

1973
AUG

3-9-46

EDMONTON SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL



TASK FORCE ON:

HIGH DENSITY HOUSING IN NORTHEAST EDMONTON

The Task Force on High Density Housing was established by the Edmonton Social Planning Council to investigate the condition of multiple-dwelling housing in Northeast Edmonton. After careful consideration, the Task Force concludes that the most pressing housing issue in Northeast Edmonton is the care and maintenance of limited dividend housing. That is housing which is built under Section 15 of the National Housing Act. This Section of the Act provides for the building of low rental housing by private entrepreneurs. Therefore, an immediate investigation into the alleged mismanagement, care and maintenance of limited dividend housing in Edmonton should be implemented by the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

August 8, 1973.

A PUBLICATION OF
THE EDMONTON SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL
10006-107 STREET,
EDMONTON, ALBERTA. T5J 1J2
PHONE: 424-0331

TASK FORCE ON HIGH DENSITY HOUSING IN NORTHEAST EDMONTON

On a request from some citizens in Northeast Edmonton, the Edmonton Social Planning Council in April of 1973 established a Task Force to investigate the condition of multiple unit housing in Northeast Edmonton. It was expected that the Task Force would prepare a brief but factual report on matters relating to safety, density and psychological effects of Northeast Edmonton's row-housing; and that it would consist of some twenty members, including residents, city officials, builders and others. In actuality, the Task Force met on five occasions between April and June of 1973 and discussed a wide range of problems which result from row-housing or multiple dwelling housing. However, before any recording of the Task Force deliberations, some description of Northeast Edmonton is needed.

Northeast Edmonton is bounded on the south by 127 Avenue and on the west by 97 Street. The eastern boundary follows the railway tracks from 127 Avenue to 50 Street and north to approximately 154 Avenue, which forms the northern boundary of the area.

According to the 1972 fall census of the City of Edmonton Election Office, the population of Northeast Edmonton was 53,116. Some 12% of Edmonton's total population. The density per gross acre in various places in Northeast Edmonton, as well as some figures for other areas in the city, is indicated in the following table supplied by the City of Edmonton Planning Department.

Densities Per Gross Acre

Subdivisions (1971)

Dickinsfield	23.5 persons per gross acre
Ottewell	16.0
Belvedere	17.2
Delwood	17.9
Londonderry	16.6
Steele Heights	16.7
Balwin	17.8
Thorncliffe	26.0
Summerlea	21.0
Brander Gardens	24.0

Outline Plans (1972)

West Jasper Place	23.4
Riverbend	22.3
Castle Downs	22.1
Mill Woods	21.6
Kaskitayo	24.9

