



Laconia Area Community Land Trust

LACLT & Linda Harvey Receive Business Excellence Award



Pictured from left to right, Board Member Peter Brothers, Executive Director Linda Harvey, Deputy Director Nancy McCurry and Board Vice Chair Denise Hubbard.

Laconia Area Community Land Trust (LACLT) and its Executive Director Linda L. Harvey were recently honored with a 2006 Business Excellence Award in the non-profit category. The 4th annual *New Hampshire Business Review* Business Excellence Awards were held at C.R. Sparks in Bedford on October 11th. Business Excellence Awards are given to owners and operators of businesses with 100 employees or fewer for their determination, industriousness, innovation and achievements. Winners were picked by a panel of judges who deliberated over more than 70 nominations.

The award was presented to Linda Harvey by Ally McNair, former host and contributing correspondent for N.H. Public Television, who introduced Linda as social worker turned developer. “If you think about it,

said McNair, both careers can be quite similar. A social worker works for society — that is people — and developing abandoned property into safe homes providing shelter is perhaps one of the purest expressions of working for people. This is exactly what Linda and the Laconia Area Community Land Trust do for Lakes Region families in need of affordable housing.” We are thrilled to have been honored with this award.

Annual Meeting Held at Belknap Mill

On October 18th, we held our annual meeting and celebration at the Belknap Mill in Laconia. The evening began with a social hour followed by a brief program and the election of officers and directors for 2007. This special event was sponsored by Laconia Savings Bank and Meredith Village Savings Bank.

Laconia Mayor Matt Lahey welcomed our guests including LACLT members, residents, and supporters. The Mayor told the group it was easy to speak about LACLT, “because it comes from the heart”. He recalled that LACLT first began its work in 1992, which was his first year serving on the City Council. He hailed LACLT for giving 14 years of real service to the community. He went on to say, “LACLT not only gives people a

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Thresholds Newsletter



Pictured Speaker, Linda Morse who is a LACLT tenant and board member with her two children Kerry and Kevin Defeo.

Annual Meeting Continued

nice place to live, but dignity.” The Mayor spoke of a recent discussion with a group of students about citizenship. They asked him how he defined citizenship. He told them, “citizenship was about doing something for your community that you really care about and doing it with enthusiasm and passion, and that’s what I see with LACLT and its members.”

Senator Judd Gregg’s Project Director, Matt Leahy (yes, another Matt Leahy--the evening was filled with many funny jokes about the two Matt Leahy/Leahys) delivered a message from Senator Gregg, “...I know from personal experience the commitment you bring to building up neighborhoods. This dedication can be seen not only in the new homes the Land Trust has constructed, but more importantly, in the sense of pride you have given to the people living in them. It is this ability to turn hopes into reality that is the greatest contribution you have made to this community.

LACLT’s outgoing Board Chair, Bob Curtis reviewed LACLT’s accomplishments of the past year and discussed its plans for the year ahead. Bob, who retired from the board after two terms (6 years) of service said the LACLT Board was the best board on which he ever served.

Claira Monier, Executive Director of the NH Housing Finance Authority spoke about Laconia’s mill history, economic struggles and comeback. Claira lauded LACLT for “helping revitalize the city’s housing stock, especially for low and moderate income people”. She said, “Without the infusion of new life these LACLT’s projects have

provided, neighborhoods would have withered and died. The Land Trust is not afraid to take on difficult adaptive reuse projects. Preservation of community buildings such as the Batchelder and Mechanic Street Schools only enrich the landscape of the municipality. Instead of tearing down perfectly sound structures, the structures are instead given new life as a residential property and give back to the community once more.”

The tenant speaker for the evening was LACLT tenant and Board Member Linda Morse. Linda spoke from her heart about the impact LACLT has had on her life from 12 years in an abusive relationship, to her stay at New Beginnings domestic violence shelter, to becoming a LACLT tenant and living with her children in a beautiful, safe apartment, to returning to college 28 years after high school, where she made the National Honor Society and the Dean’s List and received a Certificate of Excellence from the President of the college, to becoming a LACLT Board Member, to attending an empowering and life-changing NeighborWorks® America Community Leadership Institute in New York City with her daughter, other LACLT residents and Linda Harvey. Linda spoke with pride of the accomplishments her children have been able to achieve with stability in their lives. “I wouldn’t be here tonight, said Linda, if it wasn’t for the Land Trust. They gave me and my children a safe place to live. They lovingly made me believe in myself and let me know that I am worth it.”

