

Home-grown solutions for low-income housing

Charlotte a leader in mixed development

Continued from page 1A

and the Housing Partnership are strengthening ties with government and corporations to finance construction.

The 32-acre Park at Oaklawn, for instance, was built with \$34.7 million in federal HOPE VI funding, the last U.S. dollars for the housing program that has been cut by the Bush administration, only to be reinstated by Congress.

"HOPE VI isn't dead, but it's on its last legs," CHA Director Charles Woodyard said.

Live Oak, which sits on a 9-acre site located off Fairview Road near SouthPark Mall, will be rebuilt from 32 aging townhomes into a mixed-income development of 290 units on 4.62 acres, including

50 for the elderly. At least 82 units will be low-income apartments.

The housing authority will sell the remaining land for mixed-use development with the City Council's OK, the proceeds will help pay for more housing in Charlotte.

"In places where you have new affordable housing, you will have mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhoods," Howard said. "The days of low-income (residents living) together without having something a couple of steps above that are done. You don't want to have to come back in 20 years and redevelop it again."

Charlotte is in the forefront of subsidizing mixed-income housing along with Atlanta, Dallas, Texas and San Francisco. In each city, there's a movement to eliminate economic barriers between middle- and low-income families.

"It's no longer a one size fits all approach," Woodyard

said.

Challenges remain, particularly in funding. Without government money, more emphasis is being put on building relationships with corporations who are looking to maximize profits.

Woodyard said getting their support — and money — is a balancing act.

"You have to know the financial tools and how to make it work," he said. "You won't find the market rate (of traditional single-family developments), but there is a cash return."

As more people move here, that concept will need to keep pace with families that'll need an affordable place to live.

"As long as Charlotte continues to grow and people move here, we're going to have that problem," Howard said. "What we need to do is continue to build affordable — and safe — housing."

Ethnicity a factor in New Orleans

By Hazel Trice Edney
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

WASHINGTON — Race will be a major factor in New Orleans' May 20 runoff election for mayor even though the two finalists — incumbent Ray Nagin and Lt. Gov. Mitch Landrieu — have proven that they can attract support from members of the opposite race, political observers predict.

"No matter what the larger campaign group collectively decides, race will be an indelible factor in the outcome," says political scientist Lorenzo Morris, chairman of the Department of Political Science at Howard University. "Though Landrieu is certainly not a Republican, he represents by image and by general characteristics of the New Orleans electorate, someone who is more to the right than Nagin. What will happen is where race is a factor, blacks will tend to vote more likely than before for the black candidate, even if his politics in recent years wasn't the most appeal-

ing to them."

Nagin is black and Landrieu is white.

Saturday's voting apparently said as much about how Whites vote as it did about black voting patterns.

Four years ago, Nagin was all but rejected by New Orleans' black electorate, winning overwhelmingly with support from 90 percent white voters. However, in a field of 22 candidates, Nagin won only 10 percent of predominantly white precincts and about 66 percent among those in black neighborhoods. Landrieu carried 24 percent of the black vote and 30 percent of the white vote.

Correction

An article in last week's Post misidentified Mordecai Scott's birth order and number of siblings ("Kings of the ball: Students earn free formal wear for prom"). Scott, a senior at West Charlotte High School, is the third of eight children.

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