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Federal Works Agency - John M. Carmody, Administrator

Vol. 2, No. 4 - July 23, 1940

U. S. Housing Authority - Nathan Straus, Administrator

Utica Project Opens— Named for War Hero

Adrean Terrace, USHA-aided low-rent housing community in Utica, N. Y., is a two-fold symbol of democracy. It was named for First Sergeant Charles H. Adrean, who, after having received the Distinguished Service Cross for gallantry in action, died from wounds received in the World War; and it provides an American standard of housing for 213 low-income families formerly deprived of decent living conditions.

First families moved into Adrean Terrace on June 1. In their new homes, designed for economy, efficiency, and comfort, they pay an average of \$22.44 a month for shelter, light, heat, water, cooking, and refrigeration. They are families whose annual incomes are about \$800, and who, until they moved into Adrean Terrace, were living in houses which lacked sanitary facilities or were structurally unsafe.

According to a survey by the local Real Estate Board in 1937, only 1.9 of the dwellings in Utica were vacant, and most of these were either uninhabitable because of structural deficiencies or too expensive for low-income families. It was found that more than 2,000 Utica families would qualify for tenancy in a project with rentals as low as those in Adrean Terrace.

Defense Council Borrows Two USHA Staff Members

Two USHA officials, Dr. Robert C. Weaver, Special Assistant in Charge of Racial Relations, and John W. Edelman of the Deputy Administrator's staff, have been loaned to the Advisory Commission to the Council of National Defense.

Dr. Weaver will assist Mr. Floyd Reeves, Executive Assistant for Labor Supply, in coordinating racial relations problems in connection with Negro labor and in training Negroes for special skills in the defense program. Mr. Edelman will act as consultant to Miss Harriet Elliott, Advisor on Consumer Protection. He will be concerned chiefly with consumer organizations.

Vladeck City Houses First of Kind in U. S.

The Nation's first city-financed public housing project opened its door to 60 families when moving vans arrived at Vladeck City Houses, New York City, Monday morning, July 15. This modern housing project, fronting on the newly developed East River Drive, replaces some of the most notorious

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Navy Families To Live In Honolulu Project

One-Third of "Kamehameha" Homes Made Available to Navy Personnel

First concrete evidence of defense housing action is reported from America's "Gibraltar of the Pacific" as 73 units of the recently opened Kamehameha Project in Honolulu are turned over to the families of Navy personnel stationed at Hawaii's famous Pearl Harbor base. Shelter rents in this 211-unit USHA development average \$14.15 monthly per dwelling, well under rents charged in Honolulu slums, where, according to a statement of the local housing authority, "ramshackle and run-down hovels . . . command rents as high as \$40 per month for bare shelter alone."

These high rents, coupled with a bad housing shortage, have created a severe shelter problem for Navy families in the Islands as well as for low-income residents. Defense activity has made the problem more acute. Some time ago the Hawaii Housing Authority responded to the Navy's request for assistance by promising to make available one-third of the homes in the Kamehameha Project for occupancy by the families of Navy personnel.

It is understood that Navy families admitted will have incomes that average no higher than those of resident families now living in substandard homes, although the former need not have been occupying slum homes in order to qualify for the project.

Ample Space for Gardens

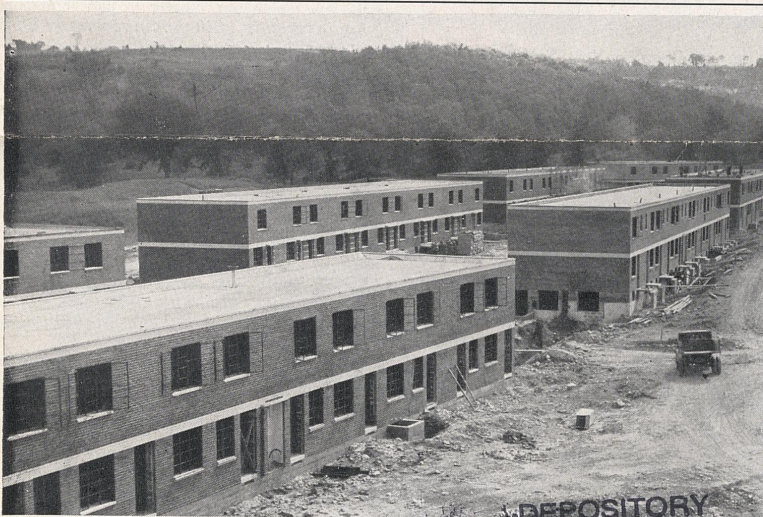
Built at an average total development cost of \$4,700 per home, Kamehameha consists of one- and two-story row houses, with ample garden space provided for each family. Maintenance of landscaped areas will be largely taken care of by the tenants themselves, an aid in keeping rents low.

