

December 15, 1977  
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 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT HEARING  
 Housing Assistance Plan

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, met on Thursday, December 15, 1977, at 7:30 o'clock p. m., in the Board Room of the Education Center for the purpose of holding a Public Hearing on the Charlotte Housing Assistance Plan. Presiding was Mayor Kenneth R. Harris, with Councilmembers Don Carroll, Betty Chafin, Thomas Cox, Charlie Dannelly, Laura Frech, Harvey B. Gantt, Ron Leeper, Pat Locke, George K. Selden, H. Milton Short and Minette Trosch present.

ABSENT: None.

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INVOCATION.

An invocation was given by Mr. Jack Bullard, Director of Community Relations.

HEARING ON THE CHARLOTTE HOUSING ASSISTANCE PLAN.

Mr. Vernon Sawyer, Director of Community Development, stated the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 requires that every city utilizing Community Development Block Grant Funds have a Housing Assistance Plan. Although many activities described in the Housing Assistance Plan are not funded by the CD Block Grant Funds, it still must be submitted as part of the application for the funds. The Housing Assistance Plan includes all housing programs which contribute to the production or rehabilitation of assisted housing units. It is prepared for the entire city with emphasis on the housing needs of low and moderate income residents. The law requires that it contain four major parts:

1. A survey or an inventory of the existing housing stock.
2. An identification of families who qualify for housing assistance.
3. A definition of housing goals, for the current year and for a projected three-year period.
4. A description of general locations where assisted housing units can be located. A major requirement is that the city, through its Housing Assistance Plan, adopt a strategy for providing increased housing opportunity to the persons of all income levels. We also are required to avoid further concentrations of iminority population and low income groups until equal affordable housing opportunities are made available outside the areas of minority and low income concentration.

The Housing Assistance Plan is to be used as a guide by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the City and by developers who propose to provide assisted housing units. The plan is the document which local government uses to inform citizens of adopted housing strategies and policies. Planning for the Housing Assistance Plan is a continuing process and one is prepared each year.

Mr. Sawyer advised that other members of his staff were present to help answer questions; that they have maps showing locations of assisted housing and other information; but that the main purpose of the hearing is to listen to the citizens present their views regarding the City's Housing Assistance Plan.

Mrs. Harriet (Sis) Kaplan - Chairman, Community Relations Committee.

Ms. Kaplan stated that in the report she presented to Council on Monday she stressed the Committee's concern about the need for adequate housing for low-income citizens. She stated that the CR staff reports that none of the several existing estimates of the number of families truly in need are really satisfactory estimates. One measurement is the number of families on the waiting list of the Charlotte Housing Authority. Approximately 1,081 households are on the waiting list for conventional public housing.

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Another 611 families are on the waiting list for Section 8 existing housing units. If all these families could be placed today, another waiting list just as long might be developed.

That to state their concern most simply - we need to utilize all available resources, federal, state and local, to get as many additional units of housing for low-income families as possible.

She stated if the Committee's recommendations are implemented one effect will be a more detailed Housing Assistance Plan which will place more restrictions upon where private builders might build new Section 8 housing. They are very sensitive to the fact that unless such restrictions are reasonable and are held to the minimum developers might not be willing to participate in the program and, as a result, we might lose some of our allocations. They believe that any revisions in the Housing Assistance Plan will be made very carefully and that this danger can be avoided. These recommendations came out of a series of meetings and are recommendations of their full committee. Following is her full report:

The City of Charlotte is committed to a policy of encouraging the expansion of housing opportunities for low-income families in small, widely scattered concentrations outside the area that might have a high concentration of black and/or low-income population and outside of areas designated as blighted by the Planning Commission.

Therefore we recommend:

1. That the City consider developing an orderly plan to scatter publicly assisted housing throughout the city in an equitable fashion so as to prevent the further concentration of public housing for families and other publicly-assisted low-income family housing such as has occurred in the Albemarle Road area.
2. That the City consider a program to subsidize the development of low-income family housing in areas where the cost of land is prohibitive for private development of such housing.
3. That the City consider reviewing all City-owned property as well as property of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and other County property for suitable sites for low-income housing, and that such sites be purchased and designated for that use where such locations are compatible with the City's housing program.

The Housing Assistance Plan states the goals of the City for low-income housing and defines the locational policy for such housing.

Therefore, we recommend:

4. That a separate public hearing (or series of hearings) be held for the sole purpose of receiving the comments of the public on the Housing Assistance Plan, and that the general public be fully informed of the time and place of such hearing(s).
5. That the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education be requested to submit recommendations regarding the locational policy of the Housing Assistance Plan toward the end of promoting a school assignment plan which will increase the number of walk-in schools while maintaining an integrated school system.

One of the stated goals of the City's Community Development program is to preserve urban neighborhoods, and the Housing and Community Development Act emphasizes the need to make maximum use of existing housing stock to provide low-income housing.

Therefore, we recommend:

6. That the total number of housing units for low-income families in the center city not be increased, but that the existing housing units needing improvement either be rehabilitated or replaced with new construction.

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We further recommend that the City encourage development of housing for other than low-income families in the center city (including First and Third Wards).

The development and preservation of integrated neighborhoods is a goal which can have beneficial effects for all residents of Charlotte, not the least of which could be an increase in the number of 'walk-in' schools in the public school system.

Therefore, we recommend:

7. That the City adopt a resolution restating the commitment of the City to open housing and calling upon individual citizens, neighborhood associations, realtors, and lending institutions to voluntarily work together with public agencies to develop and maintain integrated neighborhoods throughout the City.

Ms. Arlene Higgins - Park Road YWCA.

Ms. Higgins stated that because of the discussion that took place at the Community Development hearing on Tuesday night, she will give a little background information as to what has happened in the last year. That in January of last year they had people on hold who had been put on hold for three years before the relocation process was to begin; that for three years they had been waiting and wondering when they would be moved.

In January, because of different, very complicated factors, it appeared that it would be six more years before one area of West Morehead would be relocated. Then we had one of the worst winters we have ever had in the City and it was very distressing to see people living under those conditions and suffering the way they did. It is something she will never forget. She came to Council on behalf of the people of Third Ward and asked Council not to make people wait any longer and wonder about what kinds of decisions were going to be made. She stated that over those months she met extensively with members of the Community Development staff and they were most gracious in their information. They always included her in meetings; they did everything they could to provide information about what was going on in that neighborhood.

At that point City Council reconsidered the six-year proposal and looked again at the condition of the houses in the neighborhood, the winter that the people had suffered, and decided that it was time to work more expediently with the problem. They kept the work in motion to acquire the land from the owners, take over ownership and change the plan to, hopefully, a two-year relocation process.

Ms. Higgins stated this came up Tuesday night when one of the neighborhood residents spoke up and indicated that they did not want to move. That Council was quite right in saying that last year they did not want to and this year they do and "what is the problem?" She stated it has never been a question of whether they want to move or do not want to move - they have to move. Of course, they do not want to move; many of the people have lived there for 60 years. Several ladies in the neighborhood used to pick cotton in the fields right around where their homes are now. It has never been a question of wanting or not wanting. From all the information she has received and research she has done - the meetings, readings- the decision has been made. So, all they have tried to do in the last year - Community Development, the YWCA, and other people working in the area - is to help the people understand the process and make the move with as little trauma as possible. That what happened Tuesday night was they had a chance once more, with the new Council and with some encouragement, to make one last, valiant effort to save West Morehead. She admires them for that and certainly understands, but from what she can gather from all sources, it is not possible. All she asks of Council tonight is, if it is possible, then make a decision. That the people who are going to be hurt by vacillating are the people who live in the area - she worries about this.

