



11/13/2019

FEMA Mail Center/Environmental Historic Preservation
1500 Main Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Mazant/Royal NHPA Comments

To Whom It May Concern,

The Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance is a collaborative of non-profit housing builders and community development corporations working to rebuild the housing stock available in the city of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina devastated the city's infrastructure. Since its creation in 2007, GNOHA has sought to create change in the Greater New Orleans community through public policy advocacy and public education.

We are in full support of the Mazant/Royal 4-story, 136 unit development proposal being put forward by ITEX. Since 2000, the average income of the once *redlined* neighborhood, has almost doubled from \$38,240 to \$62,418, outpacing the average income of the city and drastically increasing rents and home values. In fact, the neighborhood (ripe with job opportunities, reliable transit options, and commerce) has gone from 68% black to 72% white since 2000, on top of still being short roughly 1,500 people who were displaced by Katrina. Historically, the Bywater was a working class community of color, and the development will allow more working class New Orleanians to move into an area of opportunity.

New Orleans is currently in an affordable housing crisis where 63% of New Orleans renters are cost-burdened, paying more than 30% of their income on housing. We must seize every opportunity to create safe and decent public housing. We have lost more affordable housing opportunities than we created over the course of the past two years, resulting in New Orleans' homeless population rising after 11 years of decreases. The rise was mostly due to an increased percentage of resident becoming homeless for the first time, and UNITY can't help residents unless they've been homeless for months. The 2019 HousingNOLA Report Card reported that overall efforts earned New Orleans a "D" letter grade for the current state of housing.

HANO scattered sites are an integral component in the strategy to meet the affordable housing needs of New Orleans, and we must support their attempts to do better by the families they serve and allow for the different tools that may be implemented to do so including: subsidized housing, traditional public housing, project based vouchers, or low-income housing tax credits. This is especially important as disaster funding for

A Shared Initiative
AIA New Orleans
Alembic Community Development
Alliance for Affordable Energy
Bike Easy
Blueprint Investment Fund
Capital One Bank
Celestin Development Corporation
Center for Planning Excellence
(CPEX)
Delaney & Delaney, LLP
Desire Community Housing Corp
Downtown Development District
Enterprise Community Partners
Family Resources of New Orleans
Greater New Orleans Fair Housing
Action Center
Hancock Whitney Bank
Home By Hand
Iris Development Company
Jane Place Neighborhood
Sustainability Initiative
Jefferson Community Action
Programs (JeffCAP)
Jericho Road Episcopal Housing
Initiative
Louisiana Appleseed
Louviv Services
Lower 9th Ward Homeowners
Association
Lowernine.org
Metairie Bank
Neighborhood Development
Foundation
New Orleans Redevelopment
Authority
NewCorp, Inc.
PCA Development, LLC
Perez, A Professional Corporation
PosiGen
Preservation Resource Center
Providence Community Housing
Renaissance Neighborhood
Development Corporation
REO, LLC
SBP, Inc.
The Albert & Tina Small Center for
Collaborative Design
The Finance Authority of New
Orleans (FANO)
The Power Coalition for Equity and
Justice
The Urban Conservancy
Tulane/Canal Neighborhood
Development Corporation (T/CNDC)
Ulrich Consulting
University of New Orleans
Department of Planning and Urban
Studies (UNO-PLUS)
Urban Focus
Webre Consulting, LLC
Wells Fargo Advisors
Youth Rebuilding New Orleans

redevelopment resources continue to decline. HANO's development partner is proposing to build a complex in the Bywater with 136 units, 82 of them affordable for people whose income could potentially be as little as \$13,800 per year. If the proposal isn't allowed to move forward, there's a chance the developer could lose funding and tax credits for the deal, meaning we might not get the units that we need to address the crisis we're in.

We are hopeful that you will allow this development proposal to go forward since many of the concerns have been addressed. A recent traffic count study determined that the development will not have a negative impact on traffic in the community. Additionally, both the New Orleans City Planning Commission and City Council have approved of this development. The City of New Orleans has also made a commitment to affirmatively further fair housing. In communities of opportunity, we need to ensure that those opportunities are offer to groups of people who have been historically marginalized, particularly when we have a chance like now. A study by the National Equity Atlas showed that when renters thrive, cities thrive. If New Orleans renters were able to pay an amount they could afford on housing, they would have an extra \$7,200 per household to spend in their communities each year, which would have a tremendous impact on economic development in our city.

Thank you for your consideration! We look forward to your support and response. Please feel free to contact me at 504.224.8301 or amorris@housingnola.org with any questions.

Sincerely,



Andreanecia M. Morris,
President/Chairwoman