

## MINUTES

### ANNUAL MEETING, HOUSING RESOURCES COMMITTEE

December 14, 1967

Annual meeting of the full membership of the Housing Resources Committee was held December 14, 1967 at 3:30 p.m. in Committee Room #2, City Hall.

Each member of the Committee and a number of guests, including representatives of the Federal Government, other Agencies, City Departments, several Promoters, Developers, Builders and members of the News Media were invited. All members of the Board of Aldermen were invited. (Copy of invitational notice is attached to the file copy of these minutes).

27 members attended the meeting and 25 other invited guests also attended. Lists of those invited, with attendance indicated, is also attached to the file copy of these minutes.

Agenda of the meeting is attached to the file copy of these minutes.

Chairman Alexander called the meeting to order promptly at 3:30 p.m. and explained the general purpose of the meeting, emphasizing that this was the first general meeting of the entire membership of the Committee and was called primarily for the purpose of reviewing the progress of the Housing Resources Committee during the first year of existence and to consider the Committee's future course of action.

Mr. Alexander then thanked the Mayor for his support, the Atlanta Housing Authority, FHA, HUD, Urban America who has given the funds to keep Mr. Gates with us, the business community, especially the Chamber of Commerce, the Press (including radio and television), the Developers, the Planning, Construction, Parks, Water, School and Building Departments and then last, but certainly not least, the Members of this Committee. Mr. Alexander then called on Mayor Allen to address the Committee.

Mayor Allen spoke extemporaneously warmly greeting the Committee members and guests and made very enthusiastic comments as to the work of the Committee and the progress attained during the first year of the Accelerated Low-income Housing Program in Atlanta.

Mayor Allen was highly complimentary of the work of the Committee, saying that it had made a good start and he vowed that the City's 1971 low-income housing goals would be met.

He cited the steadily decreasing number of housing units of all types constructed in Atlanta from 1963 through 1966, pointing out that 9,129 units were permitted in 1963 whereas only 2,382 units of all types were permitted during 1966. He pointed out that during 1967 (through October) permits for 4,162 units had been issued and he gave credit in a large measure to the Housing Resources Committee for reversal of the trend.

He was also very complimentary of the efforts of the Housing Authority in the overall low-income housing program and expressed appreciation to the Federal Agencies for their cooperation in support of the program and to the Developers and others who are making the projects materialize. Copy of Mayor Allen's comments is attached to the file copy of these minutes.

Copies of the Annual Report of the Housing Resources Committee, including comments of the Committee's Consultant, Mr. W. W. Gates, and a Summary of the Status of the Accelerated Low-income Housing Program, were provided each person who attended the meeting. Following the meeting, copies were mailed each person invited, but who did not attend the meeting. The Annual Report was generally self-explanatory, with a list of contents shown on the first page of the report.

Because of the self-explanatory nature of the report, it was not discussed in detail at the meeting. However, Chairman Alexander did call on Malcolm Jones to explain the principal changes which had taken place in the program since November 15, 1967 (the date of the Summary).

Mr. Jones explained that the "In Planning" category (6,614 units) shown in the Summary included 2,230 units, involving approximately 175 acres, still awaiting the outcome of rezoning, plus 650 additional units shown in that category, which had been proposed for Turnkey development but for which the rezoning petition was denied by the Board of Aldermen November 20. He also explained that included in the 2,230 units, the rezoning for 450 units of Public Housing under the Turnkey development on the Browntown site had been deferred by the Board of Aldermen until July 1, 1968 and another 180 units under the 221 d (3) program, proposed by the Butler Street Y.M.C.A. had also been deferred indefinitely.

On the other side of the picture Mr. Jones pointed out that 450 additional units of Public Housing were allocated December 12 for development on land being turned over to the City of Atlanta by the Federal Government (Federal Honor Farm Number 1).

Mr. Jones also pointed out that units shown as rehabilitated since November 15, 1966 (7,278 through the Housing Code Division, 212 through the Housing Authority and 30 by private enterprise) are in addition to the other tabulated figures shown in the report which are for new construction.