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That there is a lot of unrest there today. She thought it was all decided and they were moving in a very positive direction, but now she worries at the unrest. She suggested that in the future, whenever there is a question like this, that all the research possible be done before the people are involved in the process.

She stated if the people are, indeed, relocated in the next two years, she is sure they all know that part of the problem now is that there is nowhere for them to go. It is a very serious situation. She invited Councilmembers to visit the area and see for themselves the conditions under which the people are living. She stated that perhaps the lesson that can be learned from all of this is that in the future when Council is confronted with a neighborhood like West Morehead - who have all the elements of community, everything that makes a community viable and exciting, warm and whatever else you want to say - try to preserve it if possible. It is well worth saving and the people hate to lose it and she is sorry they have to.

Mayor Harris asked Ms. Higgins if she had stated we had a six-year plan after a three-year plan and then it was modified to a two-year plan? Then to Mr. Sawyer he asked who made that decision?

Mr. Sawyer replied the first plan was for three years; that maybe Ms. Higgins misunderstood - they did not plan anything for six years in West Morehead. Now, they were a little slow in beginning to buy the property but the reason was they receive their money year by year; they do not receive a lump sum of money for the whole three years - or the whole six years. The money is received a year at a time and spent for those purposes for which it was allocated.

That when you look at the overall total relocation load, it is quite large, and they have limitations - one of which Ms. Higgins just stated, the availability of standard housing. This is the greatest limitation they have. They just do not crash in and relocate people into substandard housing or other conditions that might be just as bad as those from which they move. It is a very carefully considered operation. They have given West Morehead a top priority, especially for those hardship cases that were stated on Tuesday night. He stated that now he feels everything is on track and going well.

Ms. Higgins stated she just hopes the people understand the process, that everything that has been done up to this point has been, she hopes, in their best interest. That it will continue to do that. Mr. Sawyer assured her that they will.

Councilmember Carroll asked Ms. Higgins about the stumbling blocks she referred to in her opening remarks, stating that some of them have just been clarified somewhat, but are there other things that she is aware of?

Ms. Higgins replied that to her, the condition of the houses was so bad in this particular area that, even though other people are on the waiting list and other people have needs that are almost as severe, these are extremely severe, and in cases like these, a priority system should certainly be set up. That you have to accommodate people's needs as they arise. You cannot always receive them in a ten-year projection. That when a situation comes up like the condition of these houses and the suffering we saw last winter, then perhaps through whatever process is necessary, they can expedite whatever the ten-year plan was. That evidently there is a way to do that because it was done.

Councilmember Carroll asked if it is just that the relocation procedure has not gone anywhere in the past three years? Ms. Higgins replied it was very slow, and that is understandable. She is not criticizing that, but there has to be a way to expedite it when absolutely necessary.

Councilmember Carroll asked how many people have now been relocated, and how many are planned to be relocated? Ms. Higgins replied there are two

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priority areas within West Morehead: (1) The original priority area of the City - she believes between 25 and 30 have been relocated from this area which has been under redevelopment for a long period of time; (2) What she and the YWCA consider a priority area as far as the condition of housing - this area was acquired in July and two families have been relocated from this area.

Councilmember Leeper asked Mr. Sawyer whether there is any other area in the nine target areas where there is going to be wholesale relocation of a total community?

Mr. Sawyer referred the question to Ms. Sadie Jordan, Relocation Supervisor for the Community Development Department, who stated there is only one total clearance area and that is West Morehead. The Southside Project was an area that had been slated for total clearance and everyone, except three families, has been relocated. The condition of the homes in that project were similar to those in the West Morehead area, and it had been slated as a priority area. She stated there is one segment of the Five Points Plan that calls for total relocation.

Councilmember Leeper asked how, in terms of priority, are the people that are on the waiting list for houses in reference to these people in this particular area?

Ms. Jordan replied they have what is called a displacement schedule. That the buying of the property ahead of schedule in West Morehead did throw that schedule off. The displacement schedule has no more individuals competing for housing at one given time than the market can bear. They have two fulltime individuals on staff who do nothing but certified replacement dwellings. Their housing resource bank at the present time has contained within it the available standard resources necessary to relocate those individuals within their displacement schedule.

She stated they have more people on the workload than is within their displacement schedule. The additional people on the workload are informed that because of the buying of the West Morehead property ahead of schedule they are now putting them at the end of that list, taking them out of the displacement schedule, putting those that need to be relocated immediately within the top priority of the displacement schedule. There is a one-for-one replacement unit at the time the individual is ready to be relocated or else he is not to be relocated.

Councilmember Trosch stated her first involvement with Third Ward, or West Morehead, was saving the neighborhood - the feeling of community. She asked Ms. Higgins what factors led to the realization that this could not happen? What actions can Council take to prevent this happening in the future where a community exists? What are the factors that have led to this?

Ms. Higgins replied it is her understanding that her predecessor became involved in Third Ward approximately four or five years ago. At that point there was a great effort within the community, with one of the first organized community groups in the City, to preserve it. There were many battles, many meetings, many heartaches, concerned with this. After all the considerations were laid on the table, the fight was lost. That in a lot of cases, she thinks it should have been.

She thinks the area was rezoned in the late 50's or early 60's and now, 17 years later, a great deal of the land in the West Morehead area is highly concentrated with industrial and business use. An environmental impact study was done, which is a federal regulation, and that shows that of all the target areas in the City, this is the least habitable. From every standpoint that she can see there is no direction to go now but forward. It is unfortunate that all of the churches have been torn down; most of the local businesses are gone. Considering the facts, it would be unwise to try to encourage the fight to go on and on while they live in the conditions that they live in. She stated her understanding is that some of the people in the neighborhood have a dream that it can be saved at this point; that what land use is left will be replaced with public housing and all of the people who are displaced while this new housing is

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built will come back one day to inhabit the very same land area they had before. It is very sad that this will not happen. That it behooves all of them to still work as hard as they can to help the people of Third Ward/West Morehead understand the process.

Councilmember Selden asked how many families remain in the area to be relocated.

Ms. Higgins replied when they did the winterizing project they did approximately 80 houses. There are a few more than that, but at least 80.

Ms. Jordan stated the whole area that Ms. Higgins is talking about - she is taking in a part of Third Ward, Third Ward proper, but the figure she is giving is right because their combined workload there is 89.

Councilmember Selden stated that is what she called A and B. Is B the Third Ward? Ms. Jordan replied B is the Third Ward proper and is part of West Morehead. Councilmember Selden asked how many of the 89 are in B?

