

ROSE celebrates with 'Sweet Smell of Success' breakfast

Story and photos by David F. Ashton, East PDX News

Who helped ROSE Community Development provide more good housing to SE Portland residents this year? Find out – and learn what our newest Portland City Commissioner, Nick Fish, had to say about Portland housing at this event ...



Amie Duffenauer and Sherrena Torrence welcome guests to the ROSE Community Development Corporation Annual Breakfast.

Benefactors of ROSE Community Development Corporation celebrated their 16 years of "Revitalizing Outer South East" at their annual meeting at OMSI on September 25.



The event's master of ceremonies, Steve Truesdale, sets the stage for the event.

The event's master of ceremonies, Steve Truesdale, put the mission of the organization well, telling the group of about 200 guests, "ROSE is dedicated to providing good places for families to live. Each home, each project improves the surrounding community as a whole."

"These are tough times for everybody," said ROSE Executive Director Nick Sauvie. "But they're particularly tough for many the people who live in our neighborhoods – including many seniors, people with disabilities, and people who've lost their jobs recently. These are people who need ROSE the most, and we're here to serve them."



ROSE executive director, Nick Sauvie, reminds the assembled guests of their organization's humble beginnings.

Sauvie reminded guests that, "Beginning with the acquisition of a single house, ROSE has used housing improvement as a strategy to jump-start community revitalization. To date, ROSE has produced an inventory of over 300 rental and homeownership units."



The keynote speaker at the event, Portland City Commissioner, and the City's future Housing Commissioner, Nick Fish, says housing for the most vulnerable citizens is his top priority.

Commissioner Fish commends ROSE

"I'm so pleased to join you today, to support Rose CDC," began the morning's keynote speaker, Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish. "At Portland City Hall, we think very highly of ROSE, and consider you to be a critical partner and our role of housing priorities."

Fish began by telling how, when arriving at his first major fire scene as Portland's Fire Commissioner, he was humbled when the fire chief recommended that he turn his fire helmet around. "Circumstances like this help one keep a sense of perspective," he quipped.

"ROSE has gone beyond bricks and mortar revitalization," Fish continued. "You understand you must be community developers; your projects include child care, community safety, and educational programs. These are all programs that ROSE pioneered which substantially increase the vitality of neighborhoods and the quality of life for the neighbors."



Commissioner Fish says he'll make a "blueprint" that addresses housing issues in Portland.

Fish outlines City housing priorities

As the Rose City's new Housing Commissioner, Fish decried the fact that 31% of the budget of Housing and Community Development consists of one-time only, general-fund money. "This fund totals almost \$12 million, and invests in the very heart of what we care about: Rent assistance, affordable housing, preservation, and emergency shelter programs. Having these programs funded with one-time-only money, especially in a time of economic downturn and uncertainty, puts these programs at risk.

"I ask everyone in this room [to help me] make the case to my colleagues that we should not balance the [City's 2008-2009] budget on the backs of our most vulnerable citizens."

Fish said that Mayor-elect Sam Adams asked him to develop a "blueprint" for housing. "I'll be working on that plan, and presenting it to him in November. We'll be looking at some of the existing policies of our city, and the reaffirming them. This includes the 10-year-plan to end homelessness."

Invokes the political spirit of Gretchen Kafoury

As the City's new Housing Commissioner, Fish he intends to "provoke a very rich discussion with the City Council and the community, to set a new direction for housing policies. Since the days of [Commissioner] Gretchen Kafoury, we've had strong political leadership on housing that has kept us in the forefront of national efforts to end homelessness and build affordable housing.

"As I stand before you today, I make this commitment: I will provide the same vigorous leadership that Gretchen did. I will make affordable housing my priority in the city."



Fish pitches his "11 x 13 Campaign" to shore up housing programs,

Appeals for support on three projects

Noting that federal subsidies will expire on eleven properties between now and 2013, Fish proclaimed an initiative he called the "11 x 13 Campaign" to shore up housing programs on a long term basis.

