

Out With the Old, In With the New



470 OVERBROOK FOR SALE IN MUSKEGON HEIGHTS. HAS THREE BEDROOMS, ONE BATH, FULL BASEMENT. IN WOODCLIFFE NEIGHBORHOOD!

And then there was one. 2222 Wood Street left the Land Bank family this week. This leaves one of our original improved houses on the market—3208 Waalkes. We are confident that the improving market and recent upgrades will help move this last of the “Original Five” as well.

Eleven other properties were conveyed since our last reporting. Many of our side lots have been sold and many

others have drawn interest. These purchases are assisting in the consolidation of the County real estate market (see related article, page 2).

The LB is crunching numbers and conducting site searches at available property from this year’s tax foreclosure list. There is a wide variety of housing and lots available throughout the county.

Preparation is beginning to market 470 Overbrook in Muskegon Heights and 2152 S. Getty in Muskegon. Overbrook is a cute little house with three bedrooms and one bath. Getty is a commercial building that Muskegonites will remember as the old Pletcher’s Furniture.

With both the old and the new, it will be another year of growth for the LB and more revitalization for our neighborhoods county-wide!!

New LB Project

The Land Bank is partnering with the County Treasurer’s Office in the administration of Crestview Trailer Park. Crestview is in Norton Shores and became a County possession in

April. The LB’s first order of business is to get a cleanup crew together and invite the residents to participate in a dumpster day. Debris and yard waste will be removed, perennials will be plant-

ed, and long term planning will begin on reconfiguration and new use of some lots. The City of Norton Shores has been quite helpful to date. We hope to show them some quick, tangible results!

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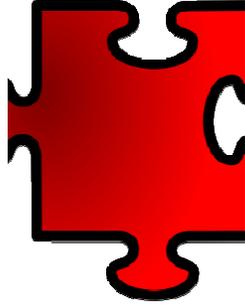
- New LB Activity
- New Partnerships
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Land Bank 101—Getting it Together



WE FOUND A FEW PIECES OF THE PUZZLE!

One of the functions of a Land Bank is to work with local units

of government in long term land use strategy.

The Land Bank accomplished this recently in selling seven lots to Dalton Township.

These lots were of the predominant 25' X 100' dimension in the area. In one of the cases, the platted block belonged to the Township except one piece—our piece! The remainder of the lots will go far in the consolidation of land and promote the Township's future land use goals.

The majority of these small lots had been through many changes of hand throughout the years, often cycling within the tax auction process. People would buy them online under the impression of having their little slice of heaven

when in fact they were islands of property within unimproved planned blocks.

Some of these small lots were actually given away with subscriptions to a Chicago newspaper many years ago.

Mark Fairchild, Register of Deeds, provided a history of some of these lots, including the quote: "It is the biggest swindle that was ever sprung on the public".

The Land Bank is proud to work with local units and put these pieces back together.

PROPERTIES SOLD ALL TIME BY THE LAND

BANK:

54

THIS YEAR TO DATE:

27

Land Bank Q & A

Q: Why doesn't the Land Bank take in a bunch of vacant lots like other land banks?

A: Great question! It comes down to resources. To take in a property, the LB would have to pay property taxes for the lot for the current tax year.

The LB would then, just like anyone else, be responsible for maintaining the property (trash removal, civic fines, lawn maintenance).

If a city department, neighborhood association or block club would be interested in working with the LB to take in a

specific property and has a plan to help maintain the property, we would love to hear from you!!

Sometimes the answer is as simple as a grassroots effort to put some good use to something that was once a problem.

Blight Elimination and Partnering

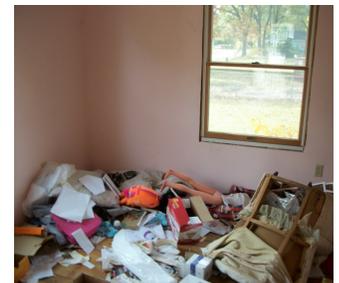
When the Land Bank obtains a property, the state of the interior and exterior can vary wildly.

Whenever possible, the LB has been partnering with local individuals and entities to wisely dispose of materials.

Sometimes it is leaving metals set aside for individuals to

scrap. Other times it is calling places like the St. Vincent DePaul Society to pick up items they can use to further their mission.

