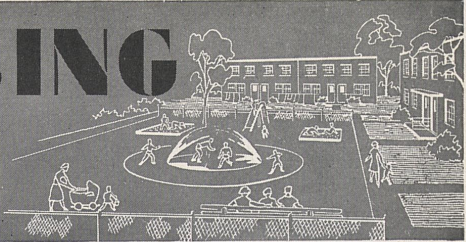


FW3.7:1/25

PUBLIC HOUSING

Weekly News

FROM AMERICAN COMMUNITIES ABOLISHING SLUMS AND BUILDING LOW-RENT HOUSING



Vol. 1, No. 25

Federal Works Agency, U. S. Housing Authority—Nathan Straus, Administrator

January 30, 1940

USHA Rural Program Wins Pledge Of Texas Women And Latin Americans

The Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, with members throughout the State, and the Brownsville, Tex., League of United Latin American Citizens, one of 160 chapters in Texas, New Mexico, Southern California, Arizona, and other Southwestern States, recently went on record in support of the proposed USHA rural program.

The Texas Federation of Women's Clubs' resolution reads: "Be it resolved that it (TFWC) endorse the United States Housing Authority program as carried on through the housing authorities of the different States of the Union, and as carried on in Texas, and that it endorse and urge the passage of the legislation and appropriation now pending in Congress to continue the United States Housing Authority's program, so as to extend it into the rural areas of the Nation."

The League of United Latin American Citizens' resolution is similar: "Be it resolved that it (LULAC) endorses the low-rent housing program of the United States Housing Authority and that it goes on record as approving the passage of legislation in Congress to extend the benefits of public housing to rural areas of the Nation and to continue the general program of housing."

These resolutions are in accord with the strong plea of Governor Olson of California for a rural program in his State. For the Governor's statement, see PUBLIC HOUSING, No. 22.

Cleveland Housing Center Serves Both Students and General Public, Says Bohn

Cleveland, Ohio, the city which in 1933 organized the first public housing authority in the United States, is also the first city to add to its public buildings a Housing Center. In this building are located the offices of the Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority and the Regional Association of Cleveland, an unofficial citizens' planning and housing organization created "to guide the growth of Cleveland."

Originally a six-room model brick house built as a demonstration building for the Great Lakes Exposition in 1936-37, the building was donated for its present purposes. Two large wings have since been added.

According to Ernest J. Bohn, Director of the Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority, who also directs

the destinies of the Regional Association, and who has long been a leader in the struggle for a national public housing program, the Housing Center "is an example of the kind of long-term constructive public relations program for housing that we have conducted since 1932.

"We do not place much value on sporadic 'publicity pushes' unless there is need for them as a result of unusual circumstances. A Housing Center such as this fills a great need as a center of interest in both public and private housing, a center of information for students and the general public, and a place for exhibits and discussions of planning and housing activities.

(See CLEVELAND HOUSING on p. 3)



In Cleveland, Ohio, one of the newest public buildings is the Housing Center, pictured above. It is the first building of its kind in U. S. public housing history.

Henry Street Settlement Demonstration Unit Shows Home Furnishings For Slender Budgets

As a service to residents in the Henry Street neighborhood and to the future tenants of Vladeck Houses, New York City Housing Authority project to be completed in the autumn, the Henry Street Settlement, whose quarters overlook the new project, has instituted a practical home furnishings demonstration.

Although plans are now going ahead to furnish a five-room apartment as a demonstration unit, the Settlement, under the leadership of Miss Helen Hall, already has utilized furniture renovated in its workrooms to equip a demonstration living room at the astonishingly small cost of \$24.73.

According to information received from Miss Susan Jenkins, who shares the responsibility for the Home Planning Project with Mr. Douglas Lockwood, the largest item in the decorations is \$6 for paint. Unbleached muslin drapes, carrying a linoleum print design of Brooklyn and Williamsburg bridges, cost 9 cents a yard. They have evoked sincere admiration from many visitors.



The materials used in transforming a chair like the one above (left) into an attractive and useful article of furniture, as in the demonstration room (right), at the Henry Street Settlement, cost

Women are invited to visit the demonstration room and there develop ideas for the improvement of their own homes.