Despite its world-wide fame as an "island paradise," Hawaii has slums that, according to the local housing authority, "are difficult to equal for their dilapidation, squalor, dirt, and a dangerous lack of sanitation." It is estimated that at least 3,500 families among the varied racial groups that make up the population—Hawaiians, Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, Portugese, Puerto Ricans, and others—are living under intolerable conditions in Honolulu, Hilo, and other municipalities throughout the Territory.

Kamehameha's 211 clean, attractive new low-rent homes will replace the type of hovel described in the following quote from the Honolulu "Advertiser."

"Just a few steps away from this bathhouse is a green scum-covered open sewer where flies and mosquitoes buzz around the

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Average family income for tenants in Adrean Terrace, 213-unit USHA project in Utica, N. Y., is expected to be about \$800.

UK LIBRARIES

Bristol First To Build Project in Virginia

Placing a sealed copper container in a concrete block bearing conspicuously the numerals 1940, Mr. C. P. Daniel, Chairman of the Bristol, Va., housing authority, officiated at cornerstone-laying ceremonies for a low-rent housing project which, he said humorously, "150 years from now a bomb may lay into ruins exposing to public view the contents of the cornerstone we are laying here today."

William L. Rice Terrace, fittingly named for the first mayor of the little village of Goodson, Va. (now Bristol), is the first USHA project to get under way in the State of Virginia. It will provide new homes for 136 low-income white families at rentals well within their means. A second project, providing homes for 68 Negro families, is being constructed in conjunction with the Terrace.

Public Housing and Public Schools

Commenting on the Nation's housing program, Mr. Daniel said that "publicly supported housing facilities to provide modernly equipped residential quarters for families in the low-income group probably are as revolutionary today as was the public school a century ago, but may soon gain the Nation-wide support accorded public education."

The Bristol "Herald-Courier" warmly congratulated the local housing authority, remarking that, while a number of Virginia cities are cooperating in the public housing program, "some of the leading cities of the State are backward in that respect. Those cities will make no mistake by following the example of Bristol and hundreds of other communities throughout the country."

"Conversion of slum districts into respectable residential districts is a distinct gain for any community. The slums are breeding places of vice and crime and disease. A community which rids itself of its slums rids itself also of these menaces."

Bristol, in Washington County, Va., is only half of "greater Bristol" which is divided by the Virginia-Tennessee boundary, and extends into Sullivan County, Tenn.

State Line Bisects Town

According to the WPA guide book, "Virginia, A Guide to the Old Dominion," Bristol, "with crowded narrow streets, is separated from Bristol, Tenn., only by the invisible State line that bisects State Street. Although welded physically, the two cities, studded with 35 churches, are separate municipal units, each with its city government, post office, school system, and water supply. Though a mart for produce from fertile lands near by, Bristol, Va., derives its brisk tempo from the production of iron, lumber, textiles, paper, and leather."

Mayor T. W. Preston, of Bristol, one of the speakers at the cornerstone-laying ceremonies, praised the project and those connected with its development.

Actual construction work on the Bristol projects was started early this spring, and it is now about 30 percent complete. Both projects will be occupied before the first of the year. James McCrary is Executive Director of the Bristol authority, and Clarence B. Kearfott is architect. William Blackley, Hal H. Harkrader, Ross McClure, and Carroll Kidd are the other members.



This picture of a Paducah (Ky.) shack dweller, his wife, son, dog, and home, recently won first place in a contest sponsored by the City of Paducah Municipal Housing Commission. It was taken by E. Earl Curtis, 718 North Twenty-fifth Street, Paducah.

Mr. Curtis received \$10 for winning first place. Other winners and their awards follow: Garnett W. Shook, second, \$5; Jack House, third, \$4; Tom W. Threlkeld, fourth, \$3; F. M. Avery, fifth, \$2; H. L. Deem, Jr., sixth, \$1; Edward Thompson, seventh, \$1; and John Proctor, eighth, \$1.

