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The Residents As Resource: A Public Housing Management Demonstration In Jersey City

A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE
by Robert J. Rigby, Jr.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
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BUREAU OF NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION
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January, 1982

FOREWORD

It has become poignantly clear over the course of the past decade that our society's resources are indeed finite. The implications of this recognition are equally apparent; we must creatively and aggressively preserve those resources which we are fortunate enough to have and maximize their utility and potential.

This publication, written by Robert J. Rigby, Jr., Executive Director of the Jersey City Housing Authority, chronicles a most dramatic example of turning about and preserving one of our most beleaguered resources, the existing public housing developments within our urban centers, through the mobilization of that most powerful resource of all—the residents themselves.

Mr. Rigby painstakingly documents what happened in Jersey City, from early organizing of residents and refurbishing of buildings devastated by neglect and vandalism through the management of the housing complexes by the tenants themselves, i.e., Tenant Management. The positive results of the Jersey City experience are both dramatic and undeniable. Mr. Rigby's analysis offers an insightful commentary into the process of tenant mobilization and the potential of indigenous organizations to substantially improve the quality of life in their own communities. His conclusions about the conditions—physical, social, attitudinal—that provide the most fertile ground for Tenant Management are detailed and compelling.

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs' involvement in this project began in 1974 when the Housing Demonstration Program recognized the potential of Jersey City's approach to turning about its severely distressed public housing developments. A formative partnership between a new Housing Authority staff and local resident leaders was assisted by a $121,000.00 grant from the Demonstration Program. The continued viability of the targeted developments, which represent not only an essential housing resource for thousands of lower income families but also a multi-million dollar investment of public funds, and the sense of community competence exhibited by respective tenant organizations, stand as testimony to the prudence of the State's support.

The Department of Community Affairs Housing Demonstration Program is proud to have been a small part of this demonstration that offers so positive and creative an alternative to abandonment and neighborhood decline in our central cities. We are confident that this work provides a real world example of much needed housing innovation. We hope that it serves as an inspiration to other dedicated professionals and local tenant leaders. The demonstration affirms that even under the most difficult circumstances and notwithstanding the most austere fiscal atmosphere which will dominate the 1980s, the mobilization of tenant resources, acting in concert with dedicated local officials (of which Mr. Rigby & Co. are the epitome), offers real promise for turning highly distressed housing situations into healthy and stable ones.

Martha L. Lamar

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In executing the demonstration and in completing this report, sincere thanks and much appreciation are owed to many people; to:

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Finally, to the many resident leaders and Jersey City Housing Authority staff, too numerous to acknowledge individually, who have worked above and beyond to forward the demonstrations in a host of trenches and without whom there would have been nothing worth writing about.

Robert J. Rigby, Jr.

For

Terence K. McCormack

1919 - 1981

Our Mentor, Our Friend

R.J.R., Jr.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This work reviews the scope, process, impact, and a few of the implications of a six-year demonstration program in public-housing management begun in Jersey City in late 1973. It traces the evolution of the program from what was a modest effort to mobilize the energies and talents of the residents of a single building within a severely distressed public-housing project, through the program's extension to two other sites, to the establishment of functioning Tenant Management Corporations that have assumed full operational responsibility for the daily management of their respective developments.

The demonstration was initially funded by a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Housing Demonstration Program to the Jersey City Housing Authority in May of 1974. The general purpose of the $121,000, eighteen-month award (one of six housing management grants statewide) was to

> demonstrate a new approach to public housing management, resulting in maintaining physical improvements in public housing complexes and to further prove that a real sense of community is possible in low-income, high-density projects.

The demonstration targeted three severely distressed family developments—vertical neighborhoods—in which indigenous tenant organizations had, in partnership with the local Housing Authority, taken a few first steps to improve site conditions.

The grant facilitated a three-year effort of intensive building-by-building tenant organizing which focused on improving building security in combination with the physical refurbishing of the interior public spaces (lobbies, hallways, and stairways) of each of the buildings in the targeted complexes. An evaluation of the venture, commissioned by DCA and conducted in 1975 by Robert Kolodny of Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture and Planning, stated,

> It is not at all unlikely that had conditions and management practices continued unchanged, (the initial target site) A. Harry Moore would have been a terminal situation....
>
> What the Jersey City Housing Authority, working in concert with the tenants, appears to have accomplished is nothing less than the social and physical stabilization of at least two moderately to severely troubled massive housing projects without resort to wholesale relocation and at very modest programmatic costs....

**The condition of public hallways throughout A. Harry Moore epitomized the acute degree of resident frustration and hapless housing authority management in the early '70s.
(A typical example, 1973.)**

Colorful wall murals painted by A. Harry Moore's young adults brighten basic interior refurbishing work completed under the demonstration project.

> They have taken what was in part a tenant security program and developed it into a device that speaks to the overall problems of making life in such projects viable again. If they are successful in taking what we think is the next logical step—permitting substantial tenant involvement in actual management and operations—they will have enhanced what is already a significant achievement, one certainly worthy of study and emulation elsewhere.[1]

That "logical next step" was taken in 1976 when two of the target sites, A. Harry Moore and Curries Woods, were included in the National Tenant Management Demonstration Program jointly sponsored by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Ford Foundation and was again taken in 1977 when the third demonstration site, Montgomery Gardens, and the Jersey City Housing Authority embarked on an independent tenant management course.

During the three succeeding years, respective demonstration sites and the Housing Authority endeavored to advance the enterprise from resident training in management roles through the signing of a formal contract for management services to the full execution of site operations by the resident corporations. At two of the target sites resident principals evidenced a truly remarkable management capability; they made Tenant Management work. One development did not. Through sketching the highlights of how and why this transpired, the text attempts to add an alternative dimension to the form and practice of housing management, especially the management of distressed public-housing stock.

Although the focus of the work is the public housing arena, it is hoped that the lessons of both the DCA and tenant management demonstrations are somewhat broader. The text attempts to portray and thereby emphasize a process of revitalization which has as its nucleus the existing human and organizational resources intrinsic in our struggling urban communities. Recent history shows that our society's capacity for both compassion and social innovation are inextricably bound to the state of the economy in direct proportion. As the atmosphere of fiscal austerity continues to dominate the '80s, it is increasingly necessary to foster undertakings which not only yield concrete dividends, but also which adhere to the adage "do the best you can, with what you have"—for it is indeed probable that what we have is all we're likely to get!

One additional note is important. When acting as commentator about that in which one is also a participant, the tendency towards a biased perspective is obvious. It is fortunate that the Department of Community Affairs had commissioned the previously referenced evaluation of the Jersey City demonstration. Published as, *Searching for New Answers in Housing Management: An Evaluation of Six Demonstration Projects in New Jersey* (1976) and referenced in the text as the "Kolodny Evaluation," it covers the organizing and volunteer phase of the effort,

from late 1973 to early 1976. For at least that period of the demonstration, the Evaluation offered many helpful and often quoted third-party remarks and thus partially compensates for the writer's proximity to the subject matter.

For the remainder of the text, it is merely hoped that the candor of this writing speaks for itself. Given that at the moment I am still in public office, it is only necessary to qualify the work by reiterating a phrase from one of Mark Twain's little known but most powerful works, *The War Prayer.* In the Introduction, Mr. Clemens accurately and insightfully noted that, "... only the dead can tell the *whole* truth."[2]

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

You will shortly read of a public housing project in a state of acute physical disrepair, ravaged by neglect and vandalism. The description will fit a rather typical stereotype, one which not only covers the physical conditions, but often is extended to the cause. It is usually expressed as "Our tax dollars built that housing for 'those' people. Look at it now, it's a disgrace! We put it up and 'they' tear it down ... remember how nice it use to be ...' or words to that effect. The comment, however crude or laced with disparaging epithets, is an all too common perception.

To place the Jersey City experience in perspective, and to call into question the assumptions—especially those relating to causes—inherent in the above stereotype, certain aspects of the Public Housing Program need to be called to the reader's attention.

NATIONAL BACKGROUND

The Public Housing Program represents the most predominant form of federal housing assistance for lower income families and individuals that persists to date. Since its inception in 1937, it has produced approximately 1.3 million housing units (usually apartments), serves a population of approximately 3.4 million persons, and represents an investment of about 20 billion dollars of public funds, with current annual expenditures being approximately 1.6 billion. The Program is administered at the federal level by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and at the local level by approximately 3,000 Public Housing Authorities, autonomous agencies with a permanent staff, usually under the direction of an unsalaried Board of Commissioners appointed by the mayor or local governing body. These agencies have been established in local communities (cities, counties, groups of counties or small cities) throughout the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the Territory of the Virgin Islands.[1]

Four points of general background are particularly germane to the circumstances of the demonstration sites.

1. Public Housing is a "housing" program only by secondary legislative intent.

When the Public Housing Program was created by the Housing Act of 1937, the development of "decent, safe and sanitary housing" was at best only one of multiple purposes. The Act clearly indicates that the production of housing units was authorized as a means to create construction jobs and to stimulate a depressed

housing industry and thereby "alleviate present and recurring unemployment."[2] The original Housing Act was passed as a New Deal economic measure, not as a "housing" program.

The second major piece of legislation, the Housing Act of 1949, did state a goal of a decent home and suitable living environment for every American family, but it was to implement the goal primarily through slum clearance and private redevelopment. The public housing provision of the Act was authorized only because the program would serve as a "relocation resource" for families who would be displaced by the land clearance provisions of the legislation.[3]

Eugene Meehan's recent analysis of the program summarizes the point well,

> In both the 1937 and 1949 housing acts, the major articulated concerns were unemployment and slum clearance; the provision of housing for persons of low income was a peripheral rather than a central goal.[4]

2. The Public Housing Program was not intended for the tenant population who have comprised its tenancy for at least the past two decades.

When the Public Housing Program was first constituted, it targeted families experiencing the economic consequences of the Depression; it was oriented towards a "temporarily submerged middle class" or a "dislocated, working class."[5] It was not intended for the poorest of families. This point is best illustrated by the financial structure of the program, which required that the cost of operations (administration, management and maintenance, utilities, payments in lieu of taxes, equipment and structure replacement, etc.) would be offset solely by income derived from tenant rents. No operating subsidy was to be provided by the federal administration. This fiscal arrangement clearly targeted a tenant population having the income capacity to pay for the cost of their own apartments, excepting only capital indebtedness.[6]

The majority of the recent public housing population, with approximately three out of every four households being primarily dependent on welfare, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security, and other forms of public income assistance,[7] would not have made the first cut for admission. It seems quite clear that neither the legislators nor the legislation that created the program in any way intended to serve the tenant population who for two decades have lived and continue to live in public housing.

3. The Program's fiscal design remained unaltered despite a radical shift in clientele.

The provisions that required tenant rents to offset operating costs did not initially seem an unreasonable proposition, and through the '40s it even appeared quite viable. The market assumptions inherent in the financial scheme coincided rather well with historical circumstance through the program's first decade. The fiscal plan assumed a consistent demand by a tenant population with incomes and rent-paying ability that would rise in proportion to, and thereby keep pace with, program operating costs. Workers in defense-related industries and production jobs generated by World War II created a growing demand for low-cost housing. Their influx into the public housing made available to them could not have better fit the mold. Their relatively high rent-paying capacity more than offset operating costs, which were relatively low given the newness of the developments.

However, pursuant to the 1949 Housing Act, which (as noted) cast the public housing program in the role of "relocation resource" for families displaced by land clearance projects, there was an influx of residents with lower incomes than their '40s counterparts. This occupancy trend towards families with lower rent-paying ability was further exacerbated by:

> A provision of the Housing and Home Finance Agency (HUD's predecessor department) which required that families whose incomes exceeded a maximum limit for "continued occupancy" be evicted from public housing as "over-income," and
>
> Liberalized eligibility provisions for mortgage insurance (FHA/VA, low down payments and loan guarantees), which facilitated increased home purchases (usually in the developing suburbs). These provisions accelerated outmigration from the cities in general and public housing in particular, by the no longer "submerged middle class"; in turn, it decreased the demand by a relatively higher income market.[8]

With an economically poorer clientele, rent-paying ability declined and in turn so too did rental income. The Program's fiscal design remained unaltered. With costs rising due to both inflation and the age of the developments, the gap between income and expenses began to widen.

4. Public Housing design and construction has been dominated by a short-sighted production mentality rather than long-term viability.

The Public Housing Program has been dominated by a production orientation, rather than emphasizing the long-term functionality and livability of the housing developments. From the inception of the program, legislation and federal administration have focused on the number of dwellings to be constructed and the cost of developing the authorized units. Program emphasis and oversight, therefore, were geared towards those actions in the first few years of a development's history, i.e., prior to the development actually being occupied, rather than during its useful life. The many factors that critically affect the long-term viability of a development, from site selection through durability, were given short shrift.

The quality of project design and construction acutely suffered under this production mentality. Commenting on the infamous (and now demolished) Pruitt-Igoe developments in St. Louis, Eugene Meehan's recent analysis, *The Quality of Federal Policy-Making: Programmed Failure in Public Housing,* notes:

> On the day they were completed, the buildings in Pruitt-Igoe were little more than steel and concrete rabbit warrens, poorly designed, badly equipped, inadequate in size, badly located, unventilated and virtually impossible to maintain. The conditions inside unventilated, over-crowded apartments in an eleven-story building on a typically hot and humid summer day in St. Louis defy imagination.[9]

Federal policy towards public housing was without concern that the buildings constructed were ever meant to be lived in.

These historical parameters converged to take an awesome toll on the viability of the program, the projects and their residents. Occupancy by an unintended clientele with reduced rent-paying capacity and rising costs of operations closed in upon program administrators and residents as a relentlessly grinding millstone.

As the permanently dependent poor, who could ill afford large rent increases, became the predominant tenants, the gap between income and expenses continued to widen. Operating reserves, intended for replacement of equipment and structures, were expended as a stopgap to offset initial operating deficits. Physical plants, therefore, were not given due attention, which in turn caused operating costs to further escalate. The absence of quality control over initial construction and the attendant absence of concern for the long-term durability of the physical structures became more and more evident with age and use.

A debilitating cycle was inexorably set in motion, and led to further increasing costs. Services declined; resident frustration heightened; crime and extensive vandalism became the norm. Maintenance was deferred; capital improvements ceased, and the physical plants further deteriorated. Operating costs continued to mount. Those families who could afford to move out did so. Vacancies increased and relative project income further declined. In order to maintain in occupancy and/or attract higher income families, housing authorities needed to provide the very services that were being cut back and the improvements in general project conditions that they could no longer afford.

Apart from a series of meager operating subsidies authorized during the '60s for certain classes of tenants, it was not until 1969 that even a segment of the escalating dilemma was addressed. In the wake of an unprecedented tenant rent strike at Pruitt-Igoe and a number of other deteriorating housing developments in St. Louis, Missouri, Congress adopted the "Brooke Amendments," named for their chief sponsor, then Senator from Massachusetts, Edward M. Brooke. The Amendments addressed the inordinate proportion of family income being paid for rent by even the poorest of project residents (50 percent or more was not uncommon).[10] "Brooke I" prohibited housing authorities from charging more than 25 percent of annual family income for rent; the second and third Brooke amendments defined and clarified "income."[11] The Amendments relieved part of the financial plight of thousands of tenants, but did little to ease the exponentially widening gap between declining project income and soaring operating costs. The level of additional federal subsidy (also authorized by the Amendments) was not only immediately inadequate, but also would be grossly insufficient to accommodate for future reductions in project income caused by the rent limitation itself.

As large inner-city projects became more and more the "housing of last resort," housing authorities were less and less able to service their clients, and site residents became less and less able to cope. In response, or rather reaction, to worsening fiscal and physical conditions through the '70s, Congress authorized additional monies for operating subsidies and capital improvements. HUD, in turn, instituted a series of subsidy distribution methods, management improvement efforts, and modernization programs. Although it is tempting to put forth a caustic critique of the federal stew, suffice it to note that federal policy and practice regarding public housing continued to be and remain "much too little, much too late." Eugene Meehan concludes:

> The evidence generated by the study (of the public housing program) is extensive, detailed and consistent;

> the effect is uniformly damning in its indictment of existing institutional arrangements. The record shows change without improvement, experience without learning, distressing insensitivity to the plight of the unfortunate and action in blatant disregard for the consequences.
>
> At no time in history has the federal government examined the public housing program in reasoned terms.... Instead, HUD and its predecessors served as a distributing agency for resources known to be inadequate ...the kinds of policies HUD has produced are a travesty of those needed to do the job seriously and efficiently.[12]

When you read, therefore, of Jersey City's circumstance at the outset of the demonstration and of the conditions prevailing at the target sites, or even if you see or hear of one of those "projects" and are about to lament its fate or decry its future, please note well that public housing is a "housing" program only by secondary intent; that it was in no way intended for the tenant population who now reside in it; that it was constructed more for "construction" as an end in itself than for livability; and that the program's fiscal structure bound the developments, its administrators, and residents to a debilitating series of daily parameters. And as the program and its principals slid into hell, not one reasonable step was taken to prevent the descent.

LOCAL BACKGROUND

Jersey City's Housing Authority, established in 1938, owns and operates 3,700 apartments located on nine housing sites, eight for families and one for the elderly. The complexes range in age from 39 to 15 years and in size from 190 to 710 units. The developments house approximately 11,000 persons, 45 percent of whom are under 18 years of age. Three-fourths of households are Black, 9 percent are Hispanic, and 16 percent are White. Public assistance is the primary source of income for slightly more than 70 percent of households.*

Jersey City's program has mirrored the economic and social dynamics besetting the public housing program nationwide. By the early '70s, six of the Authority's family developments were in abominable physical condition. The general inner-city project litany—inoperable utility systems, deteriorated structural facilities, wanton vandalism, infested heaps of debris, vacancies, etc., etc.—was in evidence to a repugnant degree. Even HUD, which is not prone to lodge too severe a protest against local administrations (since the criticism may reflect on its own monitoring capacity) took note of project conditions. Its Newark Area Office conducted a "Consolidated Management Review" of Jersey City operations in 1972 which concluded that there exist "serious deterioration of property and major deficiencies in management and property maintenance... an enormous backlog of maintenance

*The Authority also administers a 100-unit Section 23 Leased Housing Program (1965) and a 400-unit Section 8 Existing Housing Program (1975), under which apartments in the private sector are subsidized. The Authority is developing 140 units of Section 8 New Construction (1980) and 180 units of conventional public housing via the Turnkey method (1980). Annual operating expenses are approximately $10,000,000, capital expenditures are $3.5 million/year, and special grant programs amount to approximately $1.5 million/year.

jobs...and that notwithstanding the large sums being spent in the maintenance area, the extent of deterioration of the physical plant of a number of projects is alarming....Our survey shows that generally the plants are in deplorable condition and inefficiently operated."[13] As one walked through even the exterior grounds of the project, it was as if one were viewing the aftermath of a military engagement between the Rommel and Patton tank corps.

The non-physical aspects of Authority administration were also in a sorry state. The HUD Report noted:

- questionable procurement and contracting procedures
- considerable defects in personnel policies
- tenant complaints are not given the attention they deserve and there is lack of identity and sensitivity of Authority staff with project residents
- serious security problems in most of the developments
- the financial condition of the Authority is in a critical stage...It is incumbent upon the Authority to seek ways to improve its financial posture and to do everything within its power to avoid jeopardizing the operation of its low-rent program.[14]

Authority staff did not seem in a position to "seek" anything but, quite literally, the safety of their double-locked offices. It was as if the majority of family projects and their residents had been found gangrenous and were simply severed from any connection to the body of the program. To add to the chaos, files lacked any semblance of order, almost a million dollars of unpaid fuel bills were literally piled on a radiator cover, what payments were being made to vendors were months behind, lines of administrative accountability could not be found, etc., etc.

Adding to the malaise was, of course, the political heritage which is part and parcel to Hudson County and Jersey City. Stories of Frank Hague's "I am the Law" machine and its successor organization, headed by boss John V. Kenny, abound in the folklore of this blue-collar town of row-houses and railroad tracks. For the City's quarter of a million people, politics is neither a pastime nor a profession—it's a way of life. This congenital preoccupation tends to breed a rampant system of patronage, under which public positions are filled by "the faithful." (The term is a polite euphemism for political cronies who have no more competence for their jobs than the local hot-dog vendor.)

Indeed, the Housing Authority had its share of "loyal supporters," who did little to ease the general plight of the program, its developments or its residents. However, it must also be noted that their impact was at most contributory and in no way causative. For the Authority also had a significant cadre of staff who exerted what energies they had to hold back a national tide. They (as well as Jersey City's own) were mere pawns, or rather checkers, in a game of castles and bishops.

The Authority's staff stood totally overwhelmed by legislative, historical, and financial circumstance, while the residents of the housing sites remained the victims of public default. National trends had reduced Jersey City's public housing program to a state of operational catatonia. The bitter anger and frustration of site residents had been unmistakably etched on the battered walls of all too many dark, bleak hallways.

III. AN INITIAL STRATEGY

By the spring of 1973, as a result of political upheaval in the City, the composition and leadership of the Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners had radically altered and a new executive staff took tenure. Officials who had earned a reputation for "getting things done" were lend-leased from the City's Redevelopment and Model Cities agencies and from HUD's Newark Area Office and New York Regional Office. For the next eight months, all policy decisions affecting Authority operations were made by personnel who literally didn't work for it—an informal version of legal receivership.

Given the benefit of hindsight, what seemed at the time a most acute liability may have been the Authority's most notable asset. It was broke. The convenient assumption that money is the solution had to be thrown out and the Authority was forced into new, uncharted directions.

National policy and the Authority's state of program administration only aggravated its fiscal plight. The Nixon Administration had declared a moratorium on all federal spending for housing. There was as much chance of addressing an estimated $50,000,000 of rehabilitation needs as there was of Nixon himself moving into one of the projects. Even given a more favorable political milieu, candor reduced the question to "Who in hell would invest in this mess?" A bankrupt present and pessimistic grant future forced the Authority in two directions simultaneously.

First, the Authority was compelled to reject any at-large strategy. Allocating acutely limited resources to all severely distressed sites (at least five developments with over 2,000 apartments) would have had the net impact of spitting in the ocean. Equity notwithstanding, the only reasonable plan of attack seemed to be to target a specific site for initiating a "turn-about" effort. Second, the Authority was forced to ground the target effort in resources other than monetary, to turn to the ultimate consumers of the public housing product—the tenants themselves. Retrospect allows concluding that site residents have proven to be the most INVALUABLE of all resources. Yet at the time, a strategy dependent upon the tenants as its fulcrum was indeed problematic.

Contrary to popular stereotype, lower-income populations are as diverse in attitude and behavior as any other group of persons who are merely similar in economic circumstances. This diversity, as well as the gamut of issues to be addressed, required development of a mechanism for exchanging information and a structure for decision-making. Both would be prerequisite to facilitating much-needed dialogue and negotiations and in establishing a working relationship

between the Authority and the residents. The existing "tenant councils," groups of purported representatives of the residents at each site, provided only questionable mechanisms and tenuous structures.

Although often comprised of some stalwart tenants, the councils had been unable to catalyze improved conditions at respective sites and were, therefore, perceived with apathy, or not even recognized, by prospective constituencies. Council meetings were often little more than individually oriented "bitch-sessions." Since their "partner" in residential management had been reduced to impotence, the councils' state was understandable. Their existence was itself an improbability under the circumstances. Nonetheless, if mutual problems were to be substantively broached, a radically altered organizational base and form were mandated.

The task of reorganizing the tenant populations presented significant complications not easily resolved. An atmosphere of mistrust and failure pervaded the developments. An acute skepticism extended beyond public agencies and officials. A history of unfulfilled promises, neglect, and a confirmed inability to control even segments of their lives had taken an acute emotional and psychological toll. Any reorganizing effort would be forced to confront the most confounding of community dynamics: not frustration or anger (those straight-forward characteristics, when short of violence, are usually organizing assets) but, rather, the more intangible impediment to positive action—despair. Nothing less than a direct and ambitious tenant reorganization effort would suffice. It demanded recognizing that sensitive sounding words from "obviously" well-intentioned persons wouldn't be worth a damn. The organizing effort required recognition that the tenants had had enough surveys taken about "their needs," good intentions levied upon them, and programs "fostered for their welfare," to impoverish generations.

If the tenants were to become a significant residential resource, if a critical level of trust were to be established, the organizing enterprise must produce concrete **results**, dramatic improvements, and in short order. The organizing issues must be commonly perceived by the tenants as being in their own **self-interest.** The organizing process must generate resident **self-confidence,** as well as foster the linkage of both **rights and responsibilities.**

The initial target for catalyzing the turn-about and reorganizing effort was the A. Harry Moore site. It is a multifamily complex of seven 12-story, reinforced concrete and brick buildings, arranged in a misshapen oval, with 662 original apartments of one to four bedrooms. First occupied in 1954, its 7.6 acres (yielding a density of 85 apartments per acre) are bounded by a state highway on the west, a residential strip of two- and three-family homes to its east, a county park to its south, and a cemetery to its north. The development's households were 73 percent Black, 13 percent Hispanic, and 14 percent White; 68 percent were single-parent households, and 11 percent were headed by elderly persons.

In the spring of that year, site conditions were rancid. Ten of the site's 14, urine-stenched elevators were inoperable and had been for almost half a year. Several vandalized public spaces had reached an engulfing state of squalor. Approximately 19 percent of the apartments had been abandoned, with vacancies increasing at a rate of almost fifteen per month. The Kolodny Evaluation graphically characterized the buildings as having a "dungeon-like" atmosphere. Site residents' comments were even more poignant: "Things are so bad that they'll break in and take your things while you're asleep"; "The only folks who live here are those who have nowhere else to go."

Typifying the myopic design of public housing in the fifties, A. Harry Moore's twelve-story residential monoliths surround stark exterior grounds, often and accurately referred to as "no-man's land," 1974.

Initiating a revitalization effort in one of Dante's rings might seem somewhat paradoxical. Yet, if one dovetailed the requirements for physical rehabilitation with the organizing mandate before both tenants and staff, existing conditions were judged an asset. Although A. Harry Moore was indisputably up against a crumbling brick wall on a dead-end street, it also had only one way to go. For tenants involved in the effort, the slightest success could generate much-needed self-confidence. Even minor accomplishments offered a springboard for expanding the base of tenant interest and, therefore, for augmenting organizational potential.

A. Harry Moore at that time epitomized the axiom that public housing doesn't and can't work, and that there is no distinction between "projects" and "slums." For the Authority's part, if this maxim could be challenged, not only would the credibility of tenant leadership be improved, but also the Authority's ability to attract sorely needed monies would be significantly enhanced. If A. Harry Moore could be diverted from its impending Pruitt-Igoe-like fate (the abandoned and now demolished St. Louis, Missouri housing complex) federal officials and legislators might be offered investment ratings too embarrassing to turn down.