Next, regarding the City's "Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness", Fish said "We are very close to finalizing agreements for the Resource Access Center, in Old Town/Chinatown, which is scheduled to open in 2010. This project is a critical cornerstone to our commitment to ending homelessness."

Finally, he asked for support for the "Bridges to Housing" program. "We do a great job with single adults, in terms of our 10 year plan. But we need to do better dealing with families in crisis. I will continue to support this innovative regional effort to house and support homeless families."

Taking control of local issues

No one in the room can solve the problems on Wall Street, noted Fish, adding, "At times like this, though, it is most important to look to our own backyards and take care of the issues we can control. By working together, we can help end

homelessness, help make sure people have a decent place to live, and help families at risk."

ROSE Partners honored



ROSE executive director, Nick Sauvie watches as Robert Mosier of William Wilson Architects accepts the Business Partner award presented by Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish and event MC Steve Truesdale.

Leading off the ***Rose Community Awards*** was their **Business Partner Award**, presented to William Wilson Architects, accepted by Robert Mosier, the project architect for ROSE's Leander Court.

"We're here because we believe in what ROSE Community development is her community," Mosier told the group. "We believe that providing affordable housing and services helps make the entire community stronger."



Executive program officer Libby Lescalleet, accepts the ROSE Community Partner Award presented to Wattles Boys & Girls Club by Commissioner Fish.

Community Partner Award went to Wattles Boys & Girls Club; accepted by executive program officer Libby Lescalleet.

"Six years ago, we brought supporters from Lents and Darlington-Brentwood neighborhoods together under a 'Weed & Seed' program," Lescalleet said. "One of the programs is ongoing: 'Shop with a Cop' – it has spawned many other programs to help us build community."



Troy Wilkerson of EXIT Realty is presented with the Outstanding Community Leader award by Nick Fish.

Their **Outstanding Community Leader Award** was presented to Troy Wilkerson with EXIT Realty for being a leader in the Lents Homeownership Initiative and for helping educate SE Portland residents about homeownership opportunities. "It's a wonderful experience helping families move into homes. The smiles on their faces are priceless.



ROSE Volunteer of the Year award is given to Leander Court resident, Paula Hernandez by Housing Commissioner Nick Fish.

Leander Court resident Paula Hernandez was named **ROSE Volunteer of the Year**. Through an interpreter, she said, "On behalf of my family and myself, I thank you. To everybody and Rose, and all of you, I encourage you to keep helping Rose CDC. Thank you."



Kat Hand, tells why she appreciates ROSE helping her – and her family – move into a home.

ROSE homeowner tells of her 'dream come true'
"As a mother of four daughters, until seven years ago I never dreamed that I'd be able to own my own home," testified Kat hand. "My childcare provider mentioned to ROSE and the Shared Appreciation Loan Program."

"Having the stability of homeownership is given by children something they've never had before. My family and I have become a part of the community. I've worked with my neighbors to help increase the livability of my neighborhood."



Metro commissioner Robert Liberty says he's attending because "I care a lot about our housing choices across the region. ROSE is playing a solid role in community development; it's very heartening to see, especially in such uncertain times."

Contributing to a more stable community

Concluding the meeting, Truesdale asked guests to contribute to organization.

Paul Ellison with Bank of the West, looked up as he was filling out his donation envelope and said, "Having worked in Southeast Portland for 20 of my 30 years in banking, I see the need here every day. ROSE does an excellent job of helping people get in the homeownership, making for a more stable community, reduced crime and increased livability."



After the meeting, ROSE executive director, Nick Sauvie and Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish congratulate ROSE Community Award winners Robert Mosier, Libby Lescalleet, Troy Wilkerson and Paula Hernandez.

For more information about ROSE Community Development Corporation – and the great programs they sponsor or host - or to donate to their causes - call 503-788-8052 or check their web site by **[CLICKING HERE](#)**.

© 2008 David F. Ashton ~ East Portland News

[Click Here to read more East Portland News](#)