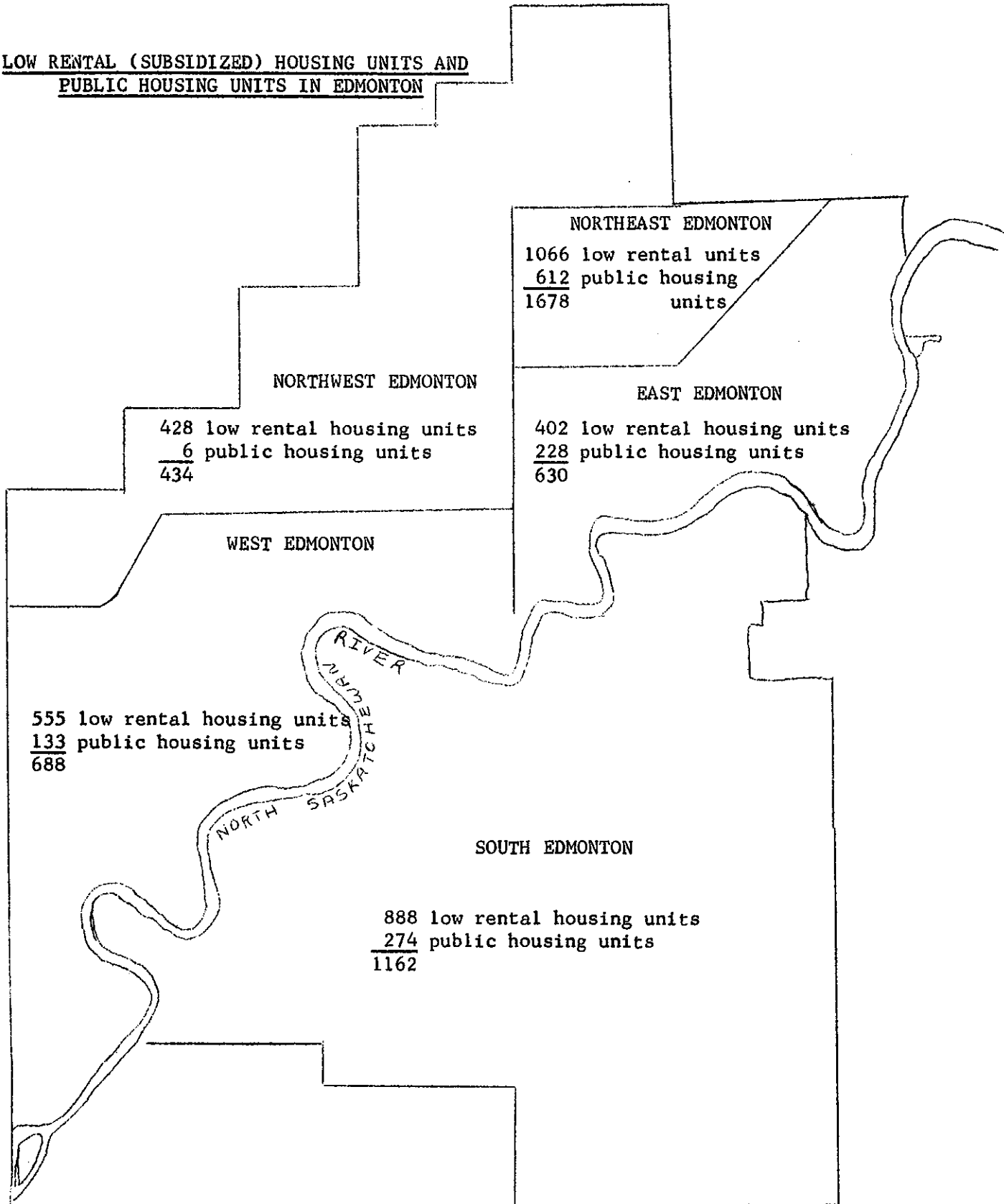
The density per gross acre is no greater in Northeast Edmonton than in any other parts of the city. All new areas, regardless of where they are located, contain much higher densities than older areas of the city.

What is significant, with regard to density, however, is the increase in multiple family dwellings, that is dwellings which are not single family houses. In the ten years between 1961 and 1971, the percentage of the total housing devoted to single detached housing has dropped from 67% to 60%, while the total number of multiple dwelling units, that is apartments, and this includes duplexes, has increased from 27% of the total housing to 34% in 1971 (University of Alberta Population Lab).

Density per gross acre, though useful, does not always reveal site densities. High-site densities where there are a significant number of children, are revealed by worn out grass and landscape abuse and destruction. Site densities for multiple dwellings would logically be much greater than those for single detached homes. Single detached density areas contain approximately 20 persons per acre, while multiple family sites range from 20-80 persons per acre. Thus where there are high concentrations of multiple housing, greater densities are experienced. Where subsidized and public housing exists and where the concentration of subsidized and public housing is higher, as in Northeast Edmonton, average densities are no higher. However, low income groups often find their access to playgrounds and parks restricted because of prejudice and discrimination. It is stated by tenants in public and limited dividend housing that their children are not welcome in the community league playgrounds. Thus low income groups find they are, because of these prejudices, confined to their housing sites more than other groups. Thus, low site density for both public and limited dividend housing is more important than for other forms of housing for higher income groups. Furthermore, many of the people occupying subsidized and public housing are young married couples. Consequently the child adult ratio in such developments is higher and space becomes even more important where such high ratios exist (low site densities).