Silas Mitchell, Executive Director of the City of Paducah Municipal Housing Com-

mission, announced the results of the contest after the judges had studied carefully all the pictures submitted.

Two USHA-aided projects are under way in Paducah: Thomas Jefferson Place, 125-unit community for white families; and Abraham Lincoln Court, 74-unit community for Negroes. Both projects will be tenanted by the first of the year.

Vladeck City Houses

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slum buildings on New York's Lower East Side.

The second of the four buildings in the city-aided project will be finished this week, and a second group of 60 families will move into it Monday, July 22. As rapidly as the other two buildings in the city project are finished families will move into them. By early August it is expected that the first of the buildings in the adjoining USHA-aided project, which will provide apartments for 1,531 families, will be ready for occupancy.

Vladeck City Houses consists of four 6-story fireproof apartment buildings with self-operating elevators. The buildings occupy only one-third of a 2-acre site, the other two-thirds of which will be landscaped to provide play space, garden walks, and benches. Vladeck Houses, neighboring USHA-aided project will cover more than six city blocks bounded by Jackson, Madison, Gouverneur, and Water Streets, and will also extend through the center of the blocks from Madison to Henry Streets, and from Water Street to the East River Drive.

The two projects are being built in one of the worst slum areas in the Lower East Side, where 172 buildings formerly stood. These buildings contained a total of 1,917

dwelling units, 88 percent of which were in old-law tenements, mostly in bad condition. Approximately 4,300 persons formerly lived on the site.

Unlike other new projects of the NYCHA, Vladeck City Houses is financed entirely by local sale of New York City Housing Authority bonds. These bonds are guaranteed as to principal and interest payments by the City, which will make subsidy payments to the project in order to maintain its low-rent character. Rents will be somewhat higher at Vladeck City Houses than in the USHA-aided project, Vladeck Houses. It is anticipated that the project will be the most nearly self-liquidating development operated by the New York City Housing Authority, and that the income limits will make it possible to take care of the great majority of the original occupants of the site.

The Vladeck City Houses rent schedule includes cost of utilities:

Size apartment	Apartment rent per week
3½ rooms	\$6.70-\$6.85
4½ rooms	7.20- 7.35
5½ rooms	7.45- 7.60

Selection of families to live in the two projects is being made from among the 19,000 applications received by Feb. 1, 1940.

Denver Project Features Novel Interlocking Row-House Unit

The Housing Authority of the City and County of Denver, in the development of the Lincoln Park project, has achieved an ingenious adaptation of unit plans to special local conditions. The sketch (below) shows a clever interlock of a one- and two-story unit, used at the end of a two-story row. Bedrooms for the one-story unit are on the first floor of the two-story portion, and the two-story row house has only the living room and kitchen on the first floor. All bedrooms are on the second floor.

Plans for the Denver project call for flats, row houses, and apartments. Homes will be provided for 346 of Denver's low-income families. Lincoln Park is one of three projects in the city for which USHA funds have been made available.

Originally famed as the center of a great metal mining region, Denver has become a distributing point for the entire Rocky

Mountain region and the center of a large and prosperous livestock industry, as well as for agriculture, coal mining, and considerable small manufacturing. This expansion has been attended by an increasing lack of decent dwellings for the city's low-income families.

The causes of blighted conditions in the various districts in Denver are twofold. A large part of the Denver slums consists of old buildings which have changed hands and use since they were first constructed. The rest are houses which, according to present standards, would have been designated as substandard at the time they were built.

Such residential construction as has gone ahead in Denver since 1930 has been largely beyond the reach of low-income families. The result has been a very real housing shortage, to remedy which the local authority undertook its program.

