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Green Home Initiative Hits City

By Alan King
AFRO Staff Writer

Bamboo floors and insulation made from old newspapers are among a few of the features offered in the rowhouse, built in 1914, going on the market next month. It is located on West Lorraine Avenue.

More than 100 people got to tour the house at a ribbon cutting ceremony on June 18 that launched a campaign to revitalize Baltimore's urban neighborhoods by increasing the available inventory of affordable, green properties with long-term sustainable savings potential.

The campaign gave local developers and rehabbers access to state-of-the-art green building practices, resources and expertise. "Buying the right appliance and putting the duct work in the right part of the house; those three things give you a huge amount of energy savings," Borinsky said, adding that the on-going initiative will offer affordable green homes in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods.

The house on West Lorraine Avenue is priced between \$130,000 and \$145,000. "They [those residents] could save \$100, \$200 or \$300 on utilities," he said.

Instead of a single-mom with three kids writing a check to the gas and electric company, Borinsky added, she could use that money for her savings.

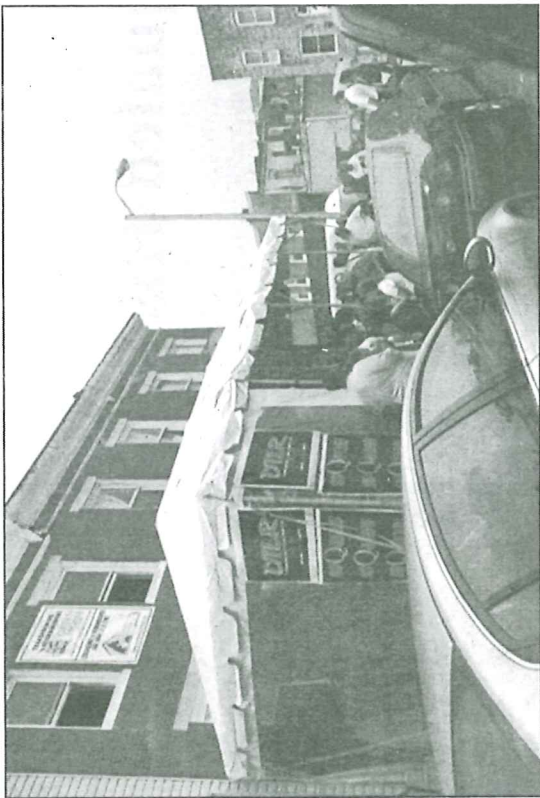


Photo By Robert Hendry
This is a photo of the outside of the rehabilitated rowhouse, built in 1914, on West Lorraine Avenue.

In addition, Mayor Sheila Dixon announced last week that the city will receive \$15.7 million in Recovery Act funding for the weatherization of city homes. "This funding will allow us to weatherize the homes of 700 low-income families per year over a three-year period," Dixon said in a statement. Baltimore rehabber A+ Neighborhoods

Instead of the basics, "we're using green technology from solar venting systems and natural lighting," Jones said.

The framing technique involves them creating a pocket for insulation to fit behind the framing and against the wall. "That essentially would cover all air gaps that could possibly seep in behind the framing and things of that nature," he said.

Jones noted the cost of rehabbing the 1914 home was \$60,000. He and Borinsky planned to make their future projects green. "I lent money on 120 houses, last year. This year, I hope to do more than that," Borinsky said. "I want every single one of them to use green building practices."

Jones agreed. "We'll be using the project as a template for every project we do after that because we will have a formula as to how we can reach the energy rating approval [with future homes]," Jones said.

Policies and regulations in effect now have been compiled on a Web site, dsireusa.org.

Borinsky and Prescott Gaylord, of Baltimore Green Construction, plan to develop a best practices handbook for small-scale green rehabbing. Borinsky said, "We're going to put [it] online and make it available to everyone so that other builders and other lenders can use the information that we're gathering."

For information on the best practices handbook, please visit www.onegreenthomecatline.com.