

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

PUBLIC HOUSING PANEL
HOUSING RESOURCES COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 28, 1967

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PROPOSAL FOR SPEEDING UP PUBLIC HOUSING UNDER THE TURNKEY PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

The Public Housing Panel of the Housing Resources Committee has held several meetings in an effort to obtain additional Public Housing to meet the requirements of the Mayor's accelerated low-income housing program and has been thwarted in most of its efforts to date through neighborhood objections, Zoning, difficulty in identifying sites that would satisfy the Housing and Urban Development Administrations' regulations relating to building Public Housing in racially identifiable areas, inadequate sewage systems, uncoordinated planning that results in undue taxation of existing schools, recreation and other vital community facilities, high cost of most available land, which makes low-income housing thereon not economically feasible and other reasons.

The current policy of the Housing Authority is to depend exclusively on private developers to propose sites for development under the Turnkey program. Many sites have been proposed but have been turned down or rejected because of one or more of the above indicated obstacles.

As a result, of the 4200 units of new Public Housing allocated to the City of Atlanta, only two small Turnkey projects thus far appear firm; one in the northwest of 250 units and one in the southeast of 220 units. Neither of these have yet broken ground and the program is almost a year old. Without a rapid upsurge in Public Housing, it will be virtually impossible to meet the goals set last November 15, by Mayor Allen for 9800 additional low and moderate income housing units during 1967-68, for replacement purposes.

The City of Atlanta is thus faced with a serious crisis that deserves the combined effort of the Mayor, the Housing Resources Committee, the Housing Authority and all Departments of the City involved in housing sites and necessary community facilities which must already exist or be made available simultaneously with construction of the housing. A solution to this proposal also requires the support of the leaders of the business community, civic, social and religious groups, and the citizenry at large.

To date, individual projects have been proposed independently without relation to other proposals and have been knocked down separately, thus preventing many people, who need low-income housing the most, from getting it. It appears that this will continue to be the case, unless a determined, massive effort is made promptly to strive to get approval of locations for the entire remaining current City allocation of approximately 3730 Public Housing units under the Turnkey program.

PANEL POSITION

The Public Housing Sub-Committee feels that the production of low-income housing should come first as a top priority in meeting the needs of its citizenry and all resources of the city of Atlanta, public and private, should be marshalled to meet the demands of the Housing crisis.

EFFORTS BY PANEL

In a special effort to overcome these problems, the Public Housing Panel of the Housing Resources Committee has held meetings with the leadership of several organizations and obtained their agreement to cooperate in a determined city-wide effort to locate the required Public Housing units under the Turnkey program on available land distributed throughout on a basis that will fairly equalize Public Housing units in every section of the city. The

Panel and its members have had discussions with representatives from the following organizations: Atlanta Summit Leadership Conference, Atlanta Branch, National Association for Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the Atlanta Committee for Cooperative Action (ACCA). A major consideration for agreement to this proposal expressed by some of the organizational representatives was the request that the committee pursue a course of action that would assure a policy of equal employment opportunity by the Atlanta Housing Authority.

Subsequently, the Public Housing Panel proposes the following, subject to conditions explained herein:

PROPOSAL

A. The Housing Authority to call on Promoters and Developers for submission of Turnkey proposals as quickly as possible, to include small developments on scattered sites, so long as a total of 200 or more units are proposed within a reasonable geographical area (for example, a 5 block square area, or equivalent).

B. Determined effort be made by the Housing Authority and the Housing Resources Committee to get proposed sites distributed throughout all sectors of the city on an equitable basis. By this, it is meant that new housing should be built first in those sections of the city where little or no Public Housing exist and continue on this basis until housing is equitable disbursed.

C. Where adequate distribution is not proposed by private developers, the Housing Authority be requested to purchase land in appropriate locations and resell it to Developers at no profit.

D. Appropriate Departments of the City, under specific direction from the Mayor, to work around the clock in a diligent effort to check out proposed sites and to arrange for necessary and appropriate community facilities to support the proposed developments.

E. Rezoning petitions on all selected proposed sites which require rezoning to be submitted at one time and a Public Hearing on all of them be held at the same time, about November 15, (anniversary date of the Mayor's Housing Conference).

F. Concerted effort to be made by the City, Housing Authority, Housing Resources Committee and other responsible agencies to create public support for the proposal among Civic Clubs, League of Women Voters, Chamber of Commerce, Womens Chamber of Commerce, Real Estate Boards, Home Builders Association, Builders Supply Associations, Trade and Labor organizations, etc., who would be urged to have representation in force at the Public Hearing with spokesmen selected in advance to voice support for the proposals, at the Public Hearing.

RECOMMENDATION

The above has been discussed with a representative group of members of the Executive Group of the Housing Resources Committee, who were unanimous in their support of this idea.

We therefore recommend the approval and active support by the Mayor and his launching of this program and that directions be given to appropriate committees for implementation.

Respectfully submitted,

Public Housing Panel
Housing Resources Committee