

A Message From CAT About Flood Recovery *continued from page 3*

a common vision for the benefit of the community. We have still faced sizable setbacks that have frustrated both the families involved as well as the Unmet Needs Committee and the CAT staff in the trenches. I think it is important that our community understand the complexities that we are facing.

In late April, the state gave permission to begin issuing contracts to raise homes in the flood plain. Dan Brown and Kathy Denkla completed a number of buyout applications. If the City Council votes to buy the 17 homes and one business at their upcoming May 17th meeting, these families will finally receive financial reimbursement which will allow them to get on with their lives. However, one last minute stumbling block appeared at the May 3rd' City Council meeting.

The setback came as members of the Economic Development Committee (EOC) and several local contractors challenged the process for selecting the demolition contractor who will demolish the homes after the city buys them using FEMA and CDBG funds. This selection is the last piece needed to complete the buyout packages. The EOC objected that the selection process RFP, did not include a preference for local contractors and they asked the Council to reject the recommendations of the Unmet Needs Committee and to add a local preference criterion. Numerous parties were involved in the preparation and review of the Request for Proposals including: myself, other flood recovery staff, the City Attorney, County Counsel, the City Administrator and the City Council. None suggested that a local preference be a criterion.

These circumstances present the Council with a dilemma. The City Council must either follow the process in the RFP in making a choice or decide to restart the process. Choosing outside the rules laid out in the RFP is likely to result in a lawsuit. Restarting the process will delay the pending crop of 18 buyouts for three more months.

The RFP was written in a sufficiently flexible way to allow another review step by the Columbia County Flood Unmet Needs Committee (CC-FUNC)-- the city's flood recovery committee for the last 2-1/2 years. This step allows for actual interviews with the top four candidates and a second ranking. Flood recovery staff have set up a meeting on the evening of May 10th to interview the candidates. Staff is working with the City Attorney to craft interview

questions for the CCFUNC to explore the qualifications of the individual contractors without violating the intent of the RFP. Hopefully, this additional step in the process will allow a quick, safe selection of the demo contractor.

We have had other setbacks:

Our efforts to arrange financing for homeowners wishing to elevate their homes has also had its struggles. Late last summer, the state CDBG staff informed us that they will not allow any CDBG money to be spent on elevated decks. We spent much of the winter working to find a solution to this problem. Unhappily, we were unsuccessful. Going forward, we will have to work with homeowners to find private financing for their deck work.

Another significant setback was the demise of the contracting firm hired by the homeowners in our first four elevations. No doubt all of you have seen these jobs languishing along Mist Drive. Happily, two of these are now substantially complete. We are helping the other two owners to make claims against the contractor's bond and insurance to help cover the cost of correcting improper work.

We have also had successes:

Mark Drexel, our flood recovery construction specialist, has nearly a dozen elevation projects in the bidding process.

Over this past winter, we received additional clarity about the federal rules which govern our project. As a result, it has become more clear how far our flood recovery resources will stretch. So far, approximately 150 homes have been repaired using volunteers, small grants and approximately two dozen

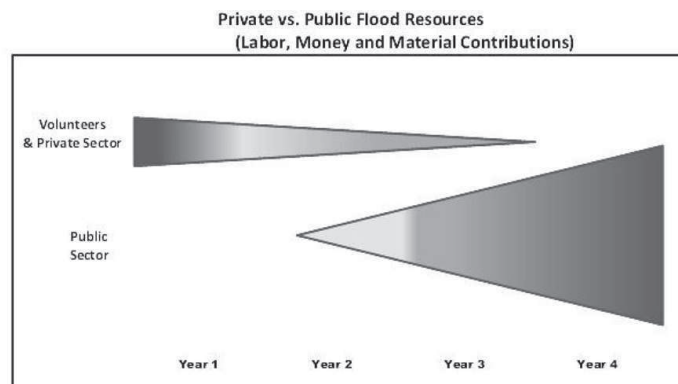
CDBG grants. Understandably, the elevation projects have been more difficult to get on track. After the initial four elevations, we expect an additional 15 to 20 this summer with, hopefully, another 20 completed next summer. All told, we expect buyouts to exceed 40 properties. Given the applications we received, expect the majority of these buyouts and elevations to be within the city limits.