USHA Publications Available at the Government Printing Office

The following publications are available for purchase at the Government Printing Office:

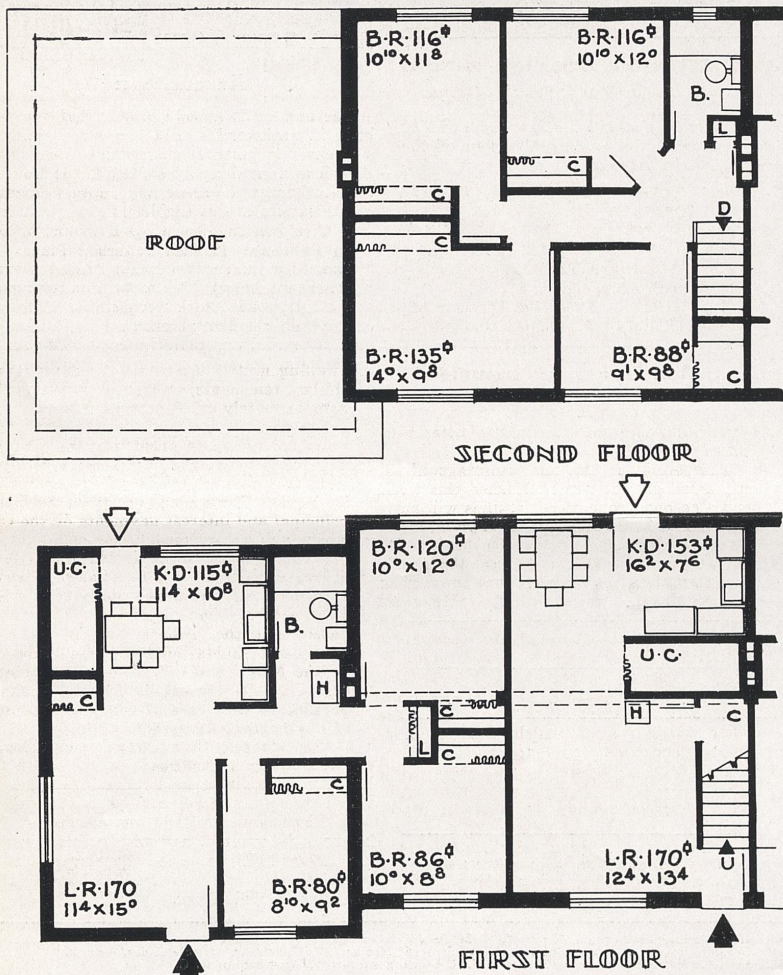
PLANNING THE SITE (Bulletin No. 11 on Policy and Procedure). Price, 60 cents.

INTRODUCTION TO HOUSING, by Edith Elmer Wood. Price, 30 cents.

WHAT THE HOUSING ACT CAN DO FOR YOUR CITY. Price, 20 cents.

Since these titles are rapidly going out of print, it is suggested that orders be placed immediately.

Orders should be addressed to Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., and cash or money order enclosed.



Current Housing Literature

HOUSING DOES ITS PART, by Nathan Straus. *Current History and Forum*, July 1940, pp. 37-39.

"The . . . approach to the problem of housing in these times seems to me to steer a wise course between the extreme of alarmist pessimism and the extreme of blindfolded overexuberance."

A discussion of housing and defense. Mr. Straus points out that the USHA program is one of the easiest to harmonize with the defense machinery. It is comparatively inexpensive ("When a family of low income is helped to live in decent housing for a full generation, the whole cost is less than one broadside from one of our largest battleships in target practice."), and its services are absolutely necessary. Mr. Straus quotes Department of Commerce vacancy surveys to show that in key cities like Buffalo, Camden, Akron, Detroit, Baltimore, Dallas, Seattle, and San Diego vacancy ratios are lower than 3 percent, and often as low as 1 percent.

HOUSING HOLDUP, by Karl Detzer. *The American Mercury*. July 1940, pp. 324-328.

An account of the building restraints and price fixing uncovered by the Department of Justice, and the outdated, unfair building codes that conspire with the rackets to keep building costs high. The author urges concerted action of all citizens in a drive on the evils prevalent in the building industry.

A NEW REMEDY FOR AN ANCIENT EVIL, by Vance G. Ingalls, Assistant Corporation Counsel, City of Detroit. 25¢. 14 pp. Mimeographed. Distributed by the Citizens' Housing and Planning Council of Detroit, 1719 Penobscot Building, Detroit, Mich.

An article discussing the legal background for acquiring land for public housing projects by condemnation.

Navy Families in Project

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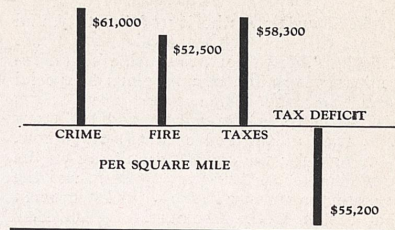
rotting fruit peelings, corn cobs, and other stagnating rubbish. The sewer runs right below the houses, if indeed it can be said to run. Just above it there is a house which rents for \$25 a month where 10 people live in crowded squalor. The house is a wreck, and yet, like the other houses in this district, it is never without tenants. There seems to be no other place to go."



