

208 N.E. Weidler Street
Portland 12, Oregon
October 16, 1961

Mr. Louis Ambler, Director Region 6,
Public Housing Administration
1360 Mission Street
San Francisco, California

Dear Sir:

On October 12, 1961, the Portland Housing Authority made known its plans for a 58 unit Albina Public Housing Project. Mr. G. W. Rossman, Executive Director of the Portland Housing Authority, stated that a schedule for property acquisition, demolition and construction is being prepared and will be announced soon.

We represent community and church groups of the Albina area. We are critical of the high handed manner in which the Portland Housing Authority has handled the Albina project. Until now, when acquisition and demolition are about to occur, we have had no information of the actions of the Portland Housing Authority. In the last year we have invited the PHA five times to address the community and have been denied. Furthermore, PHA has not shown us the courtesy of answering our communications or consulting residents in the area. Up until now we have been eager to cooperate with the PHA, but now all we have left it would seem is criticism.

Perhaps Mr. Rossman has chosen to ignore us because we are not experts in housing. This is true. But we are in many ways experts on human relations in Albina. As residents of the area and as people deeply concerned with human values and human relations in the Albina area and as people deeply concerned with human values and human relations in the Albina area, we feel we have some thoroughly examined testimony to give as to the type of housing suitable to our area.

In a communication dated April 15, 1961, the following proposal was made by the Urban Renewal Committee of the City Planning Commission to Mr. Rossman: "It is suggested that the Housing Authority seriously consider the "scattered sites" project in the rehabilitation project area being presently proposed by the development commission. The condition of this area is such that in all probability new public housing units would upgrade and would stimulate rehabilitation of existing structures". We strongly support this observation of the Urban Renewal Committee and feel that most serious consideration should be given to "scattered sites" for the Albina area. We feel we have a right to hope that the long range improvement of a community will be a more weighty consideration than short term financial savings in the selection of types of housing.

A necessary concern of anyone planning housing for the Albina area is the fact that the majority of Portland's 15,000 Negro residents are located here. During the past year city officials, community and church organizations have worked hand in hand with the directors of the Urban Redevelopment Rehabilitation Project to prepare a program that has been accepted by Washington. But the rehabilitation of Albina can only be accomplished if all cooperating agencies agree on the importance of reversing rather than increasing the trend of minority concentration in this area. Unfortunately, the Portland Housing Authority has not evidenced any concern with this matter.

We feel that the proposed 58 unit project in the Albina area is undesirable because of the following reasons:

1. The site location is in an existing ghetto and would perpetuate segregation.
2. The site location is in close proximity to already existing low income public housing - the Maple-Mallory apartments.
3. The site location will contribute to future slum conditions by the increase in the number of families in an already overcrowded low income area.

In support of our third point we would like to quote from a recently published study "Residence and Race" by Davis McEntire, the final and comprehensive report of the Commission on Race and Housing: "Much of this new housing, although modern, was worsening and perpetuating slum conditions by doubling or trebling the number of families in a limited space."

In view of the major consideration of the perpetuation of a segregated area as well as for the other reasons mentioned above, we urge you to reconsider the housing needs in the Albina area, and cancel plans for the proposed 58 unit project at the site presently selected.

Sincerely,

E. Shelton Hill
Urban League of Portland

CC: Robert C. Weaver, Administrator
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Harry C. Ward
Portland Branch, NAACP

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Regional Administrator
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Rev. T. X. Graham
Albina Ministerial Association

