

Colleagues, friends and former staff honor Amy Anthony at retirement celebration

More than 200 colleagues, friends and former staff paid tribute to Amy Anthony for her contributions to affordable housing over a 40+ year career at a retirement celebration at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston on June 23. Former MA Governor Michael S. Dukakis - who appointed Amy as his Secretary of the Executive Office of Communities and Development in the 1980s - delivered the keynote address.



"The reason we were able to do what we did in the area of housing and the revival of some very old and very depressed cities was because we had a fabulous team - including Amy," said Dukakis. "She helped to build close relationships with communities and as a result, I don't recall a whole lot of NIMBYism at the time. Because of the work she did, everyone recognized the fact that every community needs affordable housing in this state. Our hats are off to this great woman."

Three former EOCD staffers under Amy - Kate Racer, now Associate Director of the MA Dept. of Housing and Community Development; Clark Ziegler, now Executive Director of the Mass. Housing Partnership; and Joe Flatley, now President/CEO of Mass. Housing Investment Corp. - delivered a mini-roast of Amy that featured old photos and newsclips from her tenure at EOCD. On a serious note Ziegler said "she was somebody who asked the right questions, brings out the best in people, has a lot of fun at work and is an extraordinary talent."

"It is incredible when we think about the complicated ideas of the time — vouchers and the Section 8 program, housing partnerships, mixed-income housing — that Amy has been drawn to all these years and that she has successfully challenged us to work on too," said Flatley. "It's been a great ride."

POAH Board President Herbert Morse who helped found POAH with Amy in 2001, served as master of ceremonies and delivered a heartfelt tribute to her. POAH Communities President Patricia Belden, who worked with Amy since the early days too, presented her with a ceremonial glass bowl on behalf of the staff engraved with the words "POAH Founder, Leader, Mentor."

After a heartfelt thanks to her colleagues and former staff, Amy called on those in attendance to continue her commitment to affordable housing, highlighting the need to provide more resources and to use them as efficiently as possible. "I am especially troubled by the profound inequity that is caused by the limits in public funds for affordable housing. We need as an industry to work to manage costs down if only to respond to the moral imperative of that inequity."

Talking about her future plans which include a new appointment to the board of the Affordable Housing Institute, Amy said she would be working on building infrastructure projects and housing in Africa and to increasing the quality of life and opportunity for people there.

Congratulations and Best Wishes Amy!