People in the neighborhood bring their furniture to the Settlement workshop, where, under the guidance of the directors, they remodel and repair it. Settlement staff members visit the homes where problems of overcrowding are acute to advise in possible rearrangements for greater comfort.

Aiding Miss Jenkins and Mr. Lockwood are James Ashley, who directs the shop work, and Dean Fausett, prominent young American painter and muralist, who supplies design for drapes and walls and guides the efforts of home makers in creating their own designs. The National Youth Administration has assigned four young men with training in carpentry and cabinet work to aid on the project and at the same time improve their own skills. The demonstration unit will help tenants to furnish their new homes both economically and well.



75 cents. All the furniture in the room has been renovated. The table is "made over" with a linoleum cover. Drapes are unbleached muslin at 9 cents a yard.

Bad Housing, Bad Health Are Obviously Related Says Prof. Horwood

Speaking before the recent Regional Conference on Housing Administration and Management at the Hotel Bellevue in Boston, Dr. Murray P. Horwood, professor of bacteriology and sanitation at M. I. T., said: "It is not necessary to establish a statistical relationship between poor housing and poor health in order to demonstrate that poor housing is undesirable.

"All that is necessary is to observe the intolerable conditions usually associated with slum dwellings. Poor housing conditions, attended by overcrowding, favor increased opportunities for contact infection and hence make for the dissemination of the disease's spread in that way.

"No one can view the Federal housing projects in South Boston and Cambridge without realizing that such improved housing conditions for the poor are destined to have a profound and beneficial effect on the health of the people fortunate enough to be accepted as tenants."

2/5/40

A saving of approximately \$280,000 in project construction costs on the balance of the USHA's present program may be realized if recommendations of the USHA Technical Division governing use of standardized sizes of double-hung wooden and steel casement windows are adopted by local housing authorities. The establishment of five standard sizes of steel casement windows was discussed in the January 2 issue of PUBLIC HOUSING. Announcement is now made of the establishment of a minimum number of recommended standard sizes and standard details for double-hung wooden windows.

It is estimated that bids will be taken on projects containing 70,000 dwelling units after March 30, 1940. If one-half this number, or 35,000, should use the standardized wood windows, the estimated savings in production costs would amount to \$184,000, and installation costs should be cut \$17,000.

USHA's recommendations (which will not, of course, be mandatory, but will take the form of suggestions) are based on recent studies in which 18 projects, using 76 different types and sizes of wood double-hung windows, were reviewed. From analysis of plans of these projects, and typical plans, it was apparent that, in nearly every case, all required daylighting standards could be met by using not more than seven different sizes. The seven standard sizes agreed upon include three for use with wall-bearing buildings, three for use with skeleton frame buildings, and one bathroom window for use with either group. Safe heights from floor to sill are maintained in each instance, as well as minimum clearance between the head of the window and the ceiling.

The seven selected sizes, together with proposed standardized details, provide, according to manufacturers, an adequate range of size and are satisfactory in detail. The estimate of savings which will result (about \$7.50 per dwelling) is based on pre-

Keeping Up With USHA Research

- **Wooden Window Standards**
- **New Leaflet on Construction Costs**
- **USPHS Approves Wading Pools**

dictions by the manufacturers.

Because the establishment of standard window sizes does not require a change from those now in use but merely limits the range of sizes, manufacturers are in a position to supply them at any time without previous notice. The resulting economy for the manufacturer may be passed on directly to the consumer.

“Bringing Down Construction Costs,” the fourth in a series of leaflets explaining the USHA program, presents convincing evidence that public low-rent housing is also low-cost housing.

The leaflet shows that the average cost of building USHA-aided homes, including the cost of plumbing, heating, and electrical installation, is about \$2,000; that this cost, plus the cost of dwelling equipment, architects' fees, local administrative expenses, and carrying charges, is well below the maximum allowed in the United States Housing Act; and the over-all cost, including land and non-dwelling facilities, is considerably below the over-all costs on 165 large-scale projects constructed with private capital.

Although construction costs on the first USHA-aided projects were below what Congress required, subsequent costs have been even lower. According to the leaflet, “in the 116 projects built in cities of less than 500,000 population the cost of dwelling facilities averages about \$3,339 a dwelling. In the first 26 projects built in the larger cities dwelling facilities average about \$3,700 a dwelling.”