Besides this "negative" asset, A. Harry Moore seemed to offer a few straightforward positives. It was headquarters for the Bureau of Housing Security, an arm of the Jersey City Policy Department (J.C.P.D.), whose objective was to deter crime in Jersey City's three family high-rise sites, A. Harry Moore, Curries Woods (712 units) and Montgomery Gardens (462 units). Funded under a State Law Enforcement and Planning Agency grant in 1972, the Bureau was comprised of a 20-man unarmed guard force, supervised by a dozen J.C.P.D. uniformed officers. The unit's commander emphasized, and the Bureau was therefore oriented toward, promoting "resident participation" in improving project security.

More importantly, and despite abysmal circumstances, a group of A. Harry Moore tenants were the first to contact the new Authority staff and express interest in doing something positive to improve conditions. They had already taken the

initiative and re-painted two hallways in one of the site's buildings. The involved residents were a combination of tenant council stalwarts and members of Concerned Citizens, an independent tenant association, which had successfully established a pre-natal clinic at the site. They represented at least solidly tenured residents, and a potential leadership base for the organizing effort.

The Authority and the initial A. Harry Moore tenant group held a series of meetings in which work priorities, monetary and manpower resources, the implications of beginning at A. Harry Moore, and respective tenant-Authority roles were batted about. A bargain was struck. Its basic elements were:

- The Authority would, with available resources, rehabilitate the interior public areas (lobbies, stairwells, and hallways) of one building in A. Harry Moore;
- The initial tenant group would organize, with the assistance of Authority staff, the residents of the designated building to assist in maintaining the executed work, preventing vandalism, and improving building security;
- The primary mechanism for rendering this assistance would be the establishment of a "lobby-sitting" program and schedule, through which tenant **volunteers** would monitor building access in groups of three to four, from 7 to 11 P.M., six days a week;
- The Authority would proceed with rehabilitation only if the newly forming tenant-building organization continued to assist in maintaining the improvements.

This program skeleton seemed to fulfill strategy prerequisites on a number of fronts.

Of all the rehabilitation items on A. Harry Moore's agenda, interior public spaces offered an inexpensive point of departure, at least compared with apartment, utility lines, or exterior grounds work. The gouged and graffitied lobbies, hallways, and stairwells lent dramatic potential for highly visible improvements. And the rehabilitation itself could be accomplished in short order. The Authority and the emerging resident leadership, therefore, could begin to establish previously absent credibility. The hallways, stairwells, and lobbies also represented areas of common use and therefore, it was hoped, of common concern to all building residents. This commonality of self-interest could become an anchor for the group cohesion required by the reorganizing mandate.

The necessary "rights and responsibilities" linkage also seemed to be well served. The lobby monitoring task would, it was hoped, establish that any residential revival effort was an unqualified **two-way street.** Without the functional participation of building tenants, rehabilitation efforts would be ephemeral. (Prior to the former administrator's throwing in the towel, they had, on occasion, replaced a building entrance or exit door; it lasted, however, only a few hours.) More importantly, the continuation of the building refurbishing was contingent upon the continued physical presence of the monitoring tenant volunteers. Thus, the achievement of improved conditions would depend primarily on indigenous commitment and developing community ability.

IV. A. HARRY MOORE

THE ORGANIZING PROCESS

Once agreement between the Authority and the initial A. Harry Moore tenant group had been reached on the basic elements of the evolving program and that efforts would be initially concentrated in one building, tenant leaders and Authority staff set about soliciting the active participation of at least 40 percent of the households within the designated building.* Organizing methods varied according to the initiator, the audience, and the situation. However, the following basic approaches were employed by both residents and staff, in an intense series of small group and building-wide meetings:

- The initially involved tenants, especially those from the designated building, spearheaded the organizing effort—a credibility prerequisite;
- The Authority's staff posture was that residents should not believe anything said. Rather, wait and see if the relatively modest promises being made were kept—a programmatic prerequisite;
- Both parties emphasized the positive support of the other, in soft-selling the plan or in at least stirring enough curiosity to meet and talk about it;
- Both parties mutually scheduled a neighbor-by-neighbor, floor-by-floor scenario, although, at the time, there wasn't much "neighborliness" anywhere.

Initial tenant response was gradual and varied, following no discernible pattern of age, income, family size, or race. It ranged from "Get your butt out-a-here!" (or words to that effect) to, "It's about time; I'm trying to bring my kids up right. A. Harry Moore is what I can afford and we have to do something!"

Integral to the potential effectiveness of the door-knocking and living room chats was the Authority's ability to execute the agreed upon improvements. Given the agency's disorganized state, accomplishing even the most straightforward of rehabilitation tasks presented a formidable hurdle. In order to deliver the Authority's part of the bargain, it was necessary to:

*Forty percent (or 36 adults from 90 apartments) was the estimated minimum number of lobby monitors needed to establish a potentially effective volunteer force, i.e., 2 evening/shifts (7-9 and 9-11 P.M.). 3 persons/shift, 6 days/week.

• Unearth from encrusted employee rolls, or hire, with monies not even available on paper budgets, personnel from outside the agency who were capable of performing plastering, brick-laying, welding, carpentry, glazing, electrical, plumbing, painting and tiling work.

• Piece together a semi-rational purchasing procedure, in order to insure that the workmen were provided with needed tools and materials. At that time, the purchasing "system" handled requisitions for materials from each project, one-by-one, until the paper piled a foot or so high, and then "caught up" by pushing the pile into the waste basket!

• Search out vendors and suppliers who'd still do business with the Authority, or more accurately, to whom the Authority wasn't in debt.

• Develop and adhere to a rehabilitation schedule that was synchronized with material delivery, manpower availability, and tenant organizing efforts. And to provide for inspection of the quantity and quality of scheduled work on almost a daily basis.

There wasn't time for a comprehensive administrative reorganization, complete with charts, forms and procedural manuals. The Authority was forced to take an approach most antithetical for an established bureaucracy—Do what is necessary to get the job done.

As tenants witnessed improvements actually being executed and the few promises made being kept, skepticism gradually turned to circumspection. With participation at a 20-25 person per building level, involved tenants and staff visited some New York City Housing Authority developments where tenant patrol programs had effectively improved site security. The New York City sites paralleled our intentions in both the structure of building organizations and the security focus of the effort. Through meeting with and seeing tenant peers in analogous circumstances, the self-confidence of A. Harry Moore residents was augmented and expectation levels raised. Also, Authority staff no longer found it necessary to keep their fingers crossed, at least not quite so tightly.

Through this relative flurry of activity, an inching spiral of tenant organizing and building improvements found its way to the lobby of the first building. As Authority workers adjusted the building's new exit door, residents set up their card table, around which would sit the first group of lobby-monitors. They would greet fellow participants and maybe chat about the program. They'd be neighborly toward building residents not yet convinced enough to volunteer. And they would let "visitors" know, by their very presence, that open season was over.

Bureau of Housing Security brass scurried about, hoping that their few tenant training sessions would at least restrain resident volunteers from taking on armed intruders with their bare hands. Identifying buttons (designed by building tenants) were distributed to the more than 30 volunteers scheduled for the various lobby-sitting shifts. A ledger book, in which all visitors would be asked to "sign in" and in which volunteers would log their own attendance, was prominently displayed on the most visible corner of the table.

As tenants, staff, and a few onlookers toasted the occasion with slightly spiked punch, as reciprocal smiles, handshakes, and good wishes were exchanged, one knew that at least a first milestone had been achieved. Yet, just slightly beneath the event's amenities was more apprehension than any of the participants cared to

admit, either to each other or to themselves. A former building captain reflected well on that summer's evening, "Yes, I was glad we were finally getting started and I couldn't wait 'til the organizing and improvements began in my building, but at the same time I was thinking, 'I wonder if any of this is going to work?' "

The following months offered a most positive response to the building captain's query. Again taking off on some New York City models, tenants began decorating their hallways well beyond the Authority's "basic beige" coat of paint. Murals, framed pictures, bright sanitas designs, and other enhancing additions appeared in hallway after hallway.

The lobby-watchers not only adhered to the monitoring schedule, but also (and for the future more importantly) turned the lobby monitoring into a mini-social event. Hardly a tenant passed the card table without stopping for at least brief conversation. If not about the program, then they'd chat about relatives and kids, recipes, the schools or jobs, the weather and other day-to-day talk. Authority staff had not peceived the extent to which the lobby-monitoring function was more than a vandalism deterrent and security supplement—at least not until the "attendance problem" was discovered.

The volunteer lobby-monitoring task served not only as a security supplement and vandalism deterrent, but also as a vehicle for increasing resident interaction and fostering an organizational base of longer tenure than any immediate issue. (l. to r., Clara Rivera, then-building captain, currently TMC Building Manager; Sr. Virginia M. Keane, then-floor captain, currently Chairwoman, HA Board of Commissioners; Nellie Dennis, then-floor captain, currently Vice-Chairwoman, AHM-TMC Board of Directors; and Gloria Robinson, one of the first and most effective volunteer building captains that the Housing Authority has had the good fortune to know, 1975.)

Approximately six weeks into the effort, it was noticed that two volunteers' names consistently reappeared in the sign-in ledger, for their own scheduled shifts, and a number of others. Authority staff became concerned that they were substituting for volunteers whose early enthusiasm had waned. We were pleasantly surprised (and a bit humbled) when the building captain quipped, "What's the matter with you people? You have to learn to trust us." With an unmistakable smirk, a most gracious lady explained that when other volunteers arrived, the two tenants usually offered to cover a second shift. "Our tenants are still on-line; these two ladies just like to lobby-sit." As her semi-cocky expression turned to an assuring smile, she noted: "It's the first time they've been out of their apartments in years."

The gradually growing atmosphere of neighborliness also assisted the organization's effectiveness in curbing vandalism perpetrated by tenants of the building itself, usually free-roaming youngsters and friends. Prior to the organizing effort, hallway noise and disturbances elicited the flipping of a third security lock and positioning the Doberman/Shepherd just behind the apartment entrance door. Three or four months into the program, at least some locks were opened and a few interested neighbors started taking the time and trouble to find out who was doing what. Tenants came to know that they wouldn't be alone—and so, too, did potential vandals.

The program evoked a semi-positive response even from a few of the Authority's maintenance staff. The emasculation of some workers' productivity, particularly the more skilled, had not only been caused by the Authority's administrative ineptness and the State Civil Service system, but also by the products of their work being ripped-up or -off, barely after completion. Seeing this pattern begin to partially abate through the efforts of the tenant organization offered an unexpected respite from the long-standing futility of performing assigned work.

Most evidential of the enterprise catching on was the response of tenants from other buildings. Since the inception of lobby-monitoring, it was not uncommon for friends and relatives residing in the site's six other buildings to stop in and see for themselves if any of what they'd heard was true. As word spread that the promised rehabilitation was actually being executed, and as tenants saw that the improvements were being maintained through the efforts of their peers, interest in the program grew. This afforded building leaders and involved staff a conducive entreé to extend the effort to the remaining buildings. The mutual pitch for expanding the enterprise was to emphasize the *quid pro quo* aspect of the program. It was also to dovetail the extension and sequence of building rehabilitation with the contingent willingness of tenants to follow the example of their organized peers. Recent interviews with early building leaders confirmed that the "two-way street" message, knitting Authority-tenants' responsibilities, was received loud and clear.

The development of the second and third organizations, attendant refurbishing, and lobby-monitoring efforts progressed well beyond expectations over the course of the next four or five months. The Authority's credibility and tenants' self-confidence had been enhanced by the dramatically visible products of the initial effort. An extra organizing plus was provided when tenants residing in buildings other than the pilot, began to suspect that they were being visited by at least their fair share of muggers and vandals who no longer found the organized building an easy mark.

As weeks merged into months, each new building organization manifested

distinctive variations in style, pace, personalities, leadership, etc. The basic scenario, however, remained patterned after the pilot building, i.e., the security emphasis, floor-by-floor organizing, New York City Housing Authority visits, the dovetailing of tenant organizing with physical rehabilitation, the building captain/floor captains structure, and the evening lobby-sitting function.

Word of A. Harry Moore activity had also spread to a second site, where a group of tenants had themselves begun to organize, in a fashion, paralleling the A. Harry Moore "model"—two points for the projects' grapevine. They contacted involved staff and asked (or, more accurately, prodded) when the program could be initiated at Curries Woods, the largest of Authority sites (712 units).

The staff had not conducted even an informal comparison of Curries Woods' population with A. Harry Moore's. A working trust between tenant leaders and staff had not yet been developed. And there was only the most casual assessment of the site's physical rehabilitation requirements relative to available Authority resources. Nevertheless, as will be described later, the Authority proceeded to initiate the program in Curries Woods' first building and shortly thereafter in its second.

As the first holiday season approached, it seemed that, although formative, a positive feedback system was emerging between the Authority and the tenant organizations. Its potential on numerous residential fronts seemed well beyond original expectations. What was not as evident, however, was the extent to which the newly forming partnership pivoted on the meeting of mutually rising expectations.

THE DCA GRANT

The Authority had recognized that in the near future it would be necessary to secure capital grants sufficient to address the more substantive rehabilitation work required at the target sites, e.g., replacement of boilers and underground utility systems, exterior grounds improvements, and interior apartment rehabilitation, especially kitchen and bathroom modernization. Though hallway and stairwell refurbishing seemed to more than serve its catalytic purpose (at least at A. Harry Moore; at Curries Woods it was too early to tell) it left unaddressed the major work items essential to restoring the physical integrity of the housing complexes. It was presumed, through both necessity and naivete, that the modest improvements being executed would suffice in carrying organizational efforts to the time when substantial capital would be both nationally available and locally accessible. We were wrong.

By early 1974, only six months into the program, the Authority had managed so to overextend itself that agreed-upon rehabilitation schedules were not being met. Inspections slackened and the quality of rehabilitation declined. Building organizational meetings were missed and others attended without adequate staff preparation. As the number of involved buildings increased, visits by Authority brass with lobby volunteers became proportionally fewer.

The buildings organizations' response was in kind. Where rehabilitation and lobby monitoring were well under way, building leaders lodged severe complaints that the Authority was not upholding its end of the bargain. Where program efforts had been initiated more recently, organizational participation declined. And where residents were anxiously awaiting the commencement of rehabilitation, tenant

organizing efforts were either terminated or directed against the reneging Authority.

Circumstances seemed ironic. Tenant expectation levels had been intentionally raised and the Authority was failing to meet them. The revitalization strategy was grounded in reciprocity and the Authority was failing to reciprocate. Program expansion pivoted on its own momentum and we were impeding that very impetus. And on all three self-inflicted counts, the enterprise was experiencing attendant participatory fall-out. Tenant leaders and Authority staff had been so successful in catalyzing the effort that the future of the entire endeavor was in jeopardy.

After purging typical levels of group self-pity, it was recognized that the Authority must augment its rehabilitation capacity in order to at least keep pace with resident organizing efforts. The appropriate source for substantial funding was public housing's primary monetary sponsor, the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. Based upon improvements accomplished, a case for funding was gradually developing. However, the Authority needed an interim and more immediate source to sustain the effort until federal funds could be secured. It found an intelligent and amenable partner in the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Housing Demonstration Program.*

After a series of meetings between DCA staff and Authority-Tenant Organization principals, a grant application was developed. State officials inspected program results, proposal content was critiqued, and in relatively short order (May of '74) a grant award of $121,000 was announced. The general purpose of the eighteen-month grant, one of six housing management demonstrations state-wide, was to:

> demonstrate a new approach to public housing management, resulting in maintaining building improvements in public housing complexes and to further prove that a real sense of community is possible in low-income, high density projects[1]

Grant dollars were targeted to sustain the by-products of efforts to date and extend the organizing and rehabilitation work to remaining buildings throughout A. Harry Moore and Curries Woods. It was hoped that the enterprise might offer duplicative models for other severely distressed public housing sites and lower income neighborhoods.

One of the key elements of the DCA grant was providing for the continued employment of the Authority's "tenant organizer(s)." The extension and sustenance of the program was recognized as a full-time, professional effort. Resident volunteers had their hands full concentrating on their particular building activities. Involved staff were simultaneously responsible for keeping the lights on for 10,000 plus other public housing residents. The Authority therefore followed one of many bureaucratic imperatives. If there is a new task to be performed, create a new job. However, the post created, "tenant organizer," was not only new but also a bit

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*The purpose of the Housing Demonstration Program is to test new and innovative proposals for eradicating urban deterioration and revitalizing neighborhoods in the areas of neighborhood preservation, housing management, and new housing production.

novel. The Kolodny Evaluation tagged it, "...a type of employee that has little precedent on housing authority staffs."[2]

The uniqueness of the position was that the organizer was *not* to be a link or liaison between the tenants and the Authority, nor to function in the conventional "tenant relations," counselor, public relations, or tenant service roles. The organizer's primary mandate was to develop, promote, SUSTAIN and expand the building-tenant organizations.

Given the dozens of personalities with whom the organizer would be working and the diversity of situations to which he would be responding, the task was as much methodology as a goals-oriented mandate. The tenant organizer would be obliged to invest substantial time with formative tenant organizations (especially at evening meetings) in order to become familiar with the principals and their action agendas, and to offset the perception that he was an "Authority" operative. The organizer would be advising the organizations how to resolve management and maintenance issues rather than solving them himself. He would be assisting the resident associations in securing housing and residentially related services rather than delivering them on behalf of the Authority.

Close coordination of Housing Authority building refurbishing schedules with tenant organizing efforts was a key element in the demonstration program. (l. to r., reviewing improvement schedules, Paul Clemente, HA Chief of Maintenance and Utilities; Dolores Frasier, then-building captain, currently TMC Site Manager; Arthur Pugh, HA Director of Tenant Organization; and Jewell Merritt, then-building captain, currently TMC Board Member, 1974.)

The role offered professional challenges surpassed only by its inherent paradoxes. Contrary to another bureaucratic imperative, the organizer's job performance would be measured by the extent to which he phased out the need for the position, rather than perpetuating its necessity. Also, if an adversary relationship developed between the Authority and the tenant organizations regarding any given issue, the organizer might indeed allow it to run its course. (Although a small group of residents began to cautiously view the Authority in a positive light, the typical adversary relationship between tenant and landlord remained the dominant perception for the vast majority of site residents. And what better unifying force than a common and available enemy?) Yet, the more successful the organizer was in lending subtle assistance to the tenant organizations' quasi-assaults on the bureaucracy, the greater the pressure and resulting workload would become for his employer, a less than endearing achievement.

Nonetheless, to fill this emerging role the Authority, by May of '74, had hired one primary organizer and two assisting organizers, one for A. Harry Moore and one for Curries Woods. Since the financial status of the Authority as of April '74 was still more than $1,000,000 in deficit,* continued HUD approval for these non-boiler-plate organizer slots was at best tenuous. With the DCA grant, the Authority and the tenant organizations could look forward to at least eighteen months of invaluable continuity for these novel and necessary roles.

If viewed from a strict dollars-and-cents perspective, $121,000 seems insignificant when compared with the multi-million dollar federal grants secured in subsequent years. Yet the critical timing and responsiveness of the DCA grant made it invaluable. We had few friends (translate, willing to invest money!) in those early days, and, notwithstanding dollar totals, the DCA grant remains a most significant element in the overall endeavor.

THE ORGANIZING PROCESS CONTINUED

With the grant-related work under way, the *quid pro quo* aspect of the program was reestablished. As the self-interest of the "bargain" was again evident, tenant leaders and Authority staff began to recoup most of the participatory losses of early '74. Through an expanded rehabilitation staff and sufficient administrative backup, the organizing of building residents, establishing of lobby monitors, and refurbishing of interior public spaces was resumed in the initial buildings and extended to the remaining four over the course of the next ten months.

Progress being made by the A. Harry Moore building organizations was especially evident in the developing sophistication of the conduct and content of building meetings, how issues facing the residents were addressed. The point is best illustrated by example.

One A. Harry Moore building, ten months into the organizational effort, was experiencing a rash of hallway graffiti. The building and floor captains met, decided a building-wide meeting was in order, set a date, an agenda, and so advertised. Approximately 40 percent of building residents attended. Inadvertently, the Authority had managed to schedule at the same time and place an "introductory

*18 percent of Budget.

meeting with the residents of a building just beginning to organize. As Authority staff tried to avoid the glares of tenant leaders from the organized building, a rather unique scenario unfolded.

On the left side of the overcrowded Head Start Center, doubling as community hall, approximately 50 residents, seated in rows of metal chairs, were reading or quietly discussing the distributed meeting agenda. They awaited the presentation of the issue by building representatives. On the opposite side of the room was an unseated meandering mill-in lacking the slightest semblance of order. It was complete with wandering, gulping winos, paper bags in hand, proselytizing ministers, self-appointed spokespersons, militant cat-callers, a fair share of residents bitching about their individual problems, and exasperated floor captains asking, "Now just what would you bright bureaucrats suggest we do with—this?!"

Notwithstanding the rather novel progression of the evening's simultaneous activities, the organized building's consensus comment was historically indicative—"My God. That poor building! Look how disorganized they are. What a mess!" Usually collective recall does little justice to specific history, but in viewing the malaise of the 'right' side of the room, tenant leaders and Authority staff alike sensed at least one common emotion—the scene brought back memories.

One of the more concrete indices of site progress was the reduction in number of vacant units. As noted in the original description of site conditions, apartment vacancies had been steadily increasing since the early '70s. By June of '74, 120 units within the development (19 percent) had been permanently abandoned. It was clear that the previous Authority administration had exerted little or no effort to prepare vacated apartments for reoccupancy, which of course exacerbated the problem. However, the new Authority staff were also confronted with the more basic and *a priori* fact that there were no applicants for the apartments (even if they were prepared for occupancy).

Our experience indicates that a high vacancy rate affects the manageability of a development more negatively than any other residential variable. Vacant apartments (especially if long-term) represent continued rental loss and become havens for junkies and assorted derelicts, a base of operations for burglary rings, prime targets for arson, and a source of infestation. Continued vacancies are an unmistakable signal, to residents and non-residents alike, that, notwithstanding an acute demand for low-cost housing, people simply choose not to live in this development and probably with good reason.

As word of the improvements being initiated spread through neighborhood grapevines, a small pool of apartment applicants began to develop. Although not substantial, for the first time in years some interest in moving into A. Harry Moore was in fact being expressed. The Authority, in turn, parlayed a few funding sources and began to tackle at least a portion of the long-term vacancies. Apartment rehabilitation accompanied tenant organizing efforts, again targeting one building at a time, working first on the larger units (which were the most marketable), and from the upper floors through the lower. Over the course of the next eighteen months, the Authority readied for occupancy and rented 70 of the 120 vacant apartments. Thus, instead of almost one-third of the development being abandoned, the vacancy rate was cut in two, from 19 percent to 8 percent. A positive trend had become well evidenced.

Long-term vacancies, more than any other single factor, are a pernicious impediment to effective site management. By early 1974, about 20% of A. Harry Moore's apartments lay "permanently" abandoned. (A typical example, 1974.)

As A. Harry Moore's image slowly improved so too did its marketability; with the assistance of a HUD modernization grant, long-term vacancies were rehabilitated and vacant units were again occupied to a 98% level. (In a recently occupied apartment, HA Deputy Executive Director and Chief of Operations, William J. Lau, chats with new residents, 1976.)

The reduction in the number of vacant units was also an important element in the marked improvement in overall site security during the term of the DCA grant. According to the J.C.P.D.'s Bureau of Housing Security (BHS), major crimes (murder, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, theft, and auto theft) were reduced from a pre-'74 level of three times the Jersey City norm to a level approximately the City average.* With the improved police response that the program had elicited, and with augmented citizen involvement, it does not seem unreasonable to assume that the frequency of reporting crimes had somewhat increased. The reduction in the incidence of crime, therefore, was probably even more dramatic. Interviews with A. Harry Moore tenant leaders confirmed that residents perceived that the incidence of crime, especially the previously commonplace break-in and entry and stairwell mugging, was radically curtailed.

Vandalism was also noticeably reduced throughout the complex. Inspections showed that over three-quarters of executed improvements were maintained. Since the former administration had taken little or no action to remedy vandalized building areas or equipment, no dollar savings could be validly determined. Nonetheless, resident interviews overwhelmingly emphasized that prior to the volunteer effort, "everything would have been destroyed, almost overnight." The Kolodny evaluation noted that,

> Observations and the testimony of tenant leaders confirm that present conditions at the sites are enormously improved over their previous state.... The impact of the refurbishing effort, particularly at A. Harry Moore, is quite dramatic, considering the limitations inherent in the original design and construction.... There are few signs of missing lightbulbs and the amount of graffiti is slight, even in buildings refurbished and painted more than a year ago.[3]

It is important to note, however, that the extent to which improved conditions could be attributed directly to the lobby monitors is somewhat tenuous. The general ethos created by the overall formation and functioning of the building organizations may have been as significant a factor as the monitors themselves. Also, numerous contributory variables were simultaneously affecting crime and vandalism rates, not the least of which was the reduction in the vacancy rate.

Although it is a bit cautious from a security perspective, an insightful assessment as to the utility of organized lobby monitors is put forth in the Kolodny Evaluation. "With the data available, it is not possible to attribute any change in patterns of crime and vandalism to the lobby patrols, per se. This does not mean that the patrol system is unimportant. Quite the contrary, but its significance lies less in its impact on building security, where a guess is that it has some deterrent effect, and more in the fact that the patrols are building blocks in an open-ended organizing process." Professor Kolodny continues,

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*At the time, the noted crimes were referenced as "Part I"; they are more recently listed by the FBI as "Index" crimes. The relative nature of BHS data was the basis for some optimism. The accuracy of traditional methods of reporting, gathering, and analyzing crime data is often questioned. However, the typical "underreporting," in quantitative terms, seemed equally the case for the City and the site.

> To begin with, they (lobby monitors) provide a task around which people can organize and reorganize when activity begins to wane, and they are a symbol to the outside world that the residents care about their buildings. But beyond this, the elements of the building organizations—floor and building captains...*create a basic structure which can be embellished.* With the assistance of an organizer or through an evolutionary process, tenants can begin to expand their focus to include other activities.[4]

The point of the Kolodny critique proved accurate over time. For as individual building organizations became more confident of their own abilities and a sense of building-purpose and group cohesiveness became at least intuitively apparent, the scope of initiatives gradually expanded. A host of "non-security" related activities seemed endlessly being scheduled, e.g., 4th of July events and summer recreation programs, design contests for building logos, gospel sings and cake sales (which generated tenant funds for Halloween parties, senior citizen Thanksgiving and Mother's Day dinners) and an inordinate, if not outright competitive, variety of Christmas parties for the children of each and every building, complete with toys and resident Santa Claus.

