

HOUSING RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes

December 12, 1968

The Second Annual Meeting of the Housing Resources Committee was held on Thursday, December 12, 1968, in Committee Room 2, Second Floor, City Hall to review and discuss the work of the Committee in the low-income housing program during the past two years. November 15 marked the completion of the second year since the Mayor established the Housing Resources Committee on November 15, 1966, in his Conference on Housing.

Copies of invitational notice, list of those invited, with attendance indicated, and other related documents are attached to the file copy of these minutes only.

Chairman Alexander opened the meeting at 10:30 a.m. and called on Alderman Cotsakis for a statement which he had asked to make.

Mr. Cotsakis commented on revision of the Building Codes for the City of Atlanta, particularly to allow experimental housing to be built in the Model Cities area. He said that if any one had any changes of the Building Codes which they desired be made, that they should bring proposals for specific changes to the attention of the Building Committee.

Mr. Alexander then called on Malcolm Jones to comment on the accomplishments of the Housing Resources Committee.

Mr. Jones said that November 15, 1968, marked the completion of the first two years' activity of the Housing Resources Committee in its effort to promote and accelerate the Low-income Housing Program in Atlanta, for which the goal was 16,800 low and medium income housing units during a five year period (1967-71), announced by the Mayor in his Housing Conference establishing the HRC on November 15, 1966.

He then stated that the five year goal is now in the pipeline and that the current status of the low and medium income housing program shows:

Completed	3,217 units	
Under Construction	6,278 units	
In Planning	7,337 units	
In Sight	10,832 units	Total

This slightly exceeds (by 32 units) the 5 year goal of 16,800 units and is only 305 units short, in the first two categories, of the anticipated need for 9,800 units during the first two years of the program.

He also stated that the Housing Resources Committee has accomplished:

1. Promotion of low and medium income housing and coordination of efforts in this field.
2. Establishment of the Greater Atlanta Housing Development Corporation to assist local non-profit housing corporations.
3. Acceptance by the Federal Government of use of prefabricated relocateable units as temporary relocation housing.
4. Expansion of the base for Federal Grants and direct Loans, now authorized in the 1968 Housing Act.
5. Urged early adoption by the City of miniature Urban Renewal projects, to clear slums, under the newly adopted Neighborhood Development Program authorized by the 1968 Housing Act.
6. Urged revision of previous conventional planning concepts in an effort to get certain areas rezoned to permit improvement of such areas for residential use.
7. Urged the dispersal of future Public Housing in small developments on scattered sites.
8. Creation of interest in the low-income housing program by nonprofit organizations and formation of several such organizations.
9. Served as a catalyst in neighborhood interest for improvement of Vine City through Urban Renewal.
10. Proposed and obtained concurrence of the Board of Education to draft legislation to authorize developers to build schools simultaneous with development of housing projects, except in Urban Renewal areas.
11. Participated in Atlanta Conference on Equal Opportunity in Housing.
12. Worked with Model Cities' staff in establishing its rehabilitation program and in site selection for experimental housing.
13. Pointed out to City officials the necessity for the principle that site selection for low-income housing should include a planning function and responsibility.

Mr. Jones then stated the six requests which were made to the Planning and Development Committee and the Zoning Committee in Special Meeting on August 2, 1968:

1. Asked the Mayor to designate either an existing committee or appoint a new committee of the Board of Aldermen to assume a responsibility in the field of low-income housing.
2. Revision of the Building Codes for the City of Atlanta, particularly to allow experimental housing to be built in the Model Cities area.
3. Revision of the Ordinance governing non-conforming use of land to allow structural changes in improving dwelling units to meet requirements of the Housing Code.
4. Accelerate the urban renewal program particularly in the Nash-Bans, Vine City, and other areas outside the Model Cities area.
5. Authorize the Atlanta Housing Authority to request 2,000 additional units of public housing.
6. Adoption of a revised district zoning map based on the new Land Use map to include adequate areas for low-income housing.

Mr. Jones then pointed out results to date of the above indicated requests.

Mr. Alexander then called on Mr. W. W. Gates, Consultant to the Committee, to discuss the Implications of the 1968 Housing Act.

