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Chicago Housing Authority

March 16, 1979

Honorable Olga Jurco
United States Magistrate
United States District Court
219 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Re: Gautreaux v. CHA, et al.

Dear Magistrate Jurco:

Attached for discussion is the written report of the Director of Engineering you requested which addresses the questions raised at the February 14th Hearing.

Very truly yours,

Calvin H. Hall
General Counsel

CHH:jms
Attachment

CC: A. Polikoff ✓
J. Jensen

CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY

TO C. H. Hall

General Counsel

INTER-OFFICE MEMO

FROM C. W. Lebsack

DATE 2/26/79

SUBJECT: Response to February 14th Minute Order

The Magistrate requests CHA to define "high rise" in the light of 1969 Order, paragraph IV A. In checking the Order, paragraph IV A does not deal with building heights. It does restrict a project size to 120 persons except in special circumstances when the Court can approve up to 240 persons. In response to the request for a definition, there are as many definitions as there are definers. In my personal opinion, there could be four categories of structures - lo-rise, mid-rise, hi-rise and skyscrapers. The first I would define as any building where it would not be necessary to install an elevator or where the highest apartment entry is on the third floor. A mid-rise would fall between 4 and 15 stories. A hi-rise would be 16 to 35 stories and everything over that could be referred to as a skyscraper.

In regards to rejecting buildings over three stories, one reason for this is that CHA is in complete agreement that no additional units of family housing should be provided, whether new construction or rehabilitation, where families with children reside above the 3rd floor. This restriction is contained in the 1969 Order, paragraph IV C except for leased units (which may explain why families with children reside above the 3rd floor in some IDHA developed buildings).

An additional reason for rejection is vertical transportation. Although elevators are not mandated by code, it is not practical to have residents "walk up" more than three flights. If an existing structure over 3 stories has an elevator, it will in all probability require extensive rehabilitation which is a further drain on prototype. If no elevator exists, the cost of structural changes to permit one to be installed will be even higher and further erode prototype funds. Further, the monthly maintenance cost on an elevator in a building with a disproportionately low ratio of units per elevator will result in virtually all rental income being used for this one item of operating expense.

The referenced Minute Order, in discussing why buildings over 3 stories are rejected states, ".....thereby excluding potential housing for other Gautreaux class members". All non-elderly are Gautreaux class members. Therefore, we assume the reference is to childless families. Such families are of an age where children can be expected which would then leave CHA with units that are "over occupied". CHA does not now have resources to relocate present families living in overcrowded conditions, where is the logic in deliberately creating more.

The two buildings in CT 316 contain 12 units, assumed to be three bedroom each. Thus, approximately 70 persons will be displaced. In our August 1976 report it was stated the ratio of white to non-white was 60-40. Therefore, 42 white and 28 non-white will be displaced. Assume all are eligible for public housing. Since only 50% of all units are reserved for Community Area residents, 35 may return. Of these, 21 will be white and 14 will be non-white. The remaining 50%, or 35 persons, will come from CHA's waiting list and transfers - all will be non-white. As a consequence, the white population in CT 316 will decrease by 21 and the non-white will increase by 21. This, of course, assumes there has been no increase in non-white since 1976. Therefore, the ratio of white to non-white, if these 12 units are rehabilitated by CHA, will be 3464 to 1477, or 29.9% non-white.

On February 16th, a development program and budget for 36 units of rehabilitated units was transmitted to HUD. On February 26th, a second program and budget for 39 units was transmitted. These now must be environmentally evaluated and appraised by HUD.

On February 21st, CHA met with Ruby Construction staff to discuss construction costs and prototype. The meeting was attended by Mr. Soderstrom of HUD. Many relevant matters were presented to and noted by Mr. Soderstrom. It now remains for HUD to make a recommendation to HUD Central Office.

During the period of February 27, to March 14, 1979, staff made a field inspection of all buildings listed by DDPCD in the GPIA. This data is now being reviewed. A preliminary review indicates buildings, in addition to those previously felt to be acceptable, will be worthy of more intensive research. This is being initiated now.

G. W. Lebsock
Director of Engineering