More importantly, the Kolodny comments highlight that the importance of the organizing effort was not volunteer lobby-monitors nor security. These represented a specific mechanism and focus only in the immediate. More important, and with more general neighborhood applicability, was the creation of a mechanism, a vehicle—an ORGANIZATION—which over significant time lines could confront the gamut of issues that tend to arise throughout the various phases of a community's life cycles.

Indeed, as A. Harry Moore secured substantial modernization grants,* and with security somewhat in hand, the organization's focus turned toward capital planning. The lobby monitoring function was conducted more informally on each floor in a concierge mode, with formal lobby monitoring being reinstituted only if a specific rash of crime or vandalism occurred. The attention of the leadership became especially focused on developing a comprehensive renovation plan for exterior grounds, including recreation, lighting, walkways, and construction of a community center. By mid-'76, the mettle of the organization was to be further extended and tested. Tenant leaders would accept responsibility for the daily nuts-and-bolts management of the real estate itself.

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*In mid-'75, A. Harry Moore was designated as a recipient of HUD's Target Project Program, Phase I grant, for installation of new underground utility tunnels, exterior site improvements, kitchen and bathroom modernization (approx. $5,000 per unit) along with supplemental software (people program) dollars.

With building security somewhat under control, A. Harry Moore's organization focused their attention on capital planning, in particular the renovation of exterior grounds. (Admiring recently installed recreation equipment, Rev. Robert Blount, Chairman, AHM-TMC Board, left, and Peter M. DePascale, HA Director of Engineering and Construction, 1978.)

TENANT MANAGEMENT

After three years of organizational effort, A. Harry Moore's leadership had gradually emerged. Resident ability and performance were very elegant. Yet, the Housing Authority remained in control of the nuts and bolts of real-estate management:

- routine janitorial tasks—debris and garbage removal, cleaning of public spaces and community facilities, etc.
- requests for apartment repairs, maintenance of mechanical equipment (e.g., elevator, garbage compactors), and emergency maintenance
- the occupancy cycle: move-out, readying apartments for occupancy, intra-site transfers of overcrowded families or under-occupied apartments, applicant eligibility, screening, prioritizing and placement, new tenant orientation, follow-up, through move-out
- dealing with disruptive and/or disorderly tenants and their children, rent delinquents, etc.
- appliance repair and allocation
- site operating budgets, the allocation of limited resources to relatively unlimited needs, etc.

It remained an Authority, whose civil service-protected staff still had more "Who struck John?" stories than politicians have promises and which had not noticeably raised its daily site management performance to an acceptable level.

The Authority had been aware of a St. Louis, Missouri, experience for a number of years. Resident organizations within that City's public housing developments (for the most part analogous to Jersey City's) had endured a bitter and protracted struggle with the local housing authority. Through the experience, tenant organization roles had evolved to a level of management participation that encompassed not only policy recommendations but also the implementation of those policies and the actual administration of related programs. Five Tenant Management Corporations in partnership with St. Louis' radically reorganized Housing Authority had accepted responsibility for and were executing day-to-day operations and management of respective sites.[5] Thus, a potential evolutionary direction for A. Harry Moore and the Authority was in fact in progress. It was even a recommended one. The Kolodny Evaluation concluded with,

> If they (resident leaders and Authority) are successful in taking what is the logical next step—permitting substantial tenant involvement in actual management and operations—they will have enhanced what is already a significant achievement.[6]

There was no necessity for A. Harry Moore to reinvent a wheel.

Besides suggesting a way to address the management issues encumbering A. Harry Moore's action agenda, a St. Louis scenario dovetailed well with organizational mandates. In testimony before the House Subcommittee it was noted, "The (Jersey City's) organization and rehabilitation effort is characterized,

above all qualities, by its dynamic nature. Its mandate is that of all living entities, to grow, strengthen and self-generate or to atrophy and die. This nature is simultaneously the program's most substantive asset and its most threatening liability."[7] To forward A. Harry Moore's momentum, tenant leaders needed to extend the organization's real-estate purview.

Yet the direction and the scope of organizational growth assuredly must emanate from resident leaders themselves, not the bureaucracy's staff. The Authority, therefore, was not lobbying for the St. Louis prototype. The potential consequences of staff ambivalence, however, were accurately noted in the Kolodny Evaluation.

> The Authority gives every indication of looking forward to tenants having a serious role in management, although some of the staff is doubtful if the tenants are ready yet.... The dilemma is that the Authority may undermine its own efforts, underestimating the capacity of tenants to assume the responsibilities of tenant management....[8]

The dilemma was resolved in early '76. HUD announced funding for a National Tenant Management Demonstration Program. Being jointly sponsored by HUD and the Ford Foundation, the Demonstration was intended "to assess the feasibility and test the effectiveness of tenant management as a means of improving operating performance of public housing management and of increasing tenants' satisfaction with their housing."[9] HUD and the Ford Foundation had been convinced that the St. Louis experience was significant enough to warrant testing in other cities. Were management improvements in St. Louis a function of unique circumstances in time? Or, rather, does the enterprise offer a potentially duplicative model for other distressed housing stock and an alternative to the pending Pruitt-Igoe's nationwide? (On a more limited plane, DCA's hopes for the Jersey City effort itself mirrored the intent of the National Demonstration.)

A. Harry Moore resident leaders were eager to accept HUD's invitation to participate for a host of reasons, not the least of which was continued dissatisfaction with the Authority's management performance.

Of the 51 housing authorities considered, 24 applied and six, including Jersey City, were selected as participants.[10] Each demonstration site would structure its tenant management effort along the lines of the St. Louis model. The prototype suggested a particular program sequence:

- A Tenant Management Corporation (TMC) would be established as a private, not-for-profit corporation. It would be governed by an unsalaried Board of Directors comprised of residents elected by the residents of the development.
- The Board would undergo formal training, from nine to twelve months, including familiarization with the public housing program, principles of real estate management, and housing authority operations.
- After sufficient background material was reviewed, the Board would develop policies and establish the rules and regulations by which the development would be governed. Besides being ratified by the community at large, all regulations must be within the parameters of federal

and state law, HUD rules and regulations, and local housing authority policy.

- Once TMC policies and procedures for hiring and employment had been hashed out and adopted, the Board would advertise and hire a management staff, who would be TMC (not housing authority) employees. Site maintenance personnel, though supervised by TMC staff, remain employees of the housing authority.[11]
- The TMC staff (who must be residents of the site) would reflect traditional housing authority positions: site manager, assistant manager or analogue, with the addition of lane or building managers for respective groupings of low-rise and/or high-rise buildings. If funding at any point in time provided for additional social service or security personnel, they too would be TMC employees.
- The TMC staff would undergo an intensive training period from nine to fifteen months, including 12-18 weeks of classroom sessions and on-the-job training, covering housing management principles and practice from soup to nuts.
- Upon completion of the curriculum, the TMC, through its trained staff, assumes responsibility for daily management of the development and becomes accountable to both the housing authority and resident constituents. The housing authority continues to be responsible for the provision of centralized services such as purchasing, insurance, extraordinary maintenance, technical assistance, payroll processing and contract execution, as well as maintaining ownership and being ultimately responsible for the program to HUD and the public.

Though adaptation to local circumstance and needs was made, as appropriate, Jersey City's first venture into tenant management remained substantially faithful to the model.

A. Harry Moore and the Authority had decided to pursue the program whether or not a grant was awarded (although how it would be funded had not exactly been nailed down). By the time HUD formally announced grantees (July '76), elections for the TMC Board had been held and officers had begun their tenure. The elections, administered by the Hudson County Board of Elections, netted a 60 percent plus turnout. All involved seemed to accept the legitimacy of the process and were ready to proceed with the next phase.

Formal Board training began in August and continued through May of '77, once a week, every week, for 3-4 hours. When familiarization with the public housing program, principles of real estate management, and housing authority operations had been completed, development of TMC policy began in earnest. Consensus was the preeminent *modus operandi* for decision-making. Discussion, debate, and compromise resulted in what would typically be considered a "conservative" set of rules and regulations for the development.

- *Disorderly residents:* tenants who are chronically disorderly or disruptive are infringing on the rights of their neighbors and families and should be severely dealt with. (Translated: evicted permanently.) A chat once or twice is usually warranted. Due process will be adhered to. But if the behavior persists, notwithstanding stories, sobs, etc., they're OUT! And parents will be held responsible for the actions of their children.

- *Admission:* A. Harry Moore is not the housing of last resort, not anymore. Decisions shall not be arbitrary or capricious. No "class of people" shall be discriminated against. But the future neighbors of current residents and their children will be a credit to the community.

- *Hallway cleaning:* each household shall have the responsibility of sweeping one-half of their respective hallway floor every day for a month, on a rotating basis (approximately once every five months). Schedule adjustments will be made for the disabled and those senior citizens unable to do so. But, barring inability, no exceptions. Non-compliance will result in the involved party being charged the cost of Authority labor for doing the work. Although proving "negligence" will be difficult, eviction proceedings will be instituted where appropriate.

- *Rent collection and delinquency:* rent must be paid on the first of the month. Don't pay your rent and you'll be evicted. On infrequent occasions an extension may be granted, if unforseeable circumstances arise, as they very well might. But keep in mind that the "circumstances" had best be substantially more than, you "have a lower income." So do your neighbors, the TMC staff and Board members, to whom you will be talking.

- *Etc.:* timely annual re-examination of income, all tenants in occupancy being registered on the lease, no dogs, parking primarily for residents only...

The content of the community regulations developed by the TMC Board was not surprising. It reflected the leadership's recognition of the importance of behavioral order, equity, and administrative predictability. The luxury of daily liberalism was one A. Harry Moore residents could not yet afford.

By the summer of '77, after completing appropriate personnel classes on unions, civil service, equal opportunity, due process, authority policy, etc., the TMC Board hired its management staff. It included a Housing Manager, who would be the Board's chief operations officer and would supervise all site personnel, a Social Coordinator, who would be responsible for developing and implementing social and recreation service efforts, and seven Building Managers, one from each building, who would be responsible for executing management functions in their respective buildings. All TMC employees were required to be residents of the site. Building Managers must also be residents of their respective buildings. Candidates must be current in their rent and have a positive rent-paying history. They must

have "demonstrated a willingness and ability to perform community services that enhance the quality of residential life at A. Harry Moore." Predictably, the veterans were the most qualified applicants. Eight of the nine residents hired were former volunteer floor and building captains since the early days of the effort.

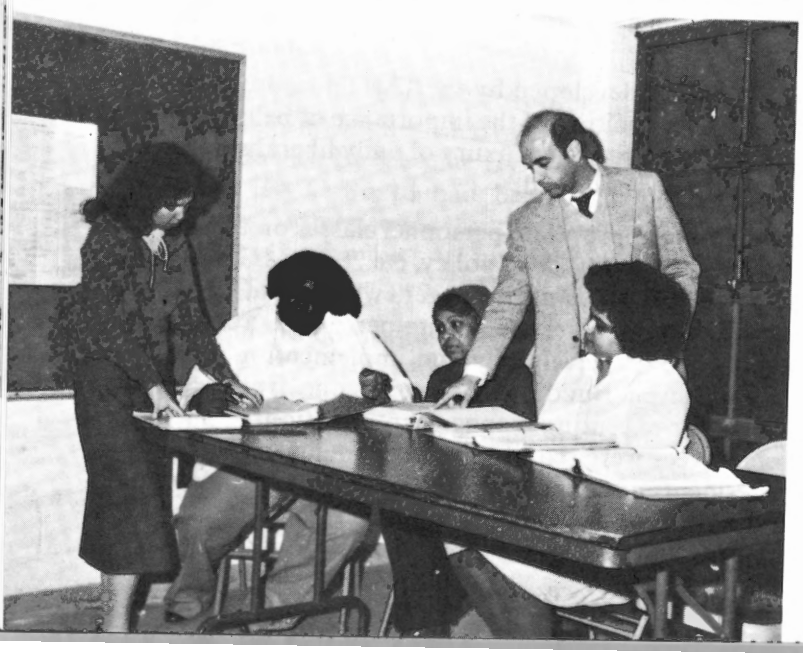
Training

Over the course of the next year, the TMC staff religiously underwent both on-the-job training (OJT) and classroom training. The first two months were spent familiarizing the staff, in a very general way, with the basic practices and systems of the Housing Authority as they relate to site management and with some of the tasks for which they would be responsible. The time served to set an operational context for the scheduled classroom sessions.

The following five months (10/77-2/78) were a combination of classroom (½ day, 3 days/week) and OJT. The classroom curriculum covered a broad range of subject matter from the background of public housing through the development and monitoring of site budgets to how annual income and rent recertifications are computed. The level of detail of each session varied according to the subject matter. Sessions covering the specific tasks that the Building Managers would be required to perform received the most detailed attention; overall Housing Authority and HUD systems were given somewhat less specific coverage, and general program context was reviewed only to the extent necessary to place Tenant Management in historical, fiscal and bureaucratic perspective.

The period of March '78 to September '78 afforded TMC principals, both Board and staff, the opportunity to experience a combined OJT and operational responsibility. (The Housing Authority's site manager was transferred to other duties, off site, as of early spring.) During these six months the TMC-HA relationship simulated *de facto* operating circumstances. Housing Authority

Extensive resident training is an essential prerequisite to effective tenant management. (A class on personnel policies, seated, l. to r., Ola Williams, Clara Rivera, and Desiree Ball, Building Managers; standing, l. to r., Grace Malley, HA Director of Personnel, and Richard D. Baron of McCormack, Baron Associates, primary training consultant to the TMC Program, 1978.)



central office supervisory staff continued OJT reviews, often pursuant to TMC staff request and occasionally when TMC staff's handling of a management situation seemed to require intervention.*

The entire training period (a summary sequence is presented in Table IV.1) may be characterized as heartening, difficult, and invaluable. It was heartening to Housing Authority staff because it confirmed almost all of the potential which had been projected for site residents based upon experience in the voluntary phase of site organization. TMC principals exhibited refreshing common sense regarding almost all issues raised, an acute insight into site problems from the various tenant viewpoints and into probable tenant reactions to responses and programs proposed to resolve site issues, an enthusiastic willingness to learn, and an undeniable capacity to acquire the skills necessary to manage the development. One could not help but reflect upon how many years—and, probably, lives—had been wasted under a debilitating, self-perpetuating welfare system (almost all TMC staff had previously been unemployed recipients of AFDC Welfare) as opposed to what was evolving under Tenant Management and could have been recognized and nurtured long ago.

The training seemed heartening to TMC principals because they finally were getting paid (a matter of no little import and deserving of due consideration) for the utilization of their time and talents. And because it was well evidenced (by the expenditure of time and money) that the Housing Authority was indeed serious in not only turning about site conditions but also in actually turning over management control to the TMC.

The training period was difficult for TMC principals for at least two reasons. First, training requires one's time and presence. Both the classroom sessions and the OJT all but precluded tenant principals from carrying on previously performed voluntary roles. Site residents perceived their "absence" as a disruption in the established pattern of leader-constituent relationships. (In fact, the incidence of vandalism increased during the training program.) Also, once word had filtered through the site's grapevine that Tenant Management had "begun," residents expected TMC Board and staff to resolve their residential and related problems immediately. One would be hard pressed to log the number of times that TMC principals needed to tactfully retort to fellow residents that they "... were still in training; could not be in two places at the same time, and were not yet in a position to carry out their intended responsibilities."

The training time was difficult for Housing Authority supervisory/administrative staff primarily because the accountability of Housing Authority site staff became impossibly muddled. Staff accountability is difficult enough with the paper-pushing (loosely termed "documentation") requirements of civil service, union contracts, equal employment bureaucracies, etc. Given the presence of tenant trainees, how ever many "Who Struck John?" stories the reader could conceive of proliferating—triple it!

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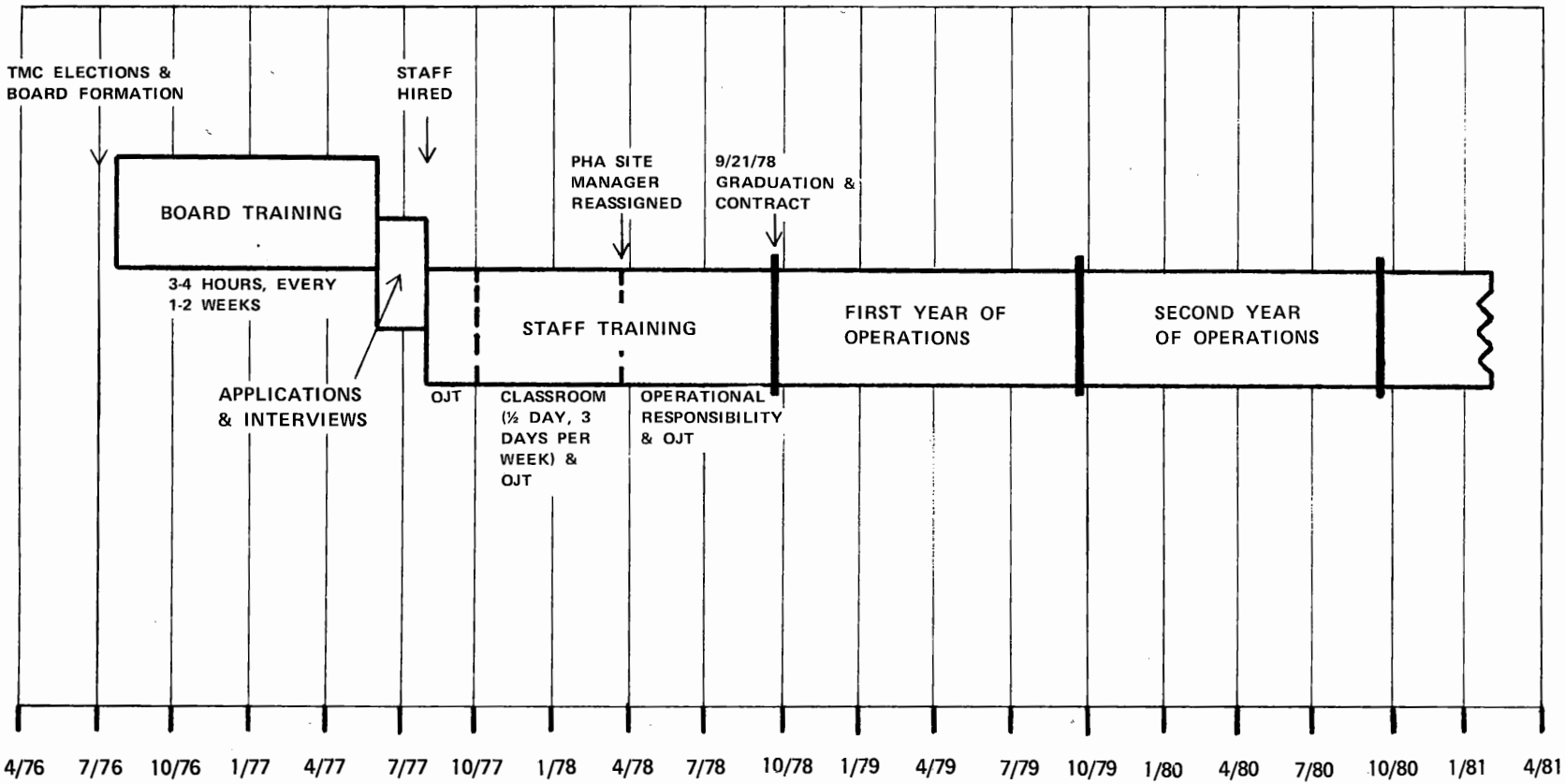
*The intervention ranged from: a) "Now why did you take that action in that circumstance? ... I see. O.K." to b) "Although I understand why you did what you did, maybe next time you might wish to consider ..." to c) "That explanation is all very interesting and probably quite valid if it were not for a host of HUD regulations which you just violated ..." — for the most part, not very different from what is necessary with even the best of Housing Authority conventional management.

TABLE IV.1. TENANT MANAGEMENT CHRONOLOGY: A. HARRY MOORE



Difficulty notwithstanding, the 14-month training period must ultimately be judged as invaluable. Its importance cannot be emphasized enough. Legitimate tenant representatives are unequivocally better able to know the needs and wishes of their communities than any non-indigenous service agency. However, if local residents are to substantially participate in responding to those needs and wishes, they must do so amidst a plethora of legal, fiscal, political and bureaucratic constraints. A working knowledge of the "rules of the game" is critical to influencing the quality of community life. The provision of technical assistance and training, by experienced professionals, in learning those rules and in understanding the context of community action is an on-going requirement for any indigenous effort.

Jersey City was fortunate in that both TMC Board and staff training were conducted by McCormack, Baron Associates, a housing development and management consulting firm. Both principals had been key actors in the settlement of the St. Louis rent strike, in developing the pilot tenant management program, and in rendering continued technical assistance to the St. Louis TMCs since 1969. At certain times the training sessions required gingerly forcing involved actors to merely listen to what each other was saying, while offering the benefit of experience. At other points it required giving a swift kick to have tough issues faced by all parties and mutually discussed. The firm's execution of the entire gamut of technical assistance and training roles stands to the credit of its principals as housing mentors. Through their tutelage, both residents and Authority staff gained critical preparatory benefit.

The training period—especially the operational/OJT time—was invalubale also because it gave all involved parties a substantial dose of what was to come. By the time formal contract signing came, both the TMC and the Housing Authority knew well what they were getting into.

TMC principals had the toughest lessons to learn. They experienced a syndrome best described as, "the world as a sewer." Very simply, it became clear that almost all of their time would be spent with tenants who either had residential and related problems or themselves presented problems to other residents.

For those residents who had problems that were within the TMC's capacity and resources to assist, TMC staff came to realize that, with sufficient effort and diligence, they, in fact, could help. (Unfortunately, it is unlikely that TMC principals appreciated the extent to which their assistance to these families was and would be qualitatively superior to that which might have been rendered by the Housing Authority's conventional systems. The Housing Authority would probably have missed this group of households entirely. The bureaucracy would have neither the knowledge nor the time to intervene prior to the families' situation reaching a crisis point requiring at least administrative intervention, if not judicial action.)

Then, however, there were those households who themselves presented problems to other residents. On occasion the family would skip-out*—but not often. Usually

*A "skip-out" is housing jargon for households who terminate occupancy unbeknownst to the Authority or the TMC. The family merely "leaves" (usually owing rent and/or under a pending court action).

those households who cannot or will not comply with even community adopted standards of behavior must be confronted. It is in dealing with this marginal population that the full impact of the difference between policy "input" and implementation hits home.

When a family is disorderly, the Building Manager is expected to initiate remedial action. If meetings, warnings, etc., have not altered the disruptive behavior, formal eviction proceedings are usually initiated. However, as the case muddles thorugh the required series of administrative and judicial reviews, an inordinate time lag occurs (2-6 months), especially with commonly granted postponements of court hearing dates.

As months pass, the Building Manager catches flak from both sides. She/He is in the awkward position of having to explain the inexplicable workings of due process to residents tired of tolerating disorderly neighbors, and is open to charges of "not doing your job." And worse, during the proceedings the accused household continues to reside within the same building as the Building Manager who is "causing all the trouble," a much less than amenable circumstance.

Though processed more expeditiously, rent delinquent cases are not much easier. It is a matter of certain consequence to support or even establish, on behalf of a community, a strict rent collection policy. (Once the principals become familiar with the dollars and cents economics of housing authority operations, it is almost a prerequisite.) It is a qualitatively different matter to be standing face to face with your neighbor and her children while a court-assigned constable executes an eviction and lock-out. Even though the family being evicted is usually no poorer than any other household in the development, had been offered second chances, and eviction was executed only as a last recourse, it's still a bitch of a task.

Knowledge of the community is probably the TMC's most effective management weapon. It facilitates staff intervention in numerous positive ways in a host of situations. Yet, ironically, it is that same community intimacy which also cuts back on TMC principals with so severe a second edge.

TMC principals came to know that, regardless of the type of problem, they would no longer be spending their time with supportive co-volunteers of former lobby-monitoring and site-planning days. Through their hands and across their desks would flow the gamut of our society's urban casualties and debilitating parasites. All needed to be dealt with. All would be their neighbors.

Finally, the training was invaluable to Housing Authority staff for it allowed substantial time to adapt operational and management information systems to the Tenant Management program and, when established systems were determined best left unchanged, to assimilate Tenant Management into them. Site maintenance staff, especially maintenance foremen, had to become accustomed to a resident-Site Manager as his/her immediate supervisor. Central Office operational and administrative staff needed to alter their modus operandi so as to include an indigenous corporate Board with its own operations staff. Management information systems had to be fully decentralized so as to facilitate site-by-site budgeting, cost accounting, vacancy/occupancy, rent collection/delinquency, and work-order tracking, etc. (A. Harry Moore's TMC needed to receive information and be monitored as an individual site.) Although the Housing Authority was well on its way toward this management approach prior to Tenant Management, the demonstration gave the work a specific and immediate impetus to press forward.

Roles and Responsibilities

The A. Harry Moore TMC and the Jersey City Housing Authority signed a formal contract for management services on September 21, 1978. It was the first in the State of New Jersey.[12] The terms of the contract outlined the roles and responsibilities of both parties, with the TMC assuming responsibility for all site-related management and maintenance tasks and the Housing Authority continuing to provide the administrative, logistical, technical/grant assistance, and fiscal systems upon which site operations depend (Tables IV.2 and IV.3).

TABLE IV.2. HOUSING AUTHORITY-TENANT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION ROLE DIVISIONS

	HOUSING AUTHORITY	TENANT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
PERSONNEL (Housing Authority employees at site)	Recruits & hires; general orientation → Reviews, processes & takes personnel actions within parameters of civil service, union contracts, federal rules and regulations	Site specific orientation; monitoring & evaluation → Recommends personnel actions (disciplinary, promotional, demotional, etc); provides documentation & testimony
	Reviews results and implications	
	HA	TMC
MODERNIZATION	Need, remedy & costing from engineering & operational (central office) perspective → Consensus (notwithstanding pushing & shoving in between) → Application to HUD (or other source) covering all technical & administrative requirements	Review of findings & proposed plan; adds, critiques, recommends amendments → Expression of site/corporation support & if necessary, mobilize political pressure.