Either way, we would rather partner and be good stewards whenever possible. Anything is better than putting stuff in a hole in the ground.



I SPY ANYONE? SOMETIMES WHEN WE GET A HOUSE WE HAVE A LITTLE WORK TO DO.

Property Donation



3028 WAALKES—THREE BEDROOMS, ONE BATH, ONE BIG YARD!

The Land Bank website (www.muskegonlandbank.org) now has a page featuring information for property donation. The page contains an applica-

tion form for those who wish to donate property.

As with any donation, it is stressed to check with your attorney or tax preparer to find out if your donation is deductible.

In a couple of recent examples, one property (in Norton Shores) was donated by a bank. The property had a garage but was otherwise vacant. The neighbor did not have a garage.

The property had taxes due and some fees associated with the home demolition.

A quick conversation over the fence discovered that the neighbor had interest in the property (the siding even matched).

The other recent example involved a vacant lot in Muskegon Heights. The adjacent property owner wished to add the property to their investment property to add some elbow room. The investor was found to be a responsible landlord, so the deal was made.

The LB will accept donated property on a case by case basis, generally if an end use is identified prior to transfer.

PROPERTIES
CURRENTLY IN THE
LAND BANK
PORTFOLIO:

34

Energy Conservation—Hot in the City

It's finally starting to get a little warmer out there. Soon we will be looking for some relief from the heat. Before running for the A/C dial, you might consider:

- * Restricting use of ovens, clothes dryers, dishwashers until the evenings
- * If you haven't already, switch to CFL light bulbs, they give off far less heat
- * Open those windows! Make sure you clean those screens and patch any holes.
- * Use curtains and blinds as a means of keeping out direct heat—follow the sun!
- * Turn off appliances, including computer equipment, that are not being used. Even on stand-by they can give off heat.

ALL TIME LB
PROPERTY:

88

Featured Property—941 Amity, Muskegon (Steele)

This month's featured property is 941 Amity in Muskegon's Steele Neighborhood.

941 Amity is a three bedroom with one bathroom and a full basement. It is



941 AMITY—3 BR, ONE BATH, NEEDS WORK!

located only one block away from Steele Middle School.

The house is not improved, but can be brought back into occupancy with a little bit of work and has a high profile on the corner of Amity and Stevens.

The house features an enclosed porch and detached garage. The house was obtained by the LB in 2008 and has been winterized. Interested parties can contact Tim at 724-6170 to arrange for an appointment to view the property. Please also refer to our website for other property listings by YOUR Land Bank.



MUSKEGON COUNTY
**LAND BANK
AUTHORITY**

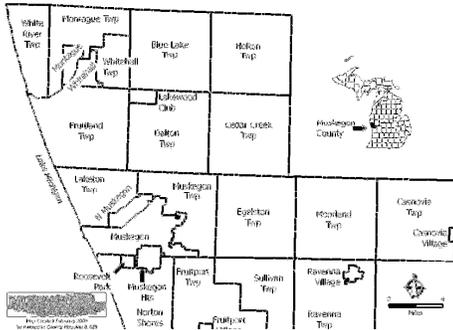
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Find us on the Web:
www.muskegonlandbank.org

We welcome your input



SERVING ALL OF MUSKEGON COUNTY

It was recently asked: “Why does the Land Bank sell some properties to investors? Isn’t the main focus supposed to be on homeownership?”

The Land Bank does not always have the resources to complete rehabs on properties in our portfolio. We also realize that a healthy housing market is comprised of good homeowners and good investment property holders.

Prospective investors go through the same process as homeowners in purchasing a Land Bank house. They bid just as anyone who wished to occupy. The landlords are screened to ensure they are up to date with property taxes on all other units they own. Visual inspections are made of the exteriors of other property holdings.

If improvements are needed, a clause is built into the purchase to ensure the structures are improved to local municipality code within a reasonable amount of time and occupancy permits are issued.

THE MUSKEGON LAND BANK WAS FORMED IN 2006 TO TRANSFORM VACANT, TAX DELINQUENT AND ABANDONED PROPERTY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SURROUNDING PROPERTY, TO IMPROVE THE COMMUNITY, STABILIZE THE AREA, GIVING LOW INCOME FAMILIES THE CHANCE TO OWN A HOME