

FRANCIS W. SARGENT
Governor
LEWIS S. W. CRAMPTON
Commissioner

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Department of Community Affairs
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CAMBRIDGE, MASS
100 Cambridge Street, Boston 02202

December 17, 1974

Paul E. Healy, City Clerk
Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

RE: Invitation Involving the Cambridge
Housing Authority

Dear Mr. Healy:

I wish to thank you for your invitations to attend meetings of the Cambridge City Council scheduled for December 9, and again for December 16, 1974 to discuss the following:

1. Development of a community facility in the Lambert Street Garage, adjacent to the Miller's River Housing Project for the Elderly.
2. Plans to make use of existing vacant, boarded-up units in Cambridge Housing Developments.

As you were advised by DCA's Bureau of Housing Management's Director, we did not receive the request to attend the December 9, 1974 meeting until that same afternoon, and we apologized for being unable to attend on such short notice. In order to adequately respond to your invitation to the December 16 meeting, I have prepared this letter.

As you are aware, the Department of Community Affairs is now constructing elderly housing in the city of Cambridge at Green and Franklin Streets. Not only will this building have the largest square footage of community space ever funded in a state project, but it will also house new offices for the CHA. Therefore, even if we were able, it would be an unfair allocation of our very limited funds to construct more community facilities in Cambridge. As to Miller's River housing project, the Department can only construct community facilities in conjunction with housing, and we in fact, have a long-standing policy of requiring the inclusion of community facilities in all state-aided projects. When we are able to proceed with another development of elderly units in Cambridge, you can rest assured that an adequate community facility will be included. Therefore, we recommend that you deal directly with HUD, relative to the garage adaptation as an elderly facility.

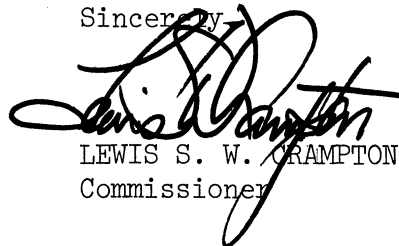
December 17, 1974

As far as plans for utilizing vacant units in state-aided family projects in Cambridge are concerned, the Department has been working closely and diligently with the Cambridge Housing Authority during the past months in the development of acceptable plans to improve operations overall, including lowering the vacancy rate and improving response time for repairing and filling vacancies among other areas. Sadly, currently vacant units have been badly damaged, primarily by vandals. Also, due to lack of stock and inventory on hand, other vacant units have been used by CHA maintenance staff as sources of unavailable parts for repairing fixtures in occupied units. As a result, the long vacated units cannot now be rented. These practices have been in effect for a long time, and we must first work with the Authority to develop an adequate inventory, then to develop an understanding of CHA's long-term rehabilitation plans for vandalized and scavanged units, finally to mobilize funding resources to pay for this rehabilitation.

We ask that the Cambridge City Council join with the Department and the Authority in developing additional financial resources to pay for necessary rehabilitation for vacant apartments, as soon as CHA has completed and submitted to the Department their proposals.

We thank the City Council for its interest, and will continue to provide all available information as requested on the Department's position relative to the operations of the Cambridge Housing Authority.

Sincerely,


LEWIS S. W. CRAMPTON
Commissioner

LSWC:jg

CC: CHA Board

Harry Spence

City Manager Sullivan

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Comm. from the Dept. of Community Affairs
re: recreational facilities at the Millers
River Housing Development.

In City Council,

December 23, 1974

12/23/74

Placed on File -