

Bringing Home the Hardware



Muskegon County Land Bank Honored for Rural Innovation

Top honors awarded at national Land Bank Conference

Kalamazoo, Mich. (October 22, 2012)— For its successful efforts to put formerly blighted properties back to productive reuse, the Muskegon County Land Bank Authority was awarded top honors at the 7th Annual Land Bank Conference, a national gathering of experts in land reuse and reform held this week in Kalamazoo, Michigan, hosted by

the Center for Community Progress.

Selected from a nationwide field, the Muskegon County Land Bank Authority was honored as the Rural Land Bank of the Year. The goal of the land bank is to acquire, rehabilitate and re-sell “at-risk” homes and commercial properties before they fall to blight or are purchased by absentee landlords and speculators. To date the land bank has acquired 171 properties, sold 116 parcels and earned \$1,284,942 in sales. Those properties include the Crestview Mobile Home Park, of which the land bank assumed ownership. By cleaning up the site, repairing a large sink hole and ultimately selling the park to a responsible owner, the Land Bank’s work allowed two dozen families to remain in their homes. —Stolen from press release by Center for Community Progress.

More Progress in Dalton Township

555 Sycamore sold about two months ago. While a vacant lot in the country is normally not on our radar, it is a prime example of good, patient, land use.

A property acquired in our second year, the wooded lot sat on our shelf. A few lowball offers came in, but

the Board stood pat.

The new owner, buying the lot for a fair price, has already cleared the lot (right). This is the last lot to be developed on the block and will be a genuine asset to the neighborhood upon completion of construction.



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Recent Sales



8003 Meade Kitchen/
Dining Room “before” pic

1231 Francis in Muskegon’s
Sheldon Park Neighborhood

458 Erickson in Muskegon’s
Jackson Hill Neighborhood

2302 DeBaker in Muskegon
Township

555 Sycamore in Dalton Town-
ship (see Page 1)

Whitbeck Road (no address),
City of Montague

8003 Meade St., City of Monta-
gue

2144 McIlwraith, City of Mus-
kegon Heights

Dalson Road, Dalton Township
3429 Spruceway, Fruitport
Township
2897 Panzl and Panzl lot, Fruit-
port Township

Of note:
Two of these homes were sold
to occupants who had been
tenants of landlords that did not
pay their taxes. This process
helps keep families from moving
and protects houses from van-
dals.

Erickson was sold to a group
helping form community gar-
dens in Jackson Hill.

PROPERTIES SOLD ALL
TIME BY THE LAND
BANK:

118

THIS YEAR TO DATE:

56

Land Bank Q & A

Q: Why does the Land Bank
not list prices for some
houses?

A: Great question and fodder
for much misconception on the
part of some.

The LB purchases houses in
batches. With a limited (one)
number of staff, these homes are
essentially reviewed on a one at a

time basis.

The homes must first be
cleaned out and then the utili-
ties status assessed (it is quite
difficult to establish a price
until these variables are
known).

All LB homes are available
for viewing on an appoint-
ment basis. Oftentimes,

a family viewing the property
will extend an offer. The of-
fers are usually land contracts
(until the titles are cleared).
The family then presents a plan
to make any repairs.

If a house does not sell quickly,
repairs are made and the house
is listed with a Realtor for the
market price.

Cool Sale Pending

1370 Francis (current electrical
panel, right) has a sale pending.
The sale is to Trinity Village Non-
Profit Housing. Trinity will be
using National Stabilization Pro-
gram (NSP) funding to completely
rehab the house. The home will
become updated, with energy-
efficient upgrades to assist the end
user with utility bills. The pro-
gram is allowed to sell to families
making up to 115% adjusted

median income, based on fam-
ily size.

The Land Bank had originally
hoped to fix up the house and
sell it for market rate, but saw
the value in accepting a lower
price to ensure the neighbor-
hood would benefit from a
showpiece.

Interested families should call
Effie at 728-5303.



Hard Goodbyes

The Land Bank will lose three key Board Members as of the end of the calendar year.

As a matter of our organizational By-Laws, three of our Board Members must be sitting County Commissioners. Due to election outcomes, we must say goodbye to:

John Snider—Mr. Snider is a founding Board Member and was integral to the creation and development of the Land Bank. It was by happenstance that Mr. Snider and two other Commissioners happened across a fellow by the name of Dan Kildee (now Congressman Dan Kildee,

D—Michigan!) and asked him to join their golf foursome. Intrigued by the idea of land banks and the benefit they could provide to the County, Mr. Snider reported his findings to the County Board and (then) newly elected Treasurer Moulatsiotis and the rest, as they say, is history.

Mr. Snider has seen the Land Bank grow from a marginal entity to one that is a driving force in bringing properties back to productive, tax-paying use. Mr. Snider also serves on the Board’s Executive Committee.

Scott Plummer and Lew Collins—Messrs. Plummer and Collins have served the Board for two years each (succeeding Chuck Buzzell and Charles Nash). Both gentlemen have served the Board well, providing guidance of property evaluation and well-heeded advice concerning property disposition. Mr. Plummer also serves on the Executive Committee.

THANK YOU, gentlemen for all you have done! The Land Bank will continue in the direction in which you have directed and reflect well on what you have contributed.

Energy Saving Tip—Spend It To Make It

One of the best investments you can make in a home (especially an older home) is to add to the insulation in your attic.

Adding insulation can be a relatively cheap investment compared to some other upgrades. If it is something you can do yourself, DO YOUR HOME-WORK and ensure you are cor-

rectly installing the product.

Please do not think of this as something that will only help with heating. A fully insulated attic will also reduce cooling bills when the temperature spikes.

The return on investment may be anywhere from a few years to less than one year, depending

upon your heat source, the amount of insulation at the onset of your project, and the climate that winter or summer.

Of course, after your investment is returned, you will continue to benefit from the lower utility bills. A great way to save money and reduce your carbon footprint!

Featured Property—181 E. Walton



View from the front porch

- ◆ Three Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths
- ◆ Great view of the Farmer’s Market
- ◆ Recent Construction
- ◆ Price not yet set—full house refresher in progress!!



PROPERTIES
CURRENTLY IN THE
LAND BANK
PORTFOLIO:

53

ALL TIME LB
PROPERTY:

171

SOLD FOR
COUNTY

9



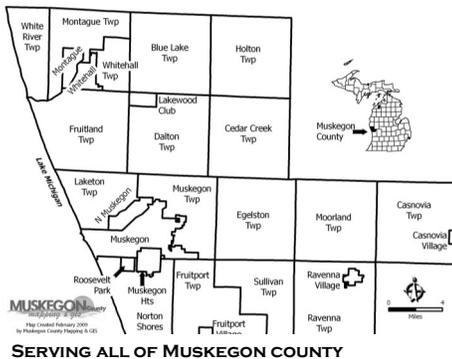
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Find us on the Web:
www.muskegonlandbank.org



Muskegon County Land Bank Board

- Tony Moulatsiotis, County Treasurer, Chairman
- John Snider, County Commissioner, Vice-Chairman
- Deb Ackerman, Egelston Township Treasurer, Appointed Township Representative
- Don Aley, At-Large Member
- Lew Collins, County Commissioner, Appointed Member
- Scott Drier, At-Large Member
- Eric Hood, City Commissioner, City of Muskegon, City Appointed Member
- Scott Plummer, County Commissioner, Appointed Member
- Willie Watson, City of Muskegon Heights Mayor Pro-Temp, City Appointed Member

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