



## Your Housing Connection



Franklin Station Townhomes, East Twenty-Fourth Street

PRG's mission is to provide quality, affordable housing and related services that contribute to neighborhood stability and family self-sufficiency.

## Neighborhood Stability

*David Rubedor, Executive Director*

*Each quarterly newsletter in 2007 focuses on one facet of PRG's mission. In this issue, we highlight some of the ways in which PRG has worked to promote neighborhood stability.*

Contributing to neighborhood stability is a vital part of our work at PRG. And it reflects the interconnectedness of housing, families and communities.

PRG's mission goes beyond providing high quality, affordable housing. Our mission directs us to make sure our work contributes to neighborhood stability. There are several aspects to accomplishing this mission. It requires an understanding and a belief that communities are stabilized and enriched both by the physical qualities of our work and by programs and services that assist the people that live there.

Throughout our history, PRG has turned vacant and run-down properties into homes where families – often with low to moderate incomes – can find community, stability and an opportunity to break out of poverty. And with a strong commitment to high quality construction, PRG and its partners help to ensure that the physical structures serve as long term amenities for the neighborhoods in which they are located.

In this issue, you will read several examples of how PRG's work contributes to neighborhood stability. You will see how both high quality construction and a commitment to the people we serve has helped to stabilize and to build communities.

September 2007

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[prginc.org](http://prginc.org)

**find a great home you can afford this fall!**

## Markley Square Condominium Association

Jean Wassenaar, PRG Board President

We moved in on April 1, 1985, in the snow and ice; the movers kept sliding off the truck ramp all day long, sometimes with furniture in their grasp. We were in a new neighborhood in a townhouse built on what used to be the Central High School practice field – Markley Field. PRG built 40 moderately priced townhomes on the field after Minneapolis Central was closed by the Board of Education. The Central Gym remained as a community activity center, but the high school building was demolished. The forty families who moved into Markley Square energized the neighborhood and cut the average neighborhood age in half. Owners became active in the Central Neighborhood organization, volunteered at the local library, worked on Weed and Seed and other community programs and became integrated into the neighborhood.

Now, twenty-two years later, fourteen of the original owners are still owners of Markley Square townhomes. Others have moved on and new, younger families have moved in. Not just in the development, but into the neighborhood homes and apartments too. The trees are mature, and the neighborhood has been and still is a good place for children to grow up and for families to live. Many of the new families are Hispanic or of other diverse ethnic backgrounds. New owners and new neighbors bring new ideas and energy to the Association. The Markley development has provided stability to the neighborhood and an opportunity for many of the families who have lived there. This is what good development, which opens up home ownership to diverse people, can accomplish. I am appreciative of the opportunity this home has provided to me and my family.

## Beautiful town homes replace “Baby Beirut” in East Phillips

Carol Pass, President, East Phillips Improvement Coalition (EPIC)

PRG/EPIC’s Franklin Station Town Homes (*photo on front page*) have been noted by many to be one of the best projects in the City for their affordability and charm. They were the fulfillment of a long-held dream of the East Phillips neighborhood to bring home ownership, crime control and beauty to an area once referred to as “Baby Beirut” for its constant gunfire and rampant crime. With the bright colors and DJR’s savvy architectural design of the town homes that now fill those two blocks, it is easy to forget that several children and adults were casualties as bullets and drugs flew in this once sad and dangerous area in the late 90’s.



The sales of the 28 town homes literally flew out the door. They were the best bargain around, and are loved for their attractiveness and design-out-crime architecture. Prices were kept very affordable by a major commitment of East Phillips’ NRP funds, the City of Lakes Community Land Trust, work by Habitat for Humanity, and the long-term diligence of PRG staff in raising additional funds.

The town home project has helped East Phillips move from 13% owner-occupied housing to about 27% homeownership, bringing in many stable families and removing much blighted and contaminated housing held by inattentive landlords.

This wonderful project is a triumph for PRG, EPIC and NRP. EPIC had the wisdom as a neighborhood to choose PRG as developer and to commit our NRP dollars. The staff of PRG had the talent and perseverance to continue working hard for home ownership even when financing looked nearly impossible. PRG helped bring stability, safety, beauty and wonderful families to some of the most troubled blocks of Minneapolis. This project has dramatically changed these blocks. They are no longer called “Baby Beirut” and we are grateful.

Having trouble meeting your mortgage payments?

Call Stacey Bostwick at PRG for mortgage counseling

(612) 721-7556 extension 21

Already behind and facing foreclosure?