* *The examples are not intended to cover the full gamut of tasks involved in each noted area but rather to typify the interrelationships.*

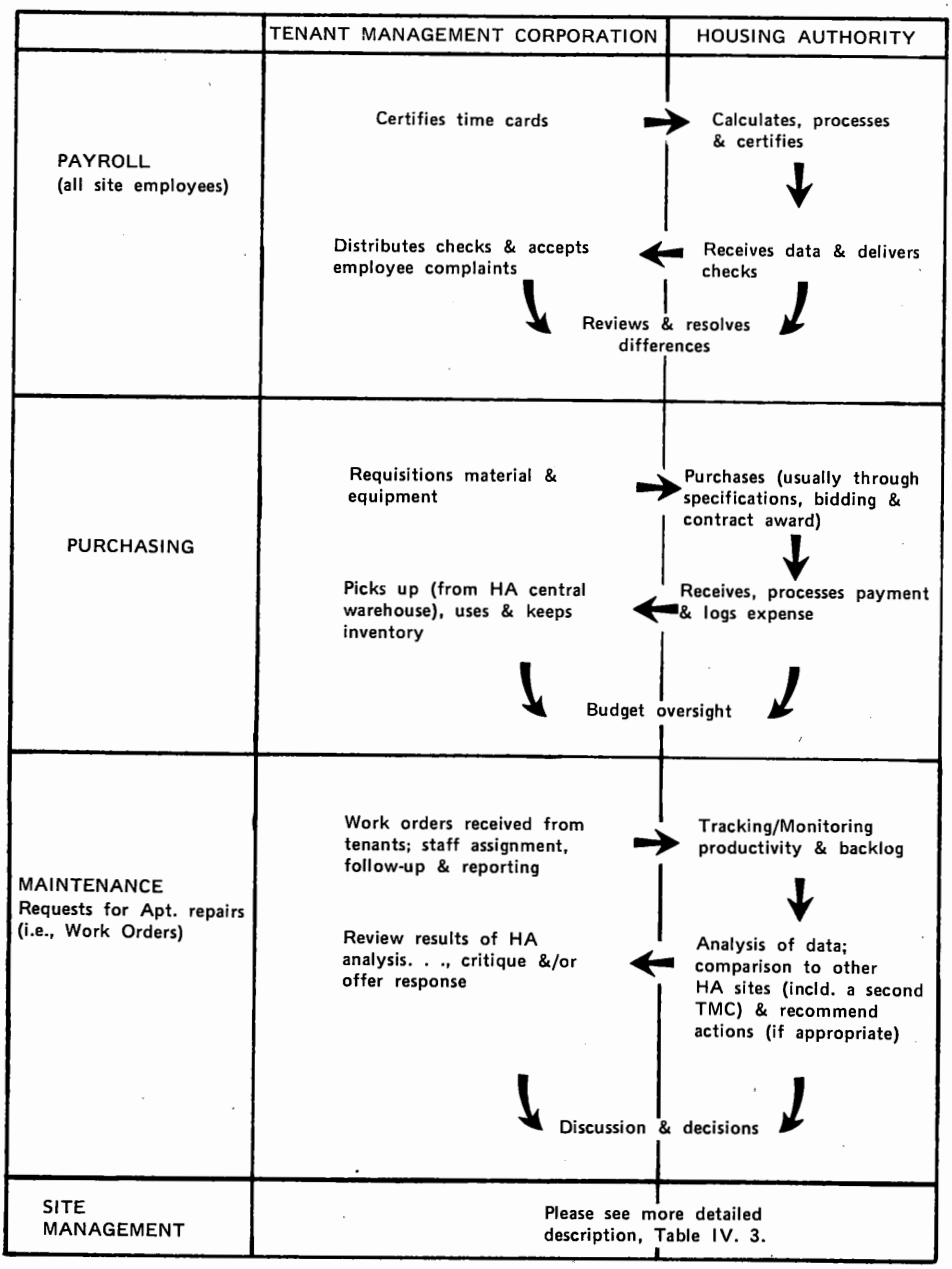

TENANT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
HOUSING AUTHORITY
PAYROLL
(all site employees)
Certifies time cards
Calculates, processes & certifies
Distributes checks & accepts employee complaints
Receives data & delivers checks
Reviews & resolves differences
PURCHASING
Requisitions material & equipment
Purchases (usually through specifications, bidding & contract award)
Picks up (from HA central warehouse), uses & keeps inventory
Receives, processes payment & logs expense
Budget oversight
MAINTENANCE
Requests for Apt. repairs (i.e., Work Orders)
Work orders received from tenants; staff assignment, follow-up & reporting
Tracking/Monitoring productivity & backlog
Review results of HA analysis. . ., critique &/or offer response
Analysis of data; comparison to other HA sites (incld. a second TMC) & recommend actions (if appropriate)
Discussion & decisions
SITE MANAGEMENT
Please see more detailed description, Table IV. 3.

TABLE IV.3. HOUSING AUTHORITY-TENANT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION ROLE DIVISIONS: SITE MANAGEMENT TASKS

		TMC*	HA/TMC	HA
A)	Staff Supervision of			
	TMC Bldg. Managers	X		
	HA Site Clerical	X		
	HA Site Maintenance	X		
	HA Centralized Skilled Trades			X
	Outside Contractors			X
B)	Occupancy			
	Vacancy Monitoring	X		
	Apartment Preparation		X	
	Application Eligibility Preparation			X
	Applicant Screening, Prioritizing & Placement	X		
	Tenant Orientation	X		
	Annual Income & Family Size Reexaminations		X	
	Intra-site Apartment Transfers	X		
C)	Rent Collection			
	Initial Determination			
	Billing (Centralized, automated)			X
	Receipt (Bank Collection)			X
	Delinquency Listings			X
	Delinquency Follow-up	X		
	Administrative Notice	X		
	Summons Preparation	X		
	Court Filing			X
	Accept Apt. Possession from Court Constable	X		
D)	Lease Violations			
	Initial Tenant Contact/Informal Warning and/or Counseling	X		
	Administrative Notice	X		
	Documentation/Follow-up	X		
	Prepare Termination Notice	X		
	Review and File Legal Motion			X
	Administrative Hearing and/or Court Testimony	X		
	Follow-up on Case Disposition	X		

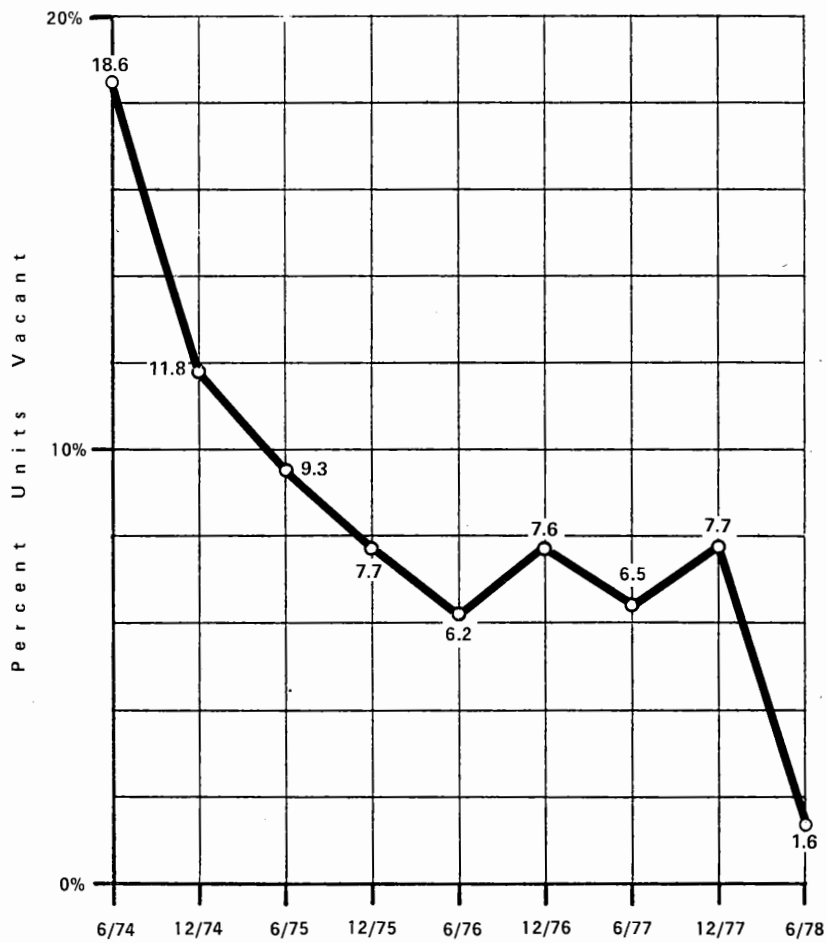
* *Tasks noted under "TMC" represent those performed by the TMC and for which the TMC is immediately responsible. Since the Housing Authority is still ultimately responsible for all aspects of site management, however, standard monitoring and evaluation roles should be taken as a given.*

TMC Performance

Over the course of the next two years, Housing Authority and TMC principals continued to work at defining, adjusting to and executing respective roles and responsibilities. The site's inherent tide of management difficulties (e.g., child density, high-rise/elevator, overall design, multi-problem families...) in no way receded with the new form of site management. The federal regulatory and fiscal miasma within which all parties must work continued to border on crippling. Nonetheless—and notwithstanding a reasonable degree of institutional-community pushing and shoving—the hard management indices have been and remain encouraging:

- The vacancy rate, which had been reduced from 19 percent (6/74) to 7.7 percent (by 12/75 thru 12/77), was further reduced to 3.1 percent during the OJT/Operational Responsibility Training Period (12/78) and has remained below 2 percent thereafter (Fig. IV.1).

Fig. IV.1. A. HARRY MOORE: PERCENT OF UNITS VACANT

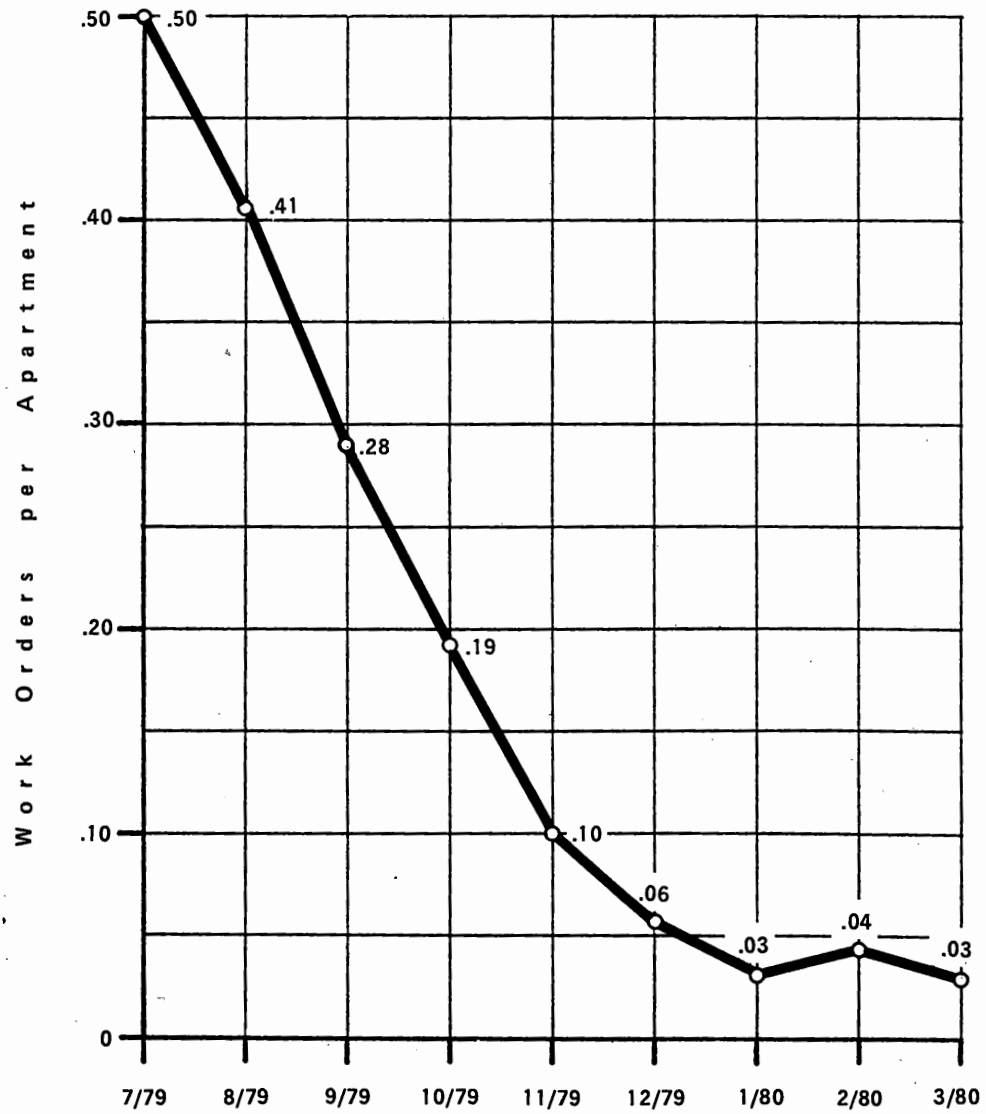


After completing more than a year of classroom and on-the-job training, the A. Harry Moore TMC signs a contract with the JCHA under which the TMC will assume full responsibility for the management of their site. (l. to r., Robert J. Rigby, Jr., HA Executive Director; Dolores Frasier, TMC Site Manager; Louis J. Coccaro, HA Commissioner; Rev. Robert Blount, TMC Board Chairman; and then-Mayor of Jersey City, Thomas F.X. Smith, 1978.)

• The number of backlogged work orders (outstanding requests for apartment repairs) has been reduced from a 7/79 level of 324 (or 1.5 per apartment) to approximately 20 (or less than .1 per apartment) as of 3/80 (Fig. IV.2).

• The number of households delinquent in rent for more than 30 days was cut in two from a 22 percent level (as of late '76) to a 5 percent level through '77 and has, with the exception of only four months, remained between 3 percent and 11 percent thereafter.

Fig. IV.2. A. HARRY MOORE:
AVERAGE NUMBER OF WORK ORDERS PER APARTMENT
INCOMPLETE AT END OF MONTH



• The diversity of income groups comprising the development's population (in accordance with the requirements of the 1974 Housing and Community Development Act) has been significantly improved. Average monthly rent as of 12/77 was $74/unit/mo., by 12/78 it had been increased to $83, by 12/79 to $89, and currently is $94 per unit per month.*

And these indices do not include the more subjective yet equally important aspects of residential life—community self-confidence, competence, pride, hope, etc. Notwithstanding the ever persisting gap between the ideal and the real world, the management of the A. Harry Moore TMC has been and remains far better than could have been expected by any reasonable performance standard.

*Prior to TMC marketing efforts, the site's average rent was $2/unit per month below the Authority's overall average. As of 7/78 it was equal to the PHA average and currently is $4 in excess of the PHA average. Thus, even after compensating for Authority-wide rent increases attributable to general increases in earned income and/or public assistance benefits, the improvement remains significant.

Public stairways, which site residents had to climb daily due to building elevators being totally inoperable, were (and remain) one of the more difficult building areas to control. (A typical condition, 1973.)

Stairways, repainted under the demonstration program, present a somewhat less ominous appearance to site residents. Even in buildings with the most active of tenant organizations, however, repainting is still required at least once every three years. (HA Board Commissioners Audrey E. Green and Joseph P. Nestor inspect how well refurbishing efforts are being maintained, 1976.)

Rev. Eugene P. Squeo, HA Commissioner, left, commends Anthony Wofford, site resident and artist, on completion of his outdoor mural. The work, covering a 60' x 10' retaining wall which forms one side of a newly-constructed sunken basketball court, was funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, 1979—it remains ungraffitied to date.

Having effectively maintained interior building improvements, Montgomery Gardens' tenant leaders extended their efforts to the site's exterior grounds. (TMC principals watch over some residents' children getting into the holiday spirit, December, 1980.)

V. CURRIES WOODS

The second demonstration site was Curries Woods, the Authority's largest development. Similar in some aspects to A. Harry Moore, it is a multifamily complex of seven 12- and 13-story reinforced concrete and brick buildings, first occupied in 1959, with 712 original apartments of one to four bedrooms. Located on the south-central boundary of Jersey City, its 10.6 acres (yielding a density of 67 units per acre) are bounded by: two- and three-family homes on the north and east, a dead-end street abutted by semi-abandoned railroad tracks to the south, and a major traffic artery to the west. Unlike A. Harry Moore, its households in 1973 were 57 percent White, 41 percent Black, and 2 percent Hispanic; only 27 percent were single-parent households, while 41 percent were headed by elderly persons (Table V.1).

The Curries Woods complex.

TABLE V.1. COMPARISON OF SITE CHARACTERISTICS FOR A. HARRY MOORE AND CURRIES WOODS AT START OF DEMONSTRATION

CHARACTERISTICS	A. HARRY MOORE	CURRIES WOODS
No. of buildings	7	7
No. of apartments	662	712
No. of bedrooms	1-4	1-4
Initial occupancy	1953	1959
Apt. density/acre	85	67
Vacancy Rate	19%	1%
HOUSEHOLDS:		
White	14%	57%
Black	73%	41%
Hispanic	13%	2%
Single-Parent	68%	25%
Elderly-Headed	11%	41%
Avg. Person per apt.	3.9	3.0

It would have been ideal for the following remarks to parallel A. Harry Moore's progress. Two case studies would emerge, hinting at a schematic for the revival of high-density, low-income housing stock. Unfortunately, blueprints aren't appropriate in this business. And as is usually the case when the ideal confronts the real world, it isn't what happened.

As previously mentioned, in the fall of '73 the residents of two buildings began organizing along lines paralleling A. Harry Moore. However, while the Authority's bolstered capacity to respond (via the DCA grant) was regenerating enthusiasm at A. Harry Moore, it did not have the same effect at Curries Woods.

The month after refurbishing work was accelerated, in May of '74, the residents of two buildings (other than those attempting to develop internal organizations) began a quasi-rent strike. With advice from the local legal services chapter, residents withheld rents from the Authority until a pound of flesh and commitments had been extracted. Rents were subsequently paid prior to the impending rent delinquency deadline (the point where legal action is mandated and the point that both parties were trying to avoid).

Two months later, the site's newly formed United Community Council demanded an investigation of the Authority's accounts, with emphasis on the DCA grant. The site's grapevine had transmitted the message that grant monies were intended to pay "salaries" for the tenant lobby-monitors. When it became evident that the monies were being funneled to indirect support of the volunteer effort, especially Authority employed organizers and maintenance workers, historically

grounded rumor took over.* Respective parties played at "...he said, she said... who struck John?" games for two to three months, before the issue was ostensibly put aside.

Curries Woods' Council then proceeded to demand an even more thorough audit of the Authority's Modernization Program.** Thus, the latter three months of 1974 were exhausted in the investigation of what monies had been authorized by HUD, expended by the former Authority administrators and for what purposes, for the period 1968-1973. It was, at times, a revealing exercise. However, given its *ex post facto* nature, findings remained wholly academic. Amidst this muckraking, individual site residents and building "leaders" lodged enough complaints about rehabilitation quality and pace, fellow tenants, etc. to fill a volume or two of an encyclopedia.

Beyond Authority-tenant relations, actual resident participation levels in improving security and reducing vandalism were minimal. Between May '74 and May '75, only two of seven buildings were able to mobilize active support for an A. Harry Moore-like lobby-monitoring effort. And one of the two persisted for only five months.

Amidst the continuing landlord-tenant gauntlet of apathy through antipathy, and notwithstanding the absence of security-related participation, Curries Woods' tenant representatives were involved in a variety of positive volunteer activities. Unlike A. Harry Moore, however, their efforts emphasized social services, e.g., service information and access, tenant education, tot and teen recreation, youth clubs, etc. A few, such as an effort to have teenagers establish escort and delivery services for the elderly, were even rather innovative. Thus a toning down of the lobby-monitoring/security effort and a more direct support of site leaders' social services emphasis did represent an alternative organizing focus. However, Authority staff believed it to be an improbable strategem, especially in a real-estate dominated context.

- It did not provide immediate resident tasks, to be routinely performed, that brought participants together and afforded a yardstick for tenant leaders and Authority staff to measure participation levels, as did "lobby-monitoring";
- It did not require participation by even a significant minority of tenants. Social services information and access efforts and recreation programs could be developed, and even be effective, with an extremely limited cadre of dedicated residents;

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*Official theft was a bit more than folklore in Jersey City. The former Mayor, City Council President, County "Boss" and assorted cronies were doing "5-15" on a half-dozen counts of bribery, extortion, conspiracy, mail fraud, tax evasion, etc.

**The "Low-Rent Housing Modernization Program" was initiated by HUD in 1968 to address accumulated capital needs of aging physical plants. Unfortunately, the annual HUD request and attendant Congressional authorization of funds is grossly insufficient to confront the needs of local authorities. Worse, the "annual" nature of the appropriations precludes the possibility of ever meeting the cumulative needs of public housing developments.[1]

- It offered no consistently visible symbol to outsiders, or to tenants not directly involved in service delivery or the receipt of such, that this "public" housing is being "privatized";
- A *quid pro quo,* self-interest partnership grounded in social services support offered at best an indirect relationship to the rehabilitation work being executed in each building. An "indirect relationship," in turn, offered only a most circuitous linkage between Authority-tenant rights and responsibilities;
- Given that the Authority's primary activity was interior building refurbishing, supporting a social services oriented effort significantly diminished the role that the Authority could play in overall tenant organization. And unless Authority staff could play a significant organizational role, the opportunity for establishing much needed credibility (with a justifiably skeptical resident population) would be wanting.

Most importantly, strategies grounded in social services tend to divide populations into **caretaker and client, facilitator and recipient, the relatively self-sufficient and the obviously dependent**—and that isn't what organizing is about.

Despite this reasoning, expendiency held sway and the service support option was played out. Although the Authority did not abandon the tack, it eased off having lobby-monitoring participation as a prerequisite to building rehabilitation. In part, self-confidence in our perceptions had been jostled and we were less secure in our intuitions. In part, the implications of continued animosity at Curries Woods epitomized typical landlord-tenant relations. It was unpalatable to the best and the brightest of Authority staff. It was inimical to making a case for funding, detracted from positive steps at A. Harry Moore, and was too threatening to the new administrators' growing reputation for success.

A few highlights of the relationship over the course of the next 12 to 18 months are indicative of the efficacy of the altered approach.

- A disagreement over maintenance charges, associated with a mutually agreed upon building entrance intercom system, degenerated into the Curries Woods Tenants Council again threatening suit and tying up the Authority's phone lines for a few days, with a host of less than noteworthy calls. (The Authority merely muttered to itself about those unreasonable, one-sided tenants.) The combined efforts of both parties netted the issue being dropped and no intercom system being installed.
- The result of a discussion among residents, Authority staff, and City police officials regarding an alleged incident of police brutality was the residents walking out of their own community hall and proceeding to picket, en

masse, the Mayor's house (as in home vs. office). Nothing changed.*

- The response to a heating crisis in the midst of a frigid snap was not to mutually seek necessary funds from HUD to replace deteriorated heating plant equipment, nor even brainstorming through immediate options to heat apartments. Rather, a mass meeting was called at which we bureaucrats stammered through causal but, to the audience, irrelevant history and a smattering of technical jargon, while dozens (!) of residents-at-large (leaders were not to be found) ripped out verbal invectives. The ordeal, or at least the meeting, culminated with a tenant speaker tagging Authority staff as "m'f'n murderers of our children...," a groan from the crowd confirming the sentiment, Authority staff staring into absurdity, and all going home—with nothing whatsoever accomplished beyond the venting of emotions.

After two and a half years, physical conditions had worsened, a management partnership was nowhere in sight, and PHA-resident relations ranged from non-existent to acrimonious.

The Authority's support of, or rather concession to, the Tenant Council's targeting an at-large, social service effort had failed to create even a semblance of the organizational building blocks generated by A. Harry Moore's lobby-monitors.** Security, which affects all residents in a development, may not be the *sine qua non* of organizing, but a social services gambit was a wholly inadequate substitute. The Curries Woods scenario confirmed almost all staff intuition regarding the improbabilities for organizational development inherent in the strategem. Not only had tenant leaders and Authority staff (the same working with A. Harry Moore) not developed an organizational vehicle to confront changing issues over time, but, even more frustrating, efforts had not even generated a mechanism to confront the basic and worsening residential issues facing the site's community in the present.

As was previously noted, when HUD announced the National Tenant Management Demonstration Program, A. Harry Moore seized the opportunity. To the Authority, the National Program also represented a potential resolution of Curries Woods' situation. Although the site in no way approximated the capability

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*One might have taken at least intellectual consolation if the picketing was a planned element in a confrontation style strategy. Unfortunately, the timing was somewhat amiss. The Mayor had, that very day, secured City Council O.K. for a $100,000 Community Development Block Grant allocation to Curries Woods, through no small political risk. And, he wasn't home! The pickets succeeded only in harassing the Mayor's family—a very-low sympathy producer—and therefore exhibited a rather inept level of political acumen. This modest foray yielded little more than the Mayor summarily informing the Authority's Board Chairman that it was "...a bloody damned lesson in irony..." or words to that effect.

**Please recall, A. Harry Moore had spun off social service and recreation efforts only after an organizational base was developed via the lobby-monitoring strategy.

of A. Harry Moore, the Authority still needed to meet, in some fashion, its responsibility for managing the development. Conventional management, via traditional Authority 9-to-5er's, had proven acutely inadequate. An A. Harry Moore security-plus scenario was remote and perhaps inappropriate. Curries Woods' own social services oriented strategem had been ineffective. It was rationalized that "Tenant Management" offered the real-estate ground that the Authority found prerequisite to both resident organizing and landlord-tenant partnerships. The Program had the potential to encompass simultaneously security and the site's own social services agenda.

Notwithstanding the tenuous content of the proposal, Curries Woods was selected as the seventh participant in the National Demonstration Program. The St. Louis prototype was again targeted as the model for program content and sequence.

Through the fall of '78 the results of expendiency became more evident. Curries Woods' first TMC Board was elected in July of '76. Board performance yielded little more than the Chairperson's resignation in January of '77. The new Chairperson evidenced a noteworthy grasp of the issues at hand and the tenant management concept. However, internal Board proceedings, and at times the lack of same, caused her to resign by April of the same year.*

An Interim Committee was established in order to bridge the summer months and preface new TMC Board elections in the fall, a reasonable response to successive resignations. The Committee's Chairperson again exhibited the potential for leadership, but it was never realized. He was ousted in August of '77 after purportedly attempting to hire himself for an available Authority job.** Nonetheless, formal elections were again held in September. A new and expanded TMC Board of 14 (two representatives from each building) was established. However, by February of '78, a half-dozen of the residents elected had resigned. Those remaining began discussing the prudence of the Board being comprised of fewer members.

Given these circumstances, Board training sessions (sequenced as were A. Harry Moore's and again conducted primarily by McCormack, Baron Associates) were in no way productive due to the changing cast of characters.