Ms. Jordan replied she did not have that breakdown but she can get it. She stated there is one other thing she would like to mention. That for every individual who is relocated they do an individual re-housing plan. This is a plan that will fit that person's needs for replacement housing. Within that plan, every area possible is analyzed from homeownership, private rentals, subsidized rentals, any federally assisted housing such as public housing and Section 8. That for all federally assisted housing, Section 8, existing and new construction, and also for public housing, they relocate people to the top of the waiting list. They have very few that have been relocated under public housing in the past two years. However, they have had quite a few that have been relocated under Section 8.

Councilmember Cox stated they had a gentleman the other night who said some very disturbing things and he was personally disturbed, and still is, about it. That outside of trying to look at the facts that he stated and trying to separate that from the rhetoric, three or four years ago could that neighborhood have been saved and would those people be happy with the neighborhood in, say, another 5 to 7 years, in Ms. Higgins' opinion?

Ms. Higgins replied the best solution in the long run had it begun early enough - 15 years ago.

Councilmember Cox stated what they are talking about as being begun early enough they are talking about three to five years ago and not 20 years ago, or 15. In other words, the deed was done in the 50's when the zoning was made? Ms. Higgins replied it has been going on that long.

Councilmember Cox stated it appears we have some of the same situations existing today - Cherry neighborhood for one - where things have got to be done to preserve the neighborhood. If something is not done, then our children will be looking at the same kind of situation. Are they looking 15 years ago at Cherry in the same way that the people 15 years ago looked at West Morehead?

Mayor Harris stated he cannot answer that question, but the main thing is we have the Community Development Plan today and the people are acting, as in the case of the Cherry group, and have already taken some very positive steps that the West Morehead area people were unable to take 15 years ago. That is the difference. Hopefully, we will be turning around some neighborhoods. That is the whole purpose.

Councilmember Cox stated he has one more question, a question of curiosity. Do these people in West Morehead understand that they have got to move today? He knows they do not want to move, but do they understand? He is trying to get at the human feelings of these people.

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Ms. Higgins stated she will tell them what she did last year to find out because she was just as curious as he is when she took her job. She heard so many things from so many different people that she decided the only way she was going to find out was to find out for herself, person-to-person with each family in the neighborhood. She conducted her own survey - went into each home, found out exactly what their incomes were, how many people were in the family, what kind of heat they had, how many bedrooms they needed in their next house wherever that might be. She wanted to know, personally, how they felt about leaving, if they understood what process was going on, if they had fought to preserve the neighborhood. That what she found was very encouraging to her. She found that people who feel just like Councilmember Cox does, who think just like they all do, who wanted desperately to stay, but who were not incapable of understanding that it was necessary to leave. She felt much better after the survey - she was sad but at the same time hopeful they could keep it from being as traumatic as she at first thought it would be.

So, her understanding, all through this year and through all the work they have been doing to help the process, was that they do understand. They are not very pleased, but they do understand and are willing to go as quietly and willingly as possible.

Councilmember Gantt stated since coming on Council he has spent a fairly good deal of time looking at the West Morehead Street area. That one of the first objections he had back in 1975 was what appeared to be total clearance in that area for industrial development. This did not seem very much different from what happened in Greenville and what happened in Brooklyn, notwithstanding the fact that this CD program was considered to be a limited clearance type thing where they were going to try to maintain the community as much as possible.

He stated he can appreciate the concern that they have right now for the particular plight of the people that are there, but one of the things they can do is to be much more forthright and much more definite about what the intentions of the City are. That we would raise a lot of false hopes if we tried to give the impression at this point in the game that the plan can be reversed; and talk about rehabilitation of the units that exist there now - they only need to go and take a look.

Councilmember Gantt stated to Ms. Higgins that under the circumstances, he thinks Council's message should be very clear, first, that little, if any, housing will go back in the West Morehead Area. That as sad as that story is to the people who have roots there, the fact is that a decision was made by Council three years ago and a lot of things were started into motion that makes reversing that process very tough. He stated there were a lot of past Councilmembers who were very sensitive to the very kind of thing that was going to occur. The only consolation was that they dealt with nine other areas that had a limited amount (that, now, is a very relative term), because he can recall the numbers game they played in terms of talking about how many families were going to be relocated when you compared it to Greenville and to the Brooklyn situations. Indeed there was a lot of soul searching on whether we wanted to clear a neighborhood but they could not find the alternative to that, the alternative being to pull out all units which would still mean relocation of the families and then to try to put back housing and a neighborhood of quality where people would want to live, given decisions related to zoning, given the crushing in of industrial development on all sides and an expressway that is going to border that neighborhood very soon.

He stated these were decisions that have been made over the last 15 years that makes a very small community trying to exist in very difficult. So, it was not one of those decisions that was made by Council that they liked very much. The best they could do was to try to find the least traumatic way to relocate the citizens in decent housing in other neighborhoods. They might not have done that job as well as they could, but they were trying.

Mayor Harris thanked Ms. Higgins for the concerns she had expressed and for her sensitivity in this matter.

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Mr. Allen Rousseau, NAACP

Mr. Rousseau stated he will answer two questions before he reads his prepared statement.

That the question was asked as to what is the problem. The problem began many years ago, when he was very young, segregated housing. That's what we are all talking about; something that happened many, many years ago. It is evident, and obvious that is the problem. The answer to the problem is not to spend another three years discussing it. Let's come up with a concrete program.

They are concerned that we will arrive at six more years for the Community Development and Housing Program, having promised the citizens of Charlotte much and delivered nothing. To prevent this, Council must proceed in the fourth year with the clear knowledge that the residents in the Community Development target areas want concrete results - results they can see. The same expert blend of public and private investment which on the one hand has revitalized the Square, a Civic Center, a new hotel, office tower, over-the-street mall, this should be used for social centers and communities, relocations of citizens.

In the Third Ward area, attention needs to be paid to the quality of business development that will be permitted to operate along Fifth Street and West Trade Street. Whatever the development is, it must help preserve Third Ward, not serve as a great wall to separate the races. They were shocked when only a few months ago, it was suggested that West Trade Street be converted into an adult entertainment center. How could serious political leaders suggest that legal prostitution, pandering, peep shows, and the like be located in the City of Charlotte. In their opinion, the Community Development target areas like Third Ward and Five Points, need to be served by de-centralized city service centers, mini-City Hall, or a Community center, a clinic for medical help.

Turning to another area of concentration, it is not enough to simply draw up a plan that says "single family homes will be here and apartments there." It is an open secret that if low and moderate income families are to own property in or near central business districts such as Third Ward, Fourth Ward and so on, then the city must take the lead in helping create a pool of long term mortgage money. This would be available to low and moderate income persons with interest rates well below the common market level. For example, local or federal tax money might be used to pay the difference between a 3% mortgage off to a redevelopment family. A special property tax rate should be considered for owner occupied single and multi-family property. This coupled with low interest mortgage money will help to encourage home steadying, families and discourage speculative developments by slum lords. To echoe the words of a Third Ward resident, When are you going to use the same planning skills in Third Ward that you used in Fourth Ward and on the Square?" He stated members of Council have heard this statement before, in the person of Kelly Alexander, Jr., member of NAACP's National Board of Directors who also happens to be a businessman in one of the Redevelopment locations. He made it as a private individual, with the knowledge that this would be the public statement of the NAACP and we gave him the authority to make that statement. They are also concerned with the interest of minority businessmen in any project of the City of Charlotte as far as relocation and development is concerned. They would like the City of Charlotte to concern itself with a guaranteed minimum of 10% minority business participation. They are assured that Council's decision will be the right one for the City.