Call Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity

(612) 331-4090 extension 3

In the city of Minneapolis, dial 311

# The Inside Page



Your Link to PRG's Services • September 2007

## Foreclosures in Our Community

Stacey Bostwick, Mortgage Counselor / Program Manager



It's hard to avoid the headlines about housing these days: [Housing Woes Continue](#), [Foreclosures Worst Ever](#), or [Charges in Mortgage Fraud Case](#). It's also hard to ignore the effects of the increasing rates of foreclosure in our community which is creating a serious threat to neighborhood stability.

For foreclosure help in Minneapolis, dial 311

Foreclosures clearly have a personal impact: the homeowner's financial situation and investment in the home and potential for future good credit is the most immediate loss. We are in a time though, where foreclosure rates are soaring and the scale of foreclosures begs the question about the larger negative impact it may have. According to an Associated Press report on September 18, 2007, nationwide there were 243,947 foreclosures were filed in August alone. The number of foreclosures is astronomical, with Hennepin County on pace to have over 6,000 families lose their homes in 2007. What's worse, according to Eric Stein, who is the senior vice president at the Center for Responsible Lending, is that of all the loans made to families in Minneapolis and St. Paul in 2006, over 20% are projected to be lost to foreclosure.

Neighborhood stability and self-sufficiency will be hard to maintain when many of these foreclosures will lead to vacant, boarded-up or abandoned properties. Many families have no option other than to walk away from the property; banks, investors or other financial institutions are finding themselves with quickly growing portfolios of real estate. These homes end up on the market along with homes being sold by current owners, leaving our market in a position that heavily favors buyers. The Minneapolis Area Association of Realtors website indicates that there is a 10 months supply of housing inventory, meaning it will take the average seller 10 months to sell their home. That makes it much more difficult for a homeowner facing foreclosure to sell in a timely manner.

## The James Avenue Cluster

Jerry Moore, Executive Director, Jordan Area Community Council

In an effort to concentrate redevelopment efforts, including buying and rehabbing foreclosed properties, the Jordan Area Community Council (JACC) in partnership with PRG is working on the 25th and James cluster in the Jordan neighborhood. We believe that it is our joint mission to enhance neighborhood stability and family self-sufficiency. By providing the community with both new and rehabilitated homes we feel that together we are providing continued community history and stability.

There are options for those facing foreclosure, and organizations that can help you get through this difficult time. If you are concerned about missing a payment or have questions about refinancing or using equity in your home, please call Stacey Bostwick at PRG at (612) 721-7556, extension 21. If you live in Minneapolis and have already missed a payment, please contact Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity for foreclosure counseling and potential funding at (612) 331-4090, extension 3. If you live outside of Minneapolis, please contact the Minnesota Home Ownership Center (HOC) at (651) 659-9336 for a referral to your local foreclosure prevention agency. HOC is also coordinating a "Borrower Workshop" where large mortgage servicers including Wells Fargo, Rescap, US Bank, TCF and Citibank, will be on hand to directly work with borrowers who may be in trouble. The Borrower Workshops will be held on Tuesday, October 9th and Wednesday, October 10th. If you would like to attend one of these workshops, please RSVP directly to HOC at (651) 659-9336.



# The Franklin Station Condominiums

PRG is offering a \$10,000 incentive towards the purchase of a condominium at Franklin Station. The incentive can be used towards down payment, closing costs, association dues (up to 3 years) or upgrades.

The Franklin Station Condominiums offer 17 different floor plans with 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units available.



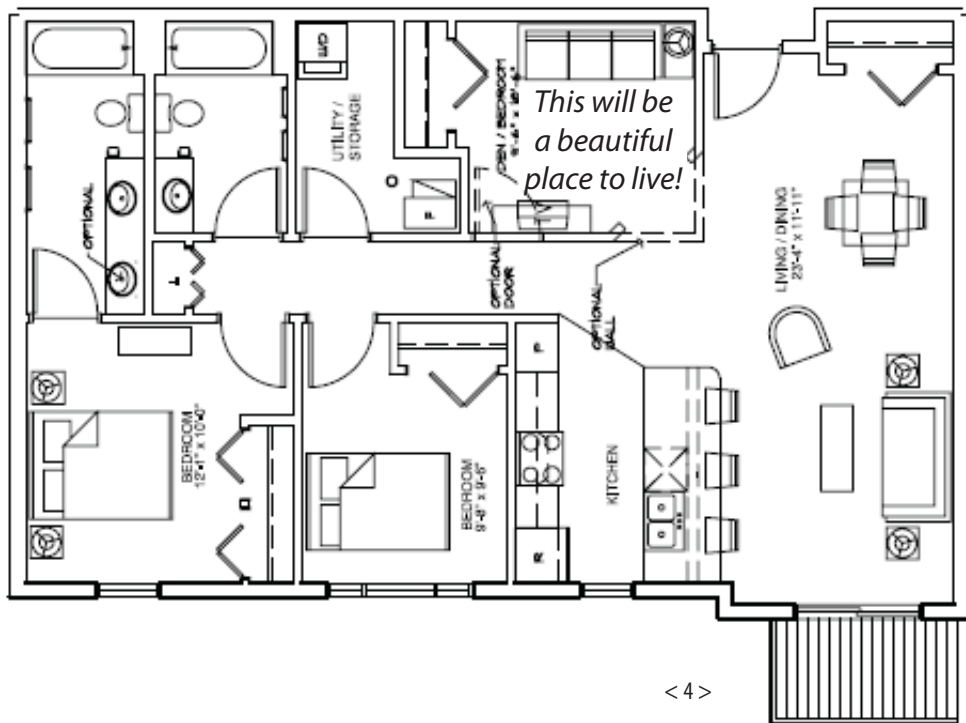
*Beautiful new condominiums to be constructed at Bloomington Avenue and East Twenty-Fourth Street*

