



To: MPHA Director Gregory Russ, Board of Commissioners of MPHA & Minneapolis City Council
From: Defend Glendale Campaign
Date: May 24, 2017
Re: Comments regarding MPHA's plans called Pathways to Preservation

Minneapolis Public Housing Authority's new Executive Director, Gregory Russ, attended Glendale resident meeting on April 17, 2017 to present long and short term plans to sell and lease 6000 of the public housing units under the low-income tax credit. This plan includes Glendale Townhomes, 42 high rise buildings, 730 homes that serve over 26000 low-income residents of color, elders, disabled, refugees, singles, immigrants, families, and children. We believe that the low-income tax credit will create paths to the destruction of public housing, displace residents, push families out of Minneapolis, and totally gentrify this city. As a result, residents rejected the low-income tax credit and presented the following to Mr. Russ, Defend Glendale Option.

1. The Defend Glendale Option is to hold MPHA accountable to fix & repair Glendale Townhomes with zero displacement, and zero privatization of Glendale Public Housing. This is the only option to preserve Glendale as public housing in Prospect Park as it is now public housing proper, not to convert Glendale to any private development, not to sell it, and not to lease it to any private developers such as Sherman Associates, etc. for profit. The Defend Glendale Option is zero displacement, and to eliminate systematic gentrification.
2. Support City Levy, State Bill Senate(SF 3127) or at the House(HF3212) authored by Senator Kari Dziedzic and House Representative Phyllis Kahn to be included in State Bonding Bill or Hennepin County housing funds to rehabilitate, fix and repair Glendale Townhomes.
3. Support Glendale Townhomes as a local historic designation. Glendale has the distinction of being one of very few low-income public housing developments build as part of middle to higher income neighborhood in Prospect Park, Minneapolis. Glendale was the first public housing built after WWII through the advocacy of Hubert Humphrey. Famous political figures and Olympian, athletes, educators and activists have grown up in Glendale. Glendale is a model that should be replicated not demolished. Therefore, Defend Glendale voted for the option that supports the historic designation, and its application process to pursue historic- designation at City of Minneapolis.
4. Support permanent-public policy, city ordinance, or state bill to protect Glendale Townhomes as public housing units, and to prohibit selling of the land to private developers for profit. Also, support to extend this permanent protection to all public housing programs and units that are at risk of being converted to private development by local public housing agencies including MPHA in order to minimize displacement, homelessness, housing crisis, and gentrification in the coming decades in Minnesota.
5. Support to build more public housing units in Minneapolis that replicate the successful model of Glendale Townhomes to stabilize, and to build close knit, safe, and healthy communities like Glendale. This does not include a section 8-voucher system, or a project based section 8 that are controlled by corporations or private landlords that put low-income families at risk and contribute to the housing crisis in Minnesota.

After the meeting on April 17, residents held another meeting with Mr. Russ on May 5. At this meeting, Mr. Russ agreed to take low-income tax credit off the table, and he agreed to research other public paths to preserve public housing such as bonds, borrowing, and city levy. We agreed that we would meet with Mr. Russ in July to continue the conversation.

After this meeting, we found that Minneapolis High-rise Council with small staff and board wrote a letter on behalf of 42 high-rises that are part of 26000 residents MPHA serves, approving the low-income tax credit plan without the knowledge of the MPHA population, residents' approval, especially in Cedar, Horn Towers, other buildings, and without community engagement. This contradiction has deepened the mistrust and anxiety among more residents about MPHA's and City's intent regarding their homes, community, and the future of 26000 residents that are at real risk of being displaced and homeless through the low-income tax credit for private investors.

Like other tenants in public housing across the country such as in Baltimore, New York City, Seattle and several more, we are fighting for our homes. We live in this city and see how the city can fund a \$1.1 billion stadium and \$10 million for the Walker Art Center Sculpture garden but yet funding public housing stability seems to be the lowest priority.

We ask that MPHA Commissioners, Executive Director of MPHA, and Minneapolis City Council to reconsider supporting any plans that will sell 42 high-rise buildings, Glendale, 730 homes through the low-income tax credit where private developers will profit, and receive free tax dollars to buy /lease public housing. This will lead to massive social and economic crisis in Minneapolis including displacement, gentrification, homelessness, and the destruction of public housing.

**Sincerely,
Defend Glendale Campaign**

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