Notwithstanding this flux of persons and the rather tenuous condition of Curries Woods' TMC Board, its management staff was hired by May of '78 (i.e., a Site Manager and seven Building Managers). Their efforts, however, were rendered for the most part hapless by the turnover in Board leadership.

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*For example, attendance at TMC Board meetings was poor to fair, decision-making was incredibly difficult, and a few Board members were delinquent in rent payment, which rather blatantly detracted from Board credibility with the community at large.

**Authority hiring policy as of '76 lent preference for employment to qualified residents. When available jobs were site specific, interviews and recommendations for employment were facilitated through site Board/Councils. The rationale was obvious. Community representatives knew community applicants far better than the Authority ever could and establishing a Board as an employment conduit added to their stature and sphere of influence. When the Boards offered extensive opportunity for application and a reasonable screening and selection process (translate: "up-front") results were usually positive. However, when Board members manipulated the process, especially if perceived as doing so for their own personal benefit, it was an utter fiasco.

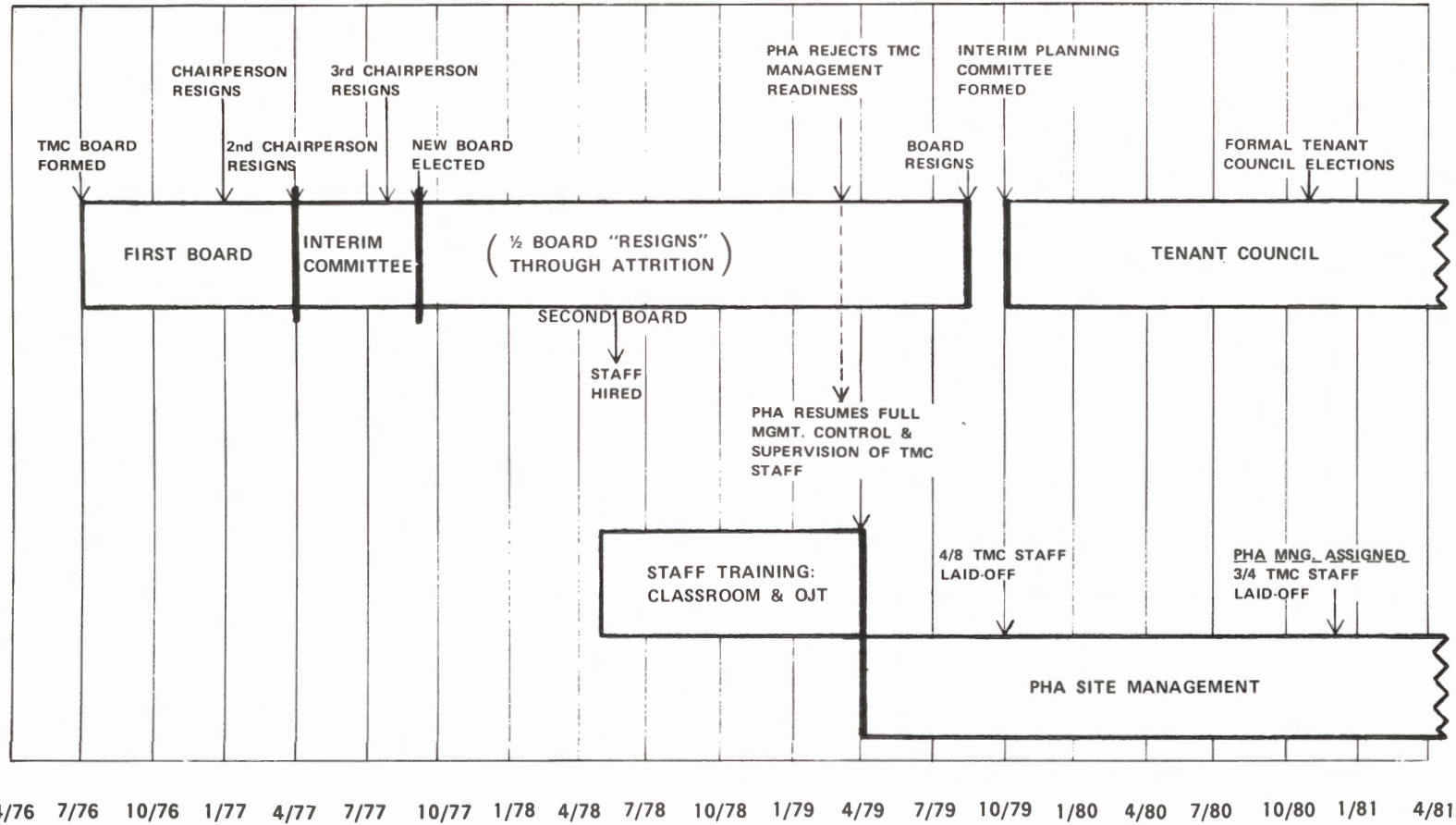
Resident-Authority relations did become less strained over the course of those two years. Although site physical conditions and other residential indices were not improved, they were not noticeably worse. A certain level of resident management training was, in fact, accomplished, and the time was not without some positive moments. Yet the development of a functioning community organization working in partnership with the Housing Authority remained an elusive objective. The prospect for a TMC accepting the responsibility for site management remained, therefore, remote. It was as if Authority staff, tenant representatives, and the general site community were on an aimless merry-go-round.

In March of 1979 the Curries Woods Board was informed that the Housing Authority had concluded that the TMC neither was nor in the near future would be in a position to enter into a contract to manage the development. An interim plan was adopted under which: the Housing Authority would immediately assume full control of site operations (including the supervision of TMC staff), the TMC staff would be gradually phased out, and the TMC Board would attempt to sort out its future direction.

In September of '79 the TMC Board formally resigned. In October of '79 four of the seven Building Managers were laid off. The remaining three and the Site Manager trainee continued to act as management aides/resident liaisons for the next year, under the supervision of an Acting Manager assigned by the Housing Authority.

A new Tenant Committee was formed during that time and determined along with the Housing Authority that Tenant Management was not to be on Curries Woods' agenda any time in the near future. In September of 1980 the remaining three Building Managers were laid off; the former Manager trainee was retained by the Housing Authority to act in the capacity of liaison to the Tenant Committee. The Housing Authority assigned its Assistant Director of Management to take over the daily management of the development.[2] (An attempt to depict this chronology is put forth in Table V.2.)

TABLE V.2. MANAGEMENT TRAINING CHRONOLOGY: CURRIES WOODS



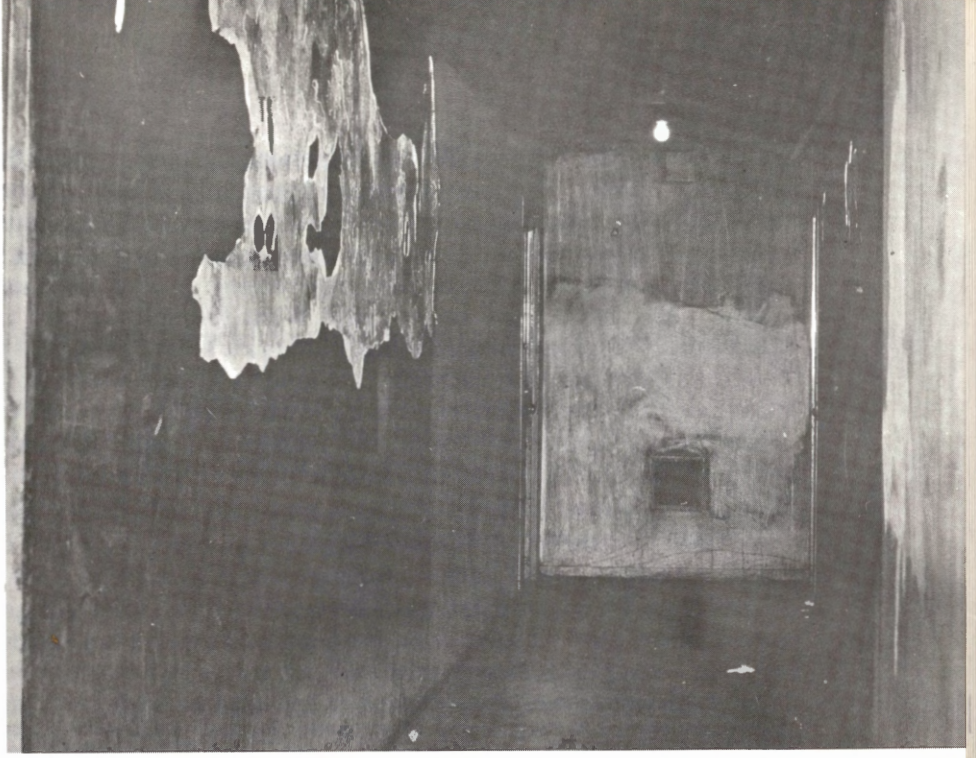
VI. MONTGOMERY GARDENS

The absence of even subtle progress at Curries Woods was even more paradoxical given developments at the Authority's third family high-rise site, the six 10-story building, 462 apartment complex, Montgomery Gardens. Its building design mirrored A. Harry Moore's, except that there were no hallway or stairwell windows (a particularly crass example of architectural innovation). Occupied a year prior to A. Harry Moore, its population also mirrored A. Harry Moore's except for a somewhat larger number of households headed by elderly persons (Table VI.1).

Montgomery residents, led by some veteran tenant leaders, had been pressing the Authority to initiate an organizing and refurbishing scenario including volunteer lobby-monitors, since mid-'74. Having had institutional tail feathers fluffed by progress at A. Harry Moore and then immediately singed by the Curries Woods experience, the Authority's agreement to embark on yet a third front was given with much circumspection.

TABLE VI.1. COMPARISON OF SITE CHARACTERISTICS FOR MONTGOMERY GARDENS, A. HARRY MOORE, AND CURRIES WOODS AT START OF DEMONSTRATION

CHARACTERISTICS	MONTGOMERY GDNS.	A. HARRY MOORE	CURRIES WDS.
No. of bldgs.	6	7	7
No. of apts.	462	662	712
No. of bedrooms	1-4	1-4	1-4
Initial occupancy	1953	1954	1959
Apt. density/acre	81	85	67
Vacancy rate	<1%	19%	1%
Households:			
White	15%	14%	57%
Black	65%	73%	41%
Hispanic	20%	13%	2%
Single-Par.	47%	68%	25%
Eld.-Head	25%	11%	41%
Avg. Pers. per apt.	3.8	3.9	3.0



Prior to the demonstration program, Montgomery Gardens' public hallways were as dismal and scarred as A. Harry Moore's. (A typical example, 1975.)

The Montgomery Gardens TMC has, for almost half a decade, evidenced an extraordinary ability to maintain executed improvements throughout public spaces. (Inspecting hallway conditions, l. to r., Barbara Brown, Vera Spiles, and Doris Maxwell, TMC Building Managers, and Martha L. Lamar, Chief, Bureau of Neighborhood Preservation, DCA, 1980.)

Mitigating the Curries Woods experience, however, was the lesser degree of difficulty that Montgomery Gardens potentially offered. Although both interior and exterior public spaces were devastated, these conditions represented merely an acute level of vandalism. As was the case with A. Harry Moore, this could become an organizing asset. Also, besides the seeming resolve of tenant leaders—"We're ready! The tenants have been ready! What the hell are you people waiting for, Christmas!? It'll come and go twice, at the rate you're going!"—Montgomery had a less than one percent vacancy rate and a steady flow of applicants seeking placement. Serious crime rates were lower than, or at worst equal to, City-wide levels. As in A. Harry Moore, the plaster and paint hallway walls offered the potential for highly visible, dramatic improvements and in short order. Except for the acutely deteriorated physical appearance and condition of the site, other indices of residential distress were relatively low.

As was the case at A. Harry Moore, Montgomery Gardens tenant leaders focused their attention on extensive renovations to exterior grounds (one view of redesigned exterior, 1979) which, prior to the demonstration program, had been barren stretches of broken asphalt.

The Authority therefore, as usual, proceeded. In Montgomery Gardens' case, the sequence of building-by-building organizing, lobby-monitoring and refurbishing was given to the Authority in advance by the Montgomery Gardens Liaison Committee. They had decided to resolve the issue up front, thereby precluding an Authority-dictated scenario.

At the outset Authority staff were almost waiting for the flak, or in other words, a Curries Woods II. The high level of initial resident enthusiasm could not be accepted as a valid index of organizational potential. Catalyzing early interest is the most facile of organizing tasks. The more telling measure of community potential, the organization's capacity for sustenance and growth, would come only in time.

Yet, over the course of the next 12+ months, floor-by-floor organizing, interior building refurbishing, and lobby-monitoring proceeded without a substantive hitch. Of course, the enterprise had its predictable share of pushing and shoving, individual building diversity, high points and disappointments. Nonetheless, by early '76, all interior public spaces had been refurbished, with many further decorated by tenants themselves. All six volunteer building organizations had functioning versions of lobby-monitoring groups. Vandalism, especially graffiti, was almost non-existent. Executed improvements were being maintained at an incredible level of effectiveness, even higher than at A. Harry Moore.[1] Individual building organizations were assimilated into and interwoven with the original site-wide Liaison Committee. Resident leaders were proceeding with supplemental spin-offs of the organizing and security efforts, e.g., holiday events, fashion shows, senior citizen dinners/trips, recreation programs, etc., as well as developing plans for major exterior grounds renovation.

Montgomery Gardens' status was assessed well by one of our many guests, Anne Power, a representative of the North Islington Housing Rights Project in England. In Ms. Power's Report, "Tenant Management Corporations in the U.S.A." (submitted to the United Kingdom's Department of the Environment), she noted,

> "The atmosphere at Montgomery Gardens was bright and sparky, the tenants involved, thoughtful and caring. It seemed to me as though they would make it work."[2]

Time would prove the commentary to be indeed accurate.

Although Montgomery Gardens was not a participant in the National Demonstration Program, in late '77 the Authority and the Montgomery Gardens Tenant Organization agreed to initiate a tenant management program independent of the National Demonstration. Resident leaders were confident of their organization's capacity and wished to extend their management role.

Once again, the effort was modeled after the St. Louis prototype. The TMC Board, comprised of six residents, one from each building, was elected in February, 1978. Board training commenced in March and was completed by June. TMC staff, one Site Manager and six Building Managers, were hired in May 1978 and trained through February of '79 (Table VI.2).

The pattern of TMC principals and their training paralleled A. Harry Moore's experience. Almost all Board positions and TMC staff slots were filled by former volunteer building or floor captains. Training included both on-the-job and classroom sessions conducted by Housing Authority staff and McCormack, Baron

and Associates.* The only significant difference, or rather advantage, that Montgomery's program had was that the person selected by the TMC as Site Manager was a site resident employed by the Housing Authority in the role of Tenant Organizer at Montgomery Gardens.** The TMC's Site Manager, therefore, was very familiar with general Housing Authority structure and modus operandi, the specific operations and problems of the site, the organizing and rehabilitation experience at Montgomery Gardens, and with how it had evolved over time.

The Housing Authority and the Montgomery Gardens Tenant Management Corporation signed a contract for management services (almost identical to A. Harry Moore's) on October 31, 1979. The site's tenant leaders and community constituents had pursued the entire tenant management format with the same diligence and fortitude and in as exemplary a fashion as was the case during their voluntary security efforts.***

The TMC's first year of operations is indicative of the community's extraordinary capacity. A few highlights confirm the judgment. As of December 1980, Montgomery Gardens' community corporation—Board, staff and constituents—have accomplished the following:

- maintained a less than one percent vacancy rate;
- held the number of households delinquent in rent payment for more than 30 days to less than 10 percent, or, stated positively, maintained a 90 percent+ rent collection rate;
- reduced the number of backlogged requests for apartment repairs from a pre-11/79 average of 171 (.37/apt.) to a level of 44 as of 1/80 (.10/apt.) and kept the backlog below that level thereafter;
- attracted a steady and economically diverse applicant pool (apartment waiting list) resulting in an increase in average monthly rent from $72 (7/75) to $93 (6/79) to its present level of $102.****

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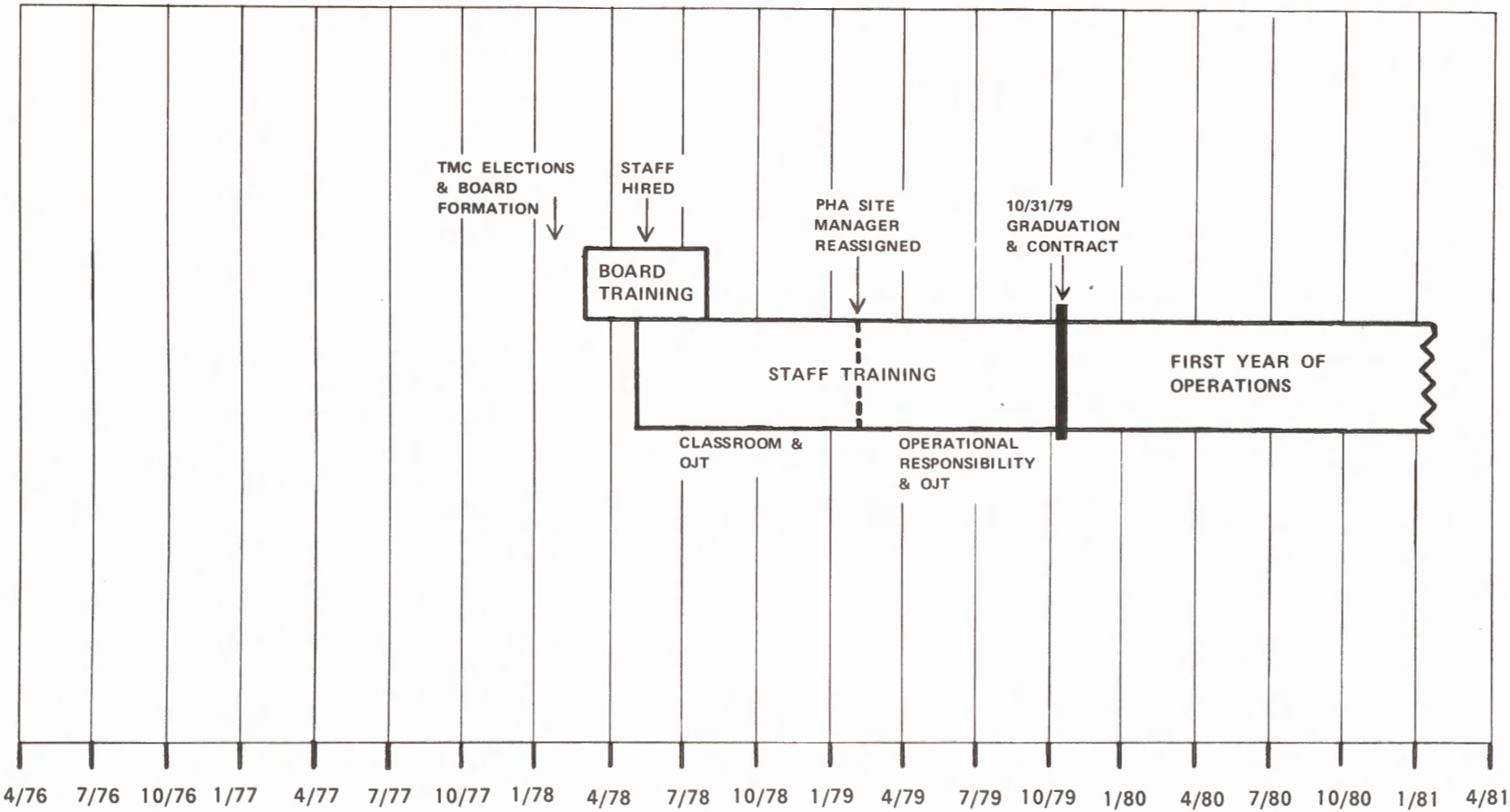
*It should be noted that the training and technical assistance contract with McCormack, Baron and Associates was between the firm and the TMC. A. Harry Moore had given the firm a positive recommendation and the Montgomery principals did not find it necessary for the Housing Authority to act as middle-man.

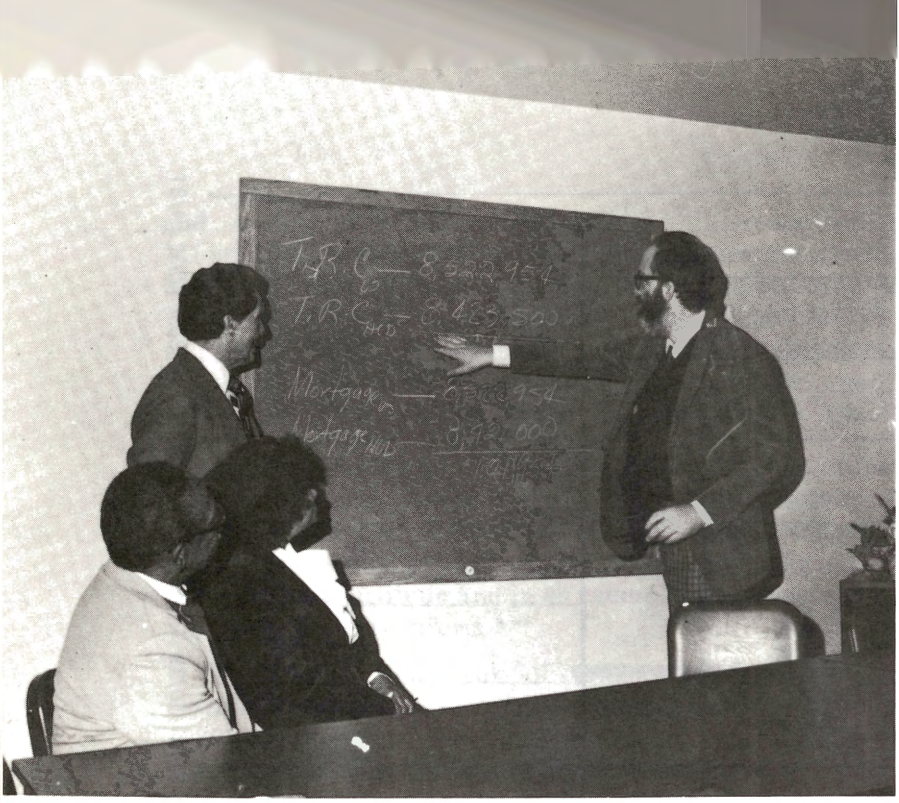
**The role of Tenant Organizer was previously described in Chapter *IV. A. Harry Moore,* under *The DCA Grant* Section.

***And this was despite the program's monetary limitations. The Montgomery Tenant Management Program was funded through a meager Target Projects Program grant balance and conventional operating "reserves." By definition, the latter should be reserved for emergencies, cash shortfalls, etc. However, the Montgomery effort was impressive enough to risk depleting already low levels of such reserves.

****Since rents in public housing may not exceed 25 percent of household income, the increases reflect not "rent hikes" but rather the site's having attracted relatively higher income applicants choosing to reside at the site.

TABLE VI.2. MONTGOMERY GARDENS TENANT MANAGEMENT CHRONOLOGY





TMC Training Classes at Montgomery Gardens followed the A. Harry Moore pattern, though were completed in slightly less time. (Attending a class on site operating budgets, seated, Pearl Bell, Vice-Chairwoman, MG-TMC Board, and Chesterfield Powell, Treasurer, MG-TMC Board; standing, Terence K. McCormack, McCormack, Baron Associates, and George M. Parsons, HA Director of Administration and Principal Systems Analyst, 1978.)

After completing Tenant Management training in exemplary fashion, the Montgomery Gardens TMC became the second—and probably not last—Tenant Corporation to sign a contract for site management with the JCHA. (Seated, l. to r., Catherine Todd, Chairwoman, MG-TMC Board; Louis J. Coccaro, HA Board Commissioner; and Lil Howard, TMC Site Manager; standing, at left, Harry Laurie, HA Board Member, and James A. Galdieri, Esq., JCHA General Counsel, 1979.)

- assisted (in substantive ways[3]) in holding serious (Index, or formerly Part I) crime rates to lower than the City's and surrounding areas';
- preserved both interior ('75) and exterior ('78) public spaces rehabilitation work to a remarkable degree; one is hard-pressed to find any significant level of vandalism throughout the complex;
- continued annual senior citizen dinners and trips, youth recreation programs, and a variety of other socially oriented services.

Even given the somewhat lesser degree of difficulty relative to A. Harry Moore, the sustenance of effort and array of accomplishments must be judged as indeed exceptional. Though full operational authority has been vested in the Montgomery Gardens TMC for only a short time, all available evidence indicates that Montgomery will persist as a model of community responsibility and competence. It will rival and perhaps surpass levels of achievement at A. Harry Moore.

VII. ANALYSIS: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

As already portrayed there was a qualitative difference between the remarkable performance of A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens and the lack of progress at Curries Woods. The following analysis posits why this was the case.

The ultimate reason why the Curries Woods effort failed to generate positive momentum was the persisting **instability** of the site's tenant **leadership,** of the development's **households,** and in turn, of the Curries Woods tenant **organization.**

This pattern of community instability was not at all obvious to Authority staff during either the DCA or the National Tenant Management demonstrations. Initially, when reviewing possible variables that might account for the performance difference, the amount of money invested, time expended, and the particular staff involved were considered. Each, however, was dismissed. Time and monies were equivalently expended and Housing Authority staff responsible for the demonstrations were the same for all three sites.

One hypothesis that seemed to offer a potential explanation was that tenant expectations had been raised to a level beyond the Authority's rehabilitation capacity. And, in turn, when not met, resident disillusionment negated consistent levels of participation. The reasoning was premised in Curries Woods' initial organizing scenario having substantially departed from that of A. Harry Moore.

As previously mentioned, the first two Curries Woods buildings had organized quite on their own. Resident expectations, therefore, were not the by-product of a dialogue and bargain per se (in retrospect a tactical error). Rather, expectations of the program were projected solely by the tenants themselves.

This line of reasoning may have partially explained why initial organizing efforts were more difficult at Curries Woods than at A. Harry Moore. It did not, however, explain the persisting lack of headway. For A. Harry Moore also had its share of disappointments, especially prior to the DCA grant. Yet resident organizations bounced back in relatively short order and a working relationship with the Authority flourished.

A second hypothesis, and one better correlated to low participatory levels in security/vandalism related efforts, was premised in the physical condition of the site and attendant resident perceptions. Curries Woods' physical design and condition offered little opportunity for the Authority to demonstrate its willingness and for the Authority and tenant leaders to demonstrate mutual capacity to improve conditions.

