The Portland Observer Sustainability

Cully Neighborhood Builds Green

Social, environment activists at work

BY JAKE THOMAS

THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Cully neighborhood in northeast Portland will be getting a little bit more energy efficient thanks to the work of social and environmental activists.

The "Changing the Climate in Cully" initiative, sponsored by the Metropolitan Alliance for the Common Good- a network of 17 labor, faith, and community organizationsseeks to connect residents of the area with a program that will lower their energy bills while creating decent jobs.

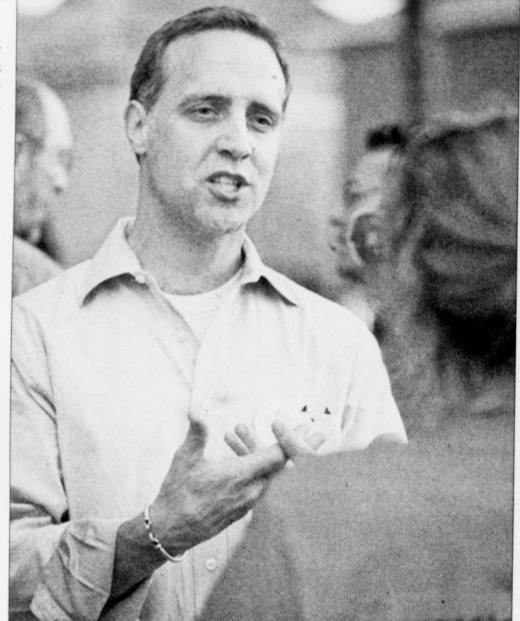
of Portland, helps homeowners make upgrades to their houses that conserve energy, while lowering their energy bills and impact on the planet. Since last month, the activresidents of the Cully neighborhood with the program.

"We are not an environmental organization, we are a social justice organization," said Mary Nemmers, the lead organizer with the alliance. 16.

Nemmers explained that her organization was particularly inter-

Clean Energy Works Portland, a ested in Clean Energy Works Portpilot program launched by the City land for several reasons. Workers who make houses more energy efficient do so by putting in new insulation, and better furnaces and water heaters. They also make living wages and receive health ists have been working to connect benefits while for doing the work, which is an aspect of the program that the alliance found appealing, according to Nemmers. The program has already created jobs for 17 people and sustained another

> Nemmers said that her organization targeted the neighborhood



Jeremy Hays of the group Green for All reaches out to make the Cully Neighborhood more energy efficient and create new green jobs. Photo courtesy of Christian Columbres Photography.

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Event is free. Lunch will be provided. Translation and childcare available upon advanced request.

because it has many houses that that drew 300 residents. were built before 1995, and it also has many middle-income households. According to a survey conducted by the Cully Neighborhood Association in conjunction with researchers at Portland State University, 21 percent of residents in the neighborhood make between \$35,000 to \$49,000. sion is held every Tuesday from Multnomah County has a weath- 7-8 p.m. at Riggler Elementary erization program for low-income School. people, leaving little help for middle-income people.

targeted benefits," said Nemmers.

Homeowners who use the program can finance the costs of the out of poverty. energy upgrades by adding them onto their energy bill, which will use less energy.

the Cully Neighborhood Association, said the program is a great opportunity for residents, and the association has helped out by mentioning it in the association's newsletter. The association also helped sponsor a kick-off event for the campaign late last month

"We wanted a neighborhoodbased approach," said Nemmers.

The Metropolitan Alliance for the Common Good has put door hangers on every door in the neighborhood promoting the program, and volunteers regularly canvass. An informational ses-

Clean Energy Works Portland and the Changing the Climate in "We knew that it was a neigh- Cully initiative both had some help borhood that didn't have a lot of from Green for All, a national organization seeking to establish a green economy that will lift people

According to Jeremy Hays, director of special projects for Green decrease because their homes will for All, helped facilitate the stakeholder process with Clean Energy Kathy Fuerstenau, the chair of Works Portland, partnering it with it organizations that would help train and hire minority and disadvantaged people into jobs retrofitting houses.

> Hays, who was in town for the Cully initiative kickoff, said that

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