

CAMBRIDGE

GoGreen Awards

2010



CATEGORY: Energy/Small Business

BETTER CITIES MANAGEMENT & LANSING FAIR *Inman Square Apartments, 1221 Cambridge Street*

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- For over 40 years, Cambridge native Lansing Fair has made it his life's work to create decent, safe, efficient affordable housing. His property management company, Better Cities Management Co., manages several affordable rental developments in Massachusetts, including Inman Square Apartments. The company's hallmark, however, has been a sustained focus on energy efficiency and upgrades.
- In the 1990's Mr. Fair took out a second mortgage on the Inman Square Apartments to participate in an innovative energy financing program run by Citizens Conservation Corp. (CCC). He took on the responsibility for paying for the tenants' heat, an unheard of switch of direction in rental housing. The CCC financing enabled him to convert the complex from electric heat by installing high efficiency gas boilers with a baseboard hot water distribution system. Windows were changed from metal sliders to wood double hung, air leakage was reduced, and old toilets were switched to low-flow models. Over the years, Mr. Fair has closely monitored the system and adjusted it as needed. Most recently, the building was topped off with a white roof.
- To further lower operating costs and keep rents low, Mr. Fair took advantage of the deregulated gas and electric markets to lower the cost of energy for residents by purchasing directly from suppliers.
- Mr. Fair also found time to share his expertise with other property owners in Cambridge. Jane Carbone from Homeowner's Rehab Inc. says "Lansing served on our board for over 30 years and he was always promoting energy efficiency in operations ... I would call him an energy champion." In the affordable housing world, Mr. Fair's long-time engagement and attention to energy issues is unique among the hundreds of subsidized housing property owners. Under Lansing Fair's direction Better Cities Management has been an early and sustained practitioner of energy efficiency and has served as a model for other property management companies.

ABOUT BETTER CITIES MANAGEMENT COMPANY

Better Cities Management Company specializes in managing affordable rental properties in Massachusetts.

For more information about Better Cities Management Company's sustainability efforts and accomplishments, please contact Lansing Fair, 617-492-7818.

ABOUT THE GO GREEN AWARD

The City of Cambridge annually recognizes local businesses and organizations for outstanding practices in transportation, waste reduction and recycling, energy, stormwater management, climate protection, and community sustainability. The awardees make significant contributions to the reduction of the carbon footprint of Cambridge and to making the city more sustainable.