Council Member Cox requested that he read the first sentence of his statement again.

Then Council Member stated. Many of us sympathize with many of the things that you have mentioned, but let me ask you a question. We have spent alot of money in nine target neighborhoods in the last three years, is that right. Mr. Rousseau agreed. He has heard mentioned this several times in these hearings.

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We have spent 29 million dollars in nine neighborhoods. He does not understand how you can spend 29 million dollars and do nothing. We need some help in understanding this.

Mr. Sawyer stated they gave Councilmembers those figures when they briefed them at the Belmont Center. He does not recall what they were. We have been allocated 29 million dollars in three years; they haven't spent that. There is a difference in allocating and spending. The percentage was about 61% of the money that we have received. He is sorry, but he does not remember the figure.

Councilmember Leeper stated that Mr. Rousseau had made a point of the City assuring that minorities get at least 10% of the business.

Mr. Rousseau stated the federal guidelines state that whenever federal funds are used, there is a stipulation that 10% as a minimum of all federal monies must go to minority businesses. They have met with the Minority Business Contractors Association, and they are very deeply concerned that in any future housing programs in the city, they would be left out.

Councilmember Cox stated they should clarify that point. He does not know the exact legalities, but on certain contracts, there is a 10% guarantee. It was agreed that with EDA funds, this is true, but not all federal funds.

Mr. Rousseau stated that procedure does not apply to the housing program of the city. They are only suggesting that Council take that into consideration.

Councilmember Leeper stated he thinks what Mr. Rousseau is saying is that we should do more than just enough.

Mr. Anton L. Steinhauser - Idlewild Farms, Easthaven and Coventry Woods Homeowners Association.

Mr. Steinhauser, 7214 Middleburg Place, stated the communities of Coventry Woods, Idlewild Farms and Easthaven, without any prior knowledge, suddenly discovered that two low-income housing projects were to be constructed in the middle of their area. After substantial efforts, we obtained specific information, as to the site locations, the number of units, and so forth. These proposals in relationship to other of what they define and what the City has defined as eligible areas or non impacted areas, led us to believe that these proposals constituted an undue concentration of such projects in a relatively dense area. He is talking about an area which has somewhere in the neighborhood of about 13 home sites. A report of the housing sub committee which was just delivered by the chairman points this out. It says that the City consider developing an orderly plan to scatter publicly assisted housing, throughout the City in an equitable fashion. He would like to emphasize the word "equitable". We are not against, by any means whatsoever, to this problem the City of Charlotte has as to the distribution of low-income housing, but what they are trying to emphasize primarily, they feel in their case, this has not been done is an equitable distribution. He quoted further from the report, "to prevent the further concentration of public housing for families and other publicly assisted low-income family housing" such as has occurred in the Albemarle Road area. This is the location they are now talking about. If the notification of the HUD field officer that these decisions and reasons for approving the project were in keeping with the existing local procedures and policies at that time, then several changes might be made.

He presented the following proposal:

- I. The Federal Register Part II: Department of Housing and Urban Development, Low Income Housing - Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments Program for April 26, 1976 states:

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Part 880.208 (e) (2)

"For purposes of compliance with section 213 of the HUD Act, the field office shall forward (if not previously submitted by the owner) a notification in the form prescribed by HUD, to the chief executive officer (or such designee as that office may designate) of the unit of local government in which the proposed housing is to be located. The letter shall invite a response within 30 calendar days from the date of the notification letter."

Within this 30-day period we request that our HAP specifically require that the following steps be taken:

1. As soon as the Mayor is notified, the news media, the school board, members of the City Council, and any affected neighborhood groups be notified of the proposed construction. At this time all pertinent information having to do with the site, number of units, etc., should be released.
2. The Planning Commission should evaluate all projects in terms of impact on the neighborhood and on the overall city plan for scattered site housing.
3. A public hearing be held, giving all parties at least two weeks to prepare their remarks.
4. The City Council vote whether to approve or disapprove of the proposed construction and the Mayor's response be in accordance with the Council's vote.

II. Several changes should be made in that part of the Housing Assistance Plan which defines the term "ineligible areas" (pages 55 and 56).

1. Part (c) on Page 56 should be changed to read:  
"areas within one mile of an existing or proposed low income housing project, etc."
2. An area should also be considered ineligible if it is located within a census tract already containing one family housing project or one proposed family housing project while other eligible census tracts contain no family projects.

III. We further request that the following requirement be incorporated into the Local Housing Assistance Plan: At the end of the preliminary approval stage, all sites which HUD is seriously considering for final approval must be submitted as a group to the City Council for evaluation with regard to their consistency with the concept of scattered site housing.

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Councilmember Gantt stated that is a regulation on a 30-day notice, isn't it? Mr. Underhill, City Attorney, replied it is. Councilmember Gantt stated that means if we have not approved a particular site by a developer in 30 days, then HUD automatically assumes approval or can we send the notice letting them know that we have got a different procedure?

Mr. Underhill stated he can tell them what he recalls. That Council has 30 days in which to comment. Their comment is based on whether the proposal is consistent with the housing plan or whether it is inconsistent with the housing plan. Comments are supposed to be limited to that. If they fail to respond within the 30-day period, the secretary may then take action approving or disapproving the project. If they respond after the 30-day period (he would have to review this and verify it) the area director has no obligation to consider that response. He stated that Mr. Sawyer probably knows if you can ask for an extension of time.

Mr. Sawyer stated it is at the discretion of HUD. If your reason is valid you can get more time.

Mr. Steinhauser stated it is his understanding after the initial program has been given to HUD by the Mayor, City Council has meetings with a local community. City Council saw the merits of the local community and requested HUD for a reversal of the decision but HUD refused that. He does not know on what they based their facts. A burden is placed on the local government and on all the committees and commissions involved in making a decision in that projects of 100 units or less are surveyed primarily by field officers and also the local government in making that particular decision as to the feasibility of that site. Apparently, the local decision was by the field officer that the site was an appropriate one and therefore they should continue in spite of the fact City Council had requested a reversal.

Councilmember Gantt stated he is sympathetic to the kind of thing that Mr. Steinhauser is trying to do - it is something that he and others have talked about in terms of a locational policy. At the same time, many of the earlier speakers spoke of the dire need for more housing. He just wants to make sure that when this Council reads his comments and the proposals from the three-community organization and they have to deliberate over this policy, that they make sure that the effective fine tuning of the locational criteria does not get us into a situation where we are, in fact, turning down much needed housing for citizens. He wants to make sure that they keep that balance because he appreciates the point Mr. Steinhauser is making, and thinks we ought to have equitable distribution of the housing and when we prepare some procedural needs of reviewing this, we ought to be seeking a way to expedite the review process in such a way that we can move ahead rather than ending up with what appears to sound like a fairly cumbersome procedure that might tend to discourage any kind of housing development.

