

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 10/3/68

TO: Dr. E. D. Harrison

FROM: R. E. Winn

SUBJECT: Luncheon Meeting of the Construction and Design Panel, Housing Resources Committee, September 24, 1968, on the Georgia Tech Campus.

Those present were Vice Chairman Moreland Smith, Mr. Cecil Alexander, Colonel Malcolm Jones, Mr. Herman Russell, Mr. Henry Alexander, Mr. Robert C. Watkins, and Mr. D. P. Elliott. The following guests were also present: Mr. Malcolm Little, Director of City Planning, Georgia Tech; Mr. Johnny Johnson, Director of Model Cities Program, City of Atlanta; Mr. James Wright, Physical Planning Coordinator, Model Cities Program, City of Atlanta; and Mr. Wayne Moore, Metropolitan Planning Commission. Reverend John A. Middleton, Mr. James Moore and Dr. E. D. Harrison could not be present. Dr. Harrison was represented by Mr. Bob Winn.

Mr. Smith presided and called on Colonel Jones to review the status of the Housing Resources Committee and to state Chairman Alexander's recent charge to the Construction and Design Panel. Colonel Jones stated that as of now some 3,000 housing units have been completed and 5,000 are under construction which relate to the Committee's charge. A large number of units are now in planning and Colonel Jones feels some 6,000 of these may reach the construction stage. Colonel Jones stated they were hoping to analyze the program and future charges to the Housing Resources Committee with Mayor Allen within a few days.

Colonel Jones also commented on a joint meeting of the Housing Resources Committee with the Board of Aldermen's Planning and Development and Building Committees. The building codes of Atlanta were considered and Mr. Wofford, Building Official, was present. Mr. Wofford felt that the codes of the City of Atlanta were sufficient to meet the needs that exist.

The Housing Resources Committee has suggested that exceptions be made to the codes for specific needs. Mr. Wofford requested specific recommendations for changes or exceptions to the code be made rather than charges unsubstantiated by documentation. Accordingly, the Construction and Design Panel is now charged with examining the code situation, and with working with contractors, developers and others to draft these recommendations and remain in communication with all concerned regarding this work.

Mr. Cecil Alexander, Chairman of the Housing Resources Committee, stated that he felt the Model Cities Program is the keystone of our efforts and that he feels a major reason we have not as yet been chosen by HUD for experimental housing is because our codes are not liberal enough. He noted that a series of studies have been made by the Metropolitan Planning Commission and that Mr. Moore (present at this meeting) is willing to help on this most technical subject. Mr. Alexander felt that all we can do is to spot specific deficiencies and to make recommendations; that we cannot rewrite the codes. He suggested the following: (1) a review of code studies already performed; (2) communications with prefabricated housing manufacturers as to their experiences concerning codes; (3) communications with HUD concerning their requirements; (4) communications with the building inspectors, plumbing inspectors, electrical inspectors and so forth.

Mr. Johnny Johnson, Director of the Model Cities Program for the City of Atlanta, stated that he felt a need to create and innovate in housing is explicit in the Model Cities Program requirements. He feels that a part of the problem might well be in

✓ the interpretation of the existing codes rather than in the code itself in many cases. He feels that the Model Cities Program should be able to do some things which are different and that they need support for these. They will seek to receive some freedom through the Mayor's Office, Board of Aldermen and the Building Inspector's Office to innovate with new techniques and new materials.

Mr. Johnson noted that demonstration cities have not yet been named by HUD and that if Atlanta is named we must be ready to take advantage of this program. His office has engaged Eric Hill & Company to make a study of the modifications necessary in the codes of Atlanta to implement Model City Programs. A copy of their findings will be provided to the Panel.

Mr. Jim Wright of the Model Cities Program stated that so far the study by Eric Hill & Company has suggested three criteria for codes: (1) they should be based on performance as much as possible; (2) there should be as few specific restrictions as possible, and; (3) an "or equal" clause should be inserted whenever specifics are made a part of the code. He noted that these standards will be necessary to properly administer the Model Cities Program. Mr. Wright believes that New York City has such a code and possibly the City of Chicago also.

→ Mr. Johnson stated that some 7,000 housing units in the Model Cities area are substandard. Thus, six or seven thousand new units will be needed in the next several years in an area which comprises only 4% of Atlanta's land area just to relocate these residents.

