

The DEMOCRATIC Voice of NJ HOA Owners

by the **CIHC**, Common Interest Homeowners Coalition of NJ

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HOW to CONTACT the CIHC:

Call Ellen Vastola
(Current President) at
732-873-3446,
preferably mornings
after 8 am.

CIHC Mission, in brief: as summarized in an article by David Garry of The Cooperator, 2004.

“The mission of the C-IHC is to serve as the independent voice for homeowners in New Jersey residential community associations, to promote and strengthen democratic governance, and to advance the general welfare of homeowners.”

As an independent organization composed of owners of homes in common-interest residential associations—including but not limited to condominiums, townhouses, planned unit developments, and cooperatives—the C-IHC considers that it is an independent voice for homeowners to legislators and government officials, industry practitioners, association boards, and the general public on matters directly related to residency in homeowner associations.”



Message from the CIHC President, Ellen Vastola 2013:

Welcome to the **CIHC** newsletter of 2013! We are excited to present ourselves in this format and hope this e-publication will be informative. This is our **introductory e-newsletter** which will present to you who we are & some basic information. Please share this with your neighbors. Future newsletters will be published 2-4 times a year and will be topical in nature. We welcome suggestions and questions on and for its content. This newsletter will also assist us in our transition from phase 1 (membership based) to phase 2 (representing ALL NJ HOA owners) of our organization.

The **CIHC** is a New Jersey not for profit organization created in 1997 after the conclusion of the NJ Assembly Task Force's investigation of homeowner association issues. Since then, the **CIHC** has interacted with legislators and government officials to provide input on the critical issues affecting owners in HOAs. While NJ still needs pro-owner legislation to protect owners in HOAs, the CIHC has successfully blocked legislation (since 1998) we feel would be detrimental to said owners. The legislative process is a slow one and the **CIHC** is still pursuing this avenue, among others, to gain democratic processes for ALL NJ owners in their HOAs.

Let's join together as a powerful VOICE for DEMOCRACY in our HOAs!

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Current **PROPOSED** Legislation in NJ 2012-2013!

NJ Assembly:

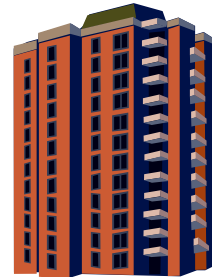
- A 140 – E. Peterson (developer post bond w/ DCA)
- A 689 – S. Kean (prohibits conflict of interest in HOAs)
- A 1730 – J. Green & S. Turner (companion Senate Bill S1132; membership & mgmt of HOAs)
- A 2246 – Prieto (Owner's rights & obligations)

NJ Senate:

- S 935 – Van Drew (elections)
- S 1132 - (companion Assembly Bill A 1730; see above)

Do you know any of these legislators?

Contact them with **your** HOA issues and get their support!



NJ Legislature site link! www.njleg.com

Use the NJ Leg link to find:

- your District legislators and their contact information,
- proposed legislation, etc.
- If you are not computer savy – ask a friend or your local Librarian for help.

How to use YOUR Legislators:

- Find out WHO they are. (See Above)
- Call them and talk to them. Let them know what is important to you, ie; your *type* of problem in your HOA! Begin a relationship. After all, they represent YOU and want you to VOTE for them!
- Make an appointment to visit them. A CIHC rep can accompany you to meet with your Legislator if you need the support. We can discuss the BIG (state wide) picture. It would be great if you can get a **group of other owners to go with you.** (more of their constituents=votes)
- Ask for their help: Support Pro-Owner Bills; intercede on your behalf with local government.
- Keep in touch with them over time - until we get pro-owner legislation. Get them on your side.
- Read the legislation and talk to your Legislators about them. We NEED this – ASAP! NJ HOA owners have waited too long.