Curries Woods' hallways (unlike the paint and plaster hallways of A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens which offered dramatic potential for improvement) were finished in a dull, gray, marblock tile. Even after Authority workers or tenant volunteers scrubbed off more blatant graffiti and washed clean the walls, the end-product was little more than a drab, institutional gray. Also, Curries Woods' hallway tile was less inviting to innumerable graffitiists than A. Harry Moore's painted plaster. Conditions confirmed the probabilities. Curries Woods' public spaces did not approach the degree of devastation witnessed at A. Harry Moore. In turn, neither Curries Woods' tenant representatives nor constituents perceived conditions as severe enough to mandate a security-centered response.

Again, however, this line of reasoning may have partially explained organizational difficulties only during earlier organizing phases. The text has already pointed out that, notwithstanding a shift in organizing orientation from security to social services/recreation efforts, site performance was little improved. More importantly, even after site conditions visibly worsened (especially during the National Tenant Management Demonstration period—continued physical deterioration and a general breakdown of informal rules of behavior, resulting in sharp increases in the incidence of crime and vandalism) resident participation remained at best sporadic.

In time it became clear that the impediments to effective organizational performance and to establishing an institutional partnership must be more deep-seated. A reasonable explanation was not derived until the long-term pattern of

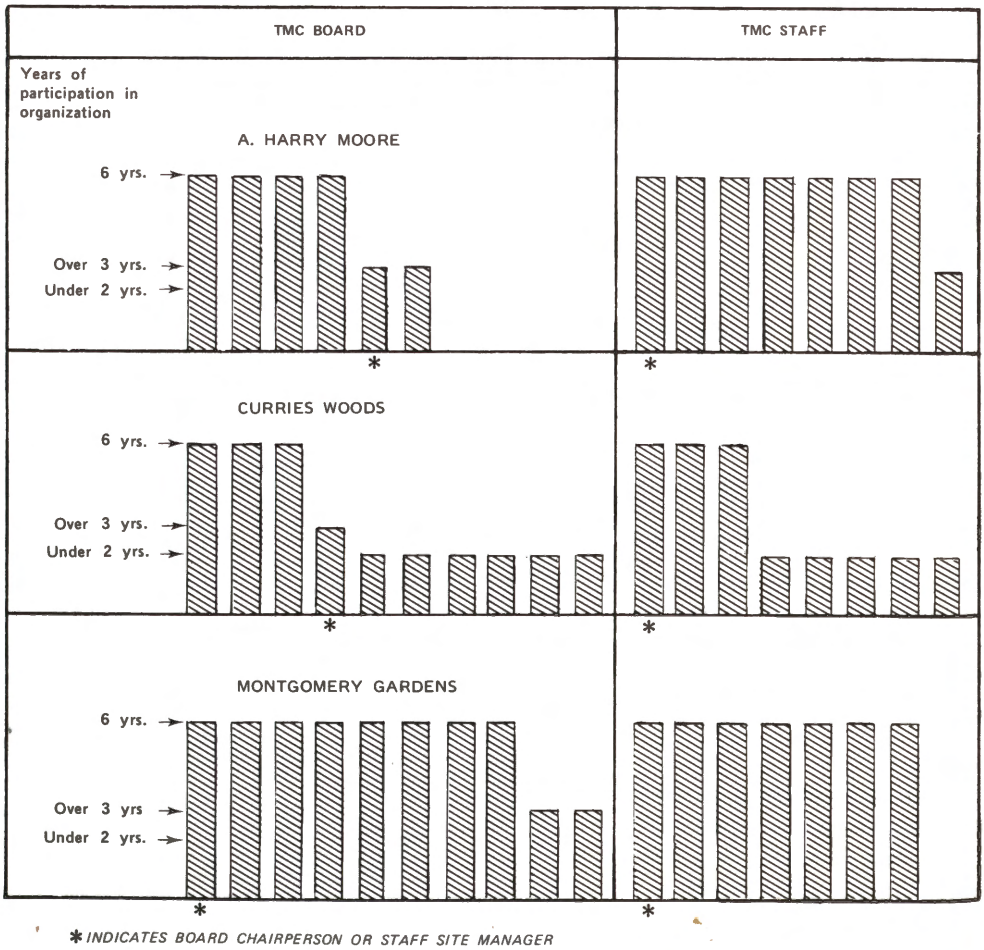
A typical example of Curries Woods' hallway walls, 1977.

Curries Woods' leadership and the composition of site households was analyzed and compared with that of A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens.

From the outset of the DCA Demonstration through the National Tenant Management Demonstration Program the turnover rate of tenant leadership at Curries Woods was evidently higher than that of A. Harry Moore or Montgomery Gardens. A juxtaposition of the three sites highlights the perception and effect (Fig. VII.1). Although at qualitatively different stages of organizational evolution, by mid-'79 each development had a Tenant Management Board and staff in place. The resident principals at all three sites were at that time (after more than five years of organizational effort) either completing the final phases of training or already on the job.

Of the 14 A. Harry Moore principals, 11 had been involved in leadership roles since 1973, three since '76, and therefore none for less than two years. Of the 17 Montgomery Gardens principals, 15 had played leadership roles through six years of organizational growth, two since '76 and therefore, again, none for less than two years. Thus, more than 75 percent of respective TMC principals were individually experienced in leadership roles, had worked as a team for over half a decade, and were well recognized by their respective communities.

Fig. VII.1. TMC BOARD AND STAFF LEADERSHIP TENURE



*INDICATES BOARD CHAIRPERSON OR STAFF SITE MANAGER

At Curries Woods, however, of the site's 18 resident principals, only six had been involved in leadership roles since '73, one since '76, while 11 of the eighteen had logged less than two years of leadership tenure. Notwithstanding the potential quality of the mid-79 Curries Woods TMC Board and staff, site leadership had changed so often and so dramatically that slightly over 60 percent of the principals were relative newcomers to individual leadership roles, collective action, and, in turn, community recognition.

Although mindful of the leadership factor and its obviously negative effects at Curries Woods, the Authority was not so cognizant of the corollary variable, namely, the pattern of the site's household composition.

It must be emphasized that this and all following references to "household composition" do *not* refer to simple apartment turnover rates. Rather, it refers only to apartment turnover which results in a net change in the composition of site households. The point is best made by example.

If ten Black, two-parent households moved out and ten others moved in, it would represent simple unit turnover, since there was no net change in the composition of site households. This type of turnover was not a distinguishing variable among the three sites. (The simple apartment turnover rate at Curries Woods was only slightly higher than at Montgomery Gardens and A. Harry Moore.)

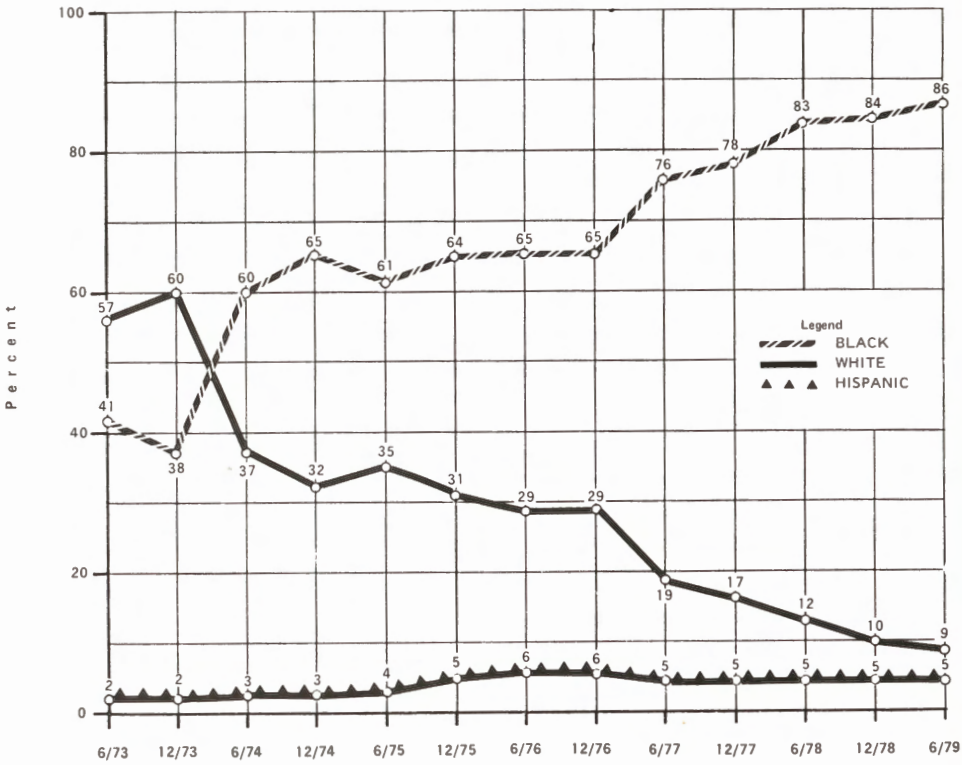
If, however, the ten Black, two-parent households were replaced by ten Black, single-parent households, it would represent unit turnover which resulted in a net change in the composition of site households. This type of household pattern is what the analysis concentrates on. Its relevance, if put simply (and at the risk of omitting a host of sociological jargon), is that if the nature of the community constituency alters, it is likely that community priorities will also alter. In turn, so too will the probability alter for organizational participation in accomplishing previously agreed upon objectives.

For example, if at any given point in time an organizing task was oriented towards senior citizen security measures, but during the course of trying to accomplish that task a substantive number of elderly households moved out, the premise upon which the effort was based would become invalid and the participants with whom the task was decided upon would cease being relevant actors.

Or, if organizational priorities had been determined with predominantly two-parent, working families, objectives would tend to be longer term, e.g., training resident auxiliary police, fund-raising activities to establish a community treasury, etc.. However, if, over the course of implementing these objectives, many of the two-parent working families moved out and were replaced by single-parent families whose primary source of income is public assistance, the original objectives and current organizational tasks would be of lesser interest. The orientation of poorer, more dependent families tends to be more immediate, e.g., hire off-duty police, have the Housing Authority fund trips for the site's young people, etc.. In turn, the initially agreed upon action agenda would probably not be pursued.

The Authority had observed (though did not appreciate the import of) the changing composition of Curries Woods households throughout both demonstrations, i.e., from predominantly White to predominantly Black (Fig. VII.2), a declining elderly population with corresponding increases in family households (Fig. VII.3), and increasing numbers of single-parent families with declining numbers of two-parent families (Fig. VII.4).

Fig. VII.2. CURRIES WOODS: RACIAL COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS



Although occupancy trends toward high concentrations of minority, single-parent households are typically associated with residential distress, the Authority gave it little note in terms of intervention strategies. The positive performance of both A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens had clearly demonstrated that revitalization efforts could be catalyzed and sustained in racially and economically impacted communities. Both A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens had higher levels of minority and single-parent households and lower levels of elderly households than did Curries Woods, even through the initiation of the Tenant Management Program, as shown in Table VII.1. Ostensibly the composition of Curries Woods households was merely becoming analogous to households already in place at A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens.

When Curries Woods household patterns are viewed over more extensive time lines, however, a significantly different perspective emerges. It highlights not the snapshot results of alterations in household composition nor particular levels of racial, economic or familial balance, but rather that the patterns of site household composition were in a constant **state of flux.**

Fig. VII.3. CURRIES WOODS: HOUSEHOLDS HEADED BY ELDERLY PERSONS

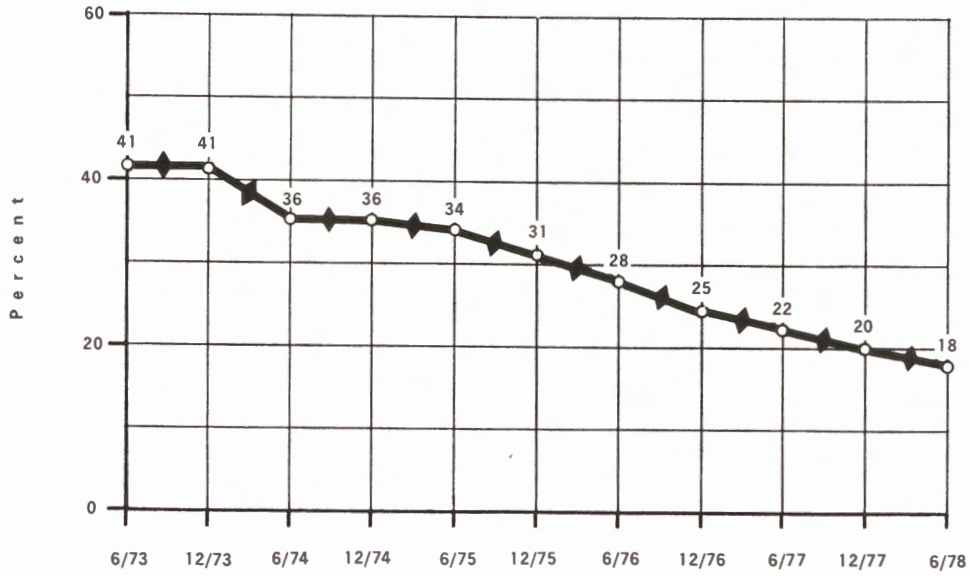


Fig. VII.4. CURRIES WOODS: SINGLE-PARENT HOUSEHOLD TREND

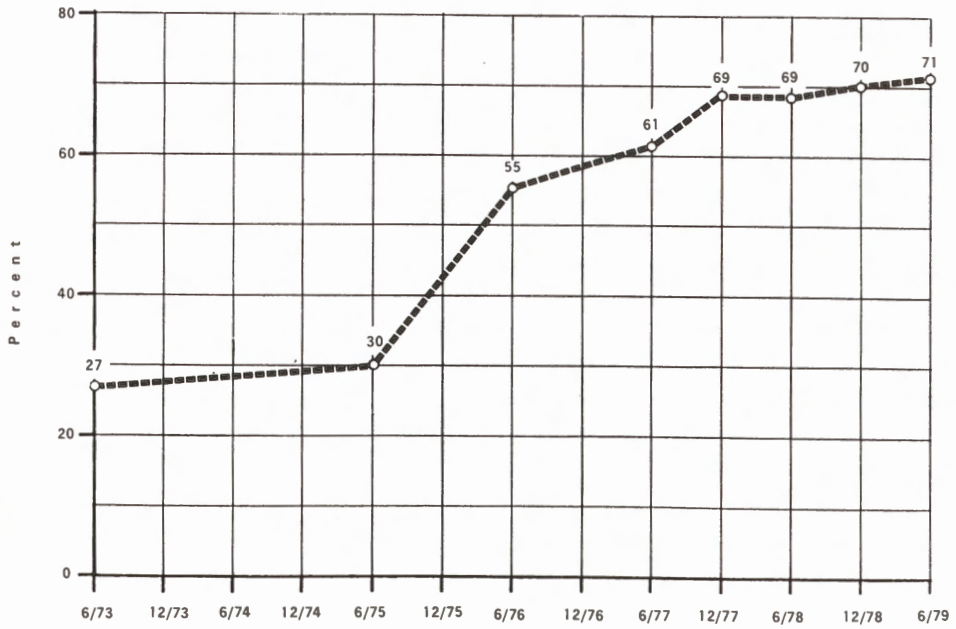


TABLE VII.1. SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISONS (ALL THREE SITES)

	Initial Organizing Efforts (DCA)			Tenant Management Initiation		
	6/74	6/74	12/74	6/76	6/76	12/77
	AHM	CW	MG	AHM	CW	MG
BLACK HOUSEHOLDS	76	60	71	81	65	78
SINGLE- PARENT	71	27	58	79	53	63
ELDERLY-HEADED	11	36	22	9	28	23

The first half of the DCA grant period (1974) was characterized by rapid racial change; White households declined from 60 percent to 32 percent and the number of Black households correspondingly increased. The period of mid-'75 through '76 (when racial composition remained stable) was characterized by an acute change in the number of single-parent households from 30 percent to 65 percent.* The National Tenant Management Demonstration period ('77 through '79) was characterized by renewed racial change; Black households increased from 65 percent to 86 percent and the number of White households proportionally decreased. Finally, the entire period between '73 and '79 exhibited a gradual decrease in the number of elderly households, from 40 percent to 18 percent.

During every period from the DCA demonstration through the National Tenant Management Demonstration Program the composition of Curries Woods households experienced acute transition of one type or another; for six years it exhibited recurring instability (Fig. VII.5).

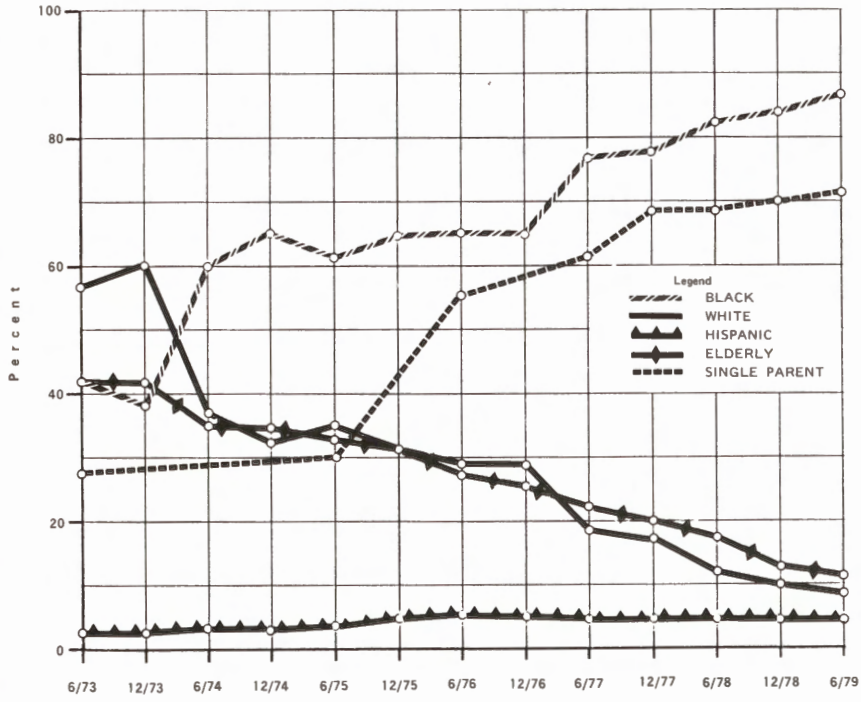
When linked to the turnover in leadership, the net effect of Curries Woods household instability becomes evident. There was a negative feedback relationship between site leadership turnover and site household instability and, in turn, with the third interacting variable—the community's **organization.** If the site's leadership looked to community constituents to follow through with agreed upon action agendas, those constituents had substantially altered and therefore would be unlikely to "follow through." The leadership would then either quit, be deposed, or merely cease acting as leaders.

*Please note that, since the referenced period exhibited little if any racial change (nor any change in the vacancy rate, two percent), the single-parent, Black households who moved in replaced two-parent, Black households who moved out.

When site constituents who might be interested in developing and pursuing organizational objectives looked to the site's leadership for direction, the principals seemed endlessly changing or lacking the collective experience to respond in effective, concrete terms. Community constituents would then either criticize the legitimacy of their own representatives, attempt to have them replaced, or merely (and more often) return to the anonymity of their own apartments.

The community dynamics conducive to establishing and sustaining a community organization simply weren't present at Curries Woods. A community infrastructure could not be built upon a foundation fraught with persisting instability.

Fig. VII.5 CURRIES WOODS: HOUSEHOLD TRANSITION



The hypothesis, or rather its converse, is highlighted by the marked contrast of A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens. Throughout the demonstrations racial composition at respective sites altered less than 15 percentage points (Figs. VII.6 and VII.7). The number of single-parent households at A. Harry Moore altered less than 12 percent. At Montgomery Gardens, although there was a 30 percent increase in the number of single-parent households, the transition occurred only gradually over the course of six years (Fig. VII.8). The elderly population at each development altered less than ten percent (Fig. VII.9). As opposed to Curries Woods, both A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens exhibited only modest alteration in the composition of site households from the initiation of tenant organizing efforts through the establishment of Tenant Management Corporations (Figs. VII.10 and VII.11).

Fig. VII.6. A. HARRY MOORE: RACIAL COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS

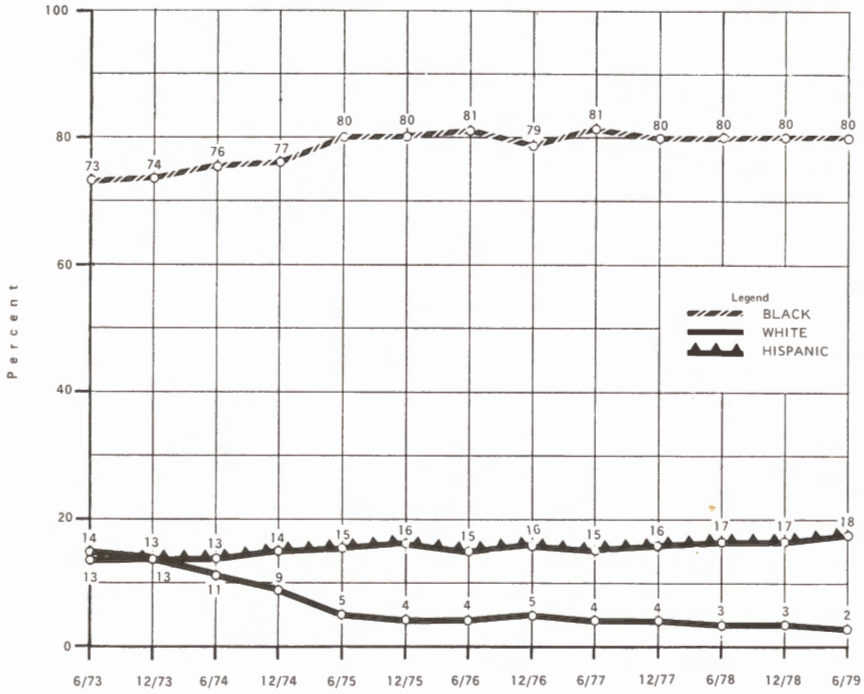


Fig. VII.7. MONTGOMERY GARDENS: RACIAL COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS

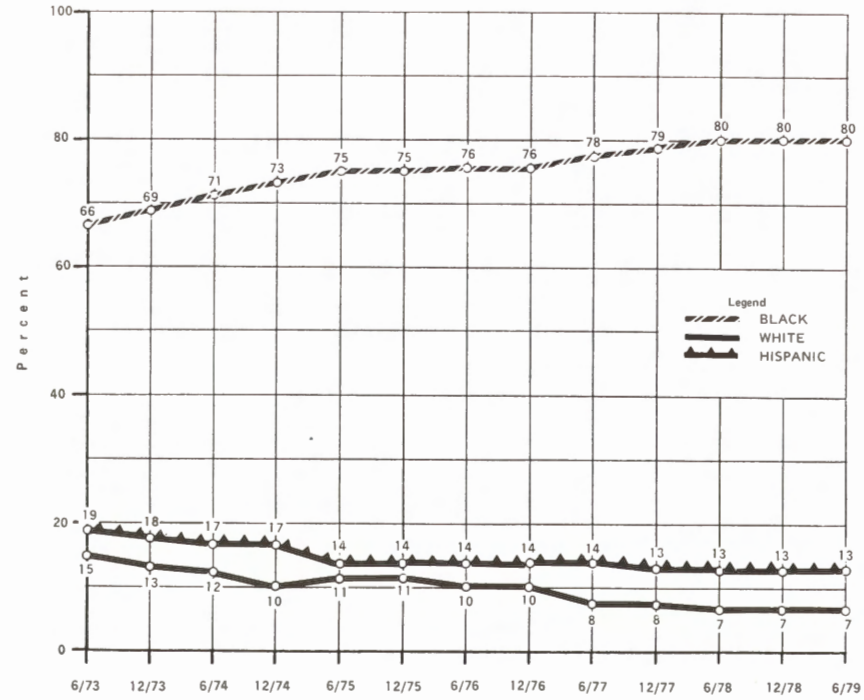


Fig. VII.8. COMPARATIVE SINGLE-PARENT HOUSEHOLD TRENDS

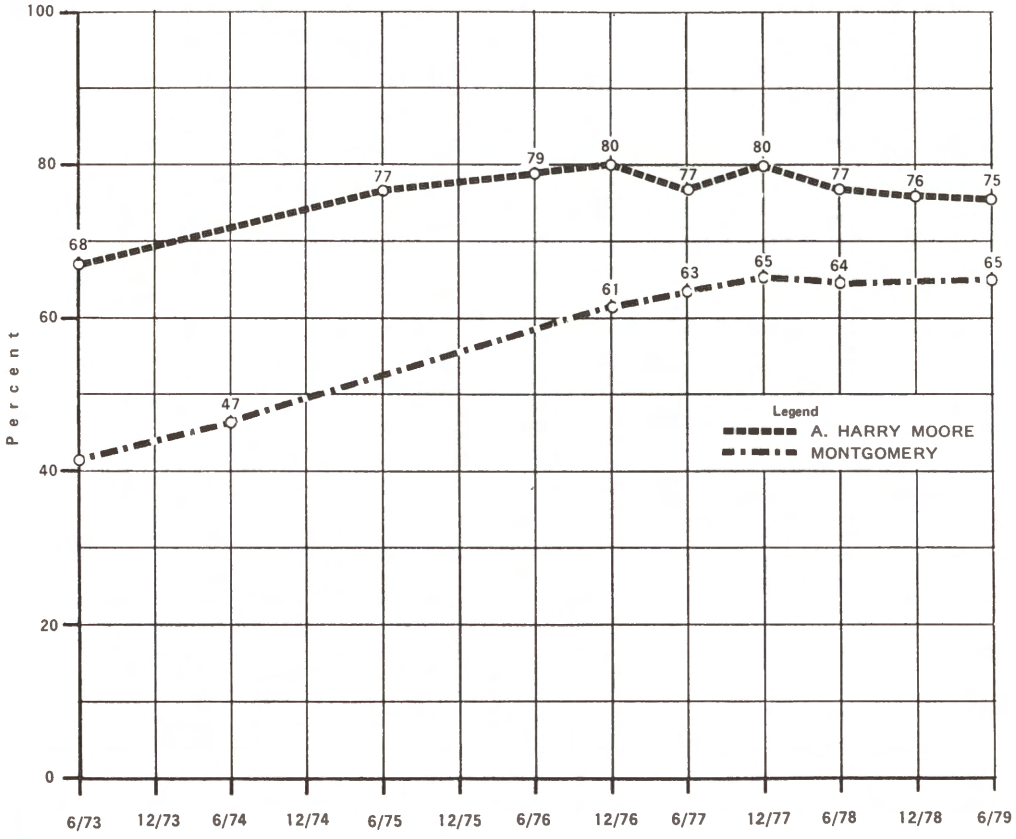


Fig. VII.9. COMPARATIVE TRENDS OF HOUSEHOLDS HEADED BY ELDERLY PERSONS

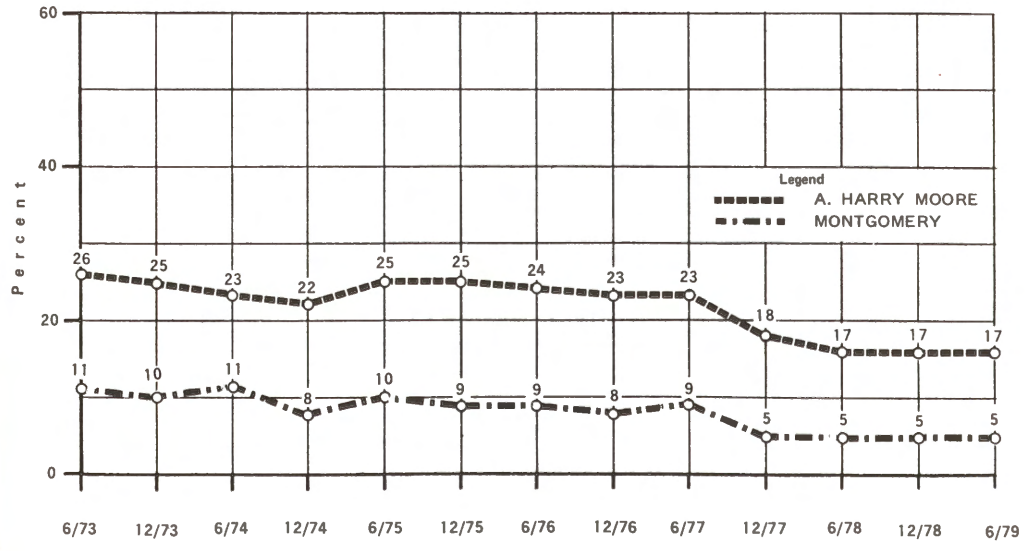


Fig. VII.10. A. HARRY MOORE: HOUSEHOLD TRANSITION OVERVIEW

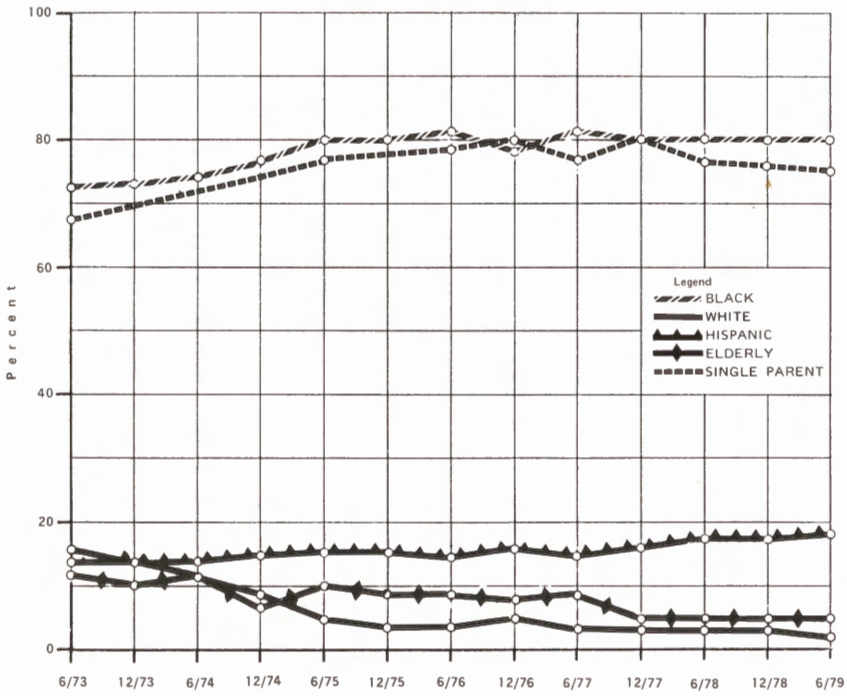
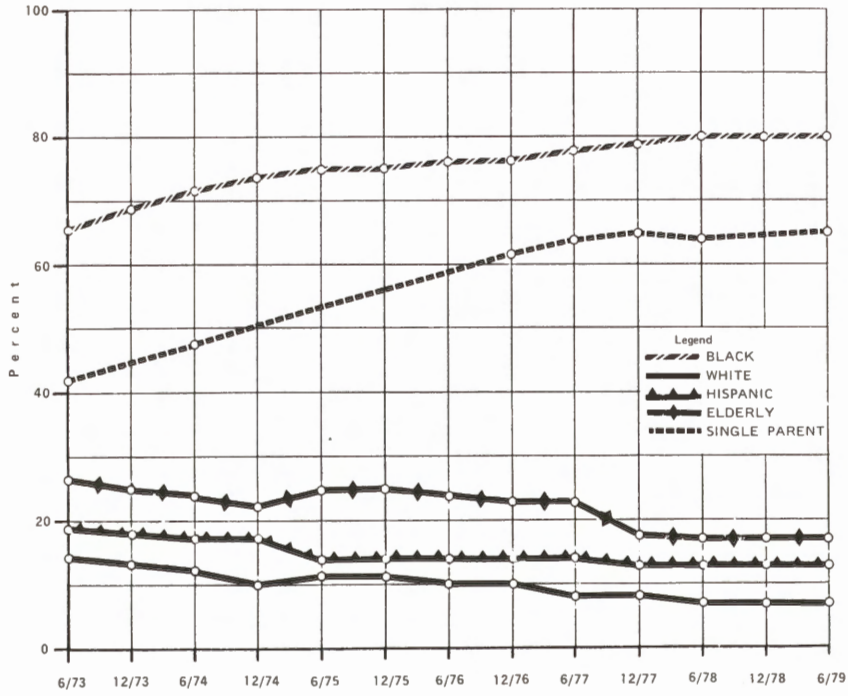


Fig. VII.11. MONTGOMERY GARDENS: HOUSEHOLD TRANSITION OVERVIEW



Again, when linked to the site's leadership factor, the stability of household composition generated a feedback relationship. However, at A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens it was a positive interaction of variables. In turn, the site's organizations mirrored the stability of its leaders and its households.

Although there may have been a baker's dozen worth of other variables alternately affecting day-to-day efforts at Curries Woods, their import pales in light of the long-term pattern of instability. Both the DCA and Tenant Management demonstrations at Curries Woods were executed amidst a negative community chemistry, one that was inimical to establishing an organizational framework of significant tenure and effectiveness.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The experience of all three developments offers insight into the process of revitalizing distressed housing sites. The conclusions and recommendations which follow are put forth neither as blueprints for community renewal nor panaceas for public housing's ills. Rather, they are presented in the spirit of sharing what lessons have been learned to date in order that they may be applied and adapted as may be appropriate to the individual circumstances of succeeding endeavors.

INITIAL ORGANIZING EFFORTS

The demonstration has confirmed four premises in which the initial organizing and rehabilitation strategy was grounded. They seem essential to future revitalization endeavors targeted at chronically distressed public housing sites and perhaps even distressed neighborhoods in the private sector. They are particularly important to the often difficult yet formative early phases of community-institutional endeavors.

1. The basis for mutual trust and confidence needs to be addressed early in the enterprise. Although both facets of the community-institutional relationship require long-term maturation, initial actions are critical. The most effective way to do this is to produce concrete results in relatively short order. The refurbishing of devastated interior hallways at A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens and the corollary lobby-monitoring program offered the immediate and positive evidence necessary to foster credibility and capacity. The absence of an analogous vehicle at Curries Woods stranded both the Authority and resident leaders without a tangible product, and thus initial organizational efforts were seriously hampered. Highly visible, short-term objectives, within the capacity of involved parties, are a must from the outset of any organizing scenario.

2. The organizing effort needs to be grounded in mutual self-interest and around issues of broad commonality. Improved security filled the bill at A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens on both counts. Residents perceived that their participation in lobby-monitoring would accrue direct and individual benefit. The issue simultaneously impacted the entire community, thus facilitating extensive levels of direct involvement. Conversely, security was not so perceived at Curries Woods and participatory levels remained extremely low. Utilizing social services/recreation as a substitute issue yielded little in the way of organizational results. It tended to divide the community into client and caretaker rather than facilitating a unified focus for the diverse elements and attitudes of the entire community. Only

through the investment of their own time and energy can neighborhood principals effectuate the equivalent of what not-so-poor communities can purchase outright. This investment will be made collectively only if the suggested enterprise is perceived as being worth the time and trouble, if it is perceived by the individuals of the community as being in their common self-interest.

3. Community revitalization scenarios must emphasize both the rights and the responsibilities of involved parties. Montgomery Gardens and A. Harry Moore principals emphatically sought their just due of residential services from the Housing Authority. They simultaneously accepted responsibility in exemplary fashion for those aspects of residential life beyond the effective control of the Authority. The efficacy of the equation was evidenced in physical improvements being executed and, for the most part, maintained, and in decreased crime, vandalism and vacancies. Curries Woods' resident principals vociferously demanded their "rights"; however, the community was not ready, when the time came, to accept a substantive level of residential responsibility. Though the community was certainly not culpable, it assuredly remained incapable.

Both institutional and community principals must recognize that the process of reviving distressed communities, be they public housing complexes or neighborhoods, is an unqualified two-way street. Without mutual assumption of responsibility the endeavor will become a fantasy—a "yellow brick road."

4. Most importantly, the revitalization of distressed neighborhoods, especially public housing sites, must assure the development and sustenance of community-based organizations. "Participation," "involvement," and a host of other perfunctory vestiges of the '60s have been, are, and will remain insufficient. Only **organizations** can catalyze and channel the collective resources of a community to address the changing issues that confront neighborhoods over the course of their life cycles. Although the task is anything but easy and the process is indeed slow, arduous, and incremental, the need for organizations functioning effectively over time is inescapable. The experience of the demonstrations has confirmed that we cannot afford to avoid the mandate.

TENANT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

Tenant Management represents a significant extension of the roles that may be played by certain tenant organizations. As already reviewed, it should only be undertaken in the context of a stable community or at least one having the potential for stability. Nonetheless, tenant management does represent a tested, alternative form of managing distressed housing stock which deserves, or rather has earned, serious consideration. The sociologist Robert Merton once commented, "More is learned from the single success than from the multiple failures...."[1] In the business of neighborhood revitalization, the point is well taken. The following is therefore intended to outline the specific factors which contributed to the positive performance of the A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens TMCs and to suggest the program elements important to successor endeavors.

The primary variables contributing to the record of respective developments are grouped into factors **external** to the target sites and into those more closely related to **internal** community aspects.

TABLE VIII.1. PERFORMANCE FACTOR SUMMARY

EXTERNAL

1. An amenable political atmosphere at the local level.

2. Sufficient program start-up and physical modernization monies.

3. Professional training and technical assistance for both Authority staff and residents.

4. The commitment of institutional principals.

INTERNAL

1. A TMC structure parallel in form to informal community leadership patterns.

2. An observable relationship between the program and the meeting of consistently expressed community needs.

3. Well evidenced resident capacity.

4. The commitment of resident leaders and constituents.

External Variables

1. Resident and Authority efforts were forwarded in the context of an *amenable political atmosphere at the local level.* Although Jersey City's governing body is legally a nine-member City Council, it is the City's Chief Executive, the Mayor, who dominates the tenor of municipal and county-wide politics. The Tenant Management Program was generated during the mayoralty of Paul T. Jordan, M.D. ('71-'77). The program evolved as an integral component of Authority operations and community life under the administration of Thomas F.X. Smith ('77 to '81). Though severe political adversaries and polar opposites in style and staff, both administrations rendered at least sufficient deference to allow for program development and, on frequent occasions, an unexpected level of advocacy. Jersey City's newly elected Mayor, Gerald McCann (July, 1981), has already expressed his emphatic support of the tenant management program and further, intends to extend the principles embodied in the enterprise with private sector block associations throughout the City. This support has been and remains an essential facet in forwarding the enterprise. Although the expansion of indigenous organizational roles need not be the darling of local powers that be, the program could not have endured if political opposition had persisted beyond short-term differences. That "no man is an island" must be emphasized tenfold when programs and politics intersect.

2. Both developments had secured *sufficient monies* to offset the cost of program start-up. This included the salaries of TMC staff, both new positions (e.g., Building Managers), and the costs of training and technical assistance. TMC staff costs were approximately $11.00 per unit per month or $70-$90,000 per development per year. Technical assistance and training costs averaged $20,000 per site per year: Including a modest fund for miscellaneous logistical and security support, total start-up expenses represented approximately five percent of each development's annual operating expenditures. Those initial costs that will annually recur may be assimilated by the TMC developments over a two- to three-year period of operations. They may be offset by increased rental income, conventional operating subsidy increases, reduced expenses, or more probably a combination thereof. The initial seed money for start-up costs, however, is what must be available.

Also, sufficient monies had been or were being expended to rehabilitate deteriorated physical plants. In '75 it was estimated that an investment of $15,000 per apartment would be required to restore basic physical integrity. When the Authority and respective TMCs signed management contracts, almost half that amount (in adjusted dollars) had already been expended or encumbered. It would have been a disservice to both the program and its principals for the Authority to turn over neglected structural facilities and inoperable mechanical and electrical systems to the TMCs. No form of site management could have registered even relative success under such circumstances. (Giving a public bureaucracy an excuse to dump its problems on the backs of tenants and then play out a self-confirming hypothesis of failure is not an objective of the program.) Though physical modernization needs remained unmet in Jersey City's target sites, a reasonable point of departure had been established.

3. Resident and Authority principals have had the benefit of *professional training and technical assistance* on a regular basis. The value of training being conducted by seasoned veterans has been previously mentioned. Also the importance of learning the "rules of the game" has been noted. It is necessary to

recognize further, that over time, the actions and reactions of elected, appointed, and corporate officials and their respective constituencies invariably produce shifts in policy emphasis and related programs. Changes range from those as subtle as are implied in a White House statement of urban policy objectives to as unequivocal as a cutback in Congressional appropriations. Clarity and severity notwithstanding, the rules become amended in some fashion on a regular basis at national, regional, and local levels. Also, principal actors in the program experience varying levels of change. It should not be surprising that a resident leader seeks to alter either his/her role or residence for a host of reasons other than programmatic.

Consistent technical assistance and on-going training are the only mechanism to compensate for both changes in the rules of the game and in program principals. Already trained staff must be regularly updated as to the amended context of community action. New tenant leaders (both board and staff) must be provided an on-going vehicle for basic training and for appreciating what has preceded their coming tenure. Only the consistent availability of experienced and professional training and technical assistance can facilitate this. It is the program ingredient that turns the confrontation of daily crisis into craft.

4. The final external variable is the *commitment of housing authority principals* to the enterprise. The Authority's commitment to the development and sustenance of tenant organizations, and to those same organizations having substantive participatory roles in site operations, was a boiler-plate of the earliest revitalization efforts. Advancing the Tenant Management Program represented a consistent extension of that initial commitment.

Beyond consistency, it was necessary for the Authority to play an advocate role in the enterprise. It would not have been sufficient for the Authority to merely offer its "cooperation" with the endeavor. Forwarding the program required more than attitudinal deference. It mandated committing adequate staff time and energy. It required facilitating at least a neutral, if not amenable, relationship with the Authority's blue-collar, white-collar, and supervisor unions. Tenured civil servants' fears that tenant management would cause the loss of jobs needed to be allayed. It was necessary to challenge the self-serving maxim that management roles could only be played by "career professionals." The in-fighting over departmental turf needed to be minimized and interdepartmental coordination and cooperation maximized. Forwarding Tenant Management required lending the program an intra-Authority importance equal to more traditional agency functions. Jersey City's experience suggests that the commitment to the enterprise by the local housing authority must be unequivocal.

Internal Variables

Interacting with external variables are those more closely related to internal community dynamics. Again, four factors are significant.

1. The first is the *form of the TMC board and staff.* It reflected the primary elements of the community organization initiated during the early years of the sites' endeavors. This parallel "form" once again echoed the intent of the St. Louis prototype. In a recent law journal article, Richard Baron noted:

> A principal goal in designing the TMC Program (in St. Louis) was the preservation of the different social and political relationships which had developed over the

> years in each of the public housing developments... a subtle, and very often effective, political structure which has nurtured itself as the community has dealt with controversial issues and agencies....[2]

As was the case with the original organizing scenario, each building is the organizational unit for both board representation and management staff. The "building," in the TMC structure, remained the "highest common denominator," which simultaneously offered a significant participatory base and sufficient self-interest identification for individual families.

Any new program threatens the status quo, even at indigenous levels. The unknown invariably breeds insecurity and, in turn, potential conflict between the established order (however informal) and that newly proposed. At A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens this conflict was minimized. The old (volunteer) guard was either supportive of or became principals in the new TMC program. A consistency of resident roles assuredly contributed to dissipating the potential difficulty. The form of the Tenant Management Program mirrored the established community infrastructure of both tenant leaders and constituents. It provided for the historical continuity essential to forwarding the enterprise.

2. Tenant leaders of the two sites viewed Tenant Management as a *vehicle to meet consistently expressed needs of respective communities.* As with lobby monitoring, Tenant Management was worth embarking on only because it was perceived as meeting a gamut of management, maintenance, organization, and employment needs of A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens residents. Although formally labeled a "demonstration," the endeavor required of its principals a substantive level of personal commitment and professional resolve. The mandate of tenant management extended well beyond participation in yet another urban experiment in community control.

It is worth noting, however, that the developments' entree did not include an unprecedented rent strike, as was the case for their more publicized predecessor, St. Louis, or their contemporary, Stella Wright in Newark. No doubt a conflict-catalyst may be helpful, if it can be constructively directed. However, such an extreme prelude is not a program prerequisite.

A. Harry Moore was dissatisfied with the Authority's management performance and tenant leaders had decided that the timing was propitious to extend the purview of the site's organization. Montgomery Gardens' tenant leaders had gained an augmented confidence in the community's ability to address a broad range of (outstanding) residential issues, and maybe in the process do a better job than the Authority. Management and maintenance issues clearly remained unresolved at the time tenant management was initiated. However, site and Authority principals were discussing and negotiating these concerns and potential remedial strategies in at least a business-like, if not relatively amenable, fashion and forum. Resident organizations were nowhere near throwing a strategic card as telling as a rent strike.

Tenant Management cannot be initiated lightly, or at the beckoning of a non-indigenous bureaucracy. It cannot be a response to temporary issues. However, its prelude need not be a drastic expression of the breakdown in government-consumer relations. The prerequisite to the initiation of Tenant Management is simply that the program must meet the consistently expressed needs of a community.

3. The management role itself was initiated by both communities only after *resident capacity had been well evidenced.* The substantive responsibilities of real estate management were taken on by tenant leaders only after years of experience in significant yet less ambitious endeavors. Building-by-building organizing, lobby security monitoring, sponsorship of special senior citizen, youth and holiday events, modernization planning, etc. had preceded tenant management. The resident responsibilities inherent in the program simply could not have been met by organizational rookies. In describing the tough calls that TMC board and staff members must make, it was previously noted that:

> Knowledge of the community is probably the TMC's most effective management weapon... yet ironically, it is that same community intimacy that also cuts back on TMC principals with so severe a second edge.

To stand firm amidst the fray requires rather firm roots. A prelude of hard-fought successes, bitter disappointments, and even a few rain-outs had taught invaluable preparatory lessons.

4. As the final external variable was the Housing Authority's commitment, the final internal factor of significance is its corollary, the *commitment of tenant leaders.* Its importance to earlier organizing and rehabilitation efforts has been often noted. Tenant Management, however, requires of resident leaders a level of personal and collective resolve beyond that evidenced through voluntary organizational participation. The commitment mandated is a function of the degree of resident accountability inherent in the program.

Through three years of voluntary organizations, respective site residents often called upon building or floor captains to help resolve maintenance or management problems. The voluntary leaders were perceived as better able to elicit a response from the Housing Authority bureaucracy. In most instances, results were in fact forthcoming and resident perception was in turn confirmed. However, when building or floor captains' efforts yielded less than a resolution of the noted difficulty, their credibility suffered only slight liability, "Well, they at least tried. It isn't their job, anyway." The Housing Authority could shoulder the brunt of tenant dissatisfaction and deservedly so.

This perceptive scenario, however, no longer becomes the case under Tenant Management. Residents have been informed, and in time perceive, that both board representatives and management staff do in fact control, and are therefore responsible for, the daily operations of the developments. Tenant constituents expect TMC officers to resolve their residential problems: "They accepted the positions. It's their job. That's what they're getting paid for!"

Unfortunately, TMC principals face the same widening gap between needs and resources as do local housing authorities. Operational contexts and parameters do not alter with the form of site management, e.g., budget constraints, local politics, city services, bidding and contract award statutes, a wholly unaccountable civil service system, an even more unaccountable tenant-landlord judicial system, the incongruities of HUD policy and practice, a far removed Congressional appropriations process, and the intractable machinery of bureaucracy. The explanations of these elements are perceived as excuses, no matter the speaker. Principals notwithstanding, resident satisfaction invariably turns on producing concrete results.

The dynamics of accountability are undeniably a notable asset of the program—at least in theoretical terms. The Tenant Management staff is hired by the Tenant Management board. Board members are elected by the residents of respective buildings. If those same residents are dissatisfied with the performance of TMC staff or board members, they may elect new representatives on a bi-annual basis. The depth of this perception on the part of the majority of site households may be open to some question, given the newness of the program. Yet, that the power of "voting" is most proximate will not long escape the cognizance of constituents, especially if positive performance is not forthcoming. No TMC principal has the luxury that distance offers to more traditional political representatives.

However, for involved TMC officers to handle this most acute level of accountability, a special commitment is required. It must be not only to improve the quality of residential life, but also to execute the task through the Tenant Management Program. The resolve of TMC principals must be of most specific and fastidious character.

This commitment on the part of tenant leaders interacts with that of housing authority principals to generate a ninth variable, the one most essential to effective performance, *a partnership* between the two parties.

The principals entered into the relationship in faith. A commitment to address the issues was made on the basis of little evidence. As obstacles were confronted, setbacks faced, and milestones achieved, the two parties came to know each other. In time, through work and shared experience, a critical level of *trust* evolved. Webster's Seventh Edition defines it as: "an assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something." On more occasions than should be admitted, the "assured" nature of the reliance was somewhat tenuous. However, over the course of six years, tenant leaders and Authority principals had indeed learned the remainder of the definition. Each other's tensile strength became more than evident. A partnership, in "trust," had been forged for better or for worse.

This partnership is the *sine qua non* of Tenant Management because of the odds and the players. The "odds" have already been reviewed: addressing all the noted external and internal factors significantly affecting the endeavor, the historical, financial, political, and bureaucratic parameters within which the enterprise must be undertaken, and the human and physical conditions which must be confronted.

The "players" (other than program principals) affecting the enterprise in a host of direct and indirect ways are multiple:

- elected officials and their cadres of loyalists, from competent leaders to petty whores;
- tenants of respective developments, from active supporters to the blatantly obnoxious;
- HUD principals, from colleagues and fellow advocates to cover-your-ass bureaucrats working very hard at never making a decision;
- criminal justice officers, from invaluable off-duty police (assisting the security efforts of the TMC developments) to dilettante judges, who inflict upon struggling com-

munities the return of most flagrant violators of basic codes of conduct;

- Civil Service officials, from the dummies to the demagogues, with a few reasonable folks somehow sandwiched in the middle;
- media personnel, especially the press, from reporters who call the shots as they see them, to those who merely regurgitate the whim and whistle of editors, owners, and the public's seemingly insatiable appetite for vicarious sadism or stardom;
- union officials, from the best of membership representation to the sweethearts and power-mongers;
- homeowners and renters living proximate to the sites, from supportive neighbors to crass bigots;
- consultants and contractors, from those whose work reflects pride in their craft, to those who'd sell yesterday's time to anyone naive enough to buy it.

Program principals must work with, confront, finesse, cajole, and convince the full spectrum of parties and their respective self-interests, diversity notwithstanding. Deciding upon and executing the most appropriate tack, at which time, with and for whom, is a relatively sophisticated knit of planning and savvy, skill and energy. The A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens efforts have emphatically shown that only the combined personal, professional, and political resources of both resident leaders and Authority principals can weave a positive community fabric amidst all the players and despite the odds. A partnership between institutional and neighborhood principals is the program element without parallel.

Assessing the Potential for Success

Admittedly, when successor efforts evaluate the extent to which specific distressed sites are appropriate targets for Tenant Management, some of the factors outlined may appear to fall well short of the ideal. Two perspectives should be kept in mind.

The first is on the optimistic side of the ledger. In considering Tenant Management, involved principals need to recognize that the demonstration efforts were an evolutionary enterprise. Neither A. Harry Moore nor Montgomery Gardens had all the key variables in their favor at any given point in time. Assuming current levels of knowledge about the program, if respective sites had been assessed in the early '70s, Tenant Management would probably not have been pursued. The demonstration efforts only gradually capitalized on what assets each community offered and in time extended those assets with the maturation of the enterprise.

Please recall that prior to the DCA demonstration neither the sites nor the Housing Authority had sufficient capital; it was attracted only after a case for funding began to emerge. Political support came only through evidencing positive results, thereby enhancing the perception of the program as one with which elected officials wished to be associated. Community principals gained self-confidence and organizational skills only through first achieving objectives more limited in scope

than Tenant Management. Future program candidates, therefore, should be assessed primarily in terms of their potential to engender the noted variables and not merely according to a listing of static pluses and minuses.

The second perspective is one of circumspection. When communities evidence unstable leadership, household, and organizational patterns, or when both indigenous and institutional commitments are tenuous, or when a preponderance of the remaining factors are judged in the negative, with no evidence mitigating the prognosis, Tenant Management should not be undertaken. Even the most ingenious of institutional and/or community machinations cannot compensate for this level of liability. Curries Woods is an excellent case in point. Notwithstanding a variety of strategy reorientations and the expenditure of time, money, and efforts equivalent to A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens in both the DCA and the National Tenant Management demonstrations, the investment yielded few dividends. At the time it was undertaken, Tenant Management was far too ambitious an endeavor for the Curries Woods community. More limited objectives would have been much more appropriate and more in tune with community capacity.

Although assessments of future sites need to be mindful of a community's potential, they must also be unequivocally candid about the basics. Urban neighborhoods are rendered only a disservice when intervention strategies fail to parallel community capability. The caution urged in this perspective is best expressed in terms of consequence. Revitalization principals must heed the invaluable tenet of the Hippocratic Oath, *Primum non nocere,* First do no harm. Jersey City's demonstrations offer sufficient experience to follow the exhortation.