Mrs. Marie C. McGuire,
Commissioner
Public Housing Administration

The Honorable Terry D. Schunk
Mayor of the City of Portland

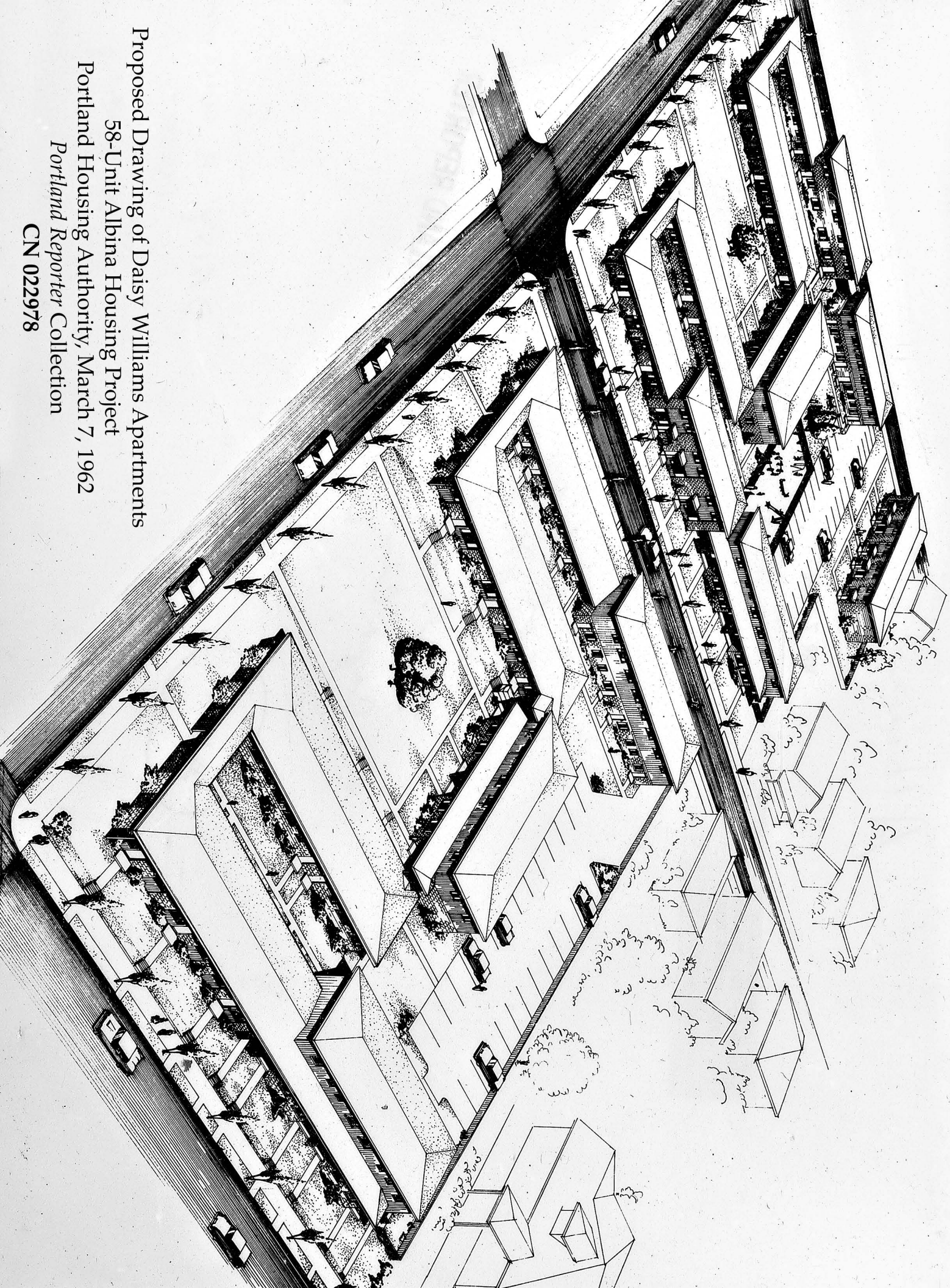
William McCoy Jr.
Catholic Council on Human Relations

Mr. G.W. Rossman
Executive Director
Housing Authority of Portland

Mrs. Leland Harriman
Albina Neighborhood Community Council

Rev. Mel Stead
Immaculate Heart Church

Mary C. Rowland (Miss)
Stella Maris House



Proposed Drawing of Daisy Williams Apartments

58-Unit Albina Housing Project

Portland Housing Authority, March 7, 1962

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