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May 15, 2000

Mr. Andrew Cuomo, Secretary
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 Seventh Street, S.W., 10th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20410

Re: Application for HOPE VI Funding for the Chicago Housing
Authority's Madden Park/Ida B. Wells/Clarence Darrow Homes

Dear Secretary Cuomo:

On behalf of the Gautreaux plaintiff class in the public housing desegregation litigation entitled Gautreaux v. CHA, No. 66 C 1459, in the Federal District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, we write in support of the application submitted by the Chicago Housing Authority and The Habitat Company, as Court-appointed Receiver, for HOPE VI funding for the redevelopment of Madden Park, Ida B. Wells and Clarence Darrow Homes.

We have participated actively in the planning process leading to the HOPE VI application. We support the application for the following reasons:

1. In our opinion the revitalization plan proposed by the application will facilitate the provision of mixed-income housing opportunities, with the prospect over the long term of racially desegregated housing opportunities, to families of the Gautreaux plaintiff class who, by court order, are entitled to receive, but have yet to receive, such opportunities.

2. The Madden Park/Wells/Darrow area is ideally located for substantial private residential development. Such private development is flourishing in the surrounding neighborhoods to the north, west, and south. The Madden Park/Wells/Darrow site is attractively located on the lakefront, minutes from downtown, near the University of Chicago to the south, and the Illinois Institute of Technology to the northwest.

3. To date, private investment in this neighborhood has been stymied by a concentration of thousands of public housing units. The plan that has emerged, however, is sufficiently dramatic, and of sufficiently broad scope that, coupled with a HOPE VI grant, it promises a genuine transformation of the entire neighborhood. As a traditional street grid is restored, dilapidated public housing buildings are demolished, and attractive buildings are constructed at the eastern gateway of this community, we believe that the private investment now occurring on the periphery will move into the community.

4. The prospects for revitalization are bolstered by the collaborative nature of the planning process. Public housing residents, homeowners, the City of Chicago (through the Department of Housing, the Department of Planning and Development,

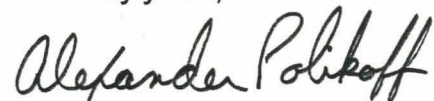
and the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development), the Court-appointed Receiver, the CHA, the Chicago Park District and other public and private entities have shown a genuine commitment to the redevelopment process. That commitment is evidenced by the commitment of City funds and public housing development funds to this project, independent of the HOPE VI funds. Moreover, the development team, led by McCormack Baron, has a demonstrated ability to produce quality mixed income developments.

5. The Gautreaux court previously designated the North Kenwood-Oakland neighborhood immediately to the south of Madden Park/Wells/Darrow a revitalizing area. Many of the parties engaged in the planning for Madden Park/Wells/Darrow are also actively engaged in developing mixed income housing in North Kenwood-Oakland. The revitalization of Madden Park/Wells/Darrow would both support, and be supported by, the revitalization already occurring in North Kenwood-Oakland.

We will continue working with the development team and interested parties to further refine the details of the revitalization plan. We expect shortly to file a motion in the Gautreaux case seeking a "revitalizing area" designation, subject to receipt of the requested HOPE VI grant, for the Madden Park/Wells/Darrow site. Such a "revitalizing area" designation is necessary to allow substantial numbers of public housing units to be developed on the sites of existing public housing developments. The Gautreaux court has previously agreed to such "revitalizing" designations for Chicago neighborhoods awarded prior HOPE VI grants, including the Henry Horner Homes, ABLA Homes, and Cabrini-Green, where there was evidence of sufficient community revitalization to create the conditions for development of true mixed-income housing.

Overall, the strong, demonstrated commitment of the City of Chicago to this plan, the excellent track record of the development team, the prime location of the site, the increasing investment in surrounding neighborhoods, the collaborative nature of the application process, the genuine enthusiasm generated by a design charrette that attracted over 500 persons, and the continuing jurisdiction of the Gautreaux Court afford an excellent prospect for attracting private investment and assuring the transformation of this seriously distressed public housing-dominated neighborhood into a well-working mixed-income community which will afford significant relief to Gautreaux families while at the same time achieving HOPE VI objectives.

Sincerely yours,



Alexander Polikoff
Lead Gautreaux Counsel

cc: Eleanor Bacon
Howard Schmeltzer