



South Brunswick Gets National Award – Township Recognizes Value of Everybody’s Labor

Adam Gordon at Fair Share Housing Center September 2, 2011 Uncategorized
 COAH, Fair Share Housing, Money magazine, mount laurel, south brunswick

Posted over Labor Day weekend, definitely worth its shot on the front page – Rosi

Recently, [Money Magazine named South Brunswick Township as the 22nd best place to live in the United States](#), and in doing so specifically recognized the Township’s racial and ethnic diversity and its “wide range of housing, from \$100,000 one-bedroom condos to million-dollar homes.”

On this Labor Day weekend, we at Fair Share Housing recognize South Brunswick as an example of a town that appreciates the contribution of everyone’s labor – whether they are teachers in the township’s schools, parents caring for their kids or for adult children with special needs, or janitors who clean the office parks near Exit 8A.

And more broadly, we stand with our allies in New Jersey’s labor movement and recognize that our work is two sides of the same coin. If people don’t have decent jobs with good wages and benefits, then it’s harder for them to afford a decent home; if towns are allowed to keep out modestly priced homes, as Gov. Christie wants to give them carte blanche to do, then people who work in a town even with decent wages won’t be able to live there.

More on South Brunswick’s story – below the fold.

In the 1980s, after the passage of the New Jersey Fair Housing Act which established every town’s obligation to provide a range of housing choices, different towns reacted differently.

Many towns tried to do the least they possibly could – most notably using the odious and now illegal “RCA” practice (“regional contribution agreements”) to sell their obligations to cities that already had more than their fair share of modestly priced homes.

And then there were other towns that embraced having a range of housing choices that everyone who worked in town could afford. South Brunswick – which was rapidly growing as a job center with new offices and warehouses around Exit 8A of the Turnpike – was one of them. While surrounding towns such as Plainsboro and North Brunswick embraced RCAs, South Brunswick decided that they would instead provide a range of options for families, seniors, and people with special needs in town.

South Brunswick chose to plan for and build many different kinds of housing, under the leadership of Arlyne DeSena, who recently retired as the Township’s Affordable Housing Officer. It has some of the state’s best schools and a strong job market. (And I happen to have grown up there).

So we were excited to see South Brunswick’s award in Money Magazine. Historically, many New Jersey communities recognized in Money Magazine surveys have been among the state’s less racially and economically diverse places. We are glad to see a more diverse and economically strong town like South Brunswick be recognized as one of the nation’s best places to live, particularly appropriate to focus on this Labor Day weekend.

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