

HOUSING RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Room 1204, City Hall

August 11, 1967

Memorandum To: Mayor Allen

From: Malcolm Jones

The action of the Zoning Committee yesterday in turning down the re-zoning of a 51 acre tract off Browntown Rd. (Zoning Petition #Z-67-124-D) from M-1 and R-5 to A-1 for Turnkey development was very disappointing to those of us working in promotion of housing for low-income families. More serious however is the discouragement to owners, sponsors and developers of other tracts under consideration for inclusion in the low-income housing program for both Turnkey and 221 d (3) development.

I recommend that you ask the Board of Aldermen to defer action on this petition, rather than to turn it down, when it comes before them August 21.

The advantage of such action would be to at least delay a turndown, which would prohibit future consideration of the site for 18 months, and would perhaps maintain a ray of hope in sponsors and developers for other low-income housing projects under consideration.

This tract is one of only 5 thus far tentatively approved by HUD for Turnkey, after 9 months of effort. Of the remaining four, one 15 acre tract requires re-zoning and besides the owner has not yet agreed; another 20 acre tract is zoned appropriately but the owner has not yet agreed to sell for this purpose. This reduces the approved firm sites to two of 20 acres each (approximately 480 units).

The Browntown Rd. site is now zoned predominately M-1. It had the favorable recommendation of the Planning Board and the formal unanimous support and endorsement of the Executive Group of the Housing Resources Committee.

If the City cannot get this site re-zoned for low-income housing, I see little prospect for favorable action on others. The amount of vacant land in the City currently zoned A-1 is just not adequate (as can be confirmed by various sponsors and developers) to meet the needs of the low-income housing program (see attached report). The 802 acres of vacant land indicated as zoned A-1 was as of January, 1966. All that we have been able to find now from the Zoning Map dated April 31, 1967 provided the HRC by the Planning Department, and which is not already committed to the low-income housing program, rejected, or planned for other use is approximately 204 acres. (It is understood however that some very small tracts, especially with mixed zoning and not suitable for the program, are not included on the zoning map).

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This land is not all available however, as some of it is too expensive; some owners are not willing to sell for low-income housing; some sites are too small to be profitable; some, although otherwise suitable, will not meet HUD's policy because of location in racially identifiable areas; and other reasons.

Therefore we must depend to a large extent on ability to re-zone qualified sites to meet the requirements. If that cannot be done (we have already had several failures), solution of the problem becomes extremely difficult if not impossible under current practice. We may thus have to resort to other procedures and techniques.

Respectively,

Malcolm D. Jones  
Supervisor of Inspection Services

MDJ/sll

cc: Director of Governmental Liaison  
Chairman, Housing Resources Committee

Encl: HRC Memorandum dated August 9, 1967