



U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Birmingham Office
Region IV
Medical Forum Building, Suite 900
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Birmingham, Alabama 35203-5301

General response letter regarding Stone manor

We received your April 27, 2009 letter regarding your constituent, Mr. Mark Dithmer, expressing his concerns about the purchase of various properties, including Stone Manor Apartments by the Huntsville Housing Authority (HHA). We hope the following information sufficiently responds to the concerns.

Many homeowners in the area, are concerned with the way HHA went about purchasing Stone Manor, and have fears that the HHA will not keep the property in good condition, which will result in a decline of property values. Many neighborhood residents have complained that a notice should have been issued to the neighborhood of the intent to purchase the property, similar to a zoning letter and subsequent public hearing.

While the HHA is not required by HUD relocation regulations to notify residents of the area where it purchases property, the HHA has to comply with the Alabama Open Meetings Act (Act No. 2005-40). The HHA holds monthly public meetings on the third Monday of each month at 12:00 noon. The HHA is also required to hold a public hearing on the PHA Plan, and the hearing was held on January 26, 2009, at 200 Washington Street, (the central office of the Huntsville Housing Authority).

The Huntsville Housing Authority is required to follow federal regulations relating to deconcentration and income mixing in accordance with section 16(a)(3)(B) of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937, (42 U.S.C. 1437n), which is submitted to HUD as part of the PHA Annual Plan process. The Code of Federal Regulations – 24 CFR 903, Subpart A - Deconcentration of Poverty and Fair Housing in Program Admissions, outlines this process. The link to this information is: http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_08/24cfr903_08.html.

The concerns over property values have been addressed through the years by advocates and opponents of affordable housing. HHA has created a page on their website called Public Housing Myths that addresses many of the concerns raised by Huntsville citizens. The web site address is: <http://www.huntsvillehousing.org/cms/FAQs%2FMyths/62.html>. HHA is an excellent manager and will work very hard to ensure the property is well maintained.

We appreciate your interest in the programs of the Department. If we can be of further assistance in this or other matters, please contact me at (205) 745-4301.

HUD's mission is to increase homeownership, support community development and increase access to affordable housing free from discrimination.