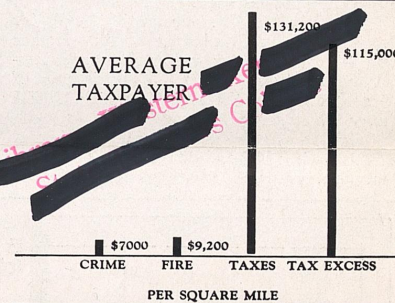
Seven out of ten of these new USHA homes in Mount Hope, W. Va., will be occupied by the families of miners from the nearby bituminous coal fields.

WHO PAYS?

SLUM TENANT



AVERAGE TAXPAYER



Schedule of Bid Opening Dates¹

Local authority and project number	Number of units	Date of bid opening
Athens (Ga.-3-1-A).....	100	8- 1-40
Baltimore (Md.-2-3).....	688	8-13-40
Beverly (N.J.-18-1).....	71	7-25-40
Corpus Christi (Tex.-8-4, Defense).....	250	8-10-40
Detroit (Mich.-1-4).....	2, 150	7-30-40
Hammond (Ind.-10-1-R).....	400	8-12-40
Montgomery (Ala.-6-4, Defense).....	424	7-26-40
New York City (N.Y.-5-6).....	1, 166	7-31-40
Pawtucket (R. I.-2-1).....	226	7-25-40
Pensacola (Fla.-6-3, Defense).....	200	7-25-40
Phoenix (Ariz.-1-2).....	150	8- 1-40
Ponce (P.R.-1-5).....	340	8-13-40
Portsmouth (Va.-6-1, Defense).....	400	8-13-40
San Juan (P.R.-2-4).....	84	8-13-40
Waco (Tex.-10-1).....	103	8-14-40
Washington (D.C.-1-4).....	313	8- 6-40
Wheeling (W.Va.-3-2).....	302	7-24-40

¹ There is usually a 30-day period between bid advertising and bid opening.

Pennsylvania Housing Asso'n Launches New Periodical

On July 1 appeared the first issue of *The Pennsylvania Houser*, official organ of the Pennsylvania Association of Housing Authorities. The publication is multilithed, but as soon as funds are forthcoming it is to be printed. The tabloid size will be adopted at that time, with 4-page issues expected.

The name is only temporary. A contest is underway to choose a permanent one. The contestant or contestants submitting the winning name will receive free 1 year's regular membership in the Pennsylvania Association of Housing Authorities.

In addition to State housing news and editorial comment, *The Pennsylvania Houser* announces contract awards, projects approved, project openings, and the creation of new authorities. On the fourth page is a tabulation showing the status of all housing projects in the State, a feature planned to keep all local housing authorities currently informed on the progress of individual programs.

This is the second State housing association to issue a periodical, North Carolina having launched a successful publication some months ago.

Weekly Construction Reports

Item	Week ended July 12, 1940	Week ended July 5, 1940	Week ended July 15, 1939
Number of projects under construction ¹	228	225	55
Number of dwellings under construction ¹	85,800	84,927	24,600
Total estimated over-all cost ² of new housing.....	\$378,372,000	\$375,013,000	\$116,313,000
Average over-all cost ² of new housing per unit.....	\$4,410	\$4,416	\$4,728
Average net construction cost ³ per unit.....	\$2,760	\$2,762	\$2,941

¹ Includes projects which have been completed.

² Includes: (a) Building the house, including structural costs and plumbing, heating, and electrical installation; (b) dwelling equipment, architects' fees, local administrative expenses, financial charges during construction, and contingency expenses; (c) land for present development; (d) nondwelling facilities.

³ The cost of building the house, including structural, plumbing, heating, and electrical costs.

Publication is approved by the Director, Bureau of the Budget, as required by rule 42 of the Joint Committee on Printing.

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. Subscription price \$1 domestic, foreign \$1.80 per year. Single copies, 5 cents. Material for PUBLIC HOUSING should be addressed to Informational Service Division, U. S. Housing Authority, Washington, D. C.

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