Mr. Gates opened by stating that the National Housing Act was passed by Congress on August 1, 1968, that the legislation provides the tools, incentives and success in meeting the national objective will large depend on:

1. Sponsor interest
2. Availability of land at a reasonable price
3. The mortgage money market
4. Municipal cooperation
5. Funding by the Congress in 1969
6. Building code and zoning restrictions

Mr. Gates then discussed four sections of the Act: Section 238, Section 237, Section 236 and Section 235.

Section 238: Establishes a new Special Risk Insurance Fund which permits the Federal Housing Administration to assume

higher mortgage insurance risks in connection with both location and credit characteristics that were unacceptable under the mutual mortgage insurance fund.

Section 237: Provides, on an experimental basis, FHA mortgage insurance to finance home ownership for low income families who would not qualify under normal credit standards.

Section 236: The tenant under this program will pay 25% of his family's income and HUD will pay the difference between the amount collected and the amount of the rent. Limited to families whose incomes are not in excess of 135% of initial admission levels of public housing.

Section 235: This section places heavy emphasis on home ownership and provides that if the purchaser of a new home or a living unit in a condominium will pay at least 20% of the family's income and HUD will pay the balance of the monthly mortgage payments.

Mr. Gates closed his discussion by stating that "The impact of this bill on housing should be tremendous. The tools are available as never before."

Mr. Alexander then discussed Future Direction of the Committee. He said that the Committee requests that the Mayor and Board of Aldermen give consideration to these proposals and advise us accordingly in a revised statement of mission for the Committee:

1. All bodies concerned with housing review the present and continuing need for low income housing.
2. Eliminate existing slums and provide housing as needed in the area for those who wish to remain there.
3. Place housing near jobs and public facilities in the City of Atlanta and throughout the metropolitan area.
4. Continue efforts to promote innovative low-income housing construction in Atlanta.
5. Continue to aid efforts to eliminate social problems connected with housing.
6. Further involve the business community in the housing program.
7. Assist nonprofit groups and developers in their efforts to obtain land and construct housing.

8. Promote and explain the new general housing act and the fair housing act.
9. Consider national and local legislation usefull to the housing program.
10. Assist in the stabilization of existing neighborhoods and encourage the construction of middle and upper income residential developments in the City of Atlanta.
11. Attempt to involve persons in the slums in the business side of demolition, rehabilitation or erecting new units.
12. Continue efforts to sell the need for low-income housing to the people of metropolitan Atlanta.

Mr. Alexander then discussed Unfinished Business. Some of the phases of the initial program which are not finished are:

1. Completion of projects now in planning.
2. Legislation pending that will allow the city to lease schools to be built by developers simultaneously with housing projects, except in urban renewal areas.
3. Investigation of problems relating to code restrictions of innovative building.
4. Activation of Board for the Greater Atlanta Housing Development Corporation.
5. Obtaining of additional sites in areas where low-income housing is needed.

Mr. Alexander made a closing statement thanking the staff, members of the committee, Federal Agencies, Atlanta Housing Authority, Planning Department, Building Department, Public Works Department, members of the Board of Aldermen, Mayor Allen and the members of the Press, Radio and TV Organizations for their cooperation and assistance.

Mr. Alexander then called on Mr. Charles F. Palmer, member of the Public Housing Panel of the Committee, to discuss a Resolution the Panel had prepared.

Mr. Palmer stated that the only logical conclusion reached is that (1) subsidized housing must be fairly distriduted throughout the city and, (2) that the only politically feasible way to do this is by a "package deal" simultaneously presented to Council by the Mayor and Atlanta Housing Authority with

overwhelming community support.

He stated that the opinion of the sub-committee is that it is not too late to resubmit those rejected zoning applications through the "package plan" on a simultaneous basis to meet the city's needs for subsidized housing and that the Mayor, the Board of Aldermen and the Atlanta Housing Authority should proceed to do so forthwith.

Mr. Palmer then stated that if the same energy, zeal and leadership of our "power-structure" and city officials that was mobilized to build our dazzling stadium, luxury apartments and magnificent hotels and office buildings in our urban redevelopment areas had been applied to providing subsidized housing for those who were bulldozed out of slums to make room for these majestic structures, the goal of public housing which our Mayor proclaimed so long ago would now be nearly reached.

