

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING, HOUSING RESOURCES COMMITTEE

January 2, 1968

Special meeting sponsored by the Housing Resources Committee of key individuals involved in low-income housing, (in accordance with Item 1 of Chairman Alexander's proposals at the Annual Housing Resources Committee Meeting of December 14, 1967) was held at 11:00 a.m. this date, in Committee Room 2, Second Floor, City Hall.

The following invited participants attended the meeting:

Mr. Cecil A. Alexander, Chairman
Alderman John M. Flanigen, Chairman, Zoning Committee
Mr. Collier B. Gladin, Director of Planning
Mr. Howard Openshaw, Director of Redevelopment, Housing Authority,
representing Mr. Lester A. Persells
Mr. Gilbert Boggs, Director of Public Housing, Housing Authority,
representing Mr. Edwin L. Sterne
Mr. Ralph Johnson, Chief Underwriter, FHA, representing Mr. John
A. Thigpen
Mr. Robert L. Sommerville, Chairman, CACUR
Mr. Dan E. Sweat, Jr., Director of Governmental Liaison

Alderman Rodney M. Cook, Chairman, Planning and Development Committee, Mr. Jim Crawford, Chairman, Atlanta-Fulton County Joint Planning Board, and Dr. Vivian Henderson, Acting Chairman, Land Acquisition Panel, Housing Resources Committee, did not attend.

Additional guests included Mr. William S. Howland, Executive Director, Citizens Advisory Committee for Urban Renewal, Mr. Al Roland, Chief Appraiser, FHA, and several members of the press.

Chairman Alexander presided.

Mr. Alexander opened the meeting by explaining its general purpose i.e. to provide an opportunity for key individuals involved with low-income housing in the City to get together, compare notes, and exchange ideas with view to accomplishing more effective coordination.

He advised that over all prospects are good for finalizing establishment of a City of Atlanta non-profit Housing Development Corporation, being sponsored by Mr. Lee Burge's committee, which, among other things, might:

- (1) Provide seed money to local neighborhood non-profit organizations.
- (2) Bank land for future low-income housing developments.
- (3) Assist in sustaining neighborhoods; and
- (4) Although officially limited to housing activities within the City limits, we hope eventually to involve the metropolitan area.

Mr. Alexander then told about a non-profit organization that had recently formed, called Interfaith Inc., consisting of Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian and Unitarian churches, in which John Steinichen is the moving force. He urged that this group be given full cooperation by all concerned with low-income housing.

Mr. Alexander then referred to the ten points he had specifically mentioned at the December 14, Annual Meeting of the Housing Resources Committee (included in the minutes) and announced that the Housing Resources Committee is interested in getting housing in all sections of the City. He then proceeded to raise a variety of points for discussion and called upon various participants for their views and comments on specific items.

The discussion which followed was healthy and tended to pinpoint some of the under-lying features which contribute to the difficulty encountered in meeting the City's goals for low-income housing. These all seemed to stem from the following factors, which evolved as the essence of the meeting:

- (a) Lack of any one body or individual empowered to make top level policy decisions essential to the program and to see that they are carried out effectively. (The structural organization of the City, in this as in other fields, appears to be the primary cause.)
- (b) Breakdown in communications and inadequate coordination of efforts of various Departments and Agencies involved in the program for carrying out a general plan to meet a specific time schedule.
- (c) The necessity for establishment of definite time schedules for matters essential to the low-income housing program. For example: establishment of supporting community facilities; ~~additional~~ proposed Urban Renewal Projects; initiation of development of some units in areas already known to require low-income housing, such as in Vine City and the Model Cities area, even though complete requirements and all specific locations may not yet be determined.