{ Mr. Moore, of the Metropolitan Planning Commission, felt that writing codes is unnecessary and impossible. He stated that there are four model codes and that regardless of claims, the Atlanta code is not the same as national codes. He stated that they vary considerably and that the plumbing code in particular is far from any national code and that most provisions in it are arbitrary. These differences should be easy to detect and he feels the Plumbing Inspection Department should be required to justify the requirements which vary from National Standards.

Mr. Moore suggested that to make a quick step a recommendation should be made to go to one of the model codes because there is no provision in the plumbing code, for example, for ammendment except by action of the Board of Aldermen on each specific point.

→ Mr. Moore suggested that the Panel try to get the Southern Standard Code accepted and noted that the administrative offices for this code provide for professional evaluation of new methods. Mr. Malcolm Little stated that the Southern Code is better than the National Codes because the latter are not revised often and the Southern Code is.

{ Mr. Alexander commented on the experience of National Homes in the Thomasville Urban Renewal Area in seeking waivers or exceptions to the code. Basically two houses were to be built as demonstration units. One deficiency was that there were not enough electrical outlets. Another is that plastic waste lines and preassembled copper supply lines and fiberglass tubs and backsplashes were not in accordance with the code. The preassembled copper and plastic lines were fought because "plumbers should not be working in a factory, but outside where it is healthier." He noted, however, that the Building Inspection and Electrical Inspection units have both said that they would send inspectors to a factory at the expense of the manufacturer. The Plumbing Inspection Department so far has not agreed to send inspectors to a factory if the factory is located outside of the City of Atlanta.

(For Model Cities)

Mr. Alexander proposed we consider the slogan "Model Codes for Model Cities."

Colonel Jones noted that HUD has started on some experimental construction projects on low-cost housing units. One is at Ashburn, Georgia, and one is in Pinellas County, Florida. One deals with low-cost single family units and the other with "golden age" units for the elderly.

The following steps were decided to be necessary by the Panel:

1. Coordinate efforts of the Panel with the Model Cities Program.
2. Pursue the Southern Building Code idea for implementation in Atlanta.
3. Pursue the National Electrical Code (Southern Code does not have Electrical Code) for implementation in Atlanta.
4. Contact National Homes and other manufacturers concerning their experiences with codes here and elsewhere.
5. Contact major manufacturers who would be involved and get their views and enlist their support if possible.
6. Contact Mr. Wofford and other members of the Building Inspection Department. Keep them informed. Try to enlist them.
7. Follow up with Mr. Moore concerning the efforts of the Metropolitan Planning Commission in coordination with the Panel.

Mr. Johnson noted that the Model Cities Program in Atlanta is hoping to build a multi-unit condominium which is designed to meet the Southern Code Standards as well as other projects in Atlanta by March of 1969 as demonstration units. He noted that it will be necessary to provide housing for any residents displaced while construction is going on.

→ Mr. Little said that the School of City Planning will be doing a study of mobile type housing which will consider the attitudes of people toward living in that type of housing.

Mr. Smith adjourned the meeting and stated that he or Dr. Harrison would reconvene the Panel in the near future. In the meantime, he will be following up with various members concerning the items discussed today.

The meeting was adjourned.

Colonel Malcolm Jones provided this information for the record: It is his understanding that a state code has been adopted which applies to manufactured housing of the mobile home type and stated that additional information could be obtained from Mr. John B. Moreley, Jr., Executive Vice President, Southeastern Mobile Homes Institute, Inc., Suite A-1, 348 East Paces Ferry Road, N. E., Atlanta, Georgia, 30305. His telephone number is 261-6166.

Colonel Jones called me on Wednesday, September 25, and stated that a telephone conversation with representatives of National Homes has indicated that no code revision was necessary, nor any form of waiver, for installation of a number of installations in Chicago's low-income housing program. Mr. Schmidt of National Homes Acceptance Corporation, in Atlanta, gave this information. It originated with Mr. Price, Chairman of the Board of National Homes. Colonel Jones further stated that Mr. Willard Wirth of National Homes in Lafayette, Indiana, is making a study to see what changes would be necessary in the City of Atlanta's codes to make the same units used in Chicago acceptable in Atlanta.

cc: Mr. Moreland Smith
Mr. Cecil Alexander
Mr. Malcolm Jones ✓