

February 26, 1969

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. R. Earl Landers
Administrative Assistant

Pursuant to your instructions, I met February 24 with Lester Persells, M. B. Satterfield, Gilbert Boggs and Howard Grigsby of the Housing Authority and on February 25 with Bill Wofford and Jim Smith of the Building Department to insure appropriate coordination pertaining to the attached Memorandum.

As a result of these discussions, the Housing Authority has agreed to report to the Building Department (Housing Code Division) on a weekly basis, the names and addresses of families and individuals which they have "certified" to move into Public Housing, because of substandard housing conditions. This report is to also include an appropriate date of anticipated move.

Upon receipt of this report, the Building Department proposes to inspect the locations involved within two working days after receiving the reports and to initiate appropriate action where necessary for compliance with the Housing Code.

(The only fallacy that I can see with respect to this arrangement is that currently the Housing Authority takes the prospective tenants' word that they are living in substandard housing and apparently makes no verification of this. In discussing this point with the Building Department, it appears that before certifying a family to move into Public Housing, because of living in substandard housing, the family involved should first request and obtain a certificate from the Housing Code Division that the unit is substandard and then present such certificate to the Housing Authority.)

The Building Department has been submitting requests to the Housing Authority from the Housing Code Division and the Codes Compliance Office (as result of Court action) separately for relocation of families. The Housing Authority has heretofore reported back to the Building Department on a monthly basis those families which they have relocated.

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(The Building Department has now decided to consolidate its reports, through the Housing Code Division only, to the Housing Authority, and the Housing Authority has agreed to report relocations back to the Housing Code Division on a weekly basis.)

The Housing Authority has requested, and the Building Department has agreed, that requests for relocation be more specific than they have been in the past in order to provide better understanding as to why relocation is necessary and determination as to when it should be accomplished.

Mr. Satterfield suggested that he did not think that the Housing Authority should approach a family to provide relocation assistance until the property and the need therefor, had been adjudicated by the Courts; that otherwise the Housing Authority might create antagonism on the part of the Landlord, or disturbance of the tenants, or both and therefore be criticized as acting unconstitutionally. I pointed out that this would be entirely too slow and would not accomplish the desired results and that such delay is unacceptable.

It also developed that on the initial visit by a Housing Authority Relocation Worker to a family, that attempt is made then and there to arrange for relocation (normally this is unsuccessful). Mr. Persells suggested that perhaps the first visit to the property by the Housing Authority Relocation Worker should be purely exploratory to find out what the circumstances are, with view to subsequently making staff determination as to appropriate action which should be taken. I heartily agree. However, it was then brought out by the Housing Authority that this type of visit is more in the nature of social work and that the Housing Authority has no Social Workers; only Relocation Workers. It seems to me that the solution is obvious. The Relocation Workers should determine the social aspects, as part of their relocation assignment, before the tenants or the landlords are notified that relocation is mandatory. If the initial visit was done quietly and on an exploratory basis, much anxiety and disturbances on the part of the tenant; and annoyance and hostility on the part of the landlord would be considerably reduced and in most instances could conceivably be eliminated all together.

The Housing Authority feels that in many instances the requests from the Building Department for relocation are everly simplified in that the names and numbers of people are usually not provided and, if relocation is being requested in order to reduce overcrowding, that the people required to move and ones permitted to remain are not specified.

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The Building Department feels that these details are functions which could and should be determined by the Relocation Workers, as part of their relocation assignments, using the Housing Code as a guide and should not be expected of the Housing Code Inspectors. I am inclined to agree with the Building Department in this respect, but have requested the Building Department in making its requests to the Housing Authority for relocation to be as specific as practical.

In general, relocation consists of two categories, i.e., families living in Urban Renewal projects and those living outside of Urban Renewal projects. The Housing Authority is authorized to provide financial relocation assistance to families residing in Urban Renewal areas. These families also get number one priority for Public Housing. The Housing Authority claims that this presents no major problem, but that the principal delaying factor in relocation of families residing outside of Urban Renewal projects is financial inability of the families to provide funds for drayage, utility meter deposits and first month's rent. These families get second priority for Public Housing, if required to move because of Housing Code Enforcement and third priority, if moving of their own volition. However, the Housing Authority has no funds for providing the initial financial assistance required for the last two categories and consequently, frequently, weeks and sometimes even months elapse before the families involved are able to accumulate enough cash with which to meet these initial relocation expenses.

As a result, the Housing Authority has proposed that it be permitted to use, as an experiment, \$2,000 from relocation funds allocated to it from the City of Atlanta, as a revolving fund and from which the Housing Authority would, on its own determination, make no interest rate loans of from \$10 to \$100 to such families, to be repaid to the Housing Authority on a weekly basis over a period of time not to exceed one year.

Since it has been pointed out by the Administrative Assistant that the City of Atlanta appropriated funds cannot be used for this purpose, I have contacted Bob Watkins, Director of the Greater Atlanta Housing Development Corporation, suggesting that his fund make a grant of \$2,500 to the Housing Authority for use by the Housing Authority as a revolving fund for the purpose indicated above and that in consideration of such grants, the Greater Atlanta Housing Development Corporation require the Housing Authority to make a semi-annual report to it as to the utilization and status of such fund. Bob Watkins thinks that he can get favorable action on this proposal within 10 days.

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If this should fail, Dan Sweat has contacted Jim Parham of EOA who thinks that his organization may be able to assist by permitting the Housing Authority to draw against certain EOA funds for the purpose described above.

I am requesting both the Housing Authority and the Building Department to follow up closely on the effectiveness of coordination and cooperation efforts enumerated in this paper and to advise me of any breakdown which occurs or of improvement in procedures which should be established.

Sincerely,

Malcolm D. Jones
Housing Coordinator

MDJ/mc

Encls: Memo dated Feb. 11, 1969

cc: Mr. Dan E. Sweat, Jr.