Homestead Welcomes New Leadership to Board of Delegates

Simon Adriane Ellis, Office Administrator

Homestead offers a very fond farewell to outgoing Board President Becky Andrews, who gave so much of her time and energy to Homestead and has left the board in order to focus on her role as a new parent.

Becky leaves the board in great hands, under the leadership of new Board President Martina Guiffoil. Martina is the Executive Director of the Rainier Valley Community Development Fund, a catalyst for economic development that promotes the diversity and livability of the Rainier Valley.

Homestead is also pleased to welcome two new board members, Siobhan Ring and Maura Deering, and celebrate the re-election of board members Geov Parrish and Dante Taylor.

Siobhan Ring and her partner Erin Katz are proud Homestead homeowners – they and their son have enjoyed living in their community land trust home since 2007. Siobhan has a long history of working for affordable housing in Seattle, including 11 years as a community organizer and then Executive Director of the Tenants Union of Washington. She is now the Mobilization Coordinator for the Children’s Alliance.

Maura Deering is an attorney who has been practicing environmental, real estate, and land use law for the past five years. In her work, she has assisted nonprofit organizations as well as homeowners and neighborhood groups.

Maura has studied and written on the subject of collaboration between conservation and community land trusts.
Homeowners Welcome New Homeownership Program Director

Simon Adriane Ellis  
Office Administrator

Lindsay Sargent joined Homestead in August as our new Homeownership Program Director, stepping right into a surge of potential homebuyers seeking to take advantage of the new homebuyer tax credit. Leveraging her seven years of real estate experience in Seattle, Lindsey jumped right in and got to work.

In the four months since Lindsay joined our staff, nine households have closed on their new homes—that is 13 adults and 10 children who are enjoying the security of their own home for the first time. These closings have brought the total number of homes in the land trust to 56 as of late November!

In addition, Lindsay’s real estate expertise has been instrumental in getting Homestead ready to sell its new townhome units this fall. Her hard work laying the groundwork for these sales, and educating Homestead’s real estate partners on the community land trust model, will be critical to the success of these partnerships.

Lindsey Sargent brings extensive real estate experience to her new role as Homestead’s Homeownership Program Director because of the organization’s mission. “When I heard about the position,” she said, “I thought it would be amazing to be able to bring so much money to help people buy homes.”

In addition to her work with Homestead, Lindsey has run a local Girl Scout troop for the past seven years, and volunteers with Crooked Trails, an organization which builds schools in developing countries.

Homestead welcomes the opportunity to add Lindsey’s enthusiasm and real estate knowledge to our team. Her hard work and dedication to helping people get into their first home has been greatly appreciated by new Homestead homeowners.

Homeowner Anniversaries!

Congrats to Homestead homeowners celebrating their anniversaries this fall and winter! All of them deserve a big thank you for their partnership with Homestead and their commitment to stewarding affordability for future homeowners!

Analia CASTAÑO & Leon Davis  
Mayra Laura CASTAÑO
David Evans  
Jane Fairchild  
Ayalew Geasse & Nurul Omer  
Laura Johnson

Chris LARCOME  
Tina LATHROP
Michael LOVELEY  
Michelle NELSON  
Miuang Sairey & SaiKunh Thun  
Jo Szcroszata

From the Director: Elections Renew Commitment to Housing, Open up New Opportunities

Rebecca Lane  
Development & Communications Director

On November 3rd the Seattle Housing Levy passed by a two to one margin, extending Seattle’s 28-year history of supporting affordable housing for another seven years. This is a tremendous expression of our collective values and sends a strong message to Seattle’s new crop of incoming elected officials that long-term affordable housing is a huge priority for our city!

The transition team for incoming mayor Mike McGinn is asking the public for advice, offering affordable housing advocates a new opportunity to get their voices heard. Here is what I said:

• Make affordable housing a top priority – the public clearly supports it.
• Be bold. Articulate the vision that all Seattle households have high quality, energy- and location-efficient affordable housing, no matter what their income. Align policy around this vision.
• Measure where the market is fulfilling this vision currently. The increasing zoning capacity with requirements for housing affordability to bring the for-profit development community forward to solve a significant part of our otherwise unmet affordable housing need.
• Utilize direct investment of tax funds from the Housing Levy, and potentially new tools like the Growth Fund and Tax Increment Financing) to create affordable homes that can’t be created by the for-profit development community.
• Safeguard the long-term affordability of our affordable housing stock – investing our scarce resources (zoning capacity or money) in temporary affordability is inefficient and won’t solve the problem.