Mr. Steinhauser stated let him just take a look at Census Tracts 1901 and 1902. In 1901, there is an existing low-income housing project consisting of 32 units on Florence Avenue. Now, Reddman Road is right at the perimeter of 1901 and 1902 and the Idlewild North Road project is right in the middle of 1902. Also, there is a low-income housing project for the elderly in the Four Seasons area on Albemarle Road, which might very well become a part of 1901. They are not against what Council is trying to do. This is really a problem.

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Ted Fillette, 403 North Tryon Street - Legal Aid Society

Mr. Fillette stated he is speaking on behalf of the staff of Legal Aid Society. For the past four and half years he has been doing primarily housing law in the City of Charlotte; most of that has been in landlord-tenant relations trying to cure legislation in Raleigh for modernized landlord-tenant relations and also working in the area of Community Development.

He stated he will try to concentrate on two ideas;

- (1) What I think has happened in a very capsule form of housing, all history, and how we got to where we are.
- (2) What ought to be considered when you formulate your new housing assistance plan.

First of all, history and all of those here are in the housing business. How did you get there? Primarily you got there because in 1935, 1936 and 1937, President Roosevelt recognized that a third of the nation was as he said, "ill housed, ill clothed and ill fed". One of the key parts of the New Deal Legislation was the Housing Act of 1937 which had as its purpose to create a decent home and environment for all Americans to live in.

If President Roosevelt could take a tour through Third Ward today, he is sure he would throw up his hands and wonder what happened. Part of what happened was there were subsequent acts that amended a 1937 act, and one of those was the 1949 act, which was the conception of Urban Renewal. Urban renewal is something that dealt with mainly one thing - that was blight. They wanted to stamp out blight; those ugly houses, those shacks and so forth. The occupants of the blight were pretty much incidental to the target of the legislation. What that meant for Charlotte was to remove some of the lesser, desirable buildings in downtown Charlotte on the Square. A lot of big money was spent in urban renewal. Much more money was spent there, than there is now available in the community development project in Charlotte. Most of the money spent for urban renewal was spent acquiring the land, bulldozing the substandard housing, and re-marketing the land for desirable things in Charlotte. (That meant this land that we are occupying right now, the downtown NCB Plaza.) Part of what the community development plan has looked like is urban renewal under a new label.

After the Act of 1949 subsequent acts created these categorical programs which gave subsidy to developers to build multi-family housing and single family housing. These were the programs that grew up in the 60s and the early 70s. As some of these projects started being built in the suburbs, at the end of the Civil Rights movement, it was known at the end of the 1960s, a lot of the people in Congress got very upset by that, and then entered Richard Nixon.

We had an entirely different point of what housing laws should be. Up until 1974 all the housing programs were federally mandated; federal money was spent according to categories, the federal government decided when and where, and how it was to be spent. With the Housing and Community Act of 1974, with the Nixon administration, it essentially said they did not want these programs any more as they were a mistake. These programs were set up on the idea that the local and state governments will not provide or cannot provide housing, so now we are going to turn the money over to the city and let the city plan and provide the housing program for the United States of America. That is what the Revenue Sharing concept of 1974 Act is all about.

Pretty much what we have is a program that says you, the City, have to plan what, if any, housing program there will be in the U.S. within your territorial limits, and when you look at what the Housing Assistance Plan for the City of Charlotte has been, there is no plan. There is no strategy for dealing with Third Ward or Cherry. There are some very broad figures about how to spend some money. A lot of it is going for acquisition of property and for urban renewal the people out of that; but for the most part, there is no strategy, there is no coherent view of what you are going to end up with and how you are going to get there.

If somebody would ask you in San Francisco what is the Housing policy for the City of Charlotte, what kind of answer would you have had? When you look at the

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Housing Assistance Plan we have had so far, there is just no policy there. When he says policy, what he is talking about is some kind of specific strategy of how you are going to maximize the money and use it to produce, and reserve the housing you have.

First, he thinks it would be really good for the rest of the Council to do as Mr. Cox apparently has done, and that is to take a tour and when they take the tour get out of the car, and go in a couple of them. Take a look at the heating facilities. The statistics in the Housing Assistance Plan for the most part is not very helpful. As far as getting away from the urban renewal concept, acquiring land with the money, realize what a limited amount of money there is, and there are some things that you can do with the money to maximize the use of it. Try not to acquire very much of the substandard profit. If you are really concerned about getting rid of blight, you have the tool to do that without spending a nickel of federal money, and that is the housing code. You should be considering how to get some place built for the people to go to that live in Third Ward now.

Some of the things that can be done to maximize that. First of all, there is not an administrator in the City to process Section 312 loans for rehabilitation other than through the Community Development Target Areas. The HUD budget proposes to about triple the availability of Section 312 loans. We do not have an administrator in the City to handle that. There has been some Section 312 loan programs in Charlotte, and they were terrible. The point is, you cannot draw down the money, and use it if you do not have someone here to do it.

Second, use the housing code in a positive way; in a way that has never been done before. He stated he passed out some key sections of the housing code and excerpts. One is on Pages 10 and 11, and gives the definition of what the heating standards are for heating facilities in the housing code. The way the code is being interpreted today by the City employees is that if a house has no heating system at all, it does not have to have one; if it does have a heating system, it should work. That means if someone has a lamp in one room that heats the living room, but does not heat any of the other rooms at all, that is considered to be an adequate heating facility. Whereas the code itself says, the heating system must heat all of the rooms in an acceptable level. This part of the code has never been enforced and is not being enforced today. That he has clients right now who do not have heat.

There is another part of the code that has been in force for at least seven years, and has never been used. That is In Rem, where the City can go in and repair something itself, put a lien on the property to collect if necessary the cost of doing that repair when a landlord does not see fit to abide by the code. Right now the Housing Inspection Department goes in and says if the owner does not repair something, we will close down the house. You can have a \$30,000 or \$40,000 complex with relatively minor violations, and the only remedy for the city employee is to close it up and board it up regardless of the amount of money it cost the owner to repair it. That is one of the kinds of things that has caused places like First Ward to deteriorate. First Ward is another one that might have been saved had we started earlier. The housing code is a tool you have, and you do not have to use your community development money to employ it.

Third -making the housing code work in a way that does not jeopardize the tenant's ability to stay there. There is a very interesting device employed in Winston-Salem and Morganton called a certificate of occupancy which the local government adopted. It does say we are not going to turn on the water in one of our houses in the City until the Building Inspection Department certifies the house is brought up to code. This is a self-enforcing mechanism that does not put all the burden on the tenant to complain to the inspector to get his house up to code. It happens automatically everytime you have some turnover. The reason that is important is people do not want to call the housing inspector now because when they do the landlord evicts them. There is no protection under the housing code against retaliatory evictions. That is the only amendment you might need to the housing code to have a more effective code and system. To the Housing Assistance Plan itself; please try to consider using general revenue sharing money to construct or to put in the hands of development corporations. We need to get some housing built.

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Finally, one thing that is absolutely devastating is that there is a real possibility that a lot of what has been said and will be put on paper may just totally go out the window and be nothing but hot air, because the Office of Management and Budget is proposing to wipe out Patricia Harris' budget, and leave practically no possibility that there will be increased Section 8 subsidies for cities like Charlotte. If federal money is not there, you are not going to be able to do anything. It will be a futile gesture after all the gnashing of teeth and how we are going to allocate Section 8 housing, and there is none.