THE FOLLOWING MAP SHOWS A DISTRIBUTION
OF PUBLIC AND LOW RENTAL HOUSING IN EDMONTON.

LOW RENTAL (SUBSIDIZED) HOUSING UNITS AND
PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS IN EDMONTON



TOTAL 3,339 low rental (subsidized) housing units in the City of Edmonton
 TOTAL 1,253 public housing units in the City of Edmonton
 4,592

It is not difficult to conclude from the above map that much of Edmonton's low rental and public housing is located in Northeast Edmonton.

The Task Force, in its investigations, found that many unanticipated problems arise out of this kind of concentration. There are, moreover, many government policies, regulations and laws which inadvertently create or inhibit solutions to these problems.

PUBLIC HOUSING PROBLEMS:

The Housing Section of the Local Board of Health encounters health hazards in multiple dwelling units, for which neither the tenant nor the landlord take responsibility. They record instances of refuse and dog droppings spread throughout lawns, walks and lanes. Much of this accumulates over the winter months and is not cleaned up as the snow and ice are melted. The Local Board of Health also notes that since many multiple dwelling units are constructed of wood frame, they may require a considerable amount of maintenance to maintain at a proper standard for the next twenty years. As will be shown in more detail later, adequate maintenance is not being followed.

By far, the most serious problems encountered by the health authorities are infestations of cockroaches, bedbugs, and grain beetles. Common attics in row housing allow insects to spread easily from one unit to another. The disinfestation of condominiums (where the occupant usually owns his unit) may in the future provide some serious problems. Consent of the owner of the condominium must be granted before a whole complex of units can be disinfested. Infestation control comes under Provincial Housing Regulations and Provincial Nuisance Regulations and neither were made with the view of handling owner occupied multiple dwelling units which are under the same roof. Consideration should be given to placing condominiums in the same classification as rented accommodation and the managers of such projects should be given the responsibility for and should have the authority to carry out the necessary work to meet minimum health standards.

POLICING PROBLEMS

The Edmonton Police Department does not maintain separate statistics for crimes for geographic areas within the city. Their crime statistics cover the whole city and are not broken down for any specific area. Consequently, there are no police statistics which specifically cover Northeast Edmonton.

Without reference to any particular areas of the city, the Police Department finds that significant factors in policing problems involve the adequacy of housing relating to such matters as light, water, heat, sewage, etc., availability of help services offered, green areas located nearby the residents, access to recreational facilities, on level and type

of street lighting present. All of these factors, in the view of the Police Department, have a distinct impact on the incidents of policing problems that a given area may generate, regardless of the general economic standing of the residents.

To sum up, those areas which are people-pleasing, give rise to less policing problems than those areas that are people-depressing. Population density is not a primary cause of high levels of criminal or anti-social conduct. Instead it is the deterioration of the living environment that creates problems generally associated with many people living in a small geographic area. If failure to maintain property is as wide spread as it might seem to be and continues then it can be fairly accurately predicted that crimes and anti-social behavior will increase in Northeast Edmonton in the immediate future.

BUILDING STANDARDS AND FIRE SAFETY

Attention to the problem of poor quality building is not the responsibility of building inspectors for the City of Edmonton but rather the building code. The City of Edmonton Building Inspection Branch is noted for its toughness. As we are all aware, minimum standards as established under the building codes become maximum standards under which people build. Therefore, if we wish high standards within our buildings, we must get to the root of the problem by increasing the standards as laid down in the building codes and most particularly for public, subsidized and multiple unit housing.

It should be noted, however, that any unilateral decisions to make the Edmonton building code of a higher standard than other communities will drive investment dollars out of our community. Any changes in building standards should be applied, at least provincially, and preferably across Canada.