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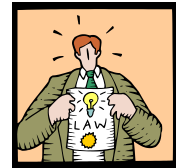
Pertinent References to increase your knowledge of HOA issues:

- <http://njcooperator.com/> This is the site for the NJ Cooperator e-newsletter. You will also find the announcements for their Annual NJ HOA Expo.
- **Privatopia** by Evan McKensie. Yale Univ Press, 1994. (Check out Amazon.com OR your local library.) And **Beyond Privatopia**, the sequel!
- “**A Bill of Rights for Homeowners in Residential Community Associations**”; Lois Pratt, PhD & Samuel Pratt, PhD. **The** seminal article on HOA issues.
- **YOUR Association’s BY-LAWS!** Read them, know them, USE them!
- More to come in future issues.

What you can do! Attend the ANNUAL EXPOS held by the: NJ CAI (fall) & the NJ Cooperator HOA Expo (spring). Good for FREE stuff, seminars and vendors! See you there in 2013. *It is good to know what is going on out there.*

What the **CIHC** is currently doing:

- We are re-structuring from a membership driven to a Board driven organization to better serve ALL NJ’s HOA owners. This will be accomplished in 2013.
- We are working with several NJ attorneys (friends) to write specific Regulation to address HOA owner complaints/issues. The first is on Elections.
- We are beginning fundraising/ asking for contributions to support our efforts. Please make a contribution! Even a \$20-25 contribution (or MORE) will help us continue to support YOU.
- We are creating an **e-newsletter**, “**The Democratic Voice . . .**” to keep you informed of legislative updates and other pertinent information. The frequency has yet to be determined. We hope this will be helpful and informative.
- We WELCOME **your** ideas and helpful strategies to share with our readers! Let’s share our knowledge! Contact E. Vastola.



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CIHC meeting of December 29, 2012:

The **CIHC** met at the Hickory Corner Library of the Mercer Co. Library System on a **snowy** Saturday afternoon. The current Board met with a quorum, so the meeting was official. Unfortunately, the weather kept our members from turning out; many of whom are regular, long time attendees of our meetings. We missed you; but we understand that your safety is also important. We were thinking that this was to be the last “membership” meeting of the CIHC. In the future we will have *topical* meetings.

Since 3 Board members were present (Ellen Vastola, Pres; Haim Bar-Akiva, Treas.; and Bill McDougall, Director at Large) the meeting became a working Board meeting with our planning for the future.

- We will go forward with our restructuring to be Board driven and representing ALL owners in NJ HOAs; the By-Laws will be revised, and a search for new Board members will be instituted so we increase our depth of knowledge in the HOA and other pertinent areas. Our current Board members expressed interest to continue in one capacity or another. *thank you.*
- The Board feels that the new structure will allow the CIHC to move quickly when circumstances arise AND that we will truly be able to say that WE represent ALL NJ HOA owners! We will still have periodic meetings but we understand that traveling is an issue for many. *We are a long state to travel from north to south.* I hope to have meetings at central locations and to use current technology to our advantage. Teleconferencing and/or Skyping, anyone??
- We discussed and decided to create an e-newsletter to increase our avenues of communication that you are reading now. 😊 Let me know what you want to see here.
- We will review and update our website to make it more user friendly and informative. We have a trusted volunteer to help us. This is our face to YOU, to all NJ HOA owners and to the World.

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We welcome contributions from NJ residents who share in the goals/mission of the C-IHC. We need funds for: maintenance of our website, postal mailings, flyer production & distribution, expenses for contacting legislators and others, periodic meetings, speakers, etc. IF you share our Mission and Goals, please contribute.

Please print out this PAGE/form & send your helpful Contribution to:

Common-Interest Homeowners Coalition,
Post Office Box 1511, Hightstown, NJ 08520.

Contributing Categories: (fill in the blank)

- **Premium Contributor:** \$100 or more _____
- **Sustaining Contributor :** \$30 or more _____
- **Regular Contributor:** \$20 _____
- **Interested person:** \$ _____

Please **PRINT CLEARLY!** Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

Name _____

H-phone _____ W or C-phone _____

Email _____

Address _____

Town _____ Zip _____

Name of Assoc. _____

THANK YOU for your (continued) **SUPPORT!**

Your contact information **will be held as CONFIDENTIAL/**
CIHC use ONLY.