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Agenda

Monday, November 15

9:30 Conference Kick-Off
Sponsored by Webster Bank and People’s Bank
Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno, Connecticut Department of Housing
Governor Ned Lamont, State of Connecticut
Kiley Gosselin, Executive Director, Partnership for Strong Communities

10:00 Ripple Effect: Exploring the Toll of Evictions on Connecticut’s Communities - A Partnership for Strong Communities IForum
Sponsored by Liberty Bank and Bank of America
The Partnership for Strong Communities annual IForum Series showcases the interdisciplinary nature of housing policy. ‘Ripple Effect: Exploring the Toll of Evictions on Connecticut’s Communities’ will explore the human experience of eviction. Speakers will share the ripple effect evictions have throughout individuals’ lives and their communities. An interdisciplinary panel will look at evictions from a holistic perspective and will include participants from faith-based organizations, legal services, education, and mental health. Presenters: Sophie House, Housing Solutions Lab, NYU Furman Center; Cecil Thomas, Greater Hartford Legal Aid, Sylvia Cooper, Ministerial Health Fellowship

11:30 Does the Road to Integration Run Through Your Town?
Sponsored by LISC and National Equity Fund
Presenters will share an overview of findings in the recently completed Connecticut Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. The analysis suggests that Connecticut is more segregated than even just five years ago. This session will share what the findings of the analysis mean for pandemic recovery, and future housing and land use policy. Presenters will investigate the reasons why Connecticut has made little versus no progress in creating more diverse communities. The session will provide housing advocates, developers, and municipal leaders with suggestions for reducing barriers to integration. Presenters: Erin Kemple, Connecticut Fair Housing Center; Michelle Riordan-Nold, Connecticut Data Collaborative; Fionnuala Darby-Hudgens, Connecticut Fair Housing Center

12:30 Partnership for Strong Communities Research Associates Program: Spotlight on the Researchers
Sponsored by CT Association of Realtors
The Partnership for Strong Communities Research Associates Program engages Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) freelance writers and researchers to produce policy and research materials on affordable housing and homelessness in Connecticut. Hear the inaugural group of Research Associates present an overview of their original research and writing on key affordable housing and housing stability issues facing our state. Presenters: Thalia Giraldo, Trinity College; Alexis Meehan, Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments; Jamil Ragland
2:00 Tenants’ Right to Legal Counsel in Evictions
Sponsored by CT Voices
In 2020, Connecticut passed a path-breaking law creating a right to legal representation for tenants facing eviction, just the third state in the country to do so. Tenants’ Right to Legal Counsel program will be phased in over time, with the first phase expected to begin in January 2022. Hear from the organizers that led the campaign for a tenants’ right to counsel and the advocates that are designing the program. Presenters: Melissa Marichal, Connecticut Fair Housing Center; Justin Farmer, Hamden City Council; Natalie Wagner, Connecticut Bar Foundation; Sarah White, Connecticut Fair Housing Center; Luke Melonakos-Harrison, CT Right to Counsel Coalition, Central CT DSA

3:00 Preserving Affordable Housing: Assessing Risks and Tracking Outcomes
Sponsored by Navigate Affordable Housing Partners, Rockport Mortgage, Enterprise Community Partners, and Preservation of Affordable Housing, Inc.
PAHRC will discuss preservation strategies for subsidized affordable housing properties and how to access and use data tools supporting decision-making found in the National Housing Preservation Database. Presenters will discuss data-driven strategies and the race equity considerations for investing in resident opportunity and building resiliency to disaster and climate events using the NHPD and other data tools. Presenters: Keely Jones Stater, PAHRC; Kelly McElwain, PAHRC

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Dan Lyons, President, Rockport Mortgage
Beacon is proud to support Partnership for Strong Communities and their mission to end homelessness and strengthen neighborhoods.

Housing Equity For All - Embrace Diversity & Support Equality

From its roots in the 1960s fighting racism in housing, Capital for Change (C4C) and its Board of Directors have focused on being an industry leader positively impacting racial equity and inclusion. C4C was intentionally designed to address and work to correct systemic racism in community lending and community development. C4C is committed to reaching out to and providing fair and equitable financing opportunities in Black and Brown communities, to combat and correct years of disregard and biased rejection. C4C strives to be the lender of opportunity by ensuring access to capital for underserved communities of color that want to grow businesses and build strong communities.
Tuesday, November 16

