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Contact: Curtis Blessing
(215) 735-6760

Advocates Launch Philadelphia Affordable Communities Campaign

More than 30 organizations join together to call for "Development without Displacement"

PHILADELPHIA, PA. A coalition of more than 30 of the city's leading community, disability, faith, labor, and urban agriculture organizations has formed to launch *Development without Displacement*, a campaign to expand and protect affordability in neighborhoods undergoing gentrification.

Inspired by recent legislative accomplishments by member groups, The Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities (PCAC) will craft and advocate for legislation to ensure that as the city's neighborhoods recover and thrive, individuals and families from all income levels benefit.

Having already been a key force in building a strong Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund with proceeds dedicated to improving housing options for families and last year's approval of a Philadelphia Land Bank to efficiently and equitably handle the acquisition and disposition of vacant properties for both affordable and market rate development – PCAC is setting their sights even higher.

"The Housing Trust fund provides greater resources to keep people in their homes and the Land Bank frees up more land to develop," said PCAC member Nancy Salandra, Director of Independent Living Services at Liberty Resources. "But now we must go further and push for neighborhood development policies that are equitable to workers at all income-levels."

Many areas of the city have recently experienced increased development and enhanced neighborhood revitalization efforts, which have resulted in a steady rise in cost of living and property values. While this is an encouraging sign of progress, for too many families, disabled individuals and seniors, it has meant being forced out of their long-term communities.

"We need to preserve affordability in gentrifying neighborhoods so that those who are committed and invested in those communities can afford to stay," said Nora Lictash, Executive Director of the Women's Community Revitalization Project. "With the right mix of affordable housing, job creation, and urban agriculture policies, we can help create diverse, healthy neighborhoods."

Although specific legislation has not yet been released, PCAC's goals include the passage of laws that ensure that developers will pay their fair share when they benefit from practices such as the flipping of homes. Proceeds from these laws would also generate more revenue for the Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund.

"Too many hard working families are being driven from their communities," said Vanessa Fields, coalition member and Vice President of District Council 47 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. "We know that by joining as one, our voices together are made louder."

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