

Morris Mill Pond Residents Plan for the Future

On December 29, 2003, the eviction of the entire community of Morris Mill Pond was overturned in JP Court #17 in Georgetown, Delaware. The Morris Mill Pond Cooperative, the state's first manufactured housing cooperative, won the right to remain in their homes.

In a hearing which lasted until early evening, it was ruled that the eviction of the residents on grounds of change of land use was not in good faith, due to the circumstances surrounding it. These circumstances included the issuing of the eviction notices immediately after illegal cesspools on the property were reported to DNREC by the residents and the fact that the property remained on the real estate market, advertised as an income-producing mobile home park, well after the evictions began.

The resident victory was the culmination of a year-long effort of the community to organize itself and establish the cooperative. However, without the help of the attorneys for the cooperative, David Weidman (of

Needs
Morris Mill Pond Cooperative

As the cooperative gets closer to relocation, members will have need of assistance. Some will need help relocating their units. Other residents will be unable to move their units and will be looking for new or used units for the new site.

If you can help with donations of labor, equipment, money, or materials to help this effort, please contact the President of the Board, Rene Arauz, 302/934-8389 or Gina Miserendino at DHC 302/678-2286.

the Georgetown office of Hudson, Jones, Jaywork & Fisher) and Lorraine K. Phillips (of the Law Office of Edward C. Gill) the hard work of organizing would have been futile. Mr. Weidman has donated a portion of his time, and Ms. Phillips has donated all of hers to defending the cooperative and its members.

Thirteen families remain at the

former Dogwood Mobile Home Park. The ruling means that they may now be subject to the new Manufactured Housing Communities Act which passed the General Assembly after the eviction notices were served. This act, while flawed, does provide for relocation assistance for residents displaced through change of land use. The owner is appealing the decision to a three-judge panel in March.

Since the owner is unwilling to sell to the residents, the board of the cooperative is actively seeking suitable land to which to re-locate their community. David Moore and Russ Huxtable of Milford Housing Development Corporation are providing technical assistance to them in these matters. The cooperative is also working closely with lenders, including Terri Hasson of Citigroup and Doris Schneider of DCIC. The cooperative has recently received grants from GMAC Bank and the Administrative Commission on the Speer Trust (New Castle Presbytery) to acquire further training, to help them with future legal costs, and to spread the word regarding the housing cooperative model to other manufactured housing communities.



Rene Arauz, President of the MMPC Board, looking at land in the Georgetown area.