

PROGRAMMATIC INSTITUTIONS



The Asylum Hill Organizing Project located at 350 Farmington Avenue.

◆ **Organized Parents Make a Difference (OPMAD)**

OPMAD, which has recently moved into its own office on Forest Street engages and organizes parents and caregivers in the Hartford Community to design and develop quality enrichment activities for elementary and middle school age children.

OPMAD offers prevention education training, specifically peer leadership, peer mediation, conflict resolution to parents and students, and parenting skills to young parents. OPMAD works in collaboration with community groups, City services and Hartford schools.

◆ **Hartford Region YWCA**

The YWCA runs a wide array of programs at their Health and Fitness Center. They also operate:

- A Child Care Center at Asylum Hill Congregational Church.
- A Neighborcare Program for children from Kindergarten to 6th grade
- Options, a domestic violence prevention program for Latina women.
- PACT Peer Education Program, a positive youth development program for teenagers.

◆ **Asylum Hill Organizing Project (AHOP)**

AHOP's purpose is to bring together all the age, ethnic, racial and economic groups within the neighborhood to address their concerns through a democratic process. Through its member groups and Board, AHOP organizes and mobilizes neighborhood residents, empowers them through a democratic decision making process into action to address neighborhood issues. Through this process, AHOP develops and implements service delivery programs to strengthen

the bonds of community and create a healthy functioning neighborhood. Some of AHOP's programs include housing rehabilitation; organizing to create and implement a legal strategy to assure that landlords maintain their properties; social and educational programs for neighborhood youth and seniors; the formation of the Neighborhood Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund; and the Welfare to Work Employment Network to provide a foundation of transitional supports for unemployed parents effected by the State's 21 month countdown for AFDC recipients. AHOP is consistently and aggressively developing ways to empower community residents into complete self sufficiency and self reliance.

◆ **Hill Housing, Inc./Strategic Housing and Redevelopment Project (SHARP)**

In 1994, Asylum Hill residents, with the leadership of AHOP, began addressing some of these issues by developing a partnership between Hill Housing, Incorporated (a 100% fully owned subsidiary of AHOP), Greater Hartford Realty Management Corporation and Case Enterprises. Together they formed the Strategic Housing and Redevelopment Project (SHARP). The goals of this collaboration were to (1) decrease density, (2) reconfigure efficiency and one bedroom market rate units to two, three and four bedroom low to moderate income housing, (3) provide home ownership opportunity, and (4) demolish blighted properties. The SHARP initiative completed all but one of these goals, targeting Huntington, Collins and Sumner Streets. The SHARP initiative lowered density by reducing seven buildings with a total of one hundred seventy units to six buildings with a total of eighty six, reconfigured large family units. Families who were once living in the properties, under-housed were relocated to newly reconfigured units, with the proper living space for each family. While the demolition of 197 Collins Street contributes to lower density, it also provides green space for children to play. All buildings have on site parking. The home ownership goal is currently in the development stage of its first phase. Permanent financing, gap financing and a bank of pre-qualified buyers are currently in place for the first ten of the twenty planned units. The home ownership project is called SHARP 20.

◆ **Neat Neighborhoods**

The Neat Neighborhood project is supported monetarily by various concerns in Asylum Hill, headed up by the Triangle Coalition. Projects include: painting boards on abandoned buildings; painting porches on abandoned buildings; trimming trees; supplying flowers, flower boxes, soil, hardware at well below cost; 12 metal decorative trash containers to be manufactured and permanently installed in the Sigourney Park area; 12 self-watering planters; the boarding up of abandoned buildings; planting of flowers in large vacant areas. Work has already begun. Two flower sales have been held to help bring in some proceeds and disperse flowers economically.