

Introducing Downtown KCK's New Improvement District!

On July 16, 2009, the Downtown Shareholders of Kansas City, Kan. officially launched the KCK Downtown Improvement District (DID). “What an exciting time for our community. Downtown Shareholders has worked to set up this DID for several years” said John Harvey, Executive Director for City Vision.

City Vision not only played an integral part in the development of this new Improvement District, but has been involved with the overall organization of Downtown Shareholders since its inception in 2003.

Today, City Vision contracts their administrative services to Downtown Shareholders — sharing their knowledge of not-for-profit management and community relationships and reducing costs through shared staff and equipment — all in the desire to keep the momentum going for revitalizing Downtown.

“Recreating a vibrant Downtown will take all of us working together” said Ed Linnebur, Executive Director for Downtown Shareholders. “Being as efficient as possible helps the sustainability of our mission too.”

At the DID kickoff, Mayor Joe Reardon provided a few remarks about the importance of the new program and its efforts to improve the image of Downtown. The goal: transform Downtown KCK into a place where people will want to live, work and play.

As part of the new program, Security and Cleaning Ambassadors work the Downtown Improvement District. During the first two months, Security Ambassadors have worked over 1,400 hours patrolling the area while Cleaning Ambassadors have picked up 2,000 55-gallon bags of trash. ■



City Vision Ministries Becomes Simply “City Vision”

Having formed 17 years ago by a group of three churches to address inner-city housing needs, City Vision Ministries has often been confused with being a type of church itself. To better emphasize and simplify its “brand”, City Vision Ministries will now be known as simply “City Vision”. While signage and publications will begin to denote the change, City Vision will continue to be known for its commitment to sustainable housing and economic redevelopment in urban core neighborhoods of Kansas City, Kan. ■

Nonprofit Alliance Benefits City Vision

Changes in funding patterns for Kansas City area not-for-profits has, for some time, signaled the need for new models of sustainable funding. One such model is for several nonprofits to develop formal alliances that promote collaboration around shared interests, reduce overhead through cost saving measures and pool resources that avoid duplicative costs.

For the past several months, City Vision and Wyandot Center for Community Behavioral Health have been working to form exactly this kind of alliance. Called simply “Wyandot Inc”, the two organizations have formed a parent “umbrella” organization that will provide the framework for new areas of service and common project development, pooling of resources and cost saving measures. The alliance also will include the newly formed

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Nonprofit Alliance continued

“Kim Wilson Housing” and a yet-to-be-named organization.

“The development of new housing options for underserved individuals in our community is certainly one of the areas of common interest for all three organizations,” commented John Harvey, City Vision’s President. “But it also just makes sense for

non-profits to work together to reduce costs whether it is health insurance premiums or leasing copy machines.”

The mission, goals and committed board and staff at City Vision will remain unchanged. All community development work in the various targeted neighborhoods will continue unchanged with the added benefit of expanding into new areas of housing services. ■

Artist Making Downtown KCK Home

Kim Eichler-Messmer, whose art studio is located at the Kansan Pressroom Studios, is officially becoming a “true local artist”. Kim and her husband Simon Messmer, who works at the Mental Health Association of The Heartland on Minnesota Avenue, will be moving in September from Lawrence, Kan. to their beautiful new home in Strawberry Hill.

The home, a 100 year old Victorian, was

renovated by City Vision earlier this spring. It was love at first site for the Messmer’s. “The character, history and charm of this house is just what we were looking for. City Vision did a fantastic job in bringing back its former beauty” said Kim. “We love the neighborhood too. People like to sit on their front porches in the evenings. Plus many things will be within walking distance for us now.”

Kim, a Fiber Artist, specializes in wall quilts.

She dyes all her own fabric (mainly cottons and silks), cuts it up into traditional and random pieces, and then sews them back together into a beautiful design. Kim’s wall quilts can be viewed every month during the 2nd Friday Art Walks in the Pressroom level of the old Kansan Building — last studio on the left. ■



Habitat Partnership Results in New Homes in Northeast Neighborhoods

For the third year, a partnership between Heartland Habitat for Humanity and City Vision is resulting in a half dozen new homes being built in Northeast neighborhoods of Kansas City, Kan. In its capacity as a federally certified Community Housing Development Organization, City Vision is providing \$315,000 in financing for the construction of these new homes.

The most recent 3 bedroom, 2 bath home was completed for new homeowner, Sherri Johnson and her family. At the home’s dedication, Sherri was praised by the Habitat volunteers for her commitment to the homebuilding process by completing all of her sweat equity hours even while pregnant with her youngest child!

City Vision is proud to be a partner with Heartland Habitat and extends its congratulations to Sherri Johnson. ■



**Growing healthy, sustainable
urban neighborhoods**

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