He stated he passed out a copy of the article from the Washington Post, and an excerpt from the B & A about the fight going on in Washington, D. C. which really overrides all of our considerations and the good intentions we may have. That he talked to a lobbyist in Washington this afternoon who is in touch with what is going on there. She says the President received OMB's recommendation today, and will probably be making the decision in about a week as to whether or not OMB's cutbacks on HUD's budget will be accepted in toto, or in part, or whatever. What they are talking about is OMB's proposed cutbacks, or that we are not going to have as much in subsidized housing for Section 8 Public Housing and in the Rehab as President Ford had asked for back in 1976.

Councilmember Short stated it is obvious that Mr. Fillette is an expert on housing; that he gets the impression that Bill Jamieson and his staff will perform only when the tenant complains. But, is it not a fact that he and his department have an ongoing program that caused them to inspect every house in the City of Charlotte, regardless of who complains - every house.

Mr. Fillette replied that is certainly their stated position. But, even when they do go in, if they do not enforce the code according to the way it is written so that people do start getting plumbing that works and heating that works, it does not do any good to do it. If they had done what they said they were doing, then he does not think we would have 8,000 or 9,000 sub-standard units in Charlotte.

Councilmember Gantt stated he is glad Mr. Fillette is bringing up this issue of code enforcement, building inspection, what have you. That he is a little concerned because every week in the agenda Council condemns and closes up a number of housing units, and landlords seem not to care because we never see any of those things being opened up again and put back on the market. It occurs to him that Mr. Fillette's fourth recommendation which has to do with building housing probably has more to do with whether or not we are going to see any of these things getting substantial improved. If the code were strictly enforced (maybe what he is saying is that it is not being rigidly enforced and that is not a fair statement for him to make without having Bill Jamison come here; certainly after his comments, many of the members of Council will want to know exactly what goes on in that area.) He stated he has a feeling that because there is not an ample supply of housing anywhere else, if you closed the unit up, where do the people go. The kinds of things Mr. Fillette is talking about he suspects are true; but he wonders whether the developer or owner would care, if in fact he is required to have a certificate of occupancy before he can let that tenant stay in the house, and he is collecting \$15 a week on that house, and decides it is not worth it. He asked if Mr. Fillette is suggesting that we let him abandon the unit, and then take it over? Mr. Fillette replied he is suggesting exactly what is happening; what they are worried about happening is happening now where the policy is to do nothing but make him close it if he will not fix the light fixtures, and so forth. You send him an order after you pass a form ordinance saying he has to close it down. What they should do to keep the houses on the market that are not deteriorated beyond value that could be repaired, is to fix it yourself, and charge them for it.

Mr. Fillette stated it has not happened in Winston-Salem and in Morganton where there is massive shut down of houses. In fact, you have the expectation by the landlord that they will have to maintain their property; and it has a self-forcing mechanism.

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Councilmember Gantt replied that assumes there is a profit in this, and they would not be keeping the housing open unless there was a profit. But assume the City makes a thousand dollars worth of repairs, and places a lien on the property, and collect the thousand dollars, and the landlord abandons the property (that Mr. Fillette is familiar with property abandonment all over the northeast in similar kinds of situations.) Mr. Fillette replied he does not think they are similar; because the pattern of ownership in the northeast is completely different than what it is Charlotte. When you have massive slumlords that own 3,000 units and using them for tax shelters; and when you hit somebody like that operating on a thin margin, and when you hit on a massive scale like rent control or concentrated code enforcement, there is nothing they can do but that. That is not the pattern of ownership you have in Charlotte.

Councilmember Cox asked the pattern of ownership in Charlotte that is different from that? Mr. Fillette replied it is very scattered; you do not have large aggregations of low income property held by one, two or three people. You have it owned very

Mayor Harris asked if he has gone over the point that if repairs are made, rents increase, and in effect the people you are trying to help - that some have called him and said they would just as soon not have the repairs made, and keep the rent low. How do you handle that problem? Mr. Fillette replied in the market we are talking about, which is the low income market - and he asked them to look at the census data that is underlined on his handout - it says in the people category whose income is from zero up to \$5,000, of those people that are paying 35 percent or more of their income for rent. Of the blacks of which there are 5,089 in Charlotte, 54 percent of those are paying more than 35 percent of their income, and they cannot pay any more. What happens is the market controls it, and nobody else is going to rent houses in Grier Town except the people in this market, and nobody else is going to move into Cherry. What are we worried about? People leaving Queens Road and coming there to live? Mayor Harris replied no; that he thinks they are talking about other subsidies. If this is done, we would wind up subsidizing the rents directly; and unfortunately he does not know whether we have improved housing, and that is the question he is asking. Mr. Fillette replied the only thing he can fall back on is the experience the cities that do have more rigorous code enforcement, and the places that have had modern landlord-tenant laws that entitle the tenant to force the landlord legally to do that.

Mayor Harris asked if he will give Council some of the information he has from the other cities. Mr. Fillette replied you do not have Harvard studies based on that; all you have is people who have been there. Councilmember Cox stated he would like to have the study from Chapel Hill or Winston-Salem, or Morganton.

Councilmember Short stated he would like to ask a question. Assume you and the Council and everyone wanted to try to do the best they could in Charlotte, would we not be better off to simply aggressively inspect homes in an ongoing basis and have it regularly done with a real good functioning department with plenty of inspectors rather than copy Winston or any city just because they have some arrangement to send an inspector out when the tenant moves. If you were going to achieve really something good for the City of Charlotte, would not the former basically be better than the latter? Mr. Fillette replied he does not think so. When you try to divide the personnel with inspection department by the population in the city, they will not get around to all the units except once every five years. Secondly, sometimes there is abuse of the property by an occupant, or there is something that intervenes so that when you have a fairly regular inspection in the houses that count, that is the way you tend to preserve the housing better.

Councilmember Short asked if we do the Winston-Salem law it would make the inspectors work faster? Mr. Fillette replied no; what it does is tend to put the inspectors on a regular basis in places where they need to be.

Councilmember Leeper asked him to speculate a little bit on 312 loans; that he is not familiar with that. Mr. Fillette asked if he remembers the Belmont Project? That is the program, and is the wrong model for how it should be

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done. It is just three percent loans that go to rehabilitation in certain categories of income; and for whatever you think of it, it is a substantial federal program that is going to be enhanced provided HUD gets their budget. It may be that it can be used effectively in the so-called marginal areas like North Charlotte and other areas that are not now in the target areas. This is one way to spread the largess.

Mr. Sawyer stated he would like to clarify one point - we do have a 312 loan processing officer in Charlotte. We have a whole section that processes our 3 percent Community Development loan, 312 loans; we are using them. The restrictions that HUD has put on the use of those loans will not allow it, except in the target areas. The promise is with the new allocation of 312 loan money that some of those restrictions will be removed. But, they are using them now and have been using them to the extent that they are available in Charlotte.

Mr. Fillette stated he did not mean to say they were not using them - that is part of the target area rehab. He was talking about outside of that. Mr. Sawyer replied well, that is the restriction that HUD put on them and it is no fault of anyone here in Charlotte.