Under our present income tax laws, development or building companies are allowed a 10% depreciation factor on framed multiple dwellings owned by these companies. Whereas if the building is erected from masonry or other incombustible material, a company owned building is only allowed a 5% depreciation factor. On the surface, this does not appear to effect the type of housing developers will provide. However, housing is often used by large companies to defer taxes on incomes in other areas like rental income. By building out of frame, developers maximize the tax shelter available to them. Thus, our present federal income tax laws encourage the construction of framed multiple dwelling units offering no incentives to developers who might possibly build multiple dwelling units out of masonry. Possibly our tax laws should be reversed to provide incentives to builders, who wish to build masonry dwelling units.

Within the last fifteen years, Edmonton has been rapidly transitioning from a single family dwelling community into a community where many of its people are now housed in multi-family dwelling units. Many multi-family dwelling units (or row housing) projects have become very large in scale (containing up to 400 units in a single project). As a result of these large scale developments, it appears that many new problems have developed in regards to fire safety. Concern has been expressed by the residents of Northeast Edmonton about the way in which row housing has been built. Units are placed back-to-back without a fire wall separating them; units have single entrances and common attics. If a fire should break out in a row housing project like this, the common attic allows the flames to spread rapidly from one unit to another and no fire wall between units allows fire to rapidly spread from one unit to another. Moreover, single entrances make it difficult for people living in these complexes to get out quickly without becoming trapped. It is not until recent years that extensive studies have been conducted by the National Research Council regarding the spread of fire and smoke in all buildings. Unfortunately to date, little of this research material has been adopted by legislative bodies or in other words, this research material has not been incorporated into our building codes.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

The City Social Service Department does not deal with Northeast Edmonton as a unit. Its services in Northeast Edmonton are organized around the Glengarry Service Centre which covers not only Northeast Edmonton but a part of Calder as well. Nevertheless, the information on social problems contained or derived out of the Glengarry Service Centre is applicable and significant to Northeast Edmonton. The Glengarry Service Centre contains a population of 77,620 people, or 17.7% of Edmonton's total population. The caseload, however, receiving financial assistance from the City is 23.7% of that total. This can be compared to the Duggan Service Centre which serves a population of 125,365 which is 29% of Edmonton's total population. The caseload receiving financial assistance there is 18% of those on financial assistance in Edmonton. In a report prepared for the Edmonton Housing Authority by the "Professionals for Progress" a group in Northeast Edmonton, note that in Evansdale a specific part of Northeast Edmonton - a public housing project, Dickensfield I and III - the caseload on public assistance is as follows:

Evansdale Public Assistance Caseload by Address

Single Family Homes	3	8.7%
Dickensfield I	13	37%
Dickensfield III	13	37%
Dickensfield Court	2	5.9%
3 Storey Walkups	4	11.5%
	<u>35</u>	<u>100%</u>

The report goes on to state:

Our findings in services to families of this area indicate a large percentage are of a deprived financial and social background, therefore are presenting requests with their many social problems.

Alcoholism and drug dependency are the most prevalent reasons why the families relate for financial and counselling services. Due to their limited opportunities in the formative years, most young couples find the rearing of families a struggle. The areas of homemaking, parenting, family relationship and employment are difficult for them - most of the men, due to limited formal education, find the opportunity to avail themselves of services of upgrading, trade or technical training out of reach or they seem to fail to have the perseverance to connect with A.V.C. and manpower - also a goodly number of them have had rather negative school experiences and so assume the above mentioned department services would not be one for which they would be eligible.

More families have fears of being labelled - such comments are frequently heard at the time they request services, "don't phone landlord, don't get in touch with my employer, doctor, etc." Due to the family's apparent lack of trust in using community services, they often use deception in describing their problems and need for service. They look at services, particularly counselling as the very last resort and therefore much of our service at present is on an emergency crisis short-term basis. It would appear an educational programme on the basic family relationships - even on a casual, non-structured available basis in their own community, would assist greatly in families changing their attitudes towards using social services in the metro areas.

The wisdom of planning and building large scale public and subsidized housing complexes should be carefully reconsidered. To place large numbers of people on financial assistance and all its attendant problems in one housing complex is undesirable. Moreover, large complexes of low income groups make them a more obvious target for discrimination by other sections of the community in which they exist. In any future development in Northeast Edmonton, this factor should be taken into consideration.

PARKS AND RECREATION PROBLEMS

From an examination of the Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980, it would appear that Northeast Edmonton (Northgate District) has few parkland deficiencies if we accept the standards as laid out in the Master Plan. There is no reason why these should not be accepted when they are above those standards set down by the National Recreation and Parks Association. For neighbourhood parks, the Edmonton standards are 1.5 acres per 1,000 persons. For district parks the standards are 1.25 acres per 1,000 persons.

District parks include such facilities as a recreation centre, picnic areas and ornamental planting. They may be located next to a highschool and contain such other recreational amenities as swimming pools, arenas, tennis courts, hockey rinks and sport fields.

Neighbourhood parks are usually (ideally) located next to elementary schools. They should contain a neighbourhood parks, ornamental planting and park furniture, and a neighbourhood playground. The playground would have a community league building, hockey rinks and sand lots.

The standards set out for golf courses, natural areas and city parks is 12 acres per 1,000 persons. Thus, the total parkland standards as set out in the Master Plan are 14.75 acres per 1,000 persons. This standard does not include any allocation for regional parks which might be created within the urban setting.

Compared to other areas of the city, Northgate District (Northeast Edmonton) has few parkland deficiencies. At the district level, there are no deficiencies at the neighbourhood level there are some deficiencies in playgrounds but mostly in neighbourhood parks (passive areas). This is confirmed by residents in the area who suggest that there is plenty of recreational parkland but few areas of a passive nature. One resident stated the problem in this way: "There are no trees in Northeast Edmonton".

The practice of locating park sites next to school grounds has the effect, residents suggest, of using them only for recreational purposes. Thus, they point to the Joint Agreement as detrimental to the development of passive recreation areas in their area.

At the district level, citizens complain about the lack of picnic facilities. All the picnic areas, they suggest, are located in the ravines and river valley. Thus, to have a picnic, residents of Northeast Edmonton must get in their cars and travel to the river valley. Many residents, like single parent families and others on low incomes, do not have cars. Thus, they must either rely on the bus service to get them there and in most cases, this is inconvenient and time consuming, or they do not go.

SLUM LANDLORDS

However well endowed Northeast Edmonton might be with adequate parkland and reasonable population densities, these factors will not prevent the development of slum housing if landlords and management of row housing refuse to adequately care for and maintain their property.

In our view, the care, maintenance and management is sufficiently neglected in Northeast Edmonton to warrant a full scale investigation particularly where private corporations are subsidized to provide low rental accommodation. Our contacts with the Kew Place Tenant Action Committee have led us to the above conclusion. Not only should the inquiry deal with care, maintenance, and management, it should also evaluate the structure and design and standards used in the building and construction of row housing.

Our discussions with the architects who design these projects indicate that they are not satisfied with the projects they design, and the restraints that developers impose upon their designs. As pointed out earlier, the minimum building code standards become the maximum standards to which especially public and low dividend housing is built.

CONCLUSIONS

An immediate investigation into the alleged mismanagement, care and maintenance of low dividend housing in Edmonton should be implemented by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

The Government of Canada, Department of Finance, should give consideration to amendments to the Income Tax Act to allow companies a 10% depreciation on multi-unit dwellings erected of incombustible materials.

All governments (municipal, provincial and national) should give careful consideration to establishing minimum building code standards which prevent the construction of multi-unit dwellings which are potential health hazards, which take into consideration minimum fire protection between units, and which up-grade the standard of materials used and the quality of workmanship accepted.

Civic officials should be encouraged to distribute public and limited dividend housing more evenly throughout the city. Such housing projects should ideally contain no more than five to six units.

Immediate attention by the provincial authorities should be given to placing condominium developments under the same classification as rented accommodation in the Provincial Housing Regulations and the Provincial Nuisance Regulations and managers of such projects should be given the responsibility and authority to carry out the necessary work to meet minimum health standards.

The City of Edmonton, Parks and Recreation Department, should immediately put into operation its plans for passive recreation areas in Northeast Edmonton.

The following people participated in the meetings of the Task Force on High Density Housing in Northeast Edmonton. Out of this Task Force, a new organization known as the Citizens' Planning Group (Northeast Edmonton) has been formed. This group is asking the citizens of Northeast Edmonton, the City of Edmonton and the Episcopal Corporation of Western Canada to co-operatively plan for the development of the property owned (part of which is St. Michael's Cemetery) by the Episcopal Corporation between 82 and 74 Streets and 137 and 142 Avenues. The citizen task force members felt that there should not be a repeat of past errors in Northeast Edmonton and that by co-operatively planning this open piece of land, they could enhance their environment rather than add to its deterioration.

Phil Sutton
Preston Manning

Vicki Herbert
Mrs. Niblett
Mr. and Mrs. Hogan
Sandy Patrie
Sandy Gillis
Glynis Humphrey
Mickey Holland

Lloyd Egen
Carol White
Ian Hamilton
Bob Claney
Gladys Carmichael
Larry Oliver
Ed Nolin
Jim Masterton
Jill Green
Peter Boothroyd
Roger Soderstrom

A P P E N D I X I

THE KEW PLACE TENANT ACTION COMMITTEE

c/o Ste. # 107
Grifford House
14115 - 76 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
June 4, 1973

Property Management
Weber Bros. Realty Ltd.
10013 - 101 A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

We are a committee of concerned tenants living in Kew Place Development, located between 76 Street and 74 Street, on 141 Avenue.

Although these buildings opened only two years ago, they are already run down, unsafe, poorly serviced and poorly managed.

We felt that you would be interested in our complaints as your investment in this property is at stake.

Numerous vacancies indicate the unwillingness of good tenants to remain in the buildings and the reluctance of prospective tenants to move in.

We have four categories for our grievances: 1) Maintenance (indoor and outdoor); 2) Safety and Security; 3) Management; 4) Faulty original construction.

MAINTENANCE

1. Leaks in the roof result in water damage to suites.
2. In most two-storey units lack of sealing in the 2nd storey bathroom results in drainage into the light fixture in the breakfast nook below.
3. Settling of the buildings will not permit many fire doors to close properly.
4. Knobs on fire doors are stripped of thread and are no longer operable.
5. Broken thermostats and valves in many units have not been repaired or replaced and we cannot control the heat in our homes.
6. There is an inadequate supply of washers and dryers (only two to serve 32 families!) and what there are work very poorly.

(Continued . . .)

7. Poor maintenance of the grounds gives the development a generally shabby look and has contributed to hostile reaction of the surrounding community to the development.
8. The parking lot is not cleared of snow in the winter nor of grass in the summer. Similarly, sidewalks and steps are rarely cleared of snow and ice and never sanded or salted.
9. Complaints about necessary general repairs (screens, tiles, doors, light fixtures, locks, etc.) go unheeded.
10. Caretakers are overworked for the small remuneration they receive. One caretaker for two buildings is inadequate service to we, the tenants, and unfairly demanding on the caretaking staff.

SAFETY & SECURITY

1. In Gifford house one of the fire extinguishers has been broken since February of this year - neither replaced nor refilled. Further - it is felt that the supply of extinguishers is inadequate - and that those presently in use should be exchanged for a chemical "child proof" type.
2. We, as a group, feel that there are not enough fire exits - nor are there any entrance ways for fire trucks to enter the development. As well, no provision is made for emergency exit from 2nd storey suites.
3. Locks on suite doors can easily be opened with plastic credit cards. Windows lift up and out and can't be locked securely. Many locks on balcony doors don't work.
4. Our mail boxes are easy to pry open and are frequently broken into (as are the money boxes on washers and dryers).
5. Regarding health standards: heat is too dry, floors are too drafty, buildings are infested with pests.

MANAGEMENT

1. The Manageress is very very hard to locate - we have trouble delivering our rent and often have to try three or four times before finding her available.
2. Receipts are not promptly issued - sometimes received months after payment.
3. The Manageress is unresponsive to our needs and to our legitimate requests for service.
4. We have observed favoritism in the interpretation of the lease (especially re: pets).
5. Her general superior attitude is offensive to us as human beings.
6. There is discrimination in the development against social allowance recipients, contrary to Alberta human rights legislation.
7. The common storage room (for trunks etc.) is not available for our use.
8. The public washroom is locked - not public.

(Continued . . .)

FAULTY ORIGINAL CONSTRUCTION

1. Leaky pipes - poorly sealed.
2. No air vents on the top floors.
3. We believe that the insulation used is inadequate and not fire proof.
4. Heating vents are improperly sealed next to the floor.
5. Poor wiring is reported in many suites.
6. Cheap materials have been used in the original construction.
7. The sewage system and plumbing, particularly in Gifford House, have given many problems which leads us to believe that inferior materials were used originally.
8. Suites are in dire need of painting as they are presently only coated with what appears to be a tinted paint primer.

Could not warranties be acted upon to rectify some of these problems??

We expect a reply to this letter by June 14th as we hold our next meeting that night at 8 o'clock at M.E. Lazerte. We would welcome the attendance of a Weber Bros. representative.

Representatives,
The Kew Place Tenant Action Committee
c/o Ste. #107
Gifford House
14115 - 76 Street
Edmonton, Alberta

P.S. We the tenants are willing to do our share. It is our home. We will be happy to cooperate with whoever is responsible to bring about better standards at Kew Place.

cc - Mr. Yuen, Kew Place Apartments, 1306 Cambridge Building
- Mrs. Walker, Kew Place Apartments, 1306 Cambridge Building
- CMHC, 10350 - 124 Street
- Landlord and Tenant Advisory Board, 10237 - 98 Street
- West 10, Legal Services Office
- Mr. Eddie Keene, CHED

CS/gvh

Copy of letter received from:

Kew Place
1308 Cambridge Building
10024 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton 15, Alberta
Telephone (403) 424-2434

June 11th, 1973

Mrs. Jenny Connell
#107 Gifford House
14115 - 76 Street
Edmonton, Alberta

Dear Mrs. Connell:

I have for acknowledgement, a copy of your letter of June 4th, 1973 addressed to the Property Management Department of Weber Bros. Realty Ltd.

I appreciate the concern expressed by you however would suggest that the majority of the complaints listed are, to a large degree, the result of the negligence and disrespect which the tenants themselves have been the major contributing factor.

We have over the last two years expended considerable money in making many of the repairs which are mentioned in your letter only to find that the tenants themselves have abused the property. For instance, do you feel it is the owner who is the one who is responsible for breaking into the money boxes in the washers and dryers? It is the tenant and/or their guests. By the same token, do you feel it is the owner who continually damages or breaks the fire extinguishers?

We feel that the tenant should take the responsibility for the actions of other tenants who damage or destroy the property. As I stated previously, as a result of the unusually high maintenance and repairs, mostly caused by tenant and/or their guests, the owners have lost money on this project from the start.

With regards to the management, effective June 1, 1973, the management of Kew Place has been taken over by the Property Management Department of Weber Bros. Realty Ltd.

We are confident that their knowledge and experience in dealing with the problem areas will be of benefit to the tenants and owners of Kew Place and hopefully, your cooperation with them will assist in quickly rectifying the problems noted by you.

As I stated at the onset of this letter, I do appreciate the concern expressed by you and trust that you will assist in solving the problems caused by the tenants. The problem with management have already been taken care of effective June 1, 1973.