9:30  Keynote Address: Diane Yentel, National Low Income Housing Coalition
Diane is the President and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, a membership organization dedicated solely to achieving socially just public policy that ensures people with the lowest incomes in the United States have affordable and decent homes. Diane is a veteran affordable housing policy expert with over two decades of work on affordable housing and community development. Before rejoining NLIHC (where she previously worked as a policy analyst), Diane was Vice President of Public Policy and Government Affairs at Enterprise Community Partners, where she led federal, state and local policy, research and advocacy programs. Prior to Enterprise, Diane was the director of the Public Housing Management and Occupancy Division at the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), where she managed a team overseeing the development and implementation of nationwide public housing policies, procedures, and guidelines. She also worked to advance affordable housing policies with Oxfam America and the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless and served for 3 years as a community development Peace Corps volunteer in Zambia. Diane is frequently quoted in major media outlets, and has testified multiple time before Congress. Diane has a Masters in Social work from the University of Texas at Austin.

11:00  Housing Connecticut’s Future: Meeting the State’s Affordable and Accessible Housing Needs
Sponsored by Trinity Financial, CCEH, CSH, and Elm City Communities Housing Authority of the City of New Haven
National and local experts led by Fairfield County’s Center for Housing Opportunity and the Urban Institute published this groundbreaking report for CT’s Department of Housing outlining current and future supply and demand for affordable and accessible housing throughout Connecticut in 2021. Presenters: Christie Stewart, Fairfield County’s Center for Housing Opportunity; Peter Tatian, Urban Institute; Billy Huang, Source Development Hub

12:00  Affordable Housing Opportunities from Pandemic Impacted Commercial Real Estate
Sponsored by Beacon Communities
Beacon Communities and its partners will discuss the transformation of 140 Clarendon Street, a mixed use property featuring the YWCA’s flagship building and a hotel in Boston’s Back Bay that closed due to the pandemic. The hotel will be converted to 110 permanent housing units for persons experiencing homelessness. 20 Security Drive, a 1970s Class B office building that also became vacant during the pandemic, will be reborn as a 150 unit mixed income community in Downtown Avon, CT using affirmative fair marketing efforts to support the diversity of the community. Presenters: Michael Freimuth, Capital Region Development Authority; Monique Hall, BSC Group; Gina Martinez, Beacon Communities; April Ognibene, Beacon Communities
1:00  **Legislative Roundtable**  
*Sponsored by JHM Financial Group*

The Legislative Roundtable will feature a discussion with members of the Housing and Planning and Development Committees. Moderated by Bill Welz of Gallo & Robinson, the panel will explore topics including bonding/housing development, zoning, COVID-related housing concerns, and more. Following the moderated panel discussion, the legislators will engage in an audience question and answer period.

2:00  **Capacity-Building as Recovery: Creating Innovative Staff Development Opportunities for the Sector**  
*Sponsored by The Community Builders, Inc.*

The Housing & Community Development Leadership Institute (HCDLI) is a new initiative operated by LISC CT and supported by Connecticut’s Department of Housing and the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority to support entry for BIPOC to the community development sector, as well as strengthen professional development opportunities for the community development sector broadly.  
*Presenters: Kasey LaFlam, LISC Connecticut; Fran Martin, solutions4community, llc*

3:00  **Adapting Historic Structures into Intentional Communities**  
*Sponsored by Pennrose, LLC and Capital Region Development Authority*

Connecticut is a state rich with historic places that contribute to the character of our town and municipal communities. The State has expended significant effort in surveying and categorizing our mill buildings and many developers have undertaking adaptive reuse of these mills into housing. In this session, we would like to present some additional building typologies that can be good candidates for reuse as housing - including a former school, church, and even office building. When a historic structure has reached the end of its useful life in its former user, adaptive reuse is an effective strategy to tap into resources that can preserve these assets and bring them back to productive use in our communities. Pennrose has used these opportunities to create intentional communities for underserved populations, such as veterans and LGBTQ seniors.  
*Presenters: Karmen Cheung, Pennrose,LLC; Charlie Adams, Pennrose, LLC.*

4:00  **Ninth Square Apartments and the Challenges of Mixed Income and Mixed Use Development During COVID-19**  
*Sponsored by Beacon Communities*