Mr. Fillette stated he is saying that that is the opportunity that should be seized to go outside of the target areas that is apparently available in some other areas and is promised to be more widely available. Mr. Sawyer agreed the promise is there. In reply to a question, Mr. Sawyer stated there are three 312 officers on his staff, that Ms. Bobbie Kendall is in charge. They are three ladies, all of whom have financial backgrounds; they came from banks and other lending institutions and are very capable.

Ms. Barbara Mattingly - League of Women Voters.

Ms. Mattingly, 4817 Coronado Drive, stated in the 1960's the League of Women Voters announced its support of residential scattered site public housing. The League felt, and still feels, that scattered site public housing is a crucial means of meeting the housing needs of low and moderate income citizens.

That in the 1970's the League endorsed the Charlotte-Mecklenburg 1995 Comprehensive Plan. This plan states that "the location of new low and moderate income housing should be distributed to affect the goal of providing all types of density of housing in all sections of the County."

In view of these positions previously taken by the League, they urge that the City persevere in its commitment to build scattered site public housing so that all of its citizens can be adequately housed. Furthermore, they urge that the revised local Housing Assistance Plan include a practical mechanism for affecting a wide spread and equitable distribution of low income housing in Charlotte.

Bill McCoy - Northeast Community Organization.

Mr. McCoy, 6735 Hartsell Place, stated the Northeast Community Organization is composed of five neighborhoods out Plaza Road - Hampshire Hills, Eastbrook Woods, Briarwood, Greenmeadows and Green Forest - in which there are 1,400 homes. That the main points of their position on housing are: (1) They recognize the need for more and better housing opportunities for low income citizens; and (2) They think that the current policy of scattered sites is philosophically correct, but difficult to implement. They agree that the placement of low-income housing in so-called impacted areas is not the most beneficial policy.

He stated their main concern about public housing and Section 8 housing is the apparent clustering of these in certain specific locations. The Northeast Community Organization is particularly interested in the Milton Road

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cluster. In order to guard against further clustering they feel that certain policy alternatives might be considered.

One of these, obviously, is a very close review of the recommendations made tonight by the Community Relations Committee. They think that the half-mile limit ought to be looked at to see if a mile limit would be more appropriate. That whatever the limit is, it should pertain to all types of subsidized housing. That he has never quite understood why, in the Milton Road area, they have two that are obviously within less than half a mile - they are almost next door to each other. One of these was under a previous program that no longer exists (he understands) - Barringer Oaks Apartment Complex and the Public Housing units that are being built now at the Milton Road site. They feel that whatever the limit is should be applied universally to all sorts of housing subsidizing.

They feel that some policy alternatives should be developed to insure housing units for low income citizens be located in all sections of the City. The scattered site concept is not going to be creditable if sites are not truly spread to all sections of the City. Economic conditions being what they are, sites are not going to be scattered if it is left entirely to market forces. City Government will, of necessity, have to intervene if this goal is to be met in the future. They feel, as others have said, very strongly that City Council itself should have more of a central role in view of these proposals. They also feel that the other bodies of local government, particularly the School Board, and County Government too, should be involved in the review process at least so that they are aware of what is taking place at any particular point and time.

John Banks - Family Housing Services.

Mr. Banks, 403 North Tryon Street, stated his agency is in a CD Target Area and is a CD funded agency; they deal with low income people who have housing problems. Some of those problems are: Rental delinquency, mortgage delinquency, and one of the bigger problems they run into now are people who simply cannot find adequate housing at a price they can afford to pay. They did some statistics several months ago and found that segment of their case load had grown from less than 5 percent to more than 20 percent. Their counsellors deal with these people on a daily basis - these are not people in the CD Target Areas, they are outside.

He stated this month they have 60 family units who are in the market for housing but cannot find it at a price they can afford to pay. One reason for that, of course, is the limitation on public housing. They will not accept people on welfare right now, because of the cost. A lot of the people they are dealing with are welfare recipients and cannot get into public housing. The other reason is the statistics show there is a waiting list of 1,086 for public housing and 611 for Section 8 housing. The people they are dealing with are those in this category. They are people who are waiting for some sort of subsidized program that City Council, the citizens of Charlotte and this area have to address. We are not producing enough housing to meet the needs of the low-income people. We have houses that are constantly being boarded up or torn down because of code enforcement. That continually compounds the problem. That the purpose of this Housing Assistance Plan is not just to address where the CD Target Area funds are to go, but to address what the City of Charlotte's plan is for housing.

Councilmember Short asked if it is a fact that if a mother is receiving AFDC, she cannot get into public housing?

Mr. Banks replied it is not a fact; it is not a legal limitation. They have a limit on rental that they can accept and he thinks it is \$46.00 a month now. That they have filled that allocation and there are no vacancies in that rent allocation at this time.

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Councilmember Short stated he feels that is a serious matter and it bothers him.

Mr. Banks stated people are in very, very hardship situations right now in the City of Charlotte but cannot get the subsidized units we are talking about building; they cannot get into public housing.

Councilmember Locke asked that Mr. Banks put that in writing.

Robert E. Hobbs - 6801 Somersworth Drive.

Mr. Hobbs stated he is here to make one statement in regard to the priority that is given to locating public housing sites.

That a public hearing was recently held by the members of the School Board concerning the Pupil Assignment Plan on the community as a whole. He requested that when Council discusses a plan to implement scattered site housing, they give a lot of consideration to putting the priority on those sites where it would have favorable impact on the school situation as far as having to transfer and move pupils within school districts. He does not know how receptive the school board will be with this type of cooperation with the housing program, especially in view of the fact that the Barrington Oaks students are transferred out of the Devonshire School District and at the same time, students from other areas are being transferred into that area. It seems to be an unreasonable type situation and he thinks he can understand why they are doing that, but the main thing he is trying to present is the need to give priority to those sites which would help improve the pupil assignment plan as far as the school is concerned.

Ms. Carrie Winter - Member, Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board.

Ms. Winter stated she would like to express her own personal commitment; that the School Board, too, is very concerned about the very things that Mr. Hobbs and others have mentioned tonight.

The Barrington Oaks situation is a difficult one and she is not sure there is enough public housing available to assist them in all their problems. She stated that in the case of Barrington Oaks specifically, those youngsters are bused out in order to keep other children from being bused still further. That where we need additional black youngsters living near a white youngster is in the eastern rim of our county.

It also creates a problem in terms of public housing because we know that we do not have busing facilities so these areas are not as attractive a place to live in for people who need city services. There is no easy answer or easy solution to any of it. She regrets that the School Board does not have a formal position or information to present tonight, but she will certainly request after their January meeting that staff begin working immediately on providing them with specific material so that they can share with Council concerning how they can help each other in improving this situation.

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Ms. Barbara Neely, 1513-A Manson - West Morehead Area.

As you know, Ms. Higgins and I work together in the West Morehead Area. I understand what Ms. Higgin is saying and we appreciate everything she is doing for us. Ms. Higgins does not really know what the people's needs are. I am the one who really knows what the people's needs are because I work there, and I live there, too. And I know everyone in the West Morehead Area. My neighbors have been trying to tell the Council what they wanted and nobody seems to listen to what they are saying.

