

## HOUSING COORDINATOR

In 2012 the City continued to see progress, while facing some new challenges on the housing front. A record number of properties taken by tax deed reinforced our commitment to address sub-standard housing through demolition and rehabilitation. Building on successful partnerships and relationships with local contractors, state and federal agencies; we are optimistic about the economic future of Berlin and continue to work toward the beautification and establishment of pride in its neighborhoods. Some of the programs contributing toward this goal are:

### **Neighborhood Stabilization Program**

The City of Berlin was awarded a grant for \$1,000,000 under NSP3, and with the initial Neighborhood Stabilization grant winding down, the City was pleased to be the recipient of some remaining NSP funds (\$255,300) which, combined with NSP3 dollars, enabled us to address the rehabilitation of 4 additional properties including: 104 Grafton, 115 Strafford, 28 Spring St., and 81-83 Mason. The School Street / Notre Dame area has continued to experience an improved visual impact. The rehabilitation of 28 Spring St. (formerly under a lead order and scheduled for demolition), brought about the restoration of the former Lessard Block, one of the fine classical examples of a 3-story frame flat. With the previously improved corner of Cambridge & School and the additional demolitions of 12 Cambridge and 483 School, the de-densification and improvement of these neighborhoods continue.

In a November bus tour of Berlin, hosted by the Community Development Finance Authority; State Representatives and local dignitaries witnessed first-hand, the

excellent coordination and planning by the City and Council, in cooperation with a public/private partnership with TKB Properties LLC (owned by Kevin Lacasse and Tim Coulombe), to address some of Berlin's most depressed neighborhoods. Remarking on the extraordinary views and excellent craftsmanship of 28 Spring Street, more than one representative was tempted to put their name on the "waiting list". To date, TKB Properties LLC has acquired 23 properties in Berlin and rehabilitated 53 units through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, and 15 additional units through private dollars, generating work for local tradesmen, and creating energy efficient, affordable housing.



**NSP 3 - 28 Spring Street (Before and after revitalization)**

### **Community Development Block Grant**

The Neighborhood Revitalization Program has experienced an exciting and productive 2012. In a successful partnership between the City and Tri County Community Action, (the programs' General Contractor); 27 additional living units, (now totaling 65 homes/ 75 living units), have seen upgrades in energy, safety and overall maintenance in FY2012. The partnership with TCCAP brought an added benefit to homeowners with the infusion of additional matching dollars to assist with new windows, weatherization, and heating systems. These resources came at a crucial time to many hard working Berlin homeowners, who have been impacted by under-employment combined with rising energy costs. The secondary benefit to the community has been a further stabilization of the tax base, and a significant increase in the number of homes now safer and code compliant.

### **Demolitions**

The City has been unwavering in its commitment to address blight and substandard housing throughout neighborhoods. Budgeted municipal funds, Neighborhood Stabilization dollars, and an EDI-Special Projects grant, have enabled us to move forward aggressively with the abatement and demolition of blighted housing.

**661 Western Ave....before**



**249 E. Mason... before  
249 E. Mason... after**

**661 Western Ave... after**





### **Environmental Issues:**

Dummer Yard, the city's most significant site (418 acres) in the downtown area, took another step toward clean-up and reuse with the completion of a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment including ground water monitoring, investigation of underground storage tanks, soil and waste assessment. With the potential for recreation, alternative energy use and industry; we are continuing to work closely with New Hampshire DES, and EPA toward redevelopment.

FY 2012 saw the final clean-up of the former Notre Dame High School, and "Ready for Reuse Determination" by the NH Department of Environmental Services. A stellar example of how a "grass roots" effort by local citizens can be the catalyst for significant change. The united voice of *Project Rescue*

*Notre Dame* and a combined 10-year effort of local, state and government agencies have now paved the way for redevelopment.

The accomplishments of this year, and the significant strides of the past 7 years toward the clean-up, de-densification, and rehabilitation of neighborhoods, cannot be discussed without mentioning our deep gratitude and appreciation for the contribution of former Housing Coordinator, Andre Caron. His leadership and commitment to the success of Berlin has been unparalleled. Thank you for *paving the way!*

Visit us at:

[www.berlinnh.gov/Pages/BerlinNH\\_Housing](http://www.berlinnh.gov/Pages/BerlinNH_Housing)

Respectfully submitted,

Linda White

Housing Coordinator



The City's Volunteer Tree is receiving its second season of leaves (honored volunteers) to be represented with a leaf on the tree. The Volunteer Tree is located at City Hall, just outside of the auditorium. Ann Morton, Tom Sweeney and Amy Welch receive the Volunteer Award from Mayor Paul Grenier (photo courtesy of Barbara Tetreault)