



Wayne County

Robert A. Ficano, County Executive

NAP Newsletter

NAP TEAM PARTICIPATES IN REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROBLEM OF ABANDONED HOMES IN MICHIGAN

Wayne County Nuisance Abatement Program (NAP) team members joined a panel of experts from the banking, mortgage and property servicing industries on May 22, at the Henry Ford Museum to discuss regional concerns about abandoned and vacant homes.

The Potestivo & Associates law firm, which regularly defends mortgage companies and banking interest holders in NAP law suits, hosted the real estate servicing summit. The gathering of diverse perspectives allowed for an insightful discussion about the growing number of abandoned houses in Michigan, many caused by mortgage foreclosures.

Chief Assistant Corporation Counsel Eric Sabree and Assistant Corporation Counsel Michael Russell both sat on a panel discussion about Wayne County's efforts to combat blight in the community. Amy Muszall, an attorney with Potestivo along with Dale McPherson, CEO of Field Assets Services and Martha Manseau of AMC Mortgages spoke on nuisance abatement from the mortgage servicer's perspective.



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As there are a variety of different reasons for the spike in vacant homes in Wayne County, there are also many different perspectives on solutions. However, there is universal recognition that vacant, blighted homes are a problem for everyone.

The seminar was well attended by members of the real estate, banking and mortgage communities, as well as governmental representatives. Other members of the NAP team were in attendance, along with representatives from the City of Detroit Department of Building and Safety Engineering.

NAP MEETS WITH CITY OF DETROIT DEPARTMENTS FOR GROUNDBREAKING TEAM EFFORTS

Even though the Wayne County and City of Detroit budgets continue to be squeezed and stretched, good solutions to bad problems can still be found. NAP recently met with The City of Detroit Department of Building and Safety Engineering and the Detroit Police Department to map out strategies for a comprehensive approach to address blight in Detroit.

From the initial meeting there were a number of good suggestions, including a training session for citizens and governmental departments about how to identify and report illegal stripping and dumping activities.

REPORT NUISANCE PROPERTY

If you see abandoned, blighted property call the Nuisance Abatement Program Hotline at: (313) 224-5757.

Properties seized through NAP can be bought on the Wayne County NAP website at:

www.waynecounty.com/WCAuctions

NATIONAL URBAN PLANNING MAGAZINE FEATURES NAP

Planning Magazine, a national publication dedicated to urban and governmental planning issues featured NAP in its June 2007 issue. The article praised the significant impact that the innovative Nuisance Abatement Program has had on the City of Detroit, and how nuisance abatement can be the first step in urban economic redevelopment. It was a great article written by Andrew Dick, Esq., a former NAP law clerk.

NAP TALK

Each issue we interview a member of the NAP team. We now call this section "Nap Talk." This issue we talk with NAP staff attorney and community liaison,

Atty. Michael D. Russell

NT: Mike, you're the newest member of the NAP legal team. Along with handling NAP cases you also serve as a community contact person for NAP. What has impressed you the most about NAP?

M.R.: The dedication of the entire NAP staff has been remarkable. We face so many obstacles and challenges in our efforts to fight blight, that it could be demoralizing. Yet the staff keeps fighting, like warriors, to make the County better.

NT: With all the things you do for NAP, what is the most rewarding?

M. R.: I enjoy seeing the citizens in a challenged community experience a sense of hope and gratitude when NAP has been able to make a difference in their neighborhood. While many problems we can't fix, it's a real inspirational moment when I hear about a success story or see a before-and-after picture, and know NAP helped to make it happen.