



Highlights of Governor's Budget Proposal

Governor Elliot Spitzer's 2008/2009 proposed budget includes good news on the housing front, along with a number of unanswered questions. Among the proposals is a new \$400 million Housing Opportunities Fund that is intended to supplement existing capital programs at DHCR and HHAP.

The new Housing Opportunities Fund reportedly will be split between upstate and downstate allocations (\$100 million and \$300 million, respectively). The fund will be administered by the State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA) and an advisory panel will be formed to make specific allocation recommendations. The fund will be capitalized from 2 different sources: the \$100 million 'upstate' fund will come from the state's Mortgage Insurance Fund; and the \$300 million 'downstate' fund will come from the sale of state-owned land on the upper west side of Manhattan. Both of these actions require legislative approval, in addition to being included in the final state budget. The legislation authorizing this fund is intended to be permanent, so other revenue sources will have to be identified to support the fund in ensuing years, once these one-time sources have been expended.

The proposed budget includes funding to support Rural Preservation Companies at a level of \$65,000, although DHCR sources indicate the figure to be \$67,000. In an unfortunate move, the

Division of Budget issued a press release that claimed a savings of nearly \$5 million in the Preservation Companies budget as a direct result of the Review/Reform Process that has been underway for the past 6 months. The DOB press release actually mis-represents what happened, as the purported 'cost savings' actually reflect the fact that the additional monies included in the 2006-2007 budget that increased RPC funding to \$87,000 per year were not included in the Governor's proposed budget. In fact, those 'legislative add' funds have never been included in a Governor's budget, and it remains to be seen whether the legislature will act to restore last year's level of support for the preservation programs. Suffice it to say, though, that the change in budget line amounts from last year's enacted budget have nothing to do with the Review/Reform process now underway.

Other significant housing funding in the budget includes: \$30 million for the Homeless Housing Assistance Program; 1500 new supportive housing beds for clients of the Office of Mental Health that are expected to come on-line over the next three years; \$125 million for 500 SRO units in integrated buildings that are intended to encourage inclusion of OMH supportive units in traditional affordable and mixed-income projects; and \$20 million to support the conversion of 100 units in privately-run adult homes into supportive housing.

At the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, the proposed budget will double the amount of funding for the Supported Housing for Families and Young Adults to \$5 million; SRO Support Services will be increased by \$1.4 million to \$21.2 million. The budget proposal for HHAP will remain at \$30 million, although HHAP applicants will also be eligible to apply under the new Housing Opportunities Fund.

The budget for the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services includes funding for a new pilot program outside of New York City that will fund an additional 125 units of supportive housing for people in recovery.

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Rural Delivery

Rural Delivery is published by the New York State Rural Housing Coalition, Inc. a nonprofit membership organization. The Coalition is a statewide membership organization dedicated to strengthening and revitalizing rural New York by assisting housing and community development providers.

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Matt Taylor
David Valachovic
Barbara Willis

Staff:

Blair Sebastian
Executive Director

Colin McKnight
Deputy Director

John Grover
Supportive Housing Coordinator

Kate Mackey
Administrative Assistant

For more information contact the Coalition at:
879 Madison Avenue, Albany, New York 12208
Tel: 518/458-8696 * Fax: 518/458-8896

E-mail: rhc@ruralhousing.org
Web Site: www.ruralhousing.org



Bits and Pieces...

Rural Advocates Legislative Conference Scheduled

The New York Rural Advocates will hold the 2008 Legislative Conference in Albany on March 2nd through March 4th. The Conference will begin with the Advocates Board Meeting on Sunday March 2nd at the Hampton Inn, and continue on March 3rd at the Sign of the Tree at the Empire State Plaza. Legislative visits will be scheduled on March 3rd and 4th. It is very important that representatives of all preservation companies attend this lobbying effort to ensure that the RPC annual contract is restored to the 2007/2008 level, or increased beyond that. For more information, contact Nancy Berkowitz at (518) 352-7787, or by email at nbek@frontiernet.net.

Federal Budget Briefing

The National Alliance to End Homelessness will sponsor a federal Budget Briefing on Tuesday, February 5th at 2:00 PM. Presenters will provide analyses of the President's budget, discuss its impact on housing and homeless programs, and share how participants can partner with NAEH in federal advocacy work in the coming year. To pre-register, send an email with your name, organization, city, state, phone number and email address to advocacy@naeh.org. Information on how to join in the budget briefing will be sent to you by email. For more information, contact Sarah Kahn at (202) 942-8259.

