

President/CEO's Report

Housing Authority Of The City Of Orlando, Florida
 Vivian Bryant, Esq., President/CEO
 Ed Carson, Chair

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DESK

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- OHA's Annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
October 16, 2014
- NAHRO National Conference
Baltimore, MD
October 16-18, 2014

Inside this issue:

Highlights from the Desk	1
Calendar of Upcoming Events	1
Board of Commissioners Meeting	1
Leadership Skills	2
OUC Conservation Workshop at The Villas at Carver Park	2
Highlights from the Desk Continued...	3
Ending Homelessness Among Veterans—The 25	3
Fair Housing Corner	4



VIVIAN BRYANT, ESQ.
PRESIDENT/CEO

HISTORY OF PUBLIC HOUSING 7th Edition

I am fascinated by the history of public housing in the United States. In the January 2014's edition on the President/CEO Report, we learned that the concept of public housing began in the late nineteenth century. There was a need to build affordable housing for ship builders during the period when war ships were built. Two housing programs responded to this need: The Public Works Administration (PWA) and the United States Housing Act of 1937 was a major legislation: (1) it created the United States Housing Authority to provide management, financial and technical assistance, and (2) it authorized the States to pass enabling legislation to create housing authorities. The One program provided low interest loans and the other provided funds for the redevelopment of communities including the clearance of slum and blight. The first two (2) public housing developments in Florida were Durkeeville in Jacksonville and Liberty Square in Miami. We see the beginnings of the separation of the Departments of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development: the

public housing side and the community development side. During the 1920s and 30s, the architectural themes included the Super Bloc plan in original street grids were abandoned when vehicular traffic reached the public housing sites. There was no vehicular traffic on site. Common areas included green space and playgrounds.

Some information on the next phase was reprinted from the Griffin Park Historic District *National Register of Historic Places* Nomination Form prepared by Paul J. Birkhead and Gary Goodwin of the Bureau of Historic Preservation.

"...Following the months of designing and planning by architects, landscape architects, engineers and contractors, the construction of Griffin Park's 174 units began in October of 1939 (Robinson et al 1999: Appendix IV, Page 4). The project cost was \$847,000 and only \$11,500 of the cost was expended by the City to pay for the installation of sanitary and storm sewers and road paving. The occupants, who were primarily black residents relocated from the demolished Jonestown buildings, moved into Griffin Park in September 1940, less than a year after the start of construction. Not long after the completion of the first phase, a second phase of Griffin Park was erected, which increased the total number of units to 250 and the overall cost of the project was \$1.49 million (Birkhead 1994: Section 8, Page 5).

After the construction of Griffin Park, the Orange Villa Defense Housing Project was rapidly built in 1941 to house the families of military personnel stationed at the Orlando Air Base. As Griffin Park was built to house only black residents, white residents occupied Orange Villa (Bacon 1977:172). Located on the corner of East Robinson and Bumby Streets, Orange Villa was built as part of the program advocated by the Lanham Act. The City of Orlando was not required to provide any funding for the project's construction. The complex consisted of 67 buildings that accommodated 100 families and 685 orange and grapefruit trees were retained on the site, hence the name "Orange Villa" (n.a.:n.d.). This public housing complex was recently demolished in the late 1990s. — *continued on page 3*

Board of Commissioners' Meeting

The Orlando Housing Authority Board of Commissioners will hold its Board Meeting, Thursday, October 16, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. at the OHA's Administration Building, Board Room, 390 N. Bumby Avenue, Orlando, FL 32803.

Orlando Housing Authority residents interested in attending the meeting who need transportation, and/or have special needs, please call the Community Affairs and Communications Department at (407) 895-3300, extension 6101.

Leadership Skills Workshop

Saturday, September 13, 2014, the Orlando Housing Authority Resident Association Presidents from Ivey Lane, Citrus Square, Johnson Manor, Jackson Court, Omega Apartments and Murchison Terrace, attended the Leadership Skills Workshop at the Orange County Internal Operations Center located at 450 E. South Street. The workshop is part of the Community Connections Workshop Series sponsored by the City of Orlando and Orange County. The Resident Association Presidents learned about their own leadership styles and tendencies, becoming skilled at recognizing other leadership styles, and enhancing and working with others who possess different leadership styles.



OUC Conservation Workshop at The Villas at Carver Park

The Villas at Carver Park Resident Association participated in an Energy Conservation Workshop sponsored by the Orlando Utilities Commission (OUC) September 10, 2014. Mr. Gregg Sampson, Conservation Coordinator, conducted the presentation and the residents learned different strategies to conserve energy and lower their utility bill. Topics included appliance maintenance and operation, monitoring energy usage, energy efficiency improvements, and energy and water saving tips. OUC provided light refreshments that included sandwiches, fruit, cookies, beverages, etc. Participants received a \$10 Wal-Mart gift certificate, and cloth grocery bags.. OUC also gave CFL light bulbs to seniors who asked questions and participated.



Highlights from the Desk Continued...

In April 1942, the housing authority initiated construction of a defense housing project known as Orlando Reeves Terrace on East South Street. Seventy-six substandard houses, a church, and a store were demolished to clear the site (n.a.:n.d.). The complex was completed in January of 1943 at a total cost of \$399,000 (Robinson et al 1999:Appendix IV, Page 4). Named after Orlando Reeves, a soldier who fought in the Second Seminole War, the complex had 90 units for men stationed at the nearby Army Air Force Base and their families. Units were also available for civilian personnel working at the military installations. An administration building and playgrounds were built as part of the complex. In 1951, 90 more units were added to the development (Bacon 1977:172).

