

Letter from CMHA Executive Director



George A. Phillips

As members of this community, we are all collectively engaged in a life-changing opportunity. We are called together to enrich this neighborhood where so many good families and individuals live and work. We have the opportunity to help catapult this neighborhood and our City of Cleveland into the future as a model for livability.

The Riverview HOPE VI project is the opportunity for this community to come

together to expand its stock of attractively designed and well-constructed housing. It is the opportunity to continue to enrich the tapestry of this community, with the addition of families who have diverse backgrounds, cultures and incomes. It is the opportunity to reinforce this community's efforts to break free of the stereotypes and obstacles of the past.

The Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority is poised as a partner with the rest of the Ohio City and Tremont communities to move this opportunity forward. The potential for current homeowners, retailers and business enterprises alike is extraordinary, as is the promise this new housing offers to the families who will call it home.

Recognizing this as a win-win for families, commercial enterprises, the neighborhood and the City of Cleveland, CMHA encourages this community to come together in a deeper connection to overcome any obstacles we face. We can collectively seize the opportunity at hand to make our community a stronger neighborhood for our children and the generations to come.

Just the Facts on the Riverview HOPE VI Project

- Riverview Terrace, located atop the Cuyahoga River bluff overlooking downtown Cleveland, has majestic views up and down the river, and the presence of the fifteen-story, 600 foot-long high-rise tower is a west side landmark. Riverview is located in the Ohio City neighborhood which contains an interesting mixture of land uses and a diverse population. Over the past five years, this area has seen resurgence in construction of new homes and commercial establishments and has become a popular restaurant

and entertainment district in the city of Cleveland. Adjacent to Riverview is the famous West Side Market, one of the country's largest indoor/outdoor markets.

- The original Riverview development contained ten residential buildings with 135 units and a high rise for elderly residents, containing 664 dwelling units, since reduced to 510 units, on 18.2 acres. In order to create a mixed-income development in Ohio City, CMHA applied for, and received, a Hope VI Grant in 1996 to demolish 135 family units and to construct a mixed income development containing 420 units, out of which 81 units were to be used as replacement public housing units. Upon receipt of the Hope VI Grant, the 135 family units on the Riverview site were demolished.
- A series of public meetings was held in 2000 to develop a master plan for building behind the current Riverview Estates. There was a lot of time and effort spent on how this development project could be done in a way beneficial to all involved.
- In May 2005, it was determined that the hillside behind the current Riverview Tower was unstable. Furthermore, it was later determined it could cost up to \$25 million to stabilize the hillside which made it financially unfeasible for development of this site. Consequently, moving forward with the original plan is no longer an option.
- Upon receiving this information, CMHA and its developer Telesis began working to develop an alternative plan. Once the preliminary plan had been drafted, a series of neighborhood meetings were held to discuss the problem with the original plan and began to focus on considering alternative sites and locations for the project.
- On September 30, 2005, CMHA submitted a revised general plan to HUD, which will be followed up by a more detailed plan that will be submitted by March 23, 2006. It is the Authority's intention to request a three-year extension of the grant. If HUD approves the plan, CMHA will keep the \$8.5 million grant and will continue to plan for the redevelopment, and will have until the end of 2009 to complete the project.
- Four locations – West 28th St. and Detroit Ave., West 28th St. and Church Avenue, West 25th St. and Lorain and Columbus Rd. – have been suggested, along with other sites scattered throughout the city. Although these have been recommended, CMHA is still exploring additional sites.



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CMHA Mission: *To be the leader in providing safe, quality, affordable housing for individuals and families in Cuyahoga County.*



Joe Santiago
Ward 14 Councilman

Dear Neighbor:

A healthy, economically diverse community is something we all want, but is hard to achieve. Thankfully, I believe the HOPE VI project planned by the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) will help us achieve this goal by allowing our community to continue on the path to providing safe and affordable housing to all of our citizens. I urge you to support this endeavor, recognizing its potential to

serve as an anchor for future economic development initiatives in our community.

While we all have questions and concerns, it is important not to view this project through the tunneled lens of the past, and of what public housing used to look like, but rather to the future. CMHA is building through development of housing solutions that are as attractive, if not more so, than some of our most prominent suburban communities.

As part of an overall strategic vision to have an economically diverse community, with good citizens living in clean, decent and safe housing, I am committed, with the help of CMHA, to making our neighborhood healthy and to ensuring that quality, affordable housing is available to all of our residents.

I sincerely hope you will join me in this important endeavor.

– **Joe Santiago**

History of CMHA's Riverview HOPE VI

- 1963 Towers and Terrace Apartments built and occupied
- 1998 CMHA submits plan to HUD for Hope VI dollars for Riverview
- 1999 HUD provides conditional approval of plan
- 2000 CMHA hires design firm; Tears down 135 Terrace apartments at Riverview as specified in the plan
- 2001 Developer sought
- 2002 Developer selected
- 2004 Developer begins more extensive engineering studies of hillside where proposed housing was originally planned
- 2005 Final studies determine that land behind Riverview is not stable for housing
- 2005 CMHA revises plan, seeks public comment and presents revised plans to HUD