Homeless Youth Basic Center Application Deadline Announced

The US Department of Health and Human Services is accepting applications for the Basic Center Program. The deadline for applications is February 19th. Most Basic Centers provide youth with emergency shelter, food, clothing, counseling, and referrals for health care, and aftercare. Most basic centers provide shelter for 15 days, and can accommodate 20 youth. Nationally, over \$12,500,000 is available for this program, with individual grants capped at \$200,000 for a 36 month contract. For more information on this NOFA, visit www.acf.hhs.gov/open/HHS-2008-ACF-ACYF-CY-0063.html.

Federal and U.S. military employees can support the Rural Housing Coalition through the annual Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). If you are a federal government or military employee and would like to donate through the CFC, please enter CFC code #9614 on your pledge card during the next fund drive.

Veterans Supportive Housing

Several new provisions were included in the FY 2008 appropriations bills enacted in the latter part of 2007 that impact homeless persons. One feature involves the inclusion of new vouchers for homeless veterans with special needs. The HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing vouchers will add 8,000 to 10,000 new Section 8 vouchers to the current 1,800 total HUD-VASH vouchers that are in place for veterans nationally.

Once the process for allocating the new vouchers is finalized, public housing agencies will work with VA medical centers to distribute and use the new vouchers. The voucher will provide the new rent subsidy, and the VA medical centers will provide the supportive services. Eligibility criteria for these vouchers are subject to change by HUD and the VA. In the past, veterans were eligible if they had any discharge status other than dishonorable, and had to have a serious psychiatric or substance abuse disorder. Federal officials are working to distribute the vouchers soon. Many VA centers do not currently participate in the HUD/VASH program, so local housing advocates may have to work with PHAs to ensure efficient access to program benefits.

515 Act Passes House

On January 23rd, the House of Representatives passed HR 3873, the Section 515 Rural Housing Property Transfer Improvement Act of 2007. This bill had been approved by the House Committee on Financial Services on October 31st.

The bill will expedite the process for transferring ownership of Section 515 rural multifamily housing projects that are in need of preservation and rehabilitation. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for action.

Foreclosure Prevention Workshops Respond To Increased Demand

The HomeSave Coalition will host a series of workshops on foreclosure prevention in the Capital District beginning with a session in mid-February. This short overview will provide basic information about the foreclosure process, timeline, options and resources available. The HomeSave Coalition is a consortium of non-profit legal, housing and community organizations that are confronting the escalating foreclosure crisis in the region. The mid-February workshop will serve as a prerequisite for the one-to-one foreclosure prevention counseling offered by the participating agencies.

“If someone is facing an adjustable interest rate or has missed a few payments on their mortgage, now is the time to take action,” says Stephanie Galvin of Albany County Rural Housing Alliance, and one of the workshop presenters. “Becoming educated about the

process and options is the best way to avoid scams and deeper financial difficulties.”

Sue Cotner, Executive Director of the Affordable Housing Partnership, added “Because we are seeing more and more homeowners of all educational and income backgrounds facing rising interest rates and foreclosure, we decided to add these sessions to our comprehensive programs to help homeowners and stop predatory lending.”

Participating in this effort are Albany County Rural Housing Alliance, TRIP NeighborWorks Homeownership Center, Better Neighborhoods, Inc., Affordable Housing Partnership, Empire Justice Center, Community Realty, Capital District Community Loan Fund, and the Albany Community Land Trust. For more information, contact Sue

Coalition For Excellence Schedules Meeting For Housing Counselors

The New York State Coalition for Excellence in Homeownership Education will hold the first of a series of regional meetings on February 11th in Albany to present findings of the study: *The Current State of Homeownership Education and Counseling Services in New York State*. The event will take place in the third floor courtroom of the SUNY Plaza complex on Broadway in Albany from 2:00-4:00 PM.

The event will include a panel discussion about the need for high quality and professional homebuyer education and financial literacy. The panelists will

Peer To Peer Trainings Planned

The Rural Housing Coalition will be holding Peer To Peer trainings again this spring. To date, one session has been scheduled, for the Hudson Valley region, on April 9th. These meetings will be held

include: Priscilla Almadovar, President/CEO of State of NY Mortgage Agency; Richard Neiman, Superintendent of Banks; Deborah Van Amerongen, Commissioner of DHCR; and Deborah Boatwright, Northeast District Director for NeighborWorks America.

Advance registration is requested, and should be received no later than February 4th. To RSVP, send an email with your complete contact information to Lynn Law of the Long Island Housing Partnership at llaw@lihp.org. A program agenda will be provided upon receipt of registration.

regionally for your convenience. RPC Executive Directors and Board Members are encouraged to attend these sessions. Watch your mail for registration information in the coming month.

