

Housing Justice Movement Building in Pittsburgh
Notes from April 16 & 20 Meetings

Next meeting: **Saturday May 11, 10:00-11:30AM** @ Carnegie Library/ East Liberty 130 S Whitfield St. (Refreshments will be available)

Website with background and past notes: [Housing Justice Movement Building](#)

Purpose of this network/group (revised based on recent work):

To support and strengthen work of the larger Housing Roundtable organized by Pittsburgh United and support the implementation of the [Affirmatively Forwarding Fair Housing Task Force Recommendations](#) by: 1) helping expand public awareness and engagement in work for affordable housing through public education/consciousness raising events; 2) Working to shift the housing debate away from the prevailing market framework to emphasize housing as a human right; and 3) Expanding connections with national and global networks of housing and human rights defenders.

Previous meetings and discussions with organizers led to the following projects, and we are developing task forces to move each one forward and connect these with other housing advocacy work. **We need you! Please help with one or more of these specific task forces—please contact pghrights@riseup.net to volunteer for a task, or message pghrights on Facebook.**

Task Force Summaries/ Volunteer updates

1) **Tenant/Resident bill of rights:** *Developing and working to pass state legislation to protect residents and the right to housing.* Rep. Sara Innamorato's office has been helpful with background work, and this needs to be taken to the state level given how the law is written. We will review and adapt as necessary the [Washington DC as Model](#) and work to try to move legislation on this. (Volunteers: Emily Cummins, Marcia Bades, Roger Rouse)

2) **Host Teach-in on the human right to housing/ People's Tribunal on Evictions.** Task force will work to organize public event in fall to raise consciousness. Idea of following NYC model of a People's Tribunal on Evictions (<https://www.tribunal-evictions.org/>), which groups around the world have used to draw attention to the moral outrage behind the commodification of housing and rising numbers of evictions. This could help build tenant union organizing and widen support for better housing policies. This could link to the Alliance of Inhabitants' [Zero Eviction Days in October](#). New York is doing a People's Tribunal this October, and we can try to model that here? (Volunteers: Roger Rouse, Dawn, Jackie)

3) **Democratize Policy Process**—Promote greater awareness of the recent legislation to limit public participation in development debates by requiring a single, approved [Registered](#)

[Community Organization for each designated neighborhood](#). Find out what action is being taken and how we can support opposition to this legislation. (Volunteers: Quinn, Lisa

4) **Reporting on Human Rights Conditions in Pittsburgh:** The Human Rights City Alliance will be working with other Human Rights Cities, engage in a local review of human rights practices as part of the United Nation's Universal Periodic Review of the US human rights record. ([UPR Cities Project](#)). There is a need for volunteers to help us document the state of the right to housing in our city and to put forward recommendations that will be brought to local, national and international officials in Geneva. For more details on [International Human Rights Monitoring](#). (Volunteers:)

Related Action: We're working with other housing justice groups to send copy of letter by [UN Special Rapporteur Letter to US Government On Housing Policies as Human Rights Violations](#), to City Council and Mayor, and copy to local Real Estate Investment Companies operating locally. [Letter to Blackstone Investment Corporation](#), [Blackstone's response](#). [More details here: [Housing is a Human Right](#)]

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