Just minutes from everything that Minneapolis has to offer: Midtown Greenway, Hiawatha Light Rail, Metro Transit Buses, Downtown Minneapolis, Midtown Global Market, Mercado Central, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Colleges, the University of Minnesota, and so much more.

All units have either decks or French balconies, central air conditioning, in unit laundry and feature energy star rated appliances. The buildings each will have first level parking, elevators and trash chutes on every floor.

**Now even more affordable with a \$10,000 purchase incentive.**

Construction start is contingent on eleven more presales. Call Erin Green at PRG, (612) 721-7556 extention 12.





## The HOW Program

2612  
Plymouth  
Avenue  
North



\$165,000

We are happy to announce that the HOW (Home Ownership Works) program has added new construction to its "menu." Up until recently, the HOW program has taken older homes and rehabbed them while keeping the charm and character of an older home and sold them to first-time homebuyers under 80% of median income. The HOW program will continue to rehab homes but will also feature new construction single family homes too.

Currently we have two rehabbed houses for sale through the HOW program, shown at left. Call Erin Green at PRG, (612) 721-7556 extension 12.



3207  
Emerson  
Avenue  
North

\$149,000

### **Home Ownership Works!**

## Moving Right Along at Emerson Townhomes

*Erin Green, Marketing Agent /HBC Assistant*

Construction is moving along very quickly at the Emerson Townhomes in Heritage Park. At this time, both buildings' main structures are framed and the south building has a roof and windows. We are on schedule for a March 2008 completion date.

Currently, PRG has seven units still available, one specifically for first-time homebuyers under 80% of median income. Gap financing is available to make the unit more affordable. In addition, PRG is offering a \$5,000 grant for purchase of any Emerson Townhome.

Prices range from \$169,500-\$244,500.



Townhouse

*Watch for more construction updates and the grand opening of a model unit in January 2008.*



Carriage House



## Cooperative and Rental Opportunities

Homes are available in some of PRG's co-ops. The co-ops range in size from 7 to 21 units, there are 1, 2, 3, and 4 bedroom units, and they are all located in south Minneapolis.

Cooperatives are set up so that all members have a voice in running the co-op. Members have input in the budget process, which sets the unit rents each year. They work on maintenance issues to keep costs (and rents) down, and they select new members for the cooperative when someone moves out.

As members of a housing cooperative, residents are part of a small community within the neighborhood. Residents know each other and therefore can look out for each other.

For more information, contact CommonBond Communities at (612) 871-0814.



**New Village**  
27th and Portland Ave. S.  
Three-bedroom \$912

PRG's workshops—offered in partnership with the Home Ownership Center—walk you through the home buying process. They include information on:

- Working with lenders
- Credit and budgeting
- Special loan programs
- Working with realtors
- Home inspections
- Being a successful homeowner

These services are available to any person or family thinking about buying a home. There is no minimum or maximum income limit. In addition to the \$35 workshop fee, there is a small fee for your confidential credit report (optional). PRG's individual counseling is free.



## Homebuyer Workshops

PRG's homebuyer education and counseling program is a great way to find out more about becoming a homeowner. Each workshop listed is either a single session or a series of sessions that costs \$35 per household.