Mr. Gladin was called upon to comment on the Model Cities Project. He discussed how his Department is trying to tie in housing requirements for five years with the Bedford-Pine and Model Cities areas; that exact housing requirements for the Model Cities area are not yet known; that planning funds in the amount of \$172,000 have been made available, whereas \$500,000 was requested; that new housing in the Model Cities area is several years off, with the possible exception of the proposed Stadium site; that we have always had to wait until we could get into an area before any actual new housing could be built; that if we could get someone interested in the Stadium site, four decks of parking could be built between Capitol and Frazier Streets, South of Fulton, and development of a platform for housing above this; that the Zoning Committee has suggested that applications for re-zoning in the Model Cities area be held up for six months; that "we" are trying to work out Housing Code enforcement policy in the area during the next six months; that the planning stage covers twelve months from November 15, 1967; that a revised work program proposal is being considered today; that the next deadline is May 1 for determining of types of treatment needed; the time from then to September 15 will be devoted to detailing (application due in to HUD then); HUD to review by October 15; that November 1 is the deadline for utilization of the first year's allocation of planning funds; that we should have an indication by the first of March of what our first year's development allocation will be; that initial development should be in areas similar to Hill Street and Grant Park that are substantial and which are not likely to change very much; that citizen participation is being emphasized; that citizens shouldn't feel that a plan has already been developed before they have a chance to indicate their desires.

Mr. Alexander expressed hope that there will be a positive effort made, in accordance with the plans developed by the project Executive Committee, to invite developers to see the land that is to be used for apartments, etc.

Mr. Alexander then explained the proposal of attempting to locate Turnkey developments in several areas of the City and expressed hope that the Housing Authority would make a positive effort toward locating some of the Public Housing required.

Mr. Gladin stated that his Department is trying to come up with a proposal of perhaps ten sites for Turnkey to meet our total requirements and on which to get allocations for the remainder of the five-year program. He pointed out that we need a package proposal for getting our total requirements.

Mr. Boggs stated that Public Housing may be placed in Urban Renewal projects, in those areas which the Housing Authority owns the land.

Mr. Jones stated that in order to get started early on additional housing in the Model Cities area we could assume that there is need for some Public Housing in the area and that perhaps some areas could be selected

now and started on, even if we do not yet know the total requirements; that it can be anticipated when so many people are to be dislocated, a certain percentage of them would need Public Housing.

Mr. Alexander stated that there is apparently little use being made of Limited Dividend.

Mr. Johnson said FHA has several projects under construction and others being considered. He cited Gartrell Court, College Plaza, and Park West 1, 2, and 3, as examples. He also stated that there is a \$32 million unused allotment in the Rent Supplement program plus \$10 million additional and also a \$1 billion fund has been allocated by insurance companies for Rent Supplement and similar loans; that several Rent Supplements are under consideration in the area (one is in Marietta and four in Metropolitan Atlanta). One Atlanta Rent Supplement project is now under construction.

Mr. Johnson said that FHA will consider row-type housing under 221 d (2) mortgages, if separate real estate entities exist.

With respect to a suggestion that "Economix" be used, Mr. Sommerville said he feels that "Economix" will not work except in certain residential areas.

Mr. Jones stated that an example of what he thought would work is townhouses which might be built in certain residential areas and cited as an example a 12-14 acre tract in rear of existing single family houses constructed on very deep lots in an R-5 area, on which he suggested townhouses might be built; and that there are many other similar areas in the City which are not now serving any useful purpose and might be developed in this manner.

Mr. Johnson said this is what he was talking about when he mentioned that FHA would insure row-housing under 221d (2); that the two main problems are getting the neighbors to agree to apartments being built and getting the land re-zoned for higher density.

Mr. Alexander asked if FHA foreclosure properties could be obtained and whether the Housing Authorities could run ads for such?

Mr. Boggs said this could be done, but hasn't been tried here; that the Housing Authority is negotiating for leasing; 162 units have already been leased and that an additional 175 units are about to be leased.

Mr. Alexander stated that some way should be set up whereby the developers could build public facilities such as schools, outfall sewers, etc., if needed to serve proposed developments, and lease them to the City until such time as the City is in a position to acquire them.

Mr. Sommerville commented that School Superintendent Letson said this is not legal in Georgia.

