



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
PEACHTREE SEVENTH BUILDING, ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30323
Room 645

REGION III
Housing Assistance Office

October 18, 1968

IN REPLY REFER TO:
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Mr. M. B. Satterfield, Executive Director
The Housing Authority of the
City of Atlanta, Georgia
824 Hurt Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30303



Dear Mr. Satterfield:

This acknowledges your letter of October 16, 1968, enclosing a copy of Mr. Rodney Cook's letter to you of October 11, 1968, for our observations, since many of the points raised involve matters which eventually require approval of this Office.

We are always encouraged when a man of Mr. Cook's stature gives as much time and thought to a program as is reflected in his letter. We wish to point out, however, several complications in his proposal that arise based on our local and national experience with the Low-Rent Housing Program.

The first matter that concerns us greatly is the fact that construction costs are at least \$2,000 more per unit on high-rise than on low-rise structures. Further, if we constructed all our larger units in a project without an intermix of smaller units, we would experience an exceptionally high average cost per unit. Since the smaller units in a high-rise would cost us at least \$2,000 per unit more than normally experienced, we could not even average two projects together to get an acceptable unit cost. In other words, this policy will result in an extra unacceptable construction cost to the Government.

Of grave additional concern to us is the fact that concentrating the large families with their high density of children in projects such as proposed will greatly increase maintenance costs as well as management problems. We have found this true even when we concentrate the larger units in one section of a project. In fact, in project planning, we endeavor to intermix larger and smaller units to avoid this larger unit concentration.

With this type concentration, increased juvenile crime and delinquency, increased frequency of juvenile gangs, increased peril to the personal safety of tenants, an increase in social problems and difficulty in handling them all become factors with which Management has to cope.

The stabilizing effect of older families is lost under any system which involves up-rooting and moving them to high-rise projects. Many older families also do not like high-rise living and would only move into the environment under protest.

Young families moving into the high-rise in turn would be required to move when they began to have children. The practice of concentrating two-person or less families in one group and larger families in another group creates an unnatural type community.


In the past, we have altered unit sizes in existing projects only on a case basis where the market had changed. In some instances, we created more units by the conversion of larger units and in other instances we created fewer units by conversion of smaller units to make larger units. In most instances, this has been a costly process, justified only because a vacancy problem over a long period of time had developed. Further, because of the physical layout of existing units, the amount of conversion to larger or smaller size units that can be made is usually quite limited. It must also be realized that when you reduce the number of units in a project, you also reduce the rental income, while at the same time, as indicated above, you increase the maintenance cost. We could not agree to any such plan in Atlanta merely to relocate families in high-rise structures.

There are instances throughout the Country now where, because of the high density of children and large families involved, consideration has been given to abandoning the projects to a different design concept.

The present policy in public housing programming favors disbursing the units into smaller clusters and avoiding the large project developments. Land and construction costs in a large city usually prohibit the development of single family units under our program

The plan outlined by Mr. Cook reflects serious and responsible thinking and concern on his part; however, it does not take into consideration some of the problems known to us that would make it unacceptable to this Administration.

Sincerely yours,


A. R. HANSON
Assistant Regional Administrator
for Housing Assistance