Chairman Alexander then addressed the Committee, thanking the members for their work and assistance during the past year and expressed regret over the loss of two prominent members of the Committee, Mr. Charles O. Emmerich and Dr. Rufus Clement, who died during the year.

Mr. Alexander then brought out several points which he considered especially important to success of the program, and addressed the Committee as follows:

"The No. 1 problem is availability of land zoned for housing. We are running out. Our record to date is good - for this we must thank Mayor Allen, the Aldermanic Board for the sites they approved in the face of opposition, the Atlanta Housing Authority, the Planning Commission and the City Building Department. I personally want to thank this Committee for its support and hard work.

Also a word of sincere thanks to the Press, T.V. and Radio for the support given. Finally, a word of praise for the Developers who have moved into this program and stuck with it through many adversities.

I want to make the following proposals:

1. A meeting once a month including all of those interested in the problem of low-income housing. I would like to invite the following to join us once a month to discuss the problems:

Dan Sweat, representing the Mayor  
 Alderman Rodney Cook, Chairman, Planning and Development Committee  
 Alderman John Flanigen, Chairman, Zoning Committee  
 Collier B. Gladin, Planning Commission  
 Jim Crawford, Chairman, Planning Commission  
 Les Persells, Atlanta Housing Authority  
 Ed Sterne, Chairman, Atlanta Housing Authority  
 Mr. Sommerville, Chairman, CACUR  
 Mr. Thigpen, FHA

Representing the Housing Resources Committee will be Colonel Jones, the Chairman of the Land Acquisition Committee and your Chairman. From time to time other members of the Committee will be asked to come. It is hoped that this monthly meeting will present an opportunity to compare progress, problems and plan for the future. A formal invitation will be sent out shortly.

2. We are firmly dedicated to the principle that efforts should continue to place housing in all sectors of the City. I wish to recognize and compliment SWAP for its effort to stabilize housing in one portion of the City. However, the prime goal of this Committee must be to build new and renovate old housing. The geography of the city and the cost of land are factors that dictate locations beyond the best intentions of us all. It is my strongly held opinion that the elimination of slums is the only sure protection for all sectors of the city.

3. I believe that the efforts to rehabilitate and rebuild our worst slum areas through Urban Renewal must move ahead.

4. I believe that the Central City must be a cross section of the economic life of our city. At the same time low-income housing is being provided, medium and high income housing should be encouraged.

5. I urge those who are considering the overall Housing Development Corporation Fund for Atlanta to continue their efforts to put this fund into operation at the earliest moment.

6. It is my hope that areas of appropriate size be planned as a cross section of housing. That areas combine Public Housing and 221 units as well as units conventionally financed. This should make the units more acceptable to the surrounding area, create a healthier environment and indicate that Public Housing will not necessarily blight a neighborhood.

7. It is necessary that the public facilities in a neighborhood be considered in the placement of housing. In order to speed up the erection of schools and parks we are looking into the possibility of the developer providing the facilities and leasing them to the designated public authority.

8. It is necessary to coordinate the social problems in all areas of low-income housing. We offer our services to the Atlanta Housing Authority and FHA to help in these areas.

9. We offer our help and cooperation to all the Housing Authorities located in the Atlanta area; to Marietta, Decatur, East Point, College Park, Lithonia, Forest Park and DeKalb County. We are convinced that housing is and must be a problem of concern to the entire metropolitan area.

10. We urge that the land use map now under study by the Planning Commission be the basis of an amended Zoning Ordinance for the City. Not only in housing, but in all areas of our City's development, it has become evident that a new apportionment of land is necessary.

Before closing, I wish to mention and recognize one particular group in Atlanta which has promise of very worthwhile accomplishments in non-profit housing ventures; the Interfaith Group, a non-denominational group composed of representatives from several churches which have recently combined their efforts and formed a Non-Profit Housing Development Corporation. It is a little early yet to assess results, but I have hopes that this group may develop some very worthwhile accomplishments in the non-profit housing field."

