

# On Board with NOAH

Neighborhood of Affordable Housing: Building a Common Good for East Boston Summer 2005

## Year in Review, An Eye on the Future

The summer of 2005 is upon us. Its freedom, warmth and openness is most welcome. As of July 1st, a new financial year is ahead of us. With a demanding time behind us, we look forward to continuing our excellent programs, projects and services.

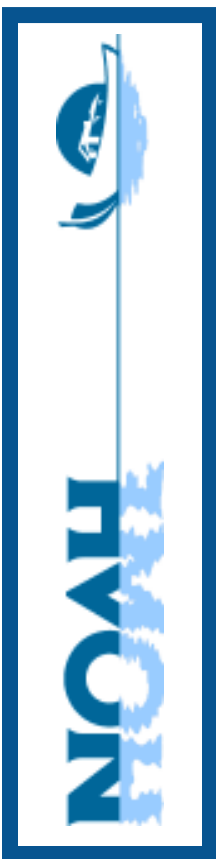
Looking ahead, we are very excited about the Maverick/BHA homeownership program designed to create 50 new homeowners (see back page). We are most happy to see as many as 100 children per day attend the O'Donnell summer program. Our Community Building and Environmental team is diplomatically bringing Chelsea Creek business people to the table with neighborhood persons in order to continue clean up dirty sites. Students, teachers and residents are planning for improvements to the Guild Schoolyard, NOAH's 6th schoolyard renovation. Working with a private developer, we are pursuing designation for the old Welfare Building in Maverick Sq. in order to create 15 units of elderly housing. In the fall, we will have new homeownership workshops for residents to attend. And we expect to break ground on our 5-unit Meridian St. project this fall as well.

In the fiscal year just ended, NOAH had to adapt to shifting external and internal forces. In March, we made a painful but necessary decision to suspend our popular 6-person Lending and Homebuyer services department. We are currently training new staff to offer these critical homeownership workshops. We await a more rigorous analysis before we consider restarting mortgage lending. Our two homeownership projects (which have strong City support) continue to wait for State funding, causing carrying costs to rise and fees for service to be significantly postponed. Lastly, philanthropic giving is down, making the funding of our programs more difficult. Throughout, NOAH's Board and staff have been working diligently and smartly to manage these changes.

While change can be challenging, it can also bring opportunity for reconnecting with friends and realigning organizational routines. We are now operating a leaner, tighter ship. We have reached out to persons we have called NOAH's Circle of Friends. This Circle has been invaluable in advising and helping guide us through these taxing times. They are helping us raise funds and opening doors to future prospects. We head into FY '06 with renewed hope.

Mary Ellen Welch  
President

Phil Giffee  
Executive Director



## Community Organizing Project of NOAH (COPN)

Members of the Community Organizing Project of NOAH (COPN) have been working effectively together to address issues they mutually identify.

\* In March, COPN kicked off the first cycle of four English Conversation Groups which met for 12 weeks, providing 28 people an opportunity to develop their English speaking skills. Thanks to volunteers Ejay Kahn, Jennifer Farragher, Ify Mora, and Marcia Shannon for leading these groups which are free to participants (except for a \$10 registration fee). Ejay, Jennifer and Ify have come back to start the second cycle already.

\* Last summer, COPN member Venancio Rodriguez, a Morris Street resident, organized weekly cleanups on his street. To address this persistent East Boston litter problem, COPN has recruited 10 block captains to do the same on their streets throughout Eagle Hill.

\* Concerned about bus service and conditions of the T stations, COPN members are organizing for better public transportation.

## Chelsea Creek Restoration Partnership (CCRP)

\* The CCRP is granting a total of \$10,000 to East Boston, Chelsea, and Revere groups to help promote the Chelsea Creek. The Harborside Community Center's Choices After-School program is one of the 13 groups which was funded. They will use their grant to purchase fishing equipment and take their youth (catch and release) fishing on a weekly basis at the Condor Street Urban Wild.

\* The Second Annual River Revel was a grand success with a thousand people and lots of fun. Closing down the bridge for the day is a great feat...and a great reminder that the River belongs to us all – business and community.

\* Congratulations to our environmental youth crew (E3C) members: Carlos Pemberthy, Camilo Toro and Rachel Pierre-Antoine. We wish them the best of luck with college and beyond!