Then, as spokesman for the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Public Housing and on the sub-committee's behalf, moved that our full Committee does now reaffirm its position on "package rezoning", and calls upon its fellow organizations of the City and those responsible for its implementation to cooperate to put it into effect.

The Resolution was duly seconded and the Chairman called for discussion.

Mr. Alexander then suggested that since this was included in the requests made on August 2, 1968, to the Zoning Committee and the Planning and Development Committee of the Board of Aldermen and had been referred to the Planning Department, the Committee should first address the Planning Department as to current status of the proposal.

Mr. Palmer declined the suggestion and asked for a formal vote on the motion to adopt the Resolution. It was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Alexander then showed the Committee slides that were taken of the slums as they exist today in certain areas of the City, particularly Lightening, and as a contrast the new low-income replacement housing developments such as: Wheat Street Gardens, College Plaza, Allen Temple, McDaniel Street apartments for the Elderly, Hollywood Road Project, Bankhead Highway, Friedship Gardens, Thomasville U.R. Project and the London Towne Houses.

Mr. William Howland then commented on the five houses in Linwood Park which have been rehabilitated by CACUR under the 221 (h) program.

The Chairman then called on Mr. Dan Sweat, Director of Governmental Liaison, for comments.

Mr. Sweat stated that the statistics released by Col. Jones and the Committee were impressive and that the influence of the Committee's success was not confined to Atlanta's housing program alone but has also been felt at the national level and that housing experts from over the country have commented on the Atlanta approach and on the excellent program of the Housing Resources Committee.

He stated that his feeling is that the story behind the statistics is where the real meaning of this Committee and the Housing Program is to be found. He said that the work of the Committee has made all the city aware of the desperate need for decent housing for the less fortunate, less affluent citizens of Atlanta; that it has helped bridge the gap of creditability between the City - the institution - the power structure and a very large and important segment of our community, and most important, this program started the City out on a new direction so long needed.

He stated that the Aldermen understood this need when they refused to pass Urban Renewal Survey and Planning applications until the housing relocation needs were met. The Mayor realized the need when he called the Housing Conference and established this committee and it was obvious that the private business leadership recognized it when, the members of the Housing Resources Committee, responded as has been done.

Mr. Sweat then pointed out that the resultant changes are reflected in a report given by Howard Openshaw, Director of Redevelopment of the Housing Authority, at the last CACUR meeting. Mr. Openshaw pointed out that of the 10,033 units begun in urban renewal projects in 1968, 884 units have been completed which is 21 times the number of housing completed the previous year in urban renewal areas. During the same period, only 484 units were demolished in urban renewal areas. So, for the first time in the history of Atlanta's urban renewal program, more housing units were completed in urban renewal areas than were demolished.

Mr. Sweat concluded by saying, "We have finally turned the corner in our urban redevelopment program and are headed in a new direction so long sought."

Mr. Archer D. Smith, III, Chairman of the Legal Panel, made a warning statement that we are deluding ourselves if we take the figures presented and quit working; that we have got to be realistic and get behind the package zoning plan.

Upon inquiry from the Chairman, Mr. Jones confirmed that sites for all of the 7,337 units shown as In Planning, have not yet been rezoned.

In reference to the figures pertaining to Public Housing, contained in the Summary of Status Report (Encl. 2, Second Annual Report), attention is called to the fact that although the 5,476 units shown as Completed, Under Construction and In Planning categories, fall short by 4,100 units of the 5 year goal, it is however within 110 units of the 2 year goal of 5,586 Public Housing units announced in the Mayor's Housing Conference, November 15, 1966.

The meeting adjourned 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Malcolm D. Jones
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Housing Coordinator

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Encls: Resolution by Public Housing Sub-Committee
Article, Atlanta Constitution, December 13, 1968
Editorial, Atlanta Journal, December 14, 1968
Editorial, Atlanta Constitution, December 16, 1968
An Official Opinion of WSB-Radio/Atlanta, Dec. 22, 1968
Editorial, WSB-TV, January 2, 1969.
Editorial, WSB-TV, January 3, 1969