Chairman Alexander then opened the meeting to comments from the floor and discussion by members of the Committee. Specific items covered during the discussion included the following:

(a) Mr. Palmer asked for explanation of the proposed Housing Development Corporation; this was explained by Chairman Alexander.

(b) Mr. Stevens commented on the problems involved in relocating families in the City's lowest income brackets, pointing out that many of them were unable to pay even the rents required under the 221 d (3) non-profit program. Mr. Persells pointed out that Public Housing is for this purpose and that the rents charged for a Public Housing unit were prescribed and are only about 20% of the families take home income and that for tenants on Public Welfare, additional payments for rent were included in the welfare disbursements; that minimum rents for Public Housing in Atlanta are about \$26 per month.

(c) In further response to this item Mr. Alexander pointed out that rents in non-profit developments are affected by the following: (1) Land costs; (2) Restrictions on prefabs - codes; (3) Rent supplement - substantial subsidies; and (4) Availability of adequate jobs for tenants.

(d) Mr. Millican commented on the lack of corresponding developments for low-income housing in neighboring cities and counties. He pointed out that if Atlanta continues to build low-income housing and the other surrounding areas do not (with few exceptions), he saw no opportunity for the City of Atlanta to ever catch up; that we would continue to attract the poor and jobless from the surrounding areas and concentrate them within the City of Atlanta. In partial response to this Mr. Persells pointed out that in order to discourage this the Housing Authority has recently adopted a policy requiring a year's residence within the City Limits of Atlanta, before applicants become eligible for Public Housing.

(e) Mr. Alexander pointed out that the CIP requirements and the goals toward which this Committee is working for the 5 year program are intended for replacement housing only (for those displaced by governmental action) and does not include any increase due to normal growth and in migration.

(f) Mr. Saporta commented on the need for review and revision of the building codes in the City of Atlanta to permit the advantages of reduced costs through improved materials and advanced technologies, now being reflected in prefabrication.

(g) Mr. Alston suggested that the difficulty being encountered in obtaining available sites for low-income housing might be overcome by using greater densities on land that is available.

(h) Rev. Boarders commented that he did not think that the City should place any restrictions on length of residency in the City of Atlanta for Public Housing applicants; that he felt the City was capable and able to house all comers and should encourage them to come into the City of Atlanta, regardless of lack of jobs and education; that these could and should be provided by Atlanta after they get here. Mr. Millican commented that he did not agree with some of the suggestions offered by Rev. Boarders.

(i) Dr. Jackson, Chairman of the Social Problems Panel, HRC, commented on the importance of social consideration in the planning and development of all low-income housing projects.

(j) Mr. Weltner, former Chairman of the Legal Panel, HRC, commented on the personal efforts and hard work of Chairman Alexander as being largely responsible for the success and progress of the City's accomplishments in the low-income housing field during the past year and made a motion that such be recognized by the Committee as a whole and the adoption of a resolution expressing these sentiments and thanking Chairman Alexander for his personal efforts and able leadership. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

(k) Mr. Saporta pointed out that within a 10 minutes walk of City Hall there is at least 1½ million square feet of building space, previously used by industry and warehousing, which is now vacant and serving no useful purpose. He suggested that it would be well for consideration to be given to developing some means of utilizing this available space for low-income housing.

(l) Mr. Carter of the Community Relations Commission staff pointed out that many good substantial houses are being demolished in the path of Expressway construction, particularly in the densely developed area in the eastern part of the City. He commented on how wasteful this appears to be in utilization of standard housing and suggested that some plan be developed for relocating many of these structures in other areas rather than demolishing them. Mr. Alexander commented that this was an excellent idea and that from a practical standpoint he saw no reason why such could not be done.

As the allotted time for the meeting had expired the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Malcolm D. Jones*

Malcolm D. Jones  
Supervisor of Inspection Services

Encls:           1. Invitational notice.  
(with file      2. List of those invited.  
copy only)     3. Agenda.  
                  4. Mayor Allen's comments.  
                  5. Annual Report, with two enclosures.

MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR