



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-1000

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CONGRESSIONAL
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

APR 19 2016

Received
District Office

MAY 18 2016

Office of Rep. John Culberson
Texas, District 7

The Honorable John Culberson
Member, United States
House of Representatives
10000 Memorial Drive, Suite 620
Houston, TX 77024-3490

Dear Representative Culberson:

On behalf of Secretary Julián Castro, thank you for your letter about the development of 233 mixed-income, multifamily units at 2640 Fountainview Drive in Houston, Texas. The following information is from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Office of Public and Indian Housing.

Your letter highlights neighborhood concerns about the impact of this development on the local Briargrove school capacity and the perceived lack of transparency throughout the predevelopment process. After the Department's review of the issues, it appears that no local development standards or procedures were breached in the development process followed by the Houston Housing Authority (HHA) to date. The HHA has addressed many of the neighborhood's concerns on the following website that contains a list of frequently asked questions about this development project and the housing authority's response: <http://housingforhouston.com/news/2640-fountain-view-apartments-community-information.aspx>. In your letter, you indicated that the new development could bring hundreds of children to Briargrove. However, the HHA projects that the number of elementary schoolchildren that could be attending Briargrove is less than 50. There is also a new elementary school presently under construction in the neighborhood that is projected for completion in August 2016.

The HHA has also done its due diligence on the Site and Neighborhood Standards, as required by HUD regulations at Section 905.602(d) of Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The Department completed the Site and Neighborhood review process for the 2640 Fountainview Drive site and has no objections to the development of this project. This review is based upon local data on the racial and economic makeup of neighborhoods where new housing is proposed. It examines a number of factors including whether the site facilitates and furthers full compliance with civil rights legislation. It also reviews accessibility to social recreational, educational and other municipal facilities and services and whether the site is accessible to employment and transportation. HUD concluded that the development the HHA is proposing for this site will provide housing for a variety of families at different economic levels and will allow for these families to reside in this high opportunity neighborhood.

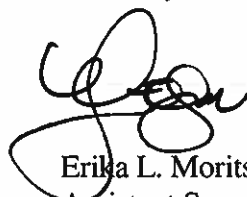
The Department believes that the HHA has thus far been diligent in following HUD guidelines and requirements. As a requirement for inclusion in the HHA's Public Housing Plan, the redevelopment of 2640 Fountain View has been on the agenda for HHA's public Board of Commissioners meeting twice in the last year and a half and has been discussed multiple times at

public Board meetings. The project was posted for public comment in 2014 and 2015 as part of the requirement for the City of Houston's Consolidated Plan and as required by environmental regulations. In addition, the description of the proposed development at 2640 Fountainview was advertised in the Houston Chronicle before the Finding of No Significant Impact was awarded in 2014. Prior to the start of construction on this project the HHA must submit a Development Proposal pursuant to regulations at Section 906.606 of Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations and be approved by HUD.

You ask that the Department immediately notify the City and HHA to stop all further work on this project until they determine the impact on school overcrowding. HUD feels that the issue of school overcrowding has been addressed and further negotiation and discussion of the issues surrounding the redevelopment of 2640 Fountainview is best done at the local level. The Department encourages neighborhood stakeholders to work with the Houston Independent School District, HHA and all relevant authorities to address the issues that the community has raised. On December 31, 2015, HUD published the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Rule Guidebook which going forward will help guarantee transparency and community engagement in the development process for all agencies receiving federal funding.

Thank you for your interest in the Department's programs. If I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erika L. Moritsugu', written in a cursive style.

Erika L. Moritsugu
Assistant Secretary for Congressional
and Intergovernmental Relations