Introductory LIHTC Training Offered

The Institute for Professional and Executive Development (IPED) will sponsor *Learn the Basics: Housing Tax Credits 101* from March 27th to 28th, at the Westin Arlington Gateway Hotel in Arlington, Virginia. This training is sponsored in part by HDR- Housing and Development Reporter.

This training is designed for owners, developers, syndicators, property managers, and applicable staff and advisors who need a basic understanding of how the low-income housing tax credit works. Others who will benefit from this training include housing agency and community development staff, non-profit representatives, and others who want step-by-step information on the use of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and how it fits into the overall development process. The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), already a well known and highly successful development tool, continues to grow in importance. Particularly in these challenging times, anyone involved in affordable housing development, finance, investment, and management needs to be fully in command of the LIHTC program and the various strategies being applied in transactions utilizing the LIHTC. This popular seminar more than meets that need.

The cost for this training is \$595 per person for representatives of non-profit agencies, and \$895 for others. Hotel accommodations are \$239 per night, if reservations are made before March 10th.

For more information on this training, visit IPED's website at www.ipedinc.net/conferences/housing_tax_credits_101_Arlington_VA_March_2008.asp.

NTIC Offers Organizer Training

Activists, organizers, and community leaders can benefit from Core Organizer training offered by NTIC in late February. The three day training will build skills in community organizing, develop key concepts in connecting with communities, build coalitions, and force decision makers to the table.

The training will be held on February 29th- March 2nd at the Wisdom House Retreat and Conference Center in Litchfield, Connecticut. For more information on this training event, call (312) 676-2817.

Historic Tax Credits Subject Of Conference

IPED will sponsor a two-day conference on using historic tax credits on February 7th and 8th at the Don CeSar Beach Resort in St. Petersburg Beach, Florida. The featured speaker at the conference will be Frank T. Caprio, Esq., General Treasurer of the State of Rhode Island. Developers and owners of residential, commercial, mixed-use, market-rate or low-income properties interested in learning more about the rules, strategies, and opportunities of Historic Tax Credit transactions are encouraged to attend.

For information on last minute registration, contact IPED at (800) 473-3293.

OFSC Issues Small Cities NOFA

The Office For Small Cities has issued the 2008 NOFA for Small Cities CDBG funding. Approximately \$40 million is available for competitive and open round economic development grants.

Changes in this year's NOFA include new maximum grant amounts depending on the type of activity, and the

S.T.A.R. Training Slated

Spectrum Seminars will offer S.T.A.R. certification training for managers of Rural Development-financed rental housing projects on April 17th and 18th in Syracuse. The training will include the certification exam, as well as updates to the 3560 regulation and handbook changes.

The training will be held at the Sheraton University Hotel. Sleeping rooms are available for \$132 per night (the cut-off date for discounted room rates is March 15th). Registration for the STAR training is \$425 per person.

For more information, contact Spectrum Seminars at (207) 767-8000.

Proposal To Allow Section 8 For Mobile Homes Introduced

A bill was introduced into the House of Representatives on January 23rd to provide rental assistance payments to assist certain owners of manufactured housing who rent the lots on which their homes are located. HR 5108 was introduced by Rep. Bob Filner, and would amend Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937.

The bill has no co-sponsors at this time. It has been referred to the House Committee on Financial Services. For more information on pending federal legislation, visit www.capwiz.com/nlihc/issues/bills.

type of applicant. Applicants are encouraged to review the NOFA carefully for these changes. Questions should be directed to OFSC at (518) 474-2057 at the earliest opportunity.

Applications for the competitive round are due on April 21st. To view the NOFA, visit www.nysmallcities.com.

The New York State Rural Housing Coalition is happy to be able to provide help wanted advertising opportunities for our members and non-profit community development agencies. Ad copy must be provided in Microsoft Word format, and may be transmitted by email to rhc@ruralhousing.org. Ad copy must comply with federal and state equal opportunity requirements to be published, and must be received by the 25th of the month to ensure placement in the succeeding issue of *Rural Delivery*. Ads provided in this fashion will also be posted in the Career Opportunities page of the Coalition's website, unless a request is specifically made not to place the advertisement on-line.

Operations & Compliance Manager

Position opening at GVRPC/Letchworth, a regionally-based company with activities in affordable housing programs, project development, and property management. Applicants must have: significant experience in high level administration, fiscal operations, and supervisory responsibilities. Knowledge of governmental financing/funding and contract management in a corporate setting desirable. Advanced degree or demonstrated comparable training and experience required. Send resume and cover letter to: GVRPC, Inc., 5861 Groveland Station Road, Mt. Morris, New York 14510 by February 20th. EOE

Development Manager

The Capital District Community Loan Fund seeks an individual to serve as Development Manager, to secure donations and grants, secure new loans from socially concerned individual and institutional investors, raise awareness of community needs and our programs, and report to various stakeholders.

