



January 27, 2019

## **MPHA Leadership & Commissioners Must Resign: They are Dangerous to the Vulnerable Residents of Elliot Twins!**

Since Fall 2018, MPHA staff led by Jeff Horwich, Director of Policy & External Affairs has been setting up tables to chat with residents in the community room at Elliot Twins, in order to misinform residents to accept displacement through RAD. During one of these meetings, an MPHA employee told an elderly Elliot Twins resident that MPHA is not renting out vacant apartments in Elliot Twins anymore to make their planned renovations easier. The Elliot Twins are in excellent shape, they do not need these renovations because they have been renovated and yet MPHA is leaving homes empty while Minneapolis faces a massive housing crisis, in the middle of winter when it is deadly for people to be without a home. By keeping units vacant MPHA is manipulating HUD laws in order to sell units to private investors following RAD conversion. HUD regulations limit the number of units that may be “lost” during a RAD conversion to no more than five percent of units. However, units are excluded from this protection if they have been vacant for 24 months before the RAD Application is submitted

(p. 21:<http://nhlp.org/files/RAD%20Advocacy%20Guide%202.0%20FINAL%20with%20Appendix.pdf>).

If units have been vacant for two years, the Housing Authority is under no federal obligation to keep them affordable. MPHA admitted they are keeping units empty. **These empty units do not have to be preserved as affordable during the RAD conversion that MPHA is moving forward with despite residents saying no to RAD and MPHA violating RAD HUD guidelines and process. The new private owners of Elliot Twins will be able to rent these homes as luxury apartments and profit off the RAD conversion and displacement of vulnerable elders.** How long has MPHA sat on vacant units at Elliot Twins while Minneapolis faces a massive housing crisis? How long has MPHA ignored its duty to house people while playing a long game to maximize profit and privatization for their investors?

Even worse, MPHA staff told an elder that they are, “Not renting Elliot Twins any longer because they are waiting for seniors to die or move out” so apartments will be vacant and more easily “renovated” (privatized and sold at market rate). Once MPHA has vacant units, they can rent them to wealthier renters of a higher income who will be majority white. Following the RAD conversion, the new private owners of Elliot Twins are only required by HUD to select an “eligible family” for any vacancies. An “eligible family” under HUD’s guidelines is a family that falls into their categories of, “low-income” or “very low-income”

(p.28:<http://nhlp.org/files/RAD%20Advocacy%20Guide%202.0%20FINAL%20with%20Appendix.pdf>).

“Low-income” is defined as 80% Area Median Income (AMI) and “very low income” is defined as 50% AMI (p. B-22:[https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/DOC\\_10815.PDF](https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/DOC_10815.PDF)). Most public housing residents are between 0 to 21% AMI. See this link to explain AMI and chart that shows how much public housing residents make compared to the rest of population in Minneapolis

,<https://www.dgphc.org/2018/05/10/ami-housing-deeply-unaffordable-for-low-income-families-part-2>.

Once the units at Elliot Twins become vacant, they will no longer be affordable for those who fall under 21% AMI. Elliot Twins will no longer be public housing after the RAD conversion, so it will not be accessible to the low-income original residents who were pushed out or for any of over 17 thousands low-income residents that are in waiting list of over 7 years to get housing in Minneapolis. As a result, the housing crisis will continue to grow.

While it may be shocking that MPHA would tell Elders they're "waiting for them to die", it comes as no surprise to residents that they would treat Elders in this way. At the recent eviction meeting <https://www.facebook.com/events/286106475383305> at Elliot Twins on January 17, 2019 during Federal Government and HUD shutdown, MPHA hired the Center for Multicultural Mediation (<https://sites.google.com/site/multiculturalmediation/>) to lie to residents in order to forcefully accept displacement through RAD conversions. On their website, the group claims that one of the main reasons to hire them is to "maintain control over the outcome of the dispute." Clearly, MPHA had no intention to hear residents' concerns, they just wanted to control the outcome of the meeting to push RAD through a manipulated process called GIN (General Information Notice) by HUD which MPHA decided to hold during HUD Shutdown; <https://www.dgphc.org/2019/01/11/mpha-is-moving-forward-to-evict-residents-from-elliott-twins-during-government-shutdown/>. This meeting was a disaster for MPHA. It exposed how abusive MPHA's leadership is and how elders/seniors, vulnerable residents are mistreated and taken advantage of. MPHA took nearly all the chairs out of the community room, so Elders and people with disabilities had nowhere to sit. MPHA and their mediators had no presentation planned so they could target, isolate and lie to residents individually to push them to accept RAD. MPHA and their mediators refused to answer questions in front of the group for the sake of transparency, which meant that residents and allies were not allowed to join together to make their voices heard. Public housing residents and Allies - specifically allies of color - were harassed by MPHA staff and private security from the start, and eventually by police, despite having been invited by residents. People were told to turn off their cameras, and a Channel 9 news crew was turned away from the event because MPHA wanted to keep their abuse of Elders and other vulnerable residents a secret. Elders were standing for far too long and the disorganization and dramatic rearranging of their community room, as well as MPHA calling the police on residents, created massive amounts of stress for Elders. MPHA's treatment of Elders is despicable, and video of it is on DGPHC's events page. This is why we need to unite to stop their privatization plans and keep public housing public. **MPHA leadership from Commissioners to Greg Russ, Jeff Horwich and the rest of the MPHA are not safe to the well-being of Elliot Twins and to the rest of the public housing residents. Therefore, they must all resign. They are dangerous to our most vulnerable population of our city and an embarrassment to the City of Minneapolis! Here is a link to contact them;** <https://www.dgphc.org/hold-them-accountable/>.

Sincerely,

**Defend Glendale & Public Housing Coalition**

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