All leaflets in this series are available free of charge upon request to the Informational Service Division, USHA.

Wading pools in USHA-aided projects “should offer no health problem,” in the opinion of Dr. J. M. DallaValle, P. A. Sanitary Engineer of the U. S. Public Health Service, now acting as an adviser to the USHA.

In a memorandum to A. C. Shire, USHA Technical Director, Dr. DallaValle said: “The pools are shallow and are fed continuously with water from approved supplies during operation. A 24-foot pool supplied with as little as 10 gallons of fresh water per minute will void the pool at least once every three minutes. This permits an adequate margin of safety.

“The pools should be cleaned once each day and drained whenever the spray is shut off,” the memorandum stated.

Concurring with Dr. DallaValle were: Messrs. L. M. Fisher and John Leukhardt of Public Health and Gilbert Rodier of USHA.

Cleveland Housing Center

(Continued from page 1)

“In the two-story central part of the building are the administrative offices, a meeting room, a library on housing and planning, rapidly becoming one of the best in the country, and an office where we park USHA advisers when they come.”

The Housing Center is ideally located. It is on the Mall, which is Cleveland's Civic Center. Other buildings on the Mall are the Public Auditorium, City Hall, County Courthouse, Board of Education, Cleveland College, Public Library, and the Federal Building. The site is owned by the City of Cleveland.

“The Housing Center symbolizes,” Mr. Bohn says, “in brick and mortar, the belief that housing has at last become respectable, and that it is high time housing authority offices, national, regional, and local, came down out of lofts and up out of basements to take their places with other respected public agencies.”

Construction Bids

Bid Openings Definitely Scheduled

Local authority and project number	Number of units	Date of bid opening
Baltimore (Md.-2-1).....	701	2-14-40
Bristol (Va.-2-1).....	142	2-7-40
Bristol (Va.-2-2).....	74	2-7-40
Gary (Ind.-11-1).....	305	2-15-40
Harrisburg (Pa.-8-2).....	200	2-5-40
Hattiesburg (Miss.-1-2).....	120	2-8-40
Nashville (Tenn.-5-2).....	332	2-2-40

Bid Openings Tentatively Scheduled¹

Local authority and project number	Number of units	Date of bid opening
Akron (Ohio-7-1).....	276	3-1-40
Baltimore (Md.-2-2).....	434	3-16-40
Birmingham (Ala.-1-3).....	614	2-25-40
Birmingham (Ala.-1-3A).....	292	2-25-40
Butte (Mont.-3-1).....	225	3-6-40
Charlotte (N. C.-3-1A).....	108	3-15-40
Denver (Colo.-1-2).....	348	3-15-40
Fajardo (P. R.-3-1).....	210	3-9-40
Frederick (Md.-3-2).....	48	3-15-40
Helena (Mont.-4-1).....	71	3-10-40
Houston (Tex.-5-1A).....	204	3-27-40
Houston (Tex.-5-2).....	328	3-27-40
Jacksonville (Fla.-1-2).....	708	3-20-40
Lexington (Ky.-4-1).....	86	3-1-40
Lexington (Ky.-4-2).....	206	3-1-40
McComb (Miss.-3-2).....	90	3-20-40
Mayaguez (P. R.-4-1).....	476	4-2-40
Nashville (Tenn.-5-1).....	350	3-27-40
New Orleans (La.-1-8).....	746	3-21-40
New York City (N. Y.-5-5).....	1,326	3-5-40
Oakland (Cal.-3-1).....	396	3-14-40
Omaha (Nebr.-1-2).....	272	2-20-40
Ponce (P. R.-1-4).....	120	4-1-40
Tampa (Fla.-3-2).....	320	3-1-40
West Palm Beach (Fla.-9-2).....	120	3-1-40

¹ There is usually a 30-day period between bid advertising and bid opening. None of the bid openings shown here have as yet been definitely scheduled.

