

Robert W. Healy, City Manager

February 15, 1996

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remaining 96 low rise units with \$13 million in federal development funds. Upon completion of Phase II construction, all 124 low-rise units will become a federally-assisted development.

The scope of work at Roosevelt Towers involves refurbishment of all building systems and interiors, complete replacement of kitchens and bathrooms, and construction of kitchen additions to most units to make them more usable and furnishable. An important new exterior feature will be a private roadway down the center spine of Roosevelt Towers, designed to create a traditional, well-defined streetscape in place of the current central spine area which historically has been an undefined and sometimes threatening area "owned" by no one.

Another important element involves the reconfiguration of back yard areas. Existing back parking lots will be removed and replaced by private shared courtyards accessible only to the abutting residents. Each will be changed to clearly limit access and use, and to more precisely define areas of responsibility.

As I mentioned last week in a separate letter regarding Roosevelt Towers, CHA expects to execute a construction contract with the successful low bidder, Suffolk Construction of Boston, within the next several weeks. Construction should begin in March and will last approximately eighteen months. We will inform you and the City Council as soon as a ground breaking ceremony is scheduled.

Corcoran Park

The rehabilitation of Corcoran Park is being funded through HUD's Major Reconstruction of Obsolete Projects (MROP) development program. The construction budget for the project is roughly \$10 million, which will in part be used to address long-standing site settlement problems related to Corcoran Park's being situated on a former peat bog and land fill. All 152 apartments in the development will be upgraded, including the modernization of all building systems, kitchens and bathrooms.

Site work is also an important part of the work at Corcoran Park. Like at Roosevelt Towers, previously undefined outdoor areas will be clearly linked to residential units, and apartments will no longer face large open spaces and open lots. A new private roadway will connect two on-site parking areas, providing a traditional entrance pattern to apartments as well as additional parking. Existing open back areas will be converted into fenced, individual private patios for each unit, with landscaped back walkways connecting the patios.

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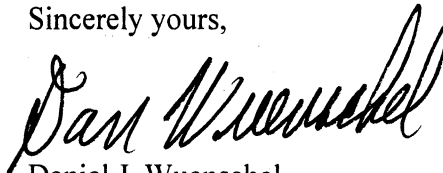
Creation of eight wheelchair accessible apartments is another important part of the work at Corcoran Park, which currently has none. A new wheelchair accessible management office and meeting room will be constructed to replace the existing facilities which are not accessible. The West Cambridge Youth Center, located in existing housing, will remain in its present location and will also be made wheelchair accessible.

Design work for the reconstruction of Corcoran Park is presently nearing completion. Construction should begin in the fall of 1996 and take a little over two years.

I know you agree that our work to retain these redevelopment grants has proven worth the effort. Once again, thank you for the city's ongoing support of our effort to preserve and improve the City's stock of low-income housing.

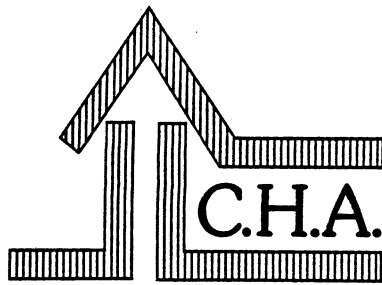
Please contact me if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely yours,



Daniel J. Wuenschel
Executive Director

cc: Councillor Francis H. Duehay
Susan Schlesinger, Community Development Department



CAMBRIDGE HOUSING AUTHORITY

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February 15, 1996

Robert W. Healy, City Manager
City of Cambridge
City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

RE: Corcoran Park and Roosevelt Towers Phase II Redevelopment

Dear ~~Mr. Healy~~ *Bob*:

I am writing to update you on two Cambridge Housing Authority redevelopment efforts which recently reached important milestones.

Last year I wrote you regarding proposed federal rescissions which posed a serious threat to the viability of public housing in Cambridge. While CHA has received significant cuts in its development, modernization and operating budgets, we were able to retain funding for two critical projects: the redevelopment of Roosevelt Towers and the substantial rehabilitation of Corcoran Park. These are the CHA's last two federally-assisted family public housing developments in need of such extensive work.

The continuing support from the City of Cambridge, particularly that from Bob Bersani of Inspectional Services, has been critical to the Authority's success in making it possible for these projects to continue. As CHA prepares to break ground on the second and last phase of Roosevelt Towers and begin final design work at Corcoran Park, I wanted to take a moment to provide your office and City Council members with an update on their current status.

Roosevelt Towers

The second phase of Roosevelt Towers will mark the completion of a long-term effort to rehabilitate a development with significant problems dating back to its original design in 1950.

Phase I of low-rise redevelopment work included reconstruction of one building with funds from the State's Executive Office of Communities and Development. (The 75 unit mid-rise building located at the back of the Roosevelt Towers site was redeveloped separately in the early 1980's as part of a pilot modernization program funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.) Phase II low-rise redevelopment involves the reconstruction of the

Consent Communication #23

S-112

Communication was received from
Daniel J. Wuenschel, Executive Director
Cambridge Housing Authority, trans-
mitting an update on two Cambridge
Housing Authority redevelopment
efforts.

In City Council March 4, 1996

Placed on File