed to DEP at 718-595-7000.

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www.unhp.org

Please direct comments,
suggestions and questions to:

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