THE COST OF TENANT MANAGEMENT

In the variety of formal evaluations of the National Tenant Management Demonstration Program that are currently under way, a typical conclusion is that even if start-up costs are discounted, Tenant Management costs more than conventional management. Superficially, it seems a rather obvious point; under Tenant Management the site and the local housing authority bear the recurring cost of additional Building or Lane Managers besides the previously incurred cost of the conventional Site Manager position. However, if costs are assessed in terms of net public expenditures and in terms of benefits, this "typical conclusion" needs to be substantially qualified.

Taking A. Harry Moore as an example of a "net public expenditures" perspective, six of the seven Building Managers hired under Tenant Management had previously been recipients of AFDC Welfare. Their average welfare grant was $6,340/yr. (in adjusted dollars). The average Building Manager's salary is currently $9,260/yr. It doesn't take an economist to calculate that the net increase in public expenditure is not the Building Manager's full salary but rather $2,920/yr.* Thus, instead of noting that under Tenant Management A. Harry Moore's management system costs rose by $64,820 (i.e., 7 x $9,260), even the most simplistic analysis

*Admittedly this does not include the costs of fringe benefits attendant to the staff salary. However, neither does the welfare grant side of the equation include administrative and other overhead costs per welfare client. For purposes of this review, suffice it to note that they would probably be offsetting.

should note that under Tenant Management public expenditures increased by only $26,780/yr. ($2,920 x 6) + ($9,260/one non-AFDC case), or $3.37 per unit per month.

Additionally, any comment on cost is of little value unless made in terms of benefits. The "additional costs" related to Tenant Mangement are most obviously offset, in A. Harry Moore's case, by the continued viability of the development as a housing resource for lower income families. If the reader would recall, prior to the organizing and rehabilitation effort and its evolution into tenant management, the development was well on its way to abandonment and the total loss of a multimillion dollar investment of public funds—not to mention the frustration, crime, violence and despair bred by the circumstances and the ultimate cost and need of re-housing over 500 low-income families if the development was in fact terminated. Hypothetical comparisons to what "... it would have cost to operate A. Harry Moore had not organizing been initiated, sustained, and tenant management in turn pursued..." *totally* miss the point. If "conventional management" had remained unaltered at A. Harry Moore, operating the development wouldn't have cost anything—A. Harry Moore would no longer exist.*

In less extreme cases, the recurring operating costs noted may be offset by the income benefit derived from reduced vacancies/increased occupancy and/or through attracting a more diverse income spectrum of apartment applicants, both generating additional monthly rental income. For example:

- As previously noted, during the period 12/77 to 12/78 the A. Harry Moore TMC reduced the site's vacancy rate from 7.7 percent to 3.1 percent and thereafter to less than 2 percent. If stated positively, site occupancy rose from 579 apartments (12/77) to 627 (12/78) to 639 (12/79) and is currently (12/80) at 635 or 98.1 percent.

  The renting of these previously abandoned apartments generated approximately $28,000 additional rental income in the first year, $38,000 in '79 and $43,000 in 1980.[4] (Please see Fig. VIII.1.)

- As also pointed out in an earlier chapter, under Tenant Management average rent per apartment rose from $73.90/mo. (12/77) to $83.20 (12/78) to $89.10 (12/79) to $94.60 (12/80).**

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*The point is well stated from a broader perspective in a recent article by Robert Kolodny:

> As an antidote to abandonment, self-help certainly earns high marks, both in terms of restoring troubled publicly-assisted housing and reclaiming orphaned privately-owned units. Indeed, it is impossible to compare it directly with alternative mechanisms for salvaging derelict housing since, in such settings, there is virtually no competition.[3]

**Please recall that tenant rent in public housing may not exceed 25 percent of a household's adjusted annual income (Brooke I). Therefore, the noted increases neither were nor are a function of landlord (Housing Authority) rent hikes, but rather of the development's having attracted apartment applicants from a broader income spectrum.

Although a portion of the noted increases are a function of general increases in wages and public assistance benefits, that portion of the increase which is above general Authority-wide increases may fairly be attributed specifically to performance under Tenant Management.*

Thus, additional rental income generated specifically under Tenant Management netted approximately $16,000 in '78, $39,000 in '79 and $33,000 in '80—an average of $4.25 per unit/month.[5] (Please see Fig. VIII.2.)

Another source for offsetting additional management expenses is obviously reduced expenses in other areas of operations. However, as costs must be assessed in terms of benefits, expenses must be measured in terms of the level and quality of service(s) provided. Such would require a level of research somewhat beyond the scope of this work.**

Also, the more intangible factors of individual and collective accomplishment, usefulness, a sense of control over at least the residential aspects of one's life, decreasing anonymity and powerlessness, etc., must be placed on the benefit scale. Again, however, empirical measurement of their value (especially in dollars and cents terms) would require research design and execution well beyond the scope of this work. Suffice it to observe that throughout the demonstrations, had not these aspects (reasonable expense levels and intangible elements) of Tenant Management been positive, the noted increases in occupancy and rental levels would have been highly unlikely.

The evaluations of Tenant Management which merely take note of increases in staff costs must be judged to be myopic. If placed in the context of net public expenditures and in context of benefits, Tenant Management represents not only a viable alternative form of managing distressed multifamily housing stock, but also a cost-effective one.

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*Montgomery Gardens is not included in Authority-wide averages since the development is also managed by a Tenant Management Corporation and would therefore not reflect conventionally managed site rental levels.

**Although somewhat tangential to the point, an example of the somewhat complicated nature of many "expense reduction" arguments is the costs attributable to vandalism. (HUD is particularly fond of requesting such data.) From site inspections, work order levels, and general observations, it would be fair to note that A. Harry Moore's TMC has reduced vandalism to a substantial degree (let us say, 75 percent) from that which had been occurring prior to the demonstrations. However, it is unlikely that this experiential judgement could be reasonably translated into empirical data. If expense reduction/cost savings are to be attributed to reduced vandalism levels, the *a priori* assumption is that at some former time the damage caused by the vandalism was repaired, thereby yielding an expense baseline. Yet, the most typical circumstance is that the results of vandalism are merely left unattended. Thus, if not couched in terms of service levels and quality one could conceivably argue that the cost of repairs due to vandalism increased under Tenant Management; prior to Tenant Management the cost was $0, since nothing was done to remedy the damage caused by initial vandalism.

Fig. VIII.1. A. HARRY MOORE TMC RENTAL INCOME INCREASES

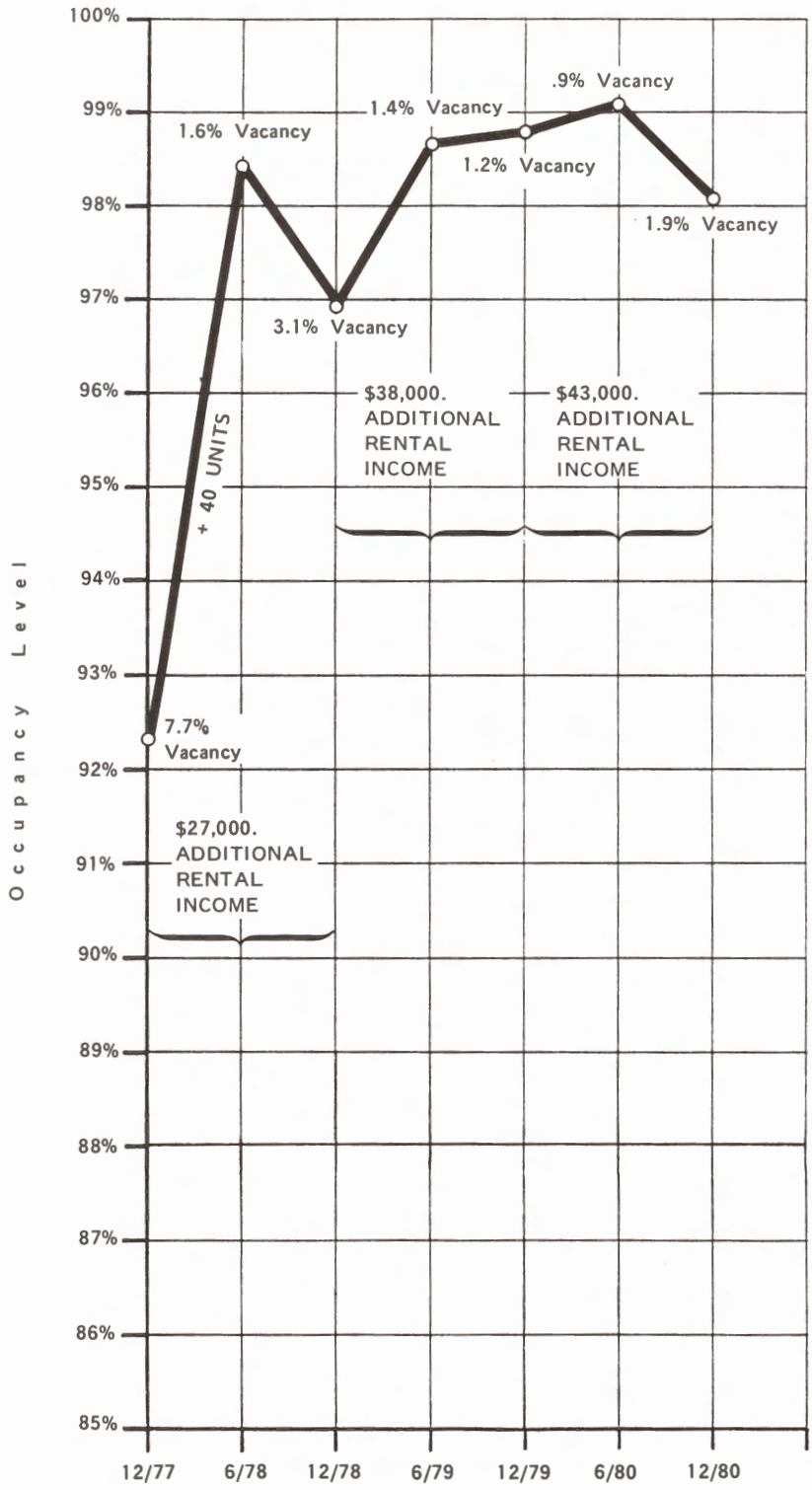
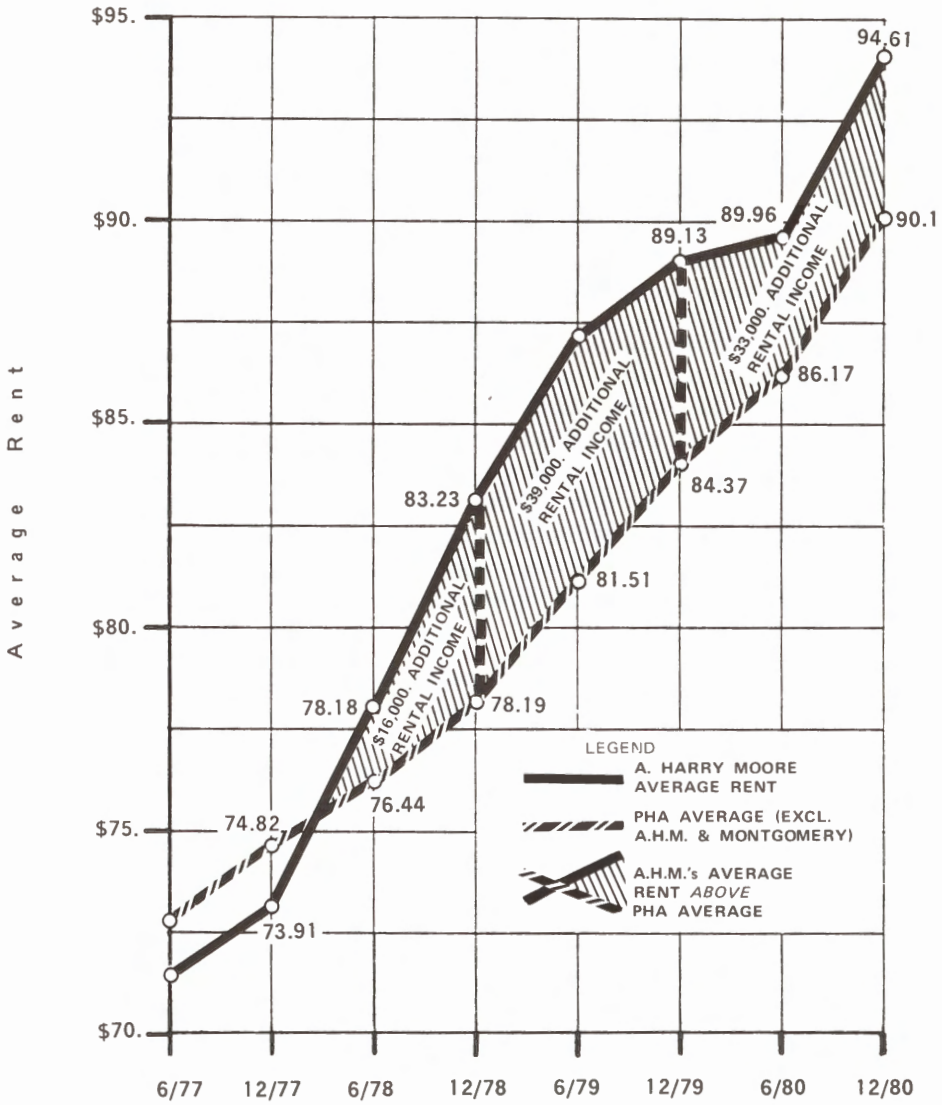


Fig. VIII.2. TMC – GENERATED ADDITIONAL RENTAL INCOME



EPILOGUE

I recently had the pleasure of meeting and talking at some length with Massachusetts Superior Court Judge Paul D. Garrity, who ordered the administration and management of the Boston Housing Authority placed in receivership and under the jurisdiction of the courts. In relating the intolerable conditions that are prevalent in Boston's public housing communities and the long history leading to his courageous decision, the Judge reiterated in many ways an assessment given to the local press after he personally inspected project conditions. He said that "one's sensibilities become saturated until one realizes that each and every name on the casualty list represents a human tragedy."[1] The point could not have been better stated.

Be it in Boston's or Jersey City's public-housing projects or in private sector neighborhoods throughout our urban centers, the consequences of neighborhood decline cannot be measured merely in terms of the physical condition of buildings, or the loss of tax revenues or increases in service costs. The toll is a human one. It is more and more urban residents who are less and less able to control even the most mundane aspects of their lives, who are scared and humiliated by the prospect of decreasing options. The toll is all too many families unable to hew the slightest semblance of hope out of the private or public marketplace. It is all too many children who won't learn to read or write or be able to get a decent job, whose mark on life will be a faceless name on a police Rap-sheet and who don't have a prayer of tomorrow being any better than today.

If we are truly distinguishable from our cousin the ape, the distinction is that we are ethical creatures. We have a responsibility to alleviate the persisting and at times tragic human consequences of our declining urban neighborhoods. The issues aren't going to go away. Neither personal distance nor extent of public default can insulate our society from the conditions or the consequences.

In confronting that condition and accepting the responsibility to alter its consequences, we face an austerity of choices, an austerity which parallels the attitude of the body politic and that of its elected officials and which is in turn reflected in declining levels of non-defense related public expenditures. Broad redistribution of wealth scenarios are a pipedream. Massive influxes of '60s-type social capital are inconceivable. The condition of our urban neighborhoods must, in all probability, be confronted in the context of and despite a paucity of public, fiscal resources.

As was the case with A. Harry Moore, public policy and practice through the '80s must turn to resources other than simply monetary—to the residents themselves. The Jersey City demonstration has evidenced reason for some optimism for the prospects. The TMC's recent extensions of their housing management roles underscore the point.

The A. Harry Moore TMC administered the 1980 Summer Food Program throughout the Housing Authority's eight family developments (a role previously played by the Housing Authority). The consensus comment of the recently established ('79) Tenant Affairs Board (city-wide association of tenant councils/corporations presidents) was, "...the summer program was well managed; both sponsors and clients received their money's worth and, for the most part, execution was better than in the past." The TMC is also establishing an on-site community laundry facility, assisting in serving clients of a site-based health clinic, supporting (through self-generated revenues) an after-school tutorial program, and developing a variety of anti-crime/vandalism and employment-related efforts under the Intergovernmental Agency Anti-Crime Program.[2]

Montgomery Gardens is executing similar endeavors as well as co-venturing a housing production enterprise. The TMC has entered into a joint venture with the Housing Authority under which a not-for-profit subsidiary will first own and ultimately manage a new 140-unit development of 2- to 5-bedroom townhouses being funded under HUD's Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments Program. In executing this role, employment opportunities for residents will be maximized and "profits" will be channeled back through the community to sustain and expand on-going action agendas.*

These initiatives are most relevant to the demonstration, in that they re-emphasize the original intent of the DCA grant itself—to support and foster the roles that community organizations may play in the revitalization, stabilization and preservation of their own neighborhoods. In partnership with, in Jersey City's case, a public institution, local organizations have evidenced a noteworthy evolution from dependent and dissatisfied clients to active and responsible consumers to capable administrators-in-training to serious providers of community services.

Although this approach is neither a panacea nor a quick-fix, the residents of our urban communities should be looked to as a vibrant and effective resource in turning about distressed neighborhoods.[3] Urban policy of the '80s needs to recognize that within the character and sinew of community principals lies more strength, stamina and talent than billions of public and/or private sector monies could muster. Urban practice needs to respect and build upon the forces of regeneration intrinsic in our local neighborhoods, be they vertical or otherwise.

In Jacob Bronowski's classic work, *The Ascent of Man,* the author notes,

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*Even Curries woods is exhibiting some hopeful signs. In the most recent elections for tenant council representative, the candidates willing to run for office and who were in fact elected are the same principals who served on the Interim Planning Committee established after the TMC Board resigned. This previously absent continuity in leadership coincides with a stabilization in the composition of site households which has apparently been the case for at least the past ten months.

> The most powerful drive in the ascent of man is his pleasure in his own skill. He loves to do what he does well and having done it well he loves to do it better.[4]

The demonstration suggests that, given half a chance and a little help, neighborhood residents can, indeed, through their own indigenous organizations, perform a critical role in the revitalization and preservation of distressed urban communities. I would suggest that, with a reasonable level of support, the role will be executed well and that the principals will assuredly delight in doing it better.

Robert J. Rigby, Jr.

Jersey City, New Jersey
May, 1981

NOTES

Chapter I

1. Robert Kolodny, *Searching for New Answers in Housing Management* (New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Housing, Housing Demonstration Progam, Trenton, NJ, 1976), p. 128.
2. Mark Twain, *The War Prayer* (Harper & Row, New York, 1923).

Chapter II

1. "Public Housing," *Housing and Development Reporter* (The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., Washington, D.C.), pp. 30:0011-30:0013; and *Problems Affecting Low-Rent Public Housing Projects* (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, Washington, D.C., 1979), pp. 18, 19.
2. U.S., Housing Act of 1937, P.L. 75-412, Chapter 896, 75th Congress, First Session.
3. Robert Kolodny, *Exploring New Strategies for Improving Public Housing Management* (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, Washington, D.C., July 1979), p. 7.
4. Eugene J. Meehan, *The Quality of Federal Policymaking: Programmed Failure in Public Housing* (University of Missouri Press, Missouri, 1979), p. 17.
5. For further discussion see Alvin Rabushka and William G. Weissert, *Caseworkers or Police?* (Hoover Institution Press, California, 1977); and Richard D. Baron, "Community Organizations: Antidote for Neighborhood Succession and Focus for Neighborhood Improvement," *St. Louis University Law Journal,* 21, No. 3 (1978).
6. Senator Robert Wagner, of New York, one of the two principal authors of the legislation, stated ". . . there are some people whom we cannot possibly reach; I mean those who have no means to pay the rent. . . . Obviously this bill cannot provide housing for those who cannot pay the rent minus the subsidy (for repaying capital indebtedness) allowed." *81 Congressional Record* 8099 (August 3, 1937).
7. *HUD Statistical Yearbook,* 1977, as displayed in Kolodny, *Exploring New Strategies* . . . , p. 26.

8. Kolodny, *Exploring New Strategies . . .*, p. 7.
9. Meehan, p. 73.
10. Meehan, p. 26.
11. *Housing and Development Reporter,* p. 30:0011.
12. Meehan, p. 215.
13. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *Consolidated Management Review Report of the Housing Authority of the City of Jersey City* (1973), pp. 1-3.
14. *Ibid.,* pp. 1-3.

Chapter IV

1. Grant No. 00462 from the Housing Demonstration Program of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs to the Housing Authority of the City of Jersey City, May 1974.
2. Robert Kolodny, *Searching for New Answers in Housing Management* (New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Housing, Housing Demonstration Program, Trenton, NJ 1976), p. 115.
3. Kolodny, pp. 118, 119.
4. Kolodny, p. 123.
5. Richard D. Baron, "Community Organizations: Antidote for Neighborhood Succession and Focus for Neighborhood Improvement," *St. Louis University Law Journal,* 21, No. 3 (1978), pp. 643-662.
6. Kolodny, p. 129.
7. Robert J. Rigby, Jr., "Livable Cities: How Small Grants Can Make a Difference," testimony before the Subcommittee on the City, House Banking and Finance Committee, 95th Congress, 1st Session, August 3, 1977.
8. Kolodny, p. 127.
9. Notice of Invitation for Proposals, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, May 1976, National Tenant Management Demonstration Program.
10. The other five cities were: Louisville, Kentucky (Iroquois Homes, 854 units); New Haven, Connecticut (Que-View, 260 units); New Orleans, Louisiana (Calliope Homes, 1,550 units); Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (Sunrise Acres, 537 units), and Rochester, New York (Ashanti, 211 units).
11. The St. Louis model represented a hybrid between conventional public housing mangement and complete contract management. Under "conventional" all staff are employees of the housing authority and all site and support services are provided by the housing authority. Under "complete contract" all staff are employees of the contract manager (e.g., a Tenant Management Corporation) and all site and support services are provided by the contract manager. The St. Louis mode provides for a sharing of both staff and service responsibilities as noted in the text.

12. Three weeks later our colleagues of Stella Wright in Newark signed New Jersey's second Tenant Management contract under auspices quite independent of the National Demonstration Program.

Chapter V

1. Robert J. Rigby, Jr., "Alternative Mechanisms of Funding Public Housing Modernization," testimony before the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development of the House Banking and Finance Committee, 98th Congress, 2nd Session, March 10, 1980.
2. On a more optimistic note, the Tenant Committee principals have remained in office for the past 12 months; comprised of a number of past officers from various tenant Boards, the Committee's activities have been consistently positive.

Chapter VI

1. "effectiveness . . . higher than A. Harry Moore," although more than evident from observation of physical conditions, must be qualified by the previously noted "lower degree of difficulty": e.g., more elderly, fewer children, and no vacancies. And, obviously, Montgomery had the advantage of learning "lessons" from the experience of their A. Harry Moore and Curries Woods tenant colleagues.

   Also, the previously noted major modernization grant to A. Harry Moore (HUD's Traget Projects Program, Phase I) was announced six months after the last building was organized and refurbished. Montgomery's grant analogue (HUD's Target Project Program, Phase II) was announced while the third of its six building organizations was being established—a significant morale booster.

   Taking not one iota of credit away from the exemplary interest and ability of Montgomery's resident leaders and constituents, if a "degree of difficulty" variable were factored into the "effectiveness" equation, A. Harry Moore and Montgomery ratings would be at par.
2. Anne Power, *Tenant Co-Ops or Tenant Management Corporations in the U.S.A.* (North Islington Housing Rights Project, London, England, 1979), p. 16.

Chapter VIII

1. Robert Merton, quoted in Charles E. Silberman's *Criminal Violence: Criminal Justice* (Random House, New York, 1978), p. 424.
2. Richard D. Baron, "Community Organizations: Antidote for Neighborhood Sucession and Focus for Neighborhood Improvement," *St. Louis University Law Journal,* 21, No. 3 (1978), p. 655.
3. Robert Kolodny, "The Emergence of Self-Help in the USA as a Housing Strategy of the Urban Poor," *Habitat International,* 5, No. 1/2 (Pergamon Press Ltd., Great Britain, 1980).
4. Capital outlay for apartment rehabilitation and attendant pay-back period is not calculated in the example because under HUD's current fiscal structure, the rehabilitation of long-term vacancies would probably be funded under a

version of the Low-Rent Modernization Program, which does not factor into operating expenses. Even if the HUD system were not fiscally segmented and more closely approximated the private sector, the pay-back period is relatively short term (average 2-5 years). Thus, the basic premise of additional operating income offsetting additional operating costs remains valid.

5. Public housing officials would be quick to point out that under the current rules and regulations governing the distribution of HUD-funded operating subsidy (The Performance Funding System), the noted income increases in any given year would only accrue to the benefit of the HA/TMC in that fiscal year. Thereafter, there is a dollar-for-dollar reduction in federal subsidy for any increase in average rent per apartment. Thus, the income benefit of increases in average rent, unlike that which derives from increased occupancy, is not cumulative in effect.

   It should be noted, however, that although this places on the HA/TMC the burden of repeating the increase in average rental income annually, it does not detract from the savings in public expenditures derived from the subsidy reductions which are, in fact, a cumulative reduction in public expenditures.

   Further, if Tenant Management is to be fairly assessed, program performance should not be penalized because HUD's system of distributing operating subsidy (which amounts to little more than mathematical mush) is devoid of any reasonable "performance" incentives.

Epilogue

1. "Rebuilding Public Housing," *the Boston Globe,* July 27, 1979, p. 12.
2. Initiated in federal fiscal year 1980, the Program was originally termed the Urban Initiatives Anti-Crime Program. Targeted at distressed public housing stock and administered by HUD with funds co-targeted from other federal agencies, the demonstration is intended to reduce crime and the fear of crime through a variety of community-institutional strategies.
3. The importance of resident attitudes and organizations to neighborhood renewal and the general self-help principle put forth in the text is more extensively reviewed in a number of recent publications:

   Rolf Goetze and Kent W. Colton, "The Dynamics of Neighborhoods," *Journal of the American Planning Associaiton,* April 1980.

   Dynamics of Neighborhood Change (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, Division of Policy Studies, 1979).

   Richard D. Baron, "Community Organizations: Antidote for Neighborhood Succession and Focus for Neighborhood Improvement," *St. Louis Law Journal,* 20, No. 3 (1978), pp. 634-663.

   Robert Kolodny, "The Emergence of Self-Help in the USA as a Housing Strategy of the Urban Poor," *Habitat International,* 5, No. 1/2 (Pergamon Press Ltd., Great Britain, 1980), pp. 213-225.
4. Jacob Bronowski, *The Ascent of Man* (Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1973), p. 116.

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