Finally, CAT

Staffer Anita Drexel has received her credentials needed to legally originate loans on behalf of CAT. These credentials are needed so that CAT can make construction loans to homeowners with elevation projects. On the first four elevation projects, we learned that the turnaround time to pay contractors with public money is too long. In order to complete these four projects, the Columbia County Flood Unmet Needs Committee provided the necessary bridge financing to pay the contractors in a timely manner. Unfortunately, that resource is insufficient to cover the work this summer. To fill this need, CAT has borrowed substantial sums from the state of Oregon and ShoreBank Enterprises Pacific, with a guarantee from Meyer Memorial Trust.

Hopefully, I've been able to convey an accurate sense of the complexity, setbacks and progress we've been able to make since December 2007. If you're like me, a picture really helps you understand complicated situations. A few months ago I needed to commu-

nicate the difference between the public and private flood responses. I developed this graphic to help me quickly convey my observation.



I suspect many of you will recognize the sudden appearance of volunteers and donated resources in the private sector triangle. The size of these triangles are not based on actual numbers. In fact, the public sector triangle is relatively too small. I expect it volunteer & private sector to totaling somewhere between \$1 and \$2 million. The public sector should approach \$9 or \$10 million.

The graphic does a better job of explaining the timing sequences of our flood recovery as well as what I have seen in New Orleans.

This has already been a long arduous trail for both the flooded families and those of us working to help them recover. I learned in New Orleans that, house for house; Vernonia's recovery has been quicker. This is certainly not because the flood recovery staff here are more talented, but because our disaster was much smaller and our people generally more resilient.

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COME WATCH OR COMPETE!

<p>Start Times & Race Duration:</p> <p>9:30am - Pre-ride the course—open to all registered racers</p> <p>10:00am - Kiddie race (all Kids under age 10) 10 minutes</p> <p>10:30am - Juniors Girls & Boys (10-14), Junior Girls & Boys,(15-18). 30 minutes</p> <p>11:10am - Cat2/3 Women (19-34) (35-44) (45-54) (55+) 40 minutes</p> <p>11:50am - Break, Course Open 15 minutes</p> <p>12:05pm - Cat 3 Men (19-34) (35-44) (45+) 40 minutes</p> <p>12:45pm - Cat 2 Men (19-34) (35-44) (45-54) (55+) 45 minutes</p> <p>1:30pm - Break, Course Open 15 minutes</p> <p>1:45pm - Single Speed Men, Single Speed Women, 45 minutes</p> <p>2:30pm - Pro/Cat 1 Women, Pro/Cat 1 Men (19-34) (35+) 50 minutes</p>	<p>Awards to top 3 in each category, Cash to Pro Men and Pro/Cat 1 Women. There will be products and prizes randomly distributed to all racers thanks to our generous sponsors.</p> <p><i>If you are new to racing enter the Cat 3 class with your age grouping</i></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;">Class:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Entry Fee</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kiddie Race</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Free</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Juniors 10-18</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cat 3 (Beginners) Cat 2, Singlespeed</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pro/Cat 1</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parking Fee /Vehicle</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$5</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: right;">(all parking proceeds go to the Bicycle Park)</p>	Class:	Entry Fee	Kiddie Race	Free	Juniors 10-18	\$5	Cat 3 (Beginners) Cat 2, Singlespeed	\$15	Pro/Cat 1	\$20	Parking Fee /Vehicle	\$5
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Send your check and completed registration form and waiver found at <http://www.obra.org/pdfs/waiver.pdf> by Fri June 4 to: UZOOM2 LLC, 15100 NW Eugene Ln, Portland, Oregon 97229. Please make checks payable to UZOOM2 LLC.

Day of race registration begins on site at 9am to 15 minutes prior to your race start time. OBRA membership required for all racers (except kiddie race) - single day \$5/annual membership \$20 available on line at http://www.obra.org/pdfs/membership_app.pdf or on site day of race.

HELMET REQUIRED-All OBRA Rules Apply

Local Properties For Rent



Vernonia, 4 bdrm, 2.5 bath, approx 1800 sf 4th bedroom could be bonus, gas stove, fireplace and heat, 2 car garage, large deck overlooking 1/2 acre lot, \$1150/month, 1563 Heather Ct



Vernonia, 2 bdrm, 1 bath, duplex, completely remodeled kitchen & bath, new carpet & paint, garage, w/d hookups, \$650/month, 182 Bridge St.



Over 13 acres, 3 bdrm, 2 bath, approx 1800 sf, well maintained ranch style home, fireplace and wood stoves, great well water, 4 car open bay garage, greenhouse, year-round creek, \$1175/month, 21046 Scappoose Vernonia Hwy.

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