\* Thanks to Meghan McGrath. Her contribution, dedication and friendship to E3C/NOAH will be missed.



COPN member, Jim Viggiano, leads the way for safer pedestrian crossings on Border Street!

Toddlers, teens and even giraffes had fun at the 2nd Annual Chelsea River Revel, June 18, 2005.

## East Boston Schoolyard Initiative

\* This summer, development of the new Curtis Guild Schoolyard begins! After much planning the Schoolyard Committee and especially the children are looking forward to the new schoolyard when they return in the fall!

\* The Ninth O'Donnell Schoolyard Summer Program began early July! Bring your 5-12 year old children up to the schoolyard for daily sports, arts and crafts, free lunch, games and fun! NOAH hopes to expand this popular "summer camp" program to another schoolyard next year.

## Real Estate Development

NOAH continues to work towards creating affordable housing opportunities here in East Boston. Currently, we have three homeownership projects in various stages of pre-construction:

**\* 328-332 Meridian Street Condominiums**  
Five new affordable homeownership units in a single condominium building on the vacant lots at 328-332 Meridian Street. Bids from contractors were received on June 24. Pending successful negotiation with the winning bidder and with the funding agencies, we hope to begin construction in September.

to a moderate income household. We are currently negotiating with the winning bidder and we hope to complete rehabilitation by October.

Working with Mitchell Properties, we hope to win 'developer designation' for the Welfare Building on Maverick Street, where we will create 15 affordable rental units for seniors. We have also recently assisted several area organizations to create affordable housing in their cities and towns. For more information on any of these projects, contact Matt Henzy, Project Manager, Real Estate Development, at [matthenzy@noahcdc.org](mailto:matthenzy@noahcdc.org) or 617-418-8259.

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### On Board with NOAH

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Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH)  
143 Border Street, East Boston, MA 02128  
[www.noahcdc.org](http://www.noahcdc.org)

*Produced and edited by Gene Babon, with writing and translation assistance from Manlio Méndez and other NOAH staff.*

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Architectural drawing of completed units at 328 - 332 Meridian Street Condominiums

**\* Border-Falcon Condominiums**  
Fourteen new affordable homeownership units in a three building condominium development on the vacant land overlooking the Mystic and Chelsea Rivers at 443 Border Street and 10 Falcon Street. Project design is 95% complete, but we are currently waiting for the State to open up its funding programs for affordable homeownership, which have been closed all year. If the State funding comes through, we plan on beginning construction this winter or early next Spring.

**\* 87 Princeton Street**  
An abandoned, dilapidated single family house located near the corner of Marion Street and Princeton Street. NOAH was named "Receiver" of the property by the Boston Housing Court. We will 'gut rehab' the property and sell it through a lottery

Special Thanks to consultants **Rebeka Mazzone** and **Margo Kelly**

## **NOAH and BHA's Homeownership Program**

NOAH and the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) work together in a wonderful program to help BHA families in the 50 to 80% medium income range buy their own home. Using proceeds from the Maverick HOPE-VI program, this special ownership opportunity will give up \$20,000 to families to be used for down payment and closing costs. BHA provided the names of all the people that qualify for this wonderful program.

The home-ownership team of Diana Franco and Carolina Trujillo has been meeting with the candidates and helping them do a budget, get pre-approved for a mortgage, solve credit issues through individual credit counseling meetings, provide first time home buyer seminars, escort people to prospective homes and help them secure a mortgage. These personal services will help people meet their goal: "buy their own home".

This program allows candidates to purchase only single family houses or condos. The candidate must live in the property for at least the first six years. After that period of time they will not have to repay BHA the money received at the time of purchase. They will no longer be entitled to assistance for the monthly payment of their new home.

If you would like to get more information about "The Maverick Homeownership Program" please contact Diana Franco or Carolina Trujillo at 617-418-8266 or 617-418-8267.

Carolina Trujillo and applicant

**Neighborhood of Affordable Housing**  
**143 Border Street**  
**East Boston, MA 02128**

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**Can you find the other word in our logo?**  
**The reflection of "NOAH" spells "HOME."**  
**This says a lot about our mission to**  
**provide people with affordable places to**  
**live in a clean and safe neighborhood.**