The evening concluded with the annual business meeting and election of officers. Newly elected Board Members include: Carol Bickford, Ellen Castro, Kim Cedarstrom, and Elaine Miller.

Outgoing Board Member Peter Brothers spoke fondly of his 6 years serving on the board. He acknowledged Linda Harvey, “as a top-notch Executive Director who exemplifies the true mission of the organization, leading a very dedicated and skilled staff.” Brothers wished LACLT continued success as an affordable housing leader in our area and the State.

Our thanks to Laconia Savings Bank and Meredith Village Savings Bank for co-sponsoring the event, to Lakes Region Linen for donating table linens, and to member Randy Eifert for volunteering his services as event photographer.

LACLT's Year in Review & Year Ahead

Year in Review:

- Rehab of Mechanic School, a 100 year old brick schoolhouse for adaptive reuse as 6 units of permanently affordable rental housing, bringing LACLT's total to 103 rental units in 38 buildings;
- Planning Board approval for Maple Hill Acres in Belmont, 32 units of permanently affordable rental housing (in partnership with Realty Resources);
- Comprehensive business planning including: 1) review of LACLT's in-house property management by a nationally noted asset management consultant resulting in LACLT outsourcing property management to The Hodges Companies effective April 1, 2006; 2) succession planning; 3) preparation of business planning documents including a three-year strategic plan, operational plan, and work plans for each line of business; and 4) capital needs assessments on the portfolio in preparation for updating the capital needs plans and reserves.
- Provided free first-time homebuyer education to 68 people, financial fitness education to 42 people, individual counseling to 105 people, and created 17 new known first-time homebuyers in a difficult market;
- Provided resident services, training, support, and referrals to 217 residents;
- 4 formerly homeless families completed our transitional housing program and moved into permanent housing;
- Awards including the Greater Laconia-Weirs Beach Chamber of Commerce Golden Hammer Award for Millview, Award for Excellence in Urban Redevelopment by the Laconia Planning Board for Millview, Corporate Soul Award by the Belknap County Economic Development Council for our deep commitment to the essence of community and our work with families and children, The Charles L. Edson Tax Credit Excellence Award from the National Affordable Housing Tax Credit Coalition – Honorable Mention in the Rural Housing Category for Millview, LACLT Executive Director Linda Harvey named remarkable Woman of 2006 by *New Hampshire Magazine*, and 2006 Business Excellence Award by *NH Business Review*.

Year Ahead:

- Construction of Maple Hill Acres in Belmont, a 5.3 million dollar new construction project in partnership with Realty Resources of Maine. This 32 unit permanently affordable rental housing complex is fully funded and has been approved by the Belmont Planning Board. A spring construction start is expected;
- Predevelopment planning with the Town of Meredith for a 32 unit permanently affordable rental housing complex in Meredith to address workforce housing needs;
- Increased focus on asset management;
- In December of 2006, LACLT will pay its one millionth tax dollar to the City of Laconia.

LACLT HONORS OUTGOING BOARD CHAIR BOB CURTIS, VICE-CHAIR DENISE HUBBARD & BOARD MEMBER PETER BROTHERS



Pictured from left to right: Peter Brothers, Denise Hubbard, Robert Curtis, and Patricia Pike.

At its annual meeting, LACLT honored outgoing Board Chair Robert Curtis, outgoing Board Vice-Chair Denise Hubbard, and outgoing Board Member Peter Brothers, all of whom served on the Board from October 2000 until October 2006. Each made substantial contributions of their time and talents to our organization and will be deeply missed.

Incoming Board Chair Patricia Pike read a proclamation which was presented to each of these Board Members from herself and LACLT's Executive Director Linda Harvey.

