

Housing Crisis

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aside to support affordable housing after last year's failed attempt to build a Trader Joe's in northeast Portland.

The development at Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Alberta Street was backed by the Portland Development Commission, but ran into opposition by a public with memories of a long and often painful history of displacement that has followed many of Portland's past urban renewal efforts, the impacts of which have been felt most deeply among Afri-

can American property owners, renters, and businesses. To many in the community, the proposed development in the heart of a historically black neighborhood was perceived as an attack.

Thursday night was a chance for community leaders to hear the results from past efforts to bring affordable housing to the city and to speak on the desires of the African-American community.

Common themes were the high price of housing, closing costs, a lack of appropriately sized homes at affordable prices, tight lending practices, high interest rates and anti-

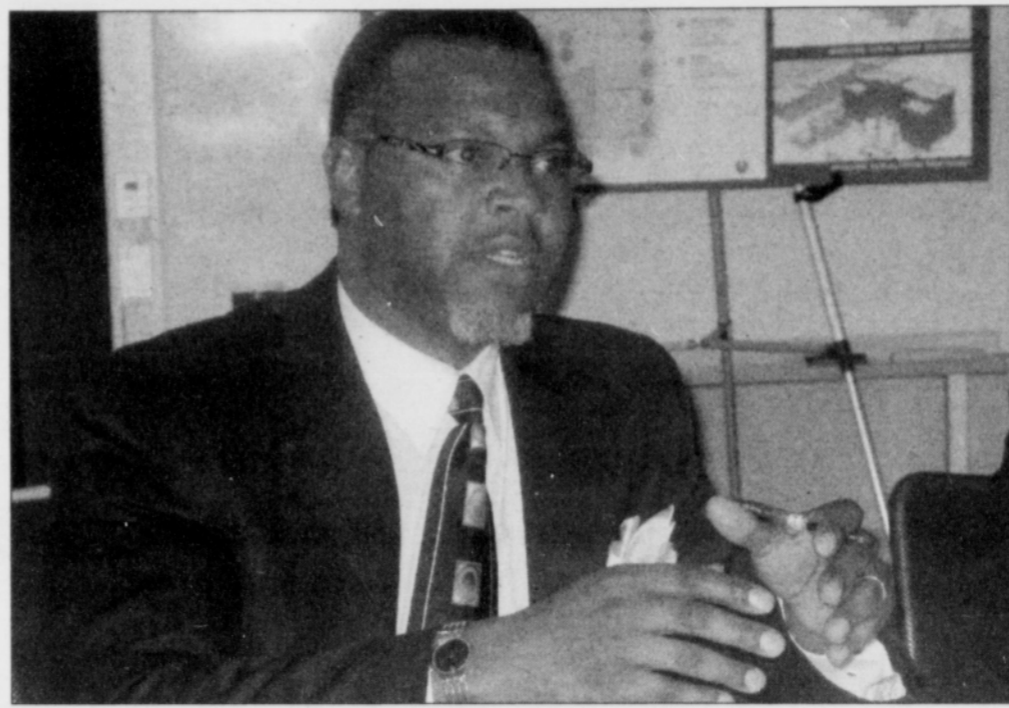


PHOTO BY OLIVIA OLIVIA/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Bishop Steven Holt of International Fellowship Family leads a discussion during a Thursday forum with the African-American faith community on affordable housing needs.

black discrimination in lending in general.

Many faith leaders expressed that their congregation members were losing homes because they could not afford to repair them, along with the rising costs of owning property due to property taxes. The cry of the night was that it was nearly impossible for black families to pass on wealth and property to the next generation, because it was so difficult to keep homes.

Hales did acknowledge that gentrification and racism have been rampant in the city but also admitted that he had no easy solution, even with the money for housing initiatives, and that this was reason for the meeting, to discuss ideas and set priorities.

Writer Wins Prestigious Award

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from Portland State University, was just named the winner of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation's annual Gaines Award for Literary Excellence for his novel, "The Residue Years".

The ceremony will be held on Jan. 22 at the Manship Theatre in downtown Baton Rouge. The Gaines Award is a nationally acclaimed annual prize offering \$10,000 to African American fiction writers. This year's ceremony will be free and open to the public but seats must be reserved in advance.

The Residue Years is a semi-autobiographical novel based on

Jackson's experiences growing up in Portland and watching his mother deal with the fall out of neighborhood violence and her personal bout with drug addiction.

Jackson's novel has been selected by the Multnomah County Library to be the 2015 Everybody Reads selection - meaning that extra copies of his books will be available

to local readers, and that Literary Arts will be hosting a reading with Jackson at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall in March.

The Multnomah County Library will also be releasing a host of cultural programming to encourage local readers to check out Jackson's book and share their feelings on his story.

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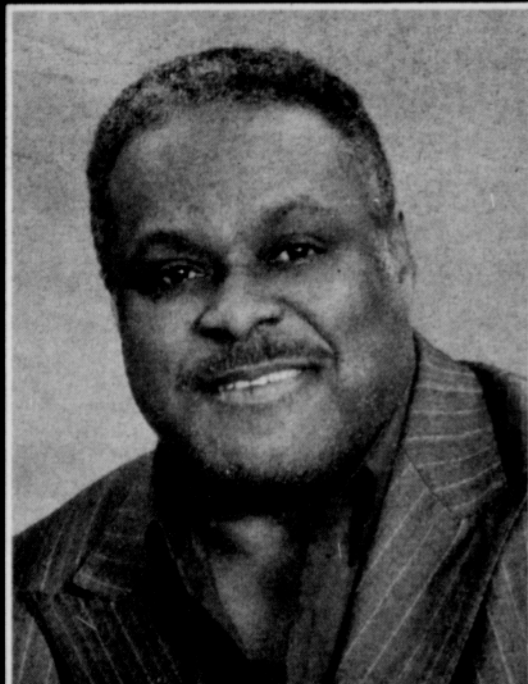
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