### English Workshops:

To register, please call (612) 721-7556, ext. 72

November 10	One Saturday	9am-5:30pm
December 1 & 8	Two Saturdays	10am-2:45pm
January 26	One Saturday	9am-5:45pm
February 23	One Saturday	9am-5:45pm
March 15	One Saturday	9am-5:45pm

## Thank you!

PRG thanks the following for their generous financial support of our homebuyer education and counseling program:

### Program Funding

- McKnight Foundation
- Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation

### Culturally Appropriate Workshop Initiative

- F. Van Konynenburg and Jane Van Konynenburg Fund of the Minneapolis Foundation
- Star Tribune Foundation
- Wells Fargo Housing Foundation

Para información a cerca de talleres en español, comuníquese con Neighborhood Development Alliance al telefono (651) 292-0131.



## Board Member Profile: Chris Gams

Chris Gams has been a member of PRG's Board of Directors since early in 2005. He also serves on our public relations and audit committees. Currently, Chris is the Executive Director of the Bottineau Neighborhood Association in Northeast Minneapolis. He has worked with a half dozen other Minneapolis neighborhoods over the past 15 years, primarily in the area of community based planning through neighborhood involvement in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program.

In relation to this quarter's newsletter theme of neighborhood stability, Chris shared his perspectives from his extensive experience:

"What are the requirements of a stable community? There are probably about as many answers to this question as there are people to answer it. Some may say the answer is local access to the goods and services we all need – affordable and healthy food options, services to get our shoes or car repaired, and even social services to help us get through a rough spot. Other may say that it's access to living wage jobs – either nearby or at least conveniently located near public transit routes. Still others may say its access to affordable and quality housing. They would all be right. But there is one thing all these answers have in common – people."

Chris has seen that without people, businesses relocate or close, employers are less likely to invest and houses will be empty. Because housing is very often our greatest expense, often 30% or more of our income, he feels

"Whether it's a partnership with the City of Minneapolis and an organization like the Jordan Area Community Council to rehabilitate and build new single family homes in an area hit hard by foreclosures and disinvestment, or a partnership with the Spirit of the Lakes Church to build new affordable housing on Lake Street for the aging GLBT community, PRG learns more about the many challenges faced by other organizations in their community building efforts."

very proud of PRG's ongoing commitment to share its three decades of affordable housing development experience with partners working to stabilize their own communities. In addition, the work that PRG does in a wide spectrum of housing challenges with a variety of partners makes our organization even better able to help in the future.

From his years of community development work, Chris knows that when people don't have to worry about where they will live or how they can afford it, we all have more time to dedicate to what we all really want – a vibrant and stable community.

We appreciate everything that Chris brings to reaching that goal.



## Thank you!

The following have made financial gifts to PRG in 2007. Thank you! Your generosity means high-quality homes that enrich Twin Cities neighborhoods and families.

Anonymous Donors  
Margaret Benson  
Timothy Berardinis  
Anastasiya Berler  
Sharol Boswell  
Bremer Bank  
Ana Brito  
Carlson Printing  
DJR Architecture  
Ned Foster  
Debbie Freedman & Peter Wodrich  
Chris Gams  
Pat Gleason  
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Marquette Financial Companies  
Michlitsch Construction  
William Nunn  
Old Republic Title Company  
Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association  
Karen Skaja  
Sweet Tea Design  
Marion Thompson  
Brianne Tushaus  
US Bancorp  
Jean Wassenaar  
Beva Lee Wunderlich

PRG's mission is to provide quality, affordable housing and related services that contribute to neighborhood stability and family self-sufficiency.

We serve low- to moderate-income families from diverse backgrounds. We develop and market affordable housing, educate and counsel first-time homebuyers, and own and asset manage rental and cooperative housing.

*Your Housing Connection* is intended to be a resource for the residents of our housing co-ops as well as for clients of our other programs and the community at large.

### **Staff:**

Bill Alvord, *Financial Manager*  
Stacey Bostwick, *Mortgage Counselor / Program Manager*  
Tessa Eddy, *Homebuyer Education and Counseling Program Assistant*  
Erin Green, *Homebuyer Counseling Assistant / Marketing Agent*  
Paul McCluskey, *Administrative Assistant*  
David Rubedor, *Executive Director*  
Kathy Wetzel-Mastel, *Project Manager*  
Carrie Williams-Noren, *Communications Manager*  
Doug Wise, *Project Coordinator*

### **Board of Directors:**

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Mark Scholtes  
Jean Wassenaar, *President*  
Erich Wunderlich, *Secretary*

In 2008, we will begin sending this newsletter to you by e-mail. Just e-mail us at [news@prginc.org](mailto:news@prginc.org) and we'll enter your e-mail address in our database.

For more information about PRG's programs and services, please call us at (612) 721-7556 or visit [prginc.org](http://prginc.org).

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You > Home > Community



*Powderhorn Residents Group, Incorporated*  
2017 East 38th Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55407

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