The proclamation read as follows:

"Bob, Denise, and Peter, LACLT is a strong, dynamic, successful organization, highly regarded and supported by the community. With your leadership and strategic planning, LACLT has strengthened its organizational capacity and health, developed new initiatives, created numerous partnerships, delivered programs of recognized excellence, and created permanent community assets.

Under your tenure and leadership, LACLT has realized remarkable growth and achievements, including:

- Increased the combined net assets from 5 million to 14 million, a 280% increase;
- Raised an additional 5.3 million for Maple Hill Acres;
- Contributed to the community tax base. LACLT will pay its 1 millionth property tax dollar this December;
- Increased LACLT's number of permanently affordable housing units from 60 to 104, with another 32 units about to be constructed and an additional 64 units in the pipeline;
- Developed comprehensive strategic and annual business plans with operating plans and work plans by lines of business;
- Expanded our geographic boundaries to respond to requests from Lakes Region communities;
- Launched a Homeownership Initiative. The HomeBuyer Resource Center has trained 672 people resulting in the creation 82 known homebuyers to date. We have a goal of Homeowner production and have developed the first single family home;
- Outsourced our property management, developing a strong focus on asset management;
- Received a multitude of local, state, and national awards and honors, including the Jim Irwin Award for Outstanding Community Service, NH Business of the Year, and the national Charles L. Edson Tax Credit Excellence Award;

We thank you Bob, Denise and Peter for your outstanding service, support and leadership to the organization, Board and staff. Your warm strength, supportive style, thoughtful questions and kind humor will be sorely missed."

HomeBuyer Resource Center Seminars & Workshops

Please join us for these FREE seminars and workshops!

Financial Fitness Workshops:

January 11, 2007 - February 8, 2007 (Thursdays) 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in Laconia
(Sponsored by Meredith Village Savings Bank)

March 1, 2007 - March 29, 2007 (Thursdays) 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in Laconia
(Sponsored by Meredith Village Savings Bank)

First-Time HomeBuyer Seminars:

Classes being scheduled now. Please check our web site in the coming weeks.

More detailed information visit www.laclt.org. To register, call Sarah Denoncourt at 524-0747 or e-mail her sdenoncourt@laclt.org.



United Way Day of Caring



The Lakes Region United Way held its Annual Day of Caring on September 22. The United Way provided us with more than a dozen hard-working volunteers. LACLT staff enjoyed meeting and working along side these wonderful people. A fun day was had by all, and so much was accomplished. We are grateful to the volunteers and to their employers who gave them time off to participate in Day of Caring.



Projects included landscaping, painting, professional tree work, and a mailing. We were fortunate to have volunteers from Asplundh Tree, The Inns & Spa at Mill Falls, Laconia Savings Bank, LRGHealthcare, Melcher & Prescott, and Petal Pushers.

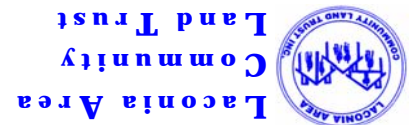
As an expression of our thanks to the volunteers and organizers, LACLT staff treated the volunteers to a pot luck luncheon that was enjoyed by all.

Once again, United Way Day of Caring organizers Pam Paquette and Judy Schothorne did a wonderful job organizing the event and the many volunteers.

We also wish to acknowledge and thank Belknap Landscape Company for donating bark mulch for our landscaping projects.



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Board of Directors

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Carol Bickford
Ellen Castro
Kim Cedarstrom
Elaine Miller
Linda Morse
Kimmel Norwood

Executive Director

Linda L. Harvey

Please join us in welcoming new Board members Carol Bickford, Ellen Castro, Kim Cedarstrom, and Elaine Miller.

Fratello's Donates Over \$900 to LACLT



Pictured: Chris McDonough, Fratello's owner presents check to Nancy McCurry, Deputy Director of LACLT.



Fratello's Restaurant in Laconia recently hosted a Community Benefit Night to raise funds to support LACLT's programs. Fratello's generously donated 50% of its food sales from the evening to LACLT. Our thanks to Fratello's for this most generous donation and to all of you who dined at Fratello's that evening.

Our Mission: To assist low and moderate income households achieve economic self-sufficiency through the development of permanently affordable housing opportunities and associated support programs.