

April, 2007

Dear Residents of Lafitte:

As promised, this is the first in a series of monthly letters that we will be sending, along with our quarterly newsletters, to provide you with updates on what's happening at Lafitte and with the Homebuilding Plan. As we work to redevelop housing at Lafitte and in the Treme and Tulane/Gravier communities, Providence and Enterprise remain committed to providing:

- An absolute opportunity for the 865 families who lived in Lafitte before Katrina to return to better quality homes and a healthier neighborhood as soon as possible;
- 900 subsidized homes, the same number as in the Lafitte development before the storm;
- Resident participation in planning and developing a more vibrant community; and
- Resident services, including case management and counseling.

We are also committed to phasing redevelopment so that residents who want to come home right away have that chance, while at the same time we work to build new affordable rental housing and homeownership opportunities on the Lafitte site and in the surrounding community.

DO WE HAVE YOUR MOST RECENT ADDRESS?

We are working hard to keep address information updated. If you or people you know are not receiving regular communications from us, please contact LaTonya Williams at Providence (phone 504-821-7226 or email lwilliams@providencech.org) with your new address information.

Now for a few updates...

Update: Case Management Support to Lafitte Families in New Orleans

On March 19, 2007 the New Orleans Community Based Service Network began offering case management services to Lafitte families in New Orleans. Providence is in discussions with partners in Houston and Baton Rouge to provide similar services in those locations within the next month. For more information contact LaTonya (her contact information is in the box above) or visit www.providencech.org.

Update: Public Housing Units are Open Now

HUD and HANO have re-opened several hundred public housing units for former residents. Sarah McMorris of NOLAC (New Orleans Legal Assistance) has a list of the 600 units available, and any residents interested in receiving information can call her at (504) 529-1000 ext. 243.

Update: HUD/HANO to Survey Residents

At the urging of Congress, HUD/HANO have committed to surveying residents regarding their interest in coming home immediately. We encourage you to participate in the survey, and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us.

Update: Work to Construct New Affordable Housing Continues

Providence and Enterprise are continuing to acquire properties in the Treme and Tulane/Gravier communities. Our first target is vacant and blighted properties in the Treme neighborhood. We are doing all that we can to get permits and financing in place to start construction of our first new rental homes this summer and have former Lafitte residents move in by the end of this year. We are also helping HANO figure out how some of the existing buildings on the Lafitte site might be used as temporary housing for returning residents.

We hope this update has been helpful. Please contact us if there is other information you would find useful, and to make sure we have your most recent contact information.

Sincerely,



James R. Kelly
President & CEO
Providence Community Housing



Michelle Whetten
Director, Gulf Coast Rebuilding Initiative
Enterprise Community Partners

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT KEEPING YOUR RIGHT TO RETURN

By New Orleans Legal Assistance/Southeast Louisiana Legal Services

Every day we get calls from public housing displaced from New Orleans by the Hurricane who want to return home. Some families want to come back to New Orleans with their disaster vouchers. Some are returning to other public housing units. Almost every day, we get calls from displaced families saying their disaster vouchers have been terminated or that they are in danger of being removed from the program. HUD data shows that as of Feb. 1, 2007, 339 families have been removed from the program. If you are removed from the disaster voucher program for something you allegedly did wrong, you could lose your right to return to Lafitte.

What can you do to protect your right to return? Here are a few things:

- 1) Check your lease. See when it expires. What kind of notice do you have to give your landlord if you want to move. Does your lease have an early termination clause?
- 2) Contact the Housing Authority where you live now. Find out the process they use when a family wants to move.
- 3) If you get a letter saying you are being terminated from the disaster voucher program, make sure you ask for a hearing in writing immediately.
- 4) If you think you need help with ending the lease where you are so you can come back to the New Orleans area or if you are in danger of losing your housing assistance, please feel free to contact our office at 504-529-1000 ext 223. If we cannot help you, we will refer you to a legal aid office in your area who may be able to help.