Yours truly,

G.L. YUEN

GLY:rw

C.C. CMHC, 10350 - 124 Street
C.C. Landlord and Tenant Advisory Board
C.C. West 10, Legal Services Offices
C.C. Mr. Eddie Keene, CHED
C.C. Mrs. Lorraine Puncho

A P P E N D I X I I

"Living" in a Limited Dividend Housing Development
(Low standard housing for low income families.)

1. We prefer to remain anonymous:

The tenants who got together to write this statement wish to remain anonymous, and since we fear that we will be evicted if our identity comes to the attention of our Landlord. We can be contacted through the Edmonton Social Planning Council or Leslie Bella at 476-7602.

2. A Pig in a Poke:

Prospective tenants are not allowed to see the unit before they sign the lease; the management says "take it or leave it - we have plenty more on the waiting list!"

3. Moving into a mess:

The units are never repaired, cleaned or painted before a new tenant moves in, even when substantial sums have been deducted from the previous tenants damage deposit for such maintenance.

eg.

- a) One new tenant found paint work an undesirable colour (black!) and filthy premises. He spent \$35.00 on paint and 160 man hours of work on repainting the property. To this the management contributed 15 man hours of labour from a 17 year old boy.
- b) Another tenant says she moved in six years ago to find a broken window pane. The verbal committment to replace the glass has not been fulfilled.
- c) Cracked toilet seats have passed from one tenant to the next, and the next, each one in turn being charged for a new one. and a new one never being provided.

4. Maintenance - practically nonexistent:

Tenant: -"Don't you people care about these buildings? Do you want them to become a slum?"

Management: -"Lady, this property is worth twice as much as the buildings set on it!"

- a) Bathroom fans don't work.
- b) Humidifiers on the furnaces don't work.
- c) Damage to tiles from damaged toilets never repaired.
- d) Service roads never maintained.

5. Rental practices - some illegal - all unfair:

- Tenants do not receive a copy of the lease they sign but a list of rules which they have not signed.
- If a tenant pays by voucher (eg. welfare voucher) they are charged an extra \$3.00 as if they had paid with an N.S.F. cheque.
- Deduct 35¢ per month from the damage deposits from each tenant for a communal disposal unit. The tenant then has to pay a lump sum at the end of the year to bring the damage deposit up to the same value. This was introduced without consulting the tenants.
- The management does not give notice of entry when he inspects property, but enters with a pass key while the tenants are absent.
- Tenants who are friends of the management are allowed to remain although their income exceeds the \$8,000. ceiling. (eg. a working couple, one with the Federal Government, and the other working as a registered nurse).

6. Poor planning and construction:

- The floors sag in most suites.
- The concrete block walls conduct sound (even of a normal conversational tone) between apartments.
- Bare wiring exposed in many places with no fixtures.
- Some lights have no switch and have to be turned off by unscrewing the light bulb.
- The plumbing causes continual problems, on seeing it a qualified plumber said "I wonder whose palm they greased to get this plumbing approved?"
- Basement floor drains and outlets are opposite sides of the dwelling - this makes installation of automatic washers difficult.

7. A Problem of paint:

One tenant, after being a reliable tenant for six years, was told that she must buy paint and repaint her three bedroom apartment or get out. Living on a Manpower training grant, attending school and raising four children alone, she was forced to borrow \$40.00 from the student loan board to buy paint.

The landlord sells paint to his tenants for \$5.00 a gallon, and the smell is so strong that the apartment is unfit to live in during the painting.

8. Good Tenants Beware:

The good tenant who fixes up his low rental unit himself, receives no compensation for his capital investment (floor tiles, light fittings, shelving in the basement). In some cases the tenant has wallpapered a room, and then has the cost of stripping this deducted from his security deposit. The paper is not stripped, however, before the next tenant moves in.

9. Organize if you Dare:

Tenants who joint the Alberta Tenants Association receive their notice for the following month.