In addition to the election, it has been a very exciting fall at Homestead. We added our 51st home to the land trust in October, and have had even more closings since that time! And we’re working hard to take full advantage of the opportunity the housing recession is providing to lock in the affordability of 50 more homes by the end of 2010. Lindsey Sargent, our new Homeownership Program Director, has hit the ground running – a good thing too, with sales at Nova and Valtera townhomes starting this fall.

In short, there has never been more to celebrate. In this season of reflection and giving thanks for the bounty we’ve received, I feel very thankful for all the support Homestead has received this year.
Thank you all so much!

Home Sales Flourish! Homestead Hopes to Add Its 60th Home by the End of the Year

Rebecca Lane  
Development & Communications Director

Several conditions came together this fall to increase land trust home sales. The $8,000 first-time homebuyer tax credit motivated prospective homebuyers to pour into Homestead’s office. Greeting this wave of motivated buyers was new Homeownership Program Director Lindsey Sargent. Additionally, two dynamic new partnerships created 35 units of newly constructed, permanently affordable townhomes in Seattle.

Nova Townhomes, a partnership with the Low Income Housing Alliance (LIHA), consists of 15 stunning two-bedroom, two-bathroom townhomes in the growing Dearborn neighborhood. They are close to downtown, walking distance to the International District, and on two major bus lines. Each new home sells for $208,000. Buyers may be eligible for the $8,000 first-time homebuyer tax credit if they close before April 30, 2010.

In July, Blue Heron JS, LLC approached Homestead to partner on the sale of the Valtera Townhomes in West Seattle. Ten of the townhomes will sell at market rate for $330,000; ten will sell for $250,000 to Homestead buyers making up to area median income; and ten will be sold to lower income Homestead buyers, with additional public subsidy bringing the purchase price down to $205,000 or lower!

Lindsey is also working on a partnership with Habitat for Humanity to make two of the homes available to their buyers.

Homestead is tremendously excited to have provided so many families with homes they can afford, and to have brought these homes into stewardship for the benefit of working families for generations to come. The staff and board of Homestead looks forward to inviting you to a celebration of our incredible progress after the New Year.

Ryan Neff Award Presented to Blue Heron at Annual Meeting

Rebecca Lane  
Development & Communications Director

Thank you to everyone who joined the board and staff of Homestead at our Fall Celebration! The crowd was jubilant, and the event was a great start to Homestead’s annual campaign. Many homeowners were in the room, and stood to a round of applause, because of course they are the reason that Homestead exists.

Homestead was very pleased to award the Ryan Neff Affordable Housing Award to Judy Pigott and Stephen Boyd of Blue Heron JS, LLC. This award is endowed by the CoHo Team on behalf of the late Ryan Neff, a colleague and friend who was dedicated to creating affordable homeownership in Seattle.

Homestead and CoHo recognized Blue Heron’s vision and commitment to affordable housing solutions in the City of Seattle, with their incomparable gift of land beneath 20 townhomes in the Valtera Townhome development in West Seattle.

The board and staff wish to express our deepest thanks on behalf of the many families who will benefit over the years, and our gratitude to Judy and Stephen for their extraordinary leadership.

You Make a Difference In Your Community!

Rebecca Lane  
Development & Communications Director

Homestead recently received an unexpected gift from the sister of one of our homeowners. In her note she talked about what a difference having a stable home has made for her sister, who is a single parent with a young child.

She’s watched with great delight as her nephew has grown confident in school, made friends in the neighborhood, and welcomed those friends to play at his house.

She has also noticed her sister’s well being bloom. She closed her note with the wish that many more families could have the good fortune that her dear sister has had as a Homestead homeowner. Her gift will assure that this wish comes true!

The generosity of Homestead’s friends and supporters is an affirmation of the value of affordable, stable and safe homes in our communities. Each gift brings another family closer to being able to afford a home. Indeed, each gift will continue to give as these homes stay affordable for succeeding generations of buyers.

More than a one-time investment, every dollar assures that these homes stay affordable forever. Each and every gift is a major gift at Homestead, because the impact is so significant in the lives of real people.

Thank you for your generosity, and for considering Homestead in your giving this year.

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