We have never wanted to move out of the area. All we wanted is to have better housing to reveal and remodel is what we want. Speaking of the 29 families that have already been located are trying to move back into the area. We have every right to live where we choose to, and this is really in the laws of this country. So remember that we have the right to decide what is fair for ourselves.

The Mayor stated that he thinks maybe Mrs. Neely and Mr. Sawyer should get together and sit around and talk about this a little bit and see if we can get some direction from that area.

The Mayor stated it is a real dilemma and that it has got to be resolved and given some direction over in the area.

Councilmember Gantt asked Mrs. Neely whether or not she has been in contact with people who have been relocated in terms of how they are doing. Mrs. Neely stated saying Yes, and they always come back to the neighborhood where they once lived.

Councilmember Gantt realized the people were adjusting to their new location, but asked if the Housing was adequate. He asked if the conditions were better than they were previously. Mrs. Neely replied, Yes, they were in alot of ways better, but have the problem with break-ins that they really do not have in Third Ward. Gantt asked if those people had a choice, other than the choice of staying where they were, did they have a choice in selecting the particular place where they were relocated, that is their new residence. Mrs. Neely replied, "Yes, in the first place, people panicked after they found out the city had bought the houses and were going to tear them down, and they had the idea they were going to tear them down right then.

Councilmember Gantt asked if we were required to show them a number of different choices before they made their selection of the new place where they were going to live. Mrs. Neely replied that the people really just didn't understand.

Councilmember Leeper stated he knew the problem with the availability of housing, but asked if there had been any thought given or any consideration or effort made, at any point, during development of housing since this is a priority area, that some of these people that live in that area might be relocated in the same geographical area?

Councilmember Sawyer stated that we tried to do what they wanted to do in terms of when they move, and where they wish to move. If a block of housing were available in a community that they could all agree on at the right price, we would certainly make the effort to help them move in that fashion. But, he stated, in one meeting a couple years ago when we were debating this problem, one lady made the remark, "If I have got to move under those conditions, I might as well stay right here." That was her attitude, and I don't think she was expressing an isolated opinion. Some do want to move, in other words; and others do not want to move.

The whole problem is one of housing conditions and environment. It is a terrible situation.

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~~Councilmember~~ Ms. Jordan stated Mr. Gantt wanted to know if we show those people several houses before they decide on the house they want to live in? Ms. Neely stated she thought so.

~~Councilmember~~ Ms. Jordan stated the units that are available, that are within the immediate vicinity, we find those houses, and because of our locational policy and because of our agreement, we must first show them units in the location of that eligible area, which means it is away from the community they are living in now. We do not, in any way, force them to choose the unit there. If we find a group of people that want to move together, we work with them as a unit. I think, if you will remember Terry Porter, and she also had three other friends, we moved them into the same area together as a unit. It was difficult for us to find four available standard apartments in different bedrooms and figurations; one needed two, the other needed four and one needed three. But we found them and we moved them together. It makes the job harder, but we do work to try to move them together if they want to go together. If they choose that area, we do not force them to move out of the area.

~~Councilmember~~ Ms. Neely replied saying that the people had the idea that the houses were going to be torn down right then.

Councilmember Gantt asked if he could say one thing to Ms. Neely. He stated he wanted her to understand that, as the plan now stands, all of those residents will have to be moved. Unless the Council changes, and he could not speak from what they have the decision to do, because it seemed that the problem is communication, and we have got neighborhood assistance, and many of us have been down to talk to different residents about the situation, but if you get nothing out of the meeting as the plan now presently stands, notwithstanding the fact that my aunt and your uncle and our friends may be living there and want to stay there. The plan says that all of that housing will be cleared from this. What we are trying to do now is to provide the least difficult way to get people moved into decent, safe and standard housing. If the plan should change their mind about the decisions that have been previously made, and there was a problem of communication, and as it stands now, there is no change in that plan. Everybody has to go, and we are going to do the best we can to move the people in the best way we can. Councilmember Gantt stated he would be glad to come out and talk with the people if they didn't understand.

Mr. Ernie Alford - MOTION, INC.

Mr. Alford stated he just arrived from Raleigh where he had been with an overview of the new Department of Housing which is now a part of the State Community Development, and they are getting it set up. He wanted to see what they were planning that might be available for Charlotte. We have reviewed the Housing Assistance Plan, and basically, we concur with most of the material therein. There are a couple of exceptions that we have. We feel that the approach to the plan is well thought out and well taken. However, we think that it is obvious from the parade of speakers here that the problem of housing is far greater than this plan begins to address. He states he thinks it is obvious at this point that instead of projecting units that are already underway as the projected goals for next year, that we should add to that an entirely new goal, and that is, a goal of sitting down, coming up with some new, inavative ways of developing and producing housing. He thinks the 312 Program, the Rehabilitation activities are all well and good and he is certainly supportive of those efforts. However, the fact of the matter is that there is not enough good standard housing available. The supply is no where approaching the demand in this City, so it is time to begin to address it both as a Council as well as a Community Development department and the other components including motion to cover with a method of developing more new and lower moderate income housing on some type of local basis.

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~~Councilmember~~ Mr. Alford states he listened with great interest to Mr. Fillette's proposal about using the in rem remedy. Some seven years ago when Mr. Alford came back to Charlotte and begin being active in the low income housing field, this is one of the things that was looked at at that time. They ran into the same problems that Mr. Gantt and Mr. Short spoke of earlier - that of the supply if you would apply that kind of principle. It is significant to consider the fact that if you would take a typical unit, that say have a cost of \$20,000, assuming that if we used Community Development Funds to acquire that unit, that would be a \$20,000 outlay. If we would utilize an interim type of approach where we utilized \$1500 for the repairs on the unit, then if, in fact, the owner did walk away from the unit, it is obvious the unit would be at a standard level. So the city would have acquired a unit, and he doubts very seriously if a unit only needs \$1500 worth of improvements, that an owner would walk away from it and default the city for the \$1500. It probably needs more study, but this is the type thinking we will have to come to grips with, utilizing some type of local approach in a tandem arrangement with federal subsidy programs to provide more new subsidized adequate housing.

Ms. Sadie Jordan - Community Development Department.

Ms. Jordan stated when the Planning Commission drew the boundaries for West Morehead - what they call West Morehead, Third Ward - the residents in that area thought they lived in Third Ward. So, when they talk about the plans for Third Ward, that is what is confusing them. Just a minute ago she was talking with Ms. Neely and she understood what the confusion was.

Ms. Jordan stated they do talk about rebuilding Third Ward, but not West Morehead; that to the people in West Morehead when Community Development talks about rebuilding Third Ward, they are talking about West Morehead.

RESOLUTION TO PRESIDENT CARTER FAVORING THE BUDGET FOR PUBLIC HOUSING SUBMITTED BY PATRICIA HARRIS, DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, TO BE CONSIDERED AT NEXT MEETING.

Councilmember Carroll stated Council has heard tonight about the need for housing from everybody and he has been looking at the newspaper clippings. He asked that the next agenda include a resolution to be sent to President Carter to the effect that Charlotte City Council is in favor of Patricia Harris' budget. That he will prepare the resolution and have it available for Council on Monday.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion was made by Councilmember Locke, seconded by Councilmember Short, and unanimously carried, to adjourn the meeting.

  
 Ruth Armstrong City Clerk