Although the housing authority constructed three housing developments between 1939 and 1943, the need for housing in Orlando, particularly for low-income families, remained at a critical level. During this period, there were long lists of people waiting to get into the housing developments, and tenants with incomes that exceeded the proscribed limits remained in complexes such as Griffin Park because there were no other housing options in the City (n.a.:n.d.).

In March of 1944, the construction of a new project funded under the USHA program was started (Robinson et al 1999:Appendix IV, Page 4). Known as the Carver Court Housing Project, Project Number

FLA 4-3, Orlando's fourth complex was intended to house "colored defense workers" (Bacon 1977:172). Brigadier General Hume Peabody, commanding officer at the Army Air Force Base, strongly supported the construction of the development, as hundreds of needed base employees could not be secured unless they were provided with housing. Orlando residents were eligible for a unit in Carver Court if they were defense workers, resided in the City since July 1, 1941, currently did not have adequate housing for their families, and gave legal notice to vacate their present homes.

The Carver Court development was named in Dr. Washington Carver, a noted black agricultural chemist who developed crop rotation methods for conserving nutrients in the soils and discovered hundreds of innovative industrial applications from farm products. Associated Orlando Architects, the architects for Griffin Park, Orange Villa, and Orlando Reeves Terrace, were hired to design Carver Court, along with their long-time collaborator, landscape architect Herbert L. Flint, and mechanical engineer, A.P. Michaels. I.E Millstone Construction Company of St. Louis, Missouri was selected as the builder based on its low bid. Orlando and Orange County were not required to provide any funding for the project, which would be operated by the Orlando Housing Authority under lease from the federal government. The housing authority would take over all responsibilities of the complex at the conclusion of the war (Orlando Reporter-Star August 1, 1945:12).

ENDING HOMELESSNESS AMONG VETERANS: The 25 Cities Initiatives

The 25 Cities is an initiative to end homelessness among our nation's veterans. This national model mobilizes communities across the country to change the way to serve homeless veterans and moves to a rapid assessment and housing approach.

Through this initiative, the housing authority, the city and county partner with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Veterans Administration (VA), veteran organizations the Continuum of Care, the Commission on Homelessness and other community nonprofits to achieve the goal of housing 100 highly vulnerable homeless veterans in 100 days. This lofty goal is only the beginning. Through this effort, cities will work to:

- ◆ Build an intake system for matching homeless veterans and the chronically homeless to the housing and specific support services they need;
- ◆ Strengthen and integrate the data systems for these two groups; and
- ◆ Merge the VA's own homeless resources and assets with a broader effort aimed at ending chronic homelessness.

Outreach and assessment are the first steps in this process. The 25 Cities Outreach Team has the goal of assessing homeless veterans in 100 days to identify our most vulnerable veterans and appropriately match them with housing and services.



ORLANDO HOUSING AUTHORITY



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HUD's Mission Statement: To promote adequate and affordable housing, economic opportunity and a suitable living environment free from discrimination.

Orlando Housing Authority Mission Statement: To offer a choice of safe and affordable housing options and opportunities for economic independence for residents of Orlando and Orange County.

FAIR HOUSING CORNER

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FOR RELEASE
Wednesday
October 8, 2014

HUD TAKES ACTION IN CALIFORNIA AND KANSAS CASES WHERE HOSTILE APARTMENT RULES AGAINST CHILDREN INCLUDED NO PLAYING OUTSIDE

Children allegedly forced to clean toilet when found playing outside; families threatened with eviction

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced today that it has reached a discrimination settlement agreement with a Napa Valley apartment owner and charged the owners of a Lenexa, Kansas, apartment complex with discrimination as a result of management at the two sites allegedly putting overly restrictive rules into place to control the free movement of children. Allegations include management placing restrictions on children playing outside, and in one case forcing children to clean the manager's office toilet when the youths were found outside unaccompanied by an adult.

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of dwellings, based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability. This includes setting rules that discriminate against families with children.

"Placing special rules on families with children unfairly singles them out and creates a hostile living environment that is authoritarian and unequal," said Gustavo Velasquez, HUD Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. "The Fair Housing Act protects the rights of families with children to enjoy their homes the same way as other households."

In Napa Valley, California, seven affected families, and the nonprofit group Fair Housing of Napa Valley, filed complaints with HUD alleging that the manager at the River Park Manor Apartments cursed at children when he found them playing outside unaccompanied, and then ordered the children to his office and instructed them to sit on the floor. HUD's charge further alleges that once at the office, the manager required the children to clean the office toilet and pick up trash around the complex, and threatened them by telling them that their families may be evicted if they did not comply with his instructions. The apartments also had a rule prohibiting children from using the swimming pool during certain hours.

Under the terms of the agreement, the owners and manager of River Park Manor Apartments will pay Fair Housing of Napa Valley \$3,750; waive four months of rent for five of the families (a total monetary value of \$19,000); pay two former tenants a total of \$7,000; eliminate the rule that limits pool usage by children during the day; and obtain fair housing training for employees.

In a separate case, HUD charged the owners and property managers of The Reserve Apartments in Lenexa, Kansas, with violating the Fair Housing Act when they allegedly instituted a policy that prohibited children under the age of 16 from freely using the common areas of the property.

According to HUD's charge, the property's policies allegedly required children to be supervised by an adult at all times and prohibited youth from playing anywhere on the property except the playground. The rules also allegedly prohibited kids from playing any team sports on the property, and from riding bicycles, skateboards, or scooters on the property. One of the affected families was a single mother who had a 14-year-old son. When she complained that her son was essentially on "lockdown," the management office allegedly refused to renew the family's lease in retaliation. A United States Administrative Law Judge will hear the charge unless any party to the charge elects to have the case heard in federal district court.

Source: hud.org