Qualifications for the position include experience securing resources for community-based organizations, experience in public relations and marketing, excellent oral and written communication skills, excellent computer skills (including database management and report design and production), and strong knowledge of Capital Region communities. A college degree in a relevant field

Career Opportunities

Single Family Housing Loan Technician

Join the team that is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of rural America! Through our programs, we touch rural America in many ways. Our financial programs support such essential public facilities and services as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities and electric and telephone service. We promote economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks and community-managed lending pools.

This position is for a loan processing technician in the Single Family Housing Loan Processing Center located in Rural Development's Syracuse State Office. This position is responsible for providing a wide variety of advanced services and technical support assistance to assist in the processing, underwriting, and closing of SFH loans and grants. For more information, contact Jeffrey Simpson, (315) 477-6410 Email: jeffrey.simpson@ny.usda.gov by February 4th. EOE

is required, graduate degree preferred. Ability to work independently, manage multiple projects and meet deadlines important.

CDCLF offers a competitive salary, health insurance and other benefits, paid vacations and time off, and aligning your personal values with your vocation.

Applications are currently being accepted and will be until the position is filled. CDCLF anticipates completing the hiring process during February, 2008. Send a letter of interest, resume, short writing sample, and self-produced promotional material to:

Capital District Community Loan Fund, 255 Orange Street, Albany, NY 12210. EOE

Executive Director

Private 501(c)3 not-for-profit housing corporation located in Allegany County, NY, is seeking an energetic, innovative person to fill the position of Executive Director. Qualified candidates must have demonstrated skills in the successful preparation of grant applications to state and federal agencies, experience in budget preparation and a working knowledge of fund accounting. Good computer skills are also required. Management experience and a desire to work with the public are also desirable qualities and experience managing rental properties is a plus.

The successful candidate will oversee the administration of all home rehabilitation programs, including, but not limited to, those funded by NYS Affordable Housing Corporation, NYS DHCR, and the NYS Office for Small Cities, and will also be responsible for the administration of revolving loan funds.

Other responsibilities will include management oversight of all rental properties owned by the Corporation, monitoring of all fiscal management activities, preparation of all semi-annual and annual reports required by various funding agencies, both state and federal, monthly reports to the Corporation's Board of Directors, and overall supervision of a staff of three.

Candidates must have a BA in a related field or equivalent job experience. Salary commensurate with experience. Must be willing to relocate. Benefit package available. Resumes must be received by February 29, 2008, and should be sent to Deborah Crane, President, Cuba Community Development Corporation, 1 West Main Street, P.O. Box 194, Friendship, NY 14739. Resumes may also be emailed to cubacom@verizon.net. EOE

Stimulus Package Has Implications For National Housing Trust Fund

The agreement reached on January 24th between the House leadership and the Administration on the economic stimulus package has good and bad news for the National Housing Trust Fund. The Congressional/White House agreement incorporates HR 1852, the FHA modernization bill that has already passed the House of Representatives.

Under HR 1852, revenue would be generated as a result of a cap on the amount of reverse mortgages that could be insured. However, the Administration demanded changes deleting the provision capping the reverse mortgage insurance, so no new revenue will be created. Advocates are currently working with the sponsors of S 2523, the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act to include the FHA revenue for the national housing trust fund in the stimulus package that comes out of the Sen-

ate.

The stimulus package includes a one year increase in the limit on loans that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac may purchase, increasing from \$417,000 to \$729,750. This increase is temporary, because both the House of Representatives and the Administration want to see comprehensive reform legislation covering the government-sponsored housing enterprises. HR 1427, the Comprehensive GSE Reform Bill, passed the House last May.

Christopher Dodd, Chairman of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, has agreed to move quickly on the introduction of his version of the GSE reform legislation. This legislation promises to make the loan limit increases permanent, and will include an Affordable Housing Fund provision, likely to be similar to S 2391,

the GSE Mission Improvement Act introduced by Senator Jack Reed last November. S 2391 reserves the funds in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund as a dedicated funding source for a national housing trust fund, when one is finally established.

It appears that Senate action on the GSE bill has stalled due to partisan concerns on issues unrelated to the Affordable Housing Fund. To date, GSE reform legislation has been the primary funding source for a national housing trust fund, so the prospect of completing another Congressional session without action on GSE legislation is a deep concern. The commitment from Senator Dodd to move forward with a GSE reform bill gives hope to supporters of the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act.

Our Website at www.rurallhousing.org is currently under construction. Watch for our new site on the net!