Ninth Square Apartments is a vibrant, mixed-use, mixed-income community located in downtown New Haven’s Ninth Square historic district which combines 50,000 square feet of retail space with 335 rental apartments, 190 of which are reserved for low-income families. Development Associate Jaissa Feliz will discuss how her team adapted when the COVID-19 pandemic struck mid-construction, and how these lessons helped Beacon Communities recharge a historically diverse neighborhood and cultural district.  
*Presenters: Jaissa Feliz, Beacon Communities; Kristie Tafel Rizzo, Beacon Residential Management; Romulo Samaniego, Beacon Communities; Alejandro Cordido, Somos Handcrafted Arepas*
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Racial segregation characterizes every metropolitan area in the U.S. and bears responsibility for our most serious social and economic problems—it corrupts our criminal justice system, exacerbates economic inequality, and produces large academic gaps between white and African American schoolchildren. We’ve taken no serious steps to desegregate neighborhoods, however, because we are hobbled by a national myth that residential segregation is de facto—the result of private discrimination or personal choices that do not violate constitutional rights. The Color of Law demonstrates, however, that residential segregation was created by racially explicit and unconstitutional government policy in the mid-twentieth century that openly subsidized whites-only suburbanization in which African Americans were prohibited from participating. Only after learning the history of this policy can we be prepared to undertake the national conversation necessary to remedy our unconstitutional racial landscape.

11:00  Connecticut’s Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP): What’s New and Exciting
Sponsored by CHFA & Whittlesey

After nearly two years of research, planning, and focused outreach efforts, Connecticut has a new Low-Income Housing Tax Credit QAP! Come learn about CHFA’s vision for expanding housing choice and creating vibrant, environmentally sustainable and economically healthy communities for low- and moderate-income residents through the QAP. Highlights include discussion of new classifications, changes in evaluation criteria and sustainability measures, and more. Join us and bring your questions.  Presenters:  Terry Nash Giovannucci, CHFA; Deborah Alter, CHFA; Seema Malani, CHFA

12:00  Zoning for Equity: A Demonstration of Town Planning & Zoning for your Fair Share Housing Goal
Sponsored by Dakota Partners

This summer Open Communities Alliance completed an in-depth analysis of the zoning impediments to affordable housing in 12 wealthy Connecticut suburbs. Organizers in one of these towns took this as a challenge to make their town more equitable and in doing so began a journey to create a plan to achieve their Fair Share of the need for affordable housing. This session will cover the zoning and planning principles and methods used to achieve this ambitious but critical goal.  Presenters:  John Guszkowski, Tyche Planning and Policy Group; Roger Maldonado, Open Communities Alliance; Sam Giffin, Open Communities Alliance
1:00 Unlocking Energy and Money Savings through Energy Efficiency & Solar
Sponsored by CT Green Bank & Housing Enterprises

In 2022, new programs focused on climate change and environmental justice will be rolled out, in addition to changes to existing programs and incentives. The CT DEEP will present on their new Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant Program for Affordable Housing, the Weatherization Assistance Program (CTWAP), and potential infrastructure bill funding. The Green Bank will speak on changes to solar programs for single and multifamily properties, and introduce battery storage program. Presenters: Victoria Hackett, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection; Mackey Dykes, CT Green Bank

2:00 Be My Neighbor in Fairfield County - ADUs and Conversions
Sponsored by Fairfield County’s Community Foundation and Fairfield County Center for Housing Opportunity

More than 35% of households within Fairfield County are cost burdened. Communities can help alleviate cost burden and create more housing diversity, which is necessary for communities to thrive economically and socially, through Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and conversions. In this session, RPA staff will review the findings of their report, Be My Neighbor in Fairfield County, engage with audience members through Q&A, and talk about how HB 6107 and ADUs can create more housing opportunity. Presenters: Melissa Kaplan-Macey, Regional Plan Association; Marcel Negret, Regional Plan Association

3:00 Addressing the Racial Wealth Gap Through a More Equitable Homebuying System
Sponsored by CHFA, CT Department of Housing, Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, Leviticus Fund, Citi Community Relations, Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance

During this workshop, participants will learn about obstacles that prevent first generation homebuyers from purchasing a home, proposed special purpose credit programs to give first time homebuyers and people of color access to capital, and tools for developers to address the shortage of quality starter homes in Connecticut. Presenters: David Lavery, Connecticut Fair Housing Center; Rashida Rattray, Connecticut Fair Housing Center; Jon Cabral, Connecticut Housing and Finance Authority
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The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness is pleased to support the Partnership for Strong Communities’ Second Annual Affordable Housing Conference.

We are honored to work with all of our partners as a part of the Reaching Home and HOMEConnecticut campaigns to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time for people in our state.

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Every Connecticut policy decision must be anti-racist. It must be informed by the need to reverse the inequities and economic violence inflicted on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. The heavy and disproportionate financial toll the pandemic has taken on Black and brown people makes this all the more imperative.

Because everyone deserves access to quality, affordable housing, Charter Oak Communities is proud to help sponsor the Connecticut Affordable Housing Conference.

Natalie Coard
Executive Director

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