Mr. Alexander stated that if this a good approach, perhaps the Georgia law should be modified; that if neighborhoods and cities could become interested in getting schools built, inadequate schools would not be a problem when new housing developments are built.

Mr. Alexander expressed a desire for the School Department to be represented at the next meeting.

Mr. Jones advised that Dr. Womack of the School Department gets a copy of the Low-income Housing Inventory reports every 60 days, but the problem is that by the time the proposed locations get on the report, if the facilities are not already provided for, it is usually too late.

Mr. Sommerville asked if Georgia school funds could not be used? The answer was not readily available.

Mr. Alexander said that Federal funds may be available for leases in these situations, as an encouragement to builders, and have been used in other parts of the country; that the School Department would eventually buy the schools.

Mr. Alexander then asked where Vine City now stands in terms of the effort to get the Vine City Urban Renewal Project under way and if funds are available?

Mr. Gladin said they have organized a community group recognized by the City. A report is being made by the City along with the group; that an Urban Renewal Project is required to alleviate problems in the Vine City area; that the school which is under development there would give the City the largest capital improvement credit to be used in meeting the City's one-third share of the cost of an Urban Renewal Project; that we have only about three years left in which to take credit for this facility.

Mr. Alexander expressed the opinion that the City needs a time-table to get rid of the worst areas throughout the City.

Mr. Gladin admitted that the Nash-Bans Project is dragging; that 50% of his staff will soon go to the Model Cities Project; that the Planning and Development Committee should come back and ask the citizens what they want, or tell them that they should be willing to go along with an Urban Renewal plan to be developed by the City.

Mr. Alexander then asked if this did not essentially resolve itself to responsibility of Mr. Cook's Committee? Mr. Gladin agreed that it did.

Mr. Flanigen then asked why is there so much delay on all Urban Renewal Projects?

Mr. Gladin explained that delay in the Vine City area was caused by an attempt to involve people in the community; that we are waiting for them to decide what they want.

Mr. Alexander again emphasized the necessity for deadlines in planning and stated that he felt the City should move on its principal proposed projects in accordance with a time schedule; that it is well to involve people in the area, but they should be given a time limit for coming up with their proposals and if they did not meet that schedule, the City should go ahead and develop plans and submit its own plan for the Urban Renewal Project; that if we are to eliminate slums, at some point the City must move into its worst areas.

Mr. Boggs said authorizations by City government for Public Housing is another problem; and that federal funds can now only be used in an area if there is housing and employment for the poor.

Mr. Oppenshaw said that Federal funds are limited and that timing of submittal of project applications is all important; that every Urban Renewal Project in Atlanta has been amended and that takes additional time. He then quoted figures as to the number of Public Housing units under construction and planned for Urban Renewal Projects.

Mr. Johnson said that the Rockdale project now has an FHA commitment for 600 units; that FHA has reviewed the (Central) Methodist Church plan and is ready to approve it; that the Ebenezer Church program is dragging; that according to the Housing Resources Committee Annual Report, the FHA 221 program is the furthest advanced in meeting the City's goals. Mr. Jones confirmed this.

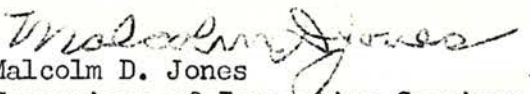
The question was raised about the slowness in getting housing started on some of the Renewal land sites. Mr. Oppenshaw said he had recently written to Mr. Rosen about this with respect to the Rockdale Project. Mr. Alexander agreed to write a letter to Mr. Robinson about the Ebenezer Church project and also Mr. Rosen.

Mr. Alexander proposed a Workshop to which developers and involved groups would be invited, to explain how we suggest developing this program, what we have available, etc. and that key Department Heads should also be invited. He asked for opinions as to this idea. Mr. Jones responded that he thought this might be very beneficial.

In summary, the necessity for over-all decision making; timing; and authority and responsibility for following through to get things done was the essence of the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectively submitted,


Malcolm D. Jones
Supervisor of Inspection Services