Sen. Barkley Speaks At Paducah Ceremonies

Ground-breaking ceremonies were recently held in Paducah, Ky., to celebrate the official start of work at Thomas Jefferson Place, one of the two projects in Paducah's \$1,000,000 low-rent housing program. Senator Alben W. Barkley, guest speaker for the occasion, told some 200 participants that among the social obligations of the Government is the task of "making possible for the less fortunate the advantage of sanitary, healthful housing."

Senator Barkley pointed out that we no longer consider the Government as "a vague something in far-away Washington," but rather as "an institution that sits by the fireside of every man, woman, and child."

Following the remarks of the Senator and other prominent citizens, Mayor Edgar T. Washburn and Mayor-elect Pierce E. Lackey were presented a spade, and, each with a foot on the top of the blade, jointly consummated the ground-breaking ceremonies.

Later in the morning the program was repeated on the site of Abraham Lincoln Court, 75-unit colored project in Paducah.

Paducah is one of six Kentucky cities with USHA commitments for the construction of public housing projects. Thus far, USHA funds set aside for Kentucky in earmarkings and loan contracts total \$19,443,000.

Current Housing Literature

NEIGHBORHOOD BOOSTER, *Freehold*, Jan. 1, 1940, pp. 12-13.

Results of USHA's laboratory work on the subject as to whether or not a public housing project tends to increase values of real estate in the immediate neighborhood—results, favorable.

THE BUSINESS OF PUBLIC HOUSING, by Milton J. Goell, *Dynamic America*, December 1939, pp. 21-23.

Describes how economies have been and can be effected in the field of low-cost housing and discusses what the USHA has been doing along these lines.

THE EFFECT OF PUBLIC HOUSING UPON PRIVATE HOUSING, by Milton J. Goell, *Dynamic America*, January 1940, pp. 21-23.

Points out how public housing has benefited the private building industry both in England and in this country.

SUBSIDIZED LOW-RENT HOUSING, *The Commonwealth*, Part 2, Nov. 21, 1939, pp. 119-157.

A study of low-cost housing problems prepared by the Economics Section of the Commonwealth Club of California. Includes arguments for and against subsidized housing, an article entitled "The San Francisco Program—Achievements and Obstacles," criticisms of the Federal low-cost housing program, plus questionnaire concerning the selection of tenants for subsidized homes.

HOUSING FOR SPECIAL GROUPS, International Federation for Housing and Town Planning, Brussels, 1939. Various pages.

Papers on the housing of agricultural workers, old people, unmarried wage earners, large families, war invalids, and abnormal tenants in various European countries and the United States.

HOUSING POLICY IN WARTIME, by C. M. Wright, *International Labour Review*, January 1940, pp. 3-29.

Considers rent restriction as a means of counteracting housing shortages in wartime and suggests a special tax on unused rooms and dwellings as a more effective method.

HOUSING IN RURAL AMERICA, by F. M. Swire, *Rural Sociology*, December 1939, pp. 449-457.

Discusses the adequacy of rural homes in terms of space for occupants, condition of the house, and modern conveniences.

SOME CONTRASTS IN LEVELS OF LIVING IN INDUSTRIAL, FARM, AND PART-TIME FARM FAMILIES IN RURAL MISSISSIPPI, by Dorothy Dickens, *Social Forces*, December 1939, pp. 247-255.

Compares living conditions of these three groups, home ownership, and the uses to which income is put.

ADMINISTRATIVE BASIS OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PLANNING, International Federation for Housing and Town Planning, Brussels, 1939. Various pages.

Short discussions on the administrative machinery in various European countries to carry out national and regional planning.

Weekly Construction Report

Item	Week ended January 19, 1940	Week ended January 12, 1940	Percentage change
Number of projects under construction.....	164	164	No change
Number of dwellings under construction.....	64,943	64,943	No change
Total estimated over-all cost ¹ of new housing.....	\$290,984,000	\$290,984,000	No change
Average over-all cost ¹ of new housing per unit.....	\$4,481	\$4,481	No change
Average net construction cost ² per unit.....	\$2,819	\$2,819	No change

¹ Includes: (a) Building the house, including structural costs and plumbing, heating, and electrical installation; (b) dwelling equipment, architects' fees, local administrative expenses, financial charges during construction, and contingency expenses; (c) land for present development; (d) nondwelling facilities.

² The cost of building the house, including structural, plumbing, heating, and electrical costs.

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