

**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS**

**APRIL 14, 2009**

**Agenda Item 1-H**

Ujima Village was built in the early 1970's with financing from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") on the site of the former Athens Tank Farm, which was operated by General Petroleum Corporation, which later became a part of the ExxonMobil Corporation. In 1995, the Housing Authority purchased Ujima Village from HUD for \$1.00, and HUD agreed to indemnify the Housing Authority against liability for costs arising from pre-existing environmental conditions affecting the soil and groundwater as a result of the past tank farm usage.

On November 12, 2008, the Board directed the Acting Executive Director to take steps to close Ujima Village, due also in part to the poor workmanship of the original construction, which led to the deterioration of the units over time. In addition, there is the need to conduct additional testing of the subsurface soil and groundwater, and the Housing Authority is doing everything responsibly necessary to determine any possible contamination. The reports generated by these investigations are public record and can

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MOTION

MOLINA \_\_\_\_\_

RIDLEY-THOMAS \_\_\_\_\_

YAROSLAVSKY \_\_\_\_\_

ANTONOVICH \_\_\_\_\_

KNABE \_\_\_\_\_

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be accessed at the Los Angeles County Library, A.C. Bilbrew Branch, located in Willowbrook.

The Board also directed the Acting Executive Director to develop a strategy to relocate the remaining tenants. Item 1-H on today's agenda recommends approval of the Ujima Village Relocation Plan, and authorizes the Acting Executive Director of the Housing Authority to begin issuing 90-day notices to vacate the property.

When the Housing Authority staff filed the Board letter a few weeks ago, 16 households remained in place, of the original 159. In the past week, two more households have moved, bringing the total down to 14. The remaining tenants are actively searching for replacement housing with assistance from the Housing Authority, and it is anticipated that all remaining households will be able to move within the next 90 days. For this reason, it is unnecessary at this time to grant the Acting Executive Director the authority to initiate eviction proceedings.

Item 1-H also instructs the Acting Executive Director to initiate the environmental review process for disposition of the Ujima Village site. The site is surrounded on three sides by the County-owned Earvin "Magic" Johnson Recreation Area. The Ujima Village site could be a valuable addition to Magic Johnson Park, and the Housing Authority staff should explore this potential use among the alternatives to be considered during the environmental review process.

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**I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ACTING AS THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY, REVISE THE RECOMMENDATIONS AS CONTAINED IN THE HOUSING AUTHORITY'S BOARD LETTER DATED APRIL 14, 2009, AGENDA NO. 1-H TO REFLECT THE FOLLOWING CHANGE AND ADDITION:**

Revise:

4. Authorize the Acting Executive Director to begin issuing 90-day notices to vacate the property, pursuant to the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Act, ~~and to initiate eviction proceedings, as needed, against tenants remaining on the property beyond the 90-day period, until all units are vacant.~~

Add:

Instruct the Acting Executive Director, given the need for green space in the southeast portion of Los Angeles County, to consider the expansion of County parkland as one of the possible alternative uses for the Ujima Village site, as part of the environmental review process.

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