

Why landlord joins fight against urban blight

By CARL STODARD

Charles Costa, a Southfield resident and inner city landlord, has enlarged his fight against a political system he says is failing to cope with urban blight, crime and dwindling property owners' rights.

Costa began his battle in 1974 with the formation of Housing Owners of Michigan Exchange (HOME), an organization composed largely of landlords.

Costa headed the group until earlier this month when he stepped down and agreed not to be a candidate for further office with the non-profit organization.

HOME's more than 600 landlord members will elect a new board of directors Sept. 14.

Since his departure, Costa has become involved in the creation of Housing Owners of the United States Exchange (HOUSE), an organization aimed at all property owners in the country. It is not affiliated with HOME.

"I know it (HOME) needed to be broader," Costa said. "You need more votes."

"DETROIT MAYOR Coleman Young gave me the idea."

The organization, Costa said, will lobby for property owners at the local and federal level. In return members will be asked to contribute \$12 a year for a membership fee and to receive a HOUSE magazine.

According to Costa, the organization is needed to battle the problems of urban decay, crime and dwindling homeowners' rights.

Though organization, he said, elected officials' records of political actions would be screened and publicized. Records of judges could also be made public. Such public scrutiny, he said, could curb political corruption and influence.

HOUSE, Costa says, will be a nationwide lobby. "My fight will be with HEW (Health, Education and Welfare Dept.). The people will tell us what they want to see changed, and we'll change it," Costa said in an interview last week.

Costa said he will also work for tougher court sentences, harder dates in prison and better housing and welfare laws.

"I WANT TO REACH the people. They talk about judges, they talk about crime. But they don't do anything."

Michigan law gives aid to handicapped

A new Michigan law prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations and education of handicapped people.

Gov. William Milliken, who recently signed the bill, said, "This historic legislation will assist Michigan's handicapped citizens, as they seek to achieve economic and social independence and lead more productive and fulfilling lives. The new law goes far beyond existing protection and guarantees provided by federal legislation which relates only to employment."

The governor said that employers cannot refuse to hire, promote or classify qualified persons because of handicap when the handicaps are not related to the job or when adaptive devices or aids may be used. The law also applies to membership in labor organizations. Detail of public services are also prohibited because of use of adaptive devices.

"Now, I'm giving them an outlet. They can do something. I hate talking when I know things can change."

All they (the members) have to do is join and write down what they want done and it will be done," Costa claimed.

Persons seeking additional information about HOUSE may call 631-1200 or 328-7286. HOUSE offices are located at 2000 Myrtle, Detroit.

HOME is located at 1933 Seven Mile, Detroit. For additional information, persons may call 331-3356 or 821-4377.

Picnic will launch membership drive

Gerald Cook, membership chairman of Adai Shalom Synagogue, will launch the Farmington Hills synagogue's membership drive with a picnic supply Sept. 2, at 6 p.m.

It will be held in the synagogue on Middle Belt Road between Twelve and Thirteen Mile Roads for prospective members and their families.

The congregation has arranged for family fun events, supervised children's play, tours of the premises and an opportunity for guests to meet Rabbi Seymour Rosenblatt.

Adai Shalom presently has about 900 member families.

Members assisting Cook for the picnic arrangements are Arlene Ann Benderoff, Claudia Gold, Inez Silverstein, Norma York and Joel Gerabenson.

There is no charge or obligation for those who attend the picnic.

Super sundaes

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