



Irene Gomez-Bethke Papers.

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The 69 W. Congress St. Resettlement Project was conceived in 1977 by Hispanos en Minnesota (then known as Migrants in Action) to provide emergency housing for resettling migrant families. The idea was to obtain a facility that could house 2 or 3 families for a period of up to 1 year, while the agency worked with the families to find permanent housing. HEM began negotiations with the city for a property and the Congress St. house was offered for the proposed program. Funding for the project came from Federal Community Development Block Grant funds administered by the St. Paul Department of Community Development and the Mc Knight Foundation. CDBG funds amounted to \$29,000 for purchase of the house from the city; and McKnight contributed \$46,000 for the rehabilitation.

Previous to these plans, the house was used by the HRA as an office, even though it was in a residential zone. The house was in poor shape and it deteriorated further when the HRA occupied it. The combination of the traffic in and out of the house, and the poor maintenance caused a strain between the neighborhood and the city. When the property was offered to HEM there was an upsurge of neighborhood resistance. The concerns that were raised at the time centered on zoning and assurance for proper house and grounds maintenance. Since the house is located in a residential zone, the argument went, it should be used only for that purpose (not for offices or other institutions); and an emergency shelter will quickly turn into a run-down facility without regular maintenance. Therefore, the underlying concern was that lack of accountability for maintenance would lead to lower property values. In and of themselves, high property standards are important and legitimate concerns for neighborhood residents. But the needs of less fortunate people for affordable and adequate housing is equally legitimate. HEM felt that given the extent of the housing shortage in the metropolitan area, innovative projects which attempt to solve the problems of availability and emergency need should at least be given a chance to work. HEM entered into this project with the hope of forging a compromise between these two not unreconcilable positions.

Community opposition was organized and expressed in a series of public meetings of the West Side Citizens Organization (WSCO). The question of whether or not the emergency housing project should go through was debated. Discussion of the issues became heated and sometimes tempers flared up. A public vote was taken by WSCO, which ruled for disapproval of the project. Because of some technical irregularities, the vote was voided by the City Council, and another vote was ordered to be conducted. This time the project was approved and WSCO recommended that the City Council also approve the project.

The matter was turned over to the City Council which stipulated that the program could be implemented if use of the house were limited to one migrant family at a time and that HEM work with a neighborhood advisory board made up of interested residents of the immediate area of the 69 W. Congress St. house, to insure proper monitoring of the project and adequate accountability to the community and the city.

Work began on the rehabilitation of the house and it was finished in the summer of 1979. Throughout that time staff members of HEM worked with the neighborhood advisory board to establish the structure for monitoring the project. A meeting was called for October 24, 1979 to discuss family selection, board participation in decision-making, and guidelines for use of the Congress house. Leaflets were distributed to every house on Congress and Stryker streets that are in the same block and opposite 69 W. Congress. Neighbors were approached in the street and told about the meeting and invited to participate. Peg Foster and Ross Williams of WSCO, as well as Margo Ashmore of the West Side

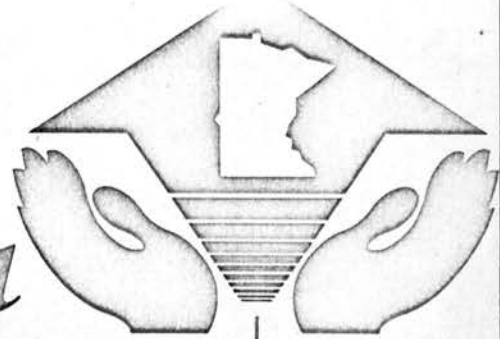
Voice, were telephoned and invited to attend the meeting.

At the meeting the idea was presented to hire a caretaker to live in the house along with the selected family. The rationale was that in so doing, HEM would be better able to monitor the maintenance of the house and have a representative who was directly accountable to the neighborhood board. HEM recommended the caretaker living on the premises as a measure to insure that the \$46,000 investment for the rehabilitation of the house be protected. The discussion stressed that the caretaker would function as a source of continuity and stability for the use of the house and act as a representative to the neighborhood. In this way the original community concerns of proper maintenance up to neighborhood standards and accountability to the advisory board would be provided by HEM. The board voted for hiring a caretaker.

HEM's recommendation is that WSCO not sponsor a public meeting. We feel that the proper forum for such an open and public meeting should be the neighborhood advisory board since they have been authorized by the City Council to be the decision-making body for community concerns. HEM feels that were WSCO to hold a public meeting, the old issue of approval for the project would be raised. This issue has already been decided. What is at issue is how the project will be run. This is the authority of the neighborhood advisory board and WSCO or any other concerned resident should be invited to bring his or her concerns to this body.

Hispanos *en* Minnesota

Formerly Migrants in Action



MEMO

TO: David Wilson

FROM: Ricardo Flores

RE: 69 W. Congress House

DATE: January 8, 1980

H.
Alberto Miera has asked me to substantiate whether or not we could lose the title of the house to another agency. His understanding is that Terry McNallis once indicated this could happen. Please verify and submit a report to me by this afternoon. Thank you.

Board of Directors

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Manuel Cervantes
Vice President
Francisca Vega
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Serving Minnesota's
Largest Minority
Hispanics
Latinos
Chicanos

Speed Letter.

Ricardo Flores

From /David Wilson.

SUBJECT 69 W. Congress St. Lease agreement with the city of St. Paul

MESSAGE

Enclosed is a copy of a letter sent to HEM from the city answering questions posed which concern the transfer of property at the end of the lease agreement. Our present dealings with the Dept of Community Development do not lead me to conclude that there is any present danger of the house being taken away from HEM. To the contrary, Community Development has been very helpful in resolving the problem of a caretaker. Today, 1/8/79 I called Carolyn Larsen re: the lease agreement. She reiterated the information contained in Perry McNeillis's letter. While this letter is worded strongly in the last paragraphs, I feel that it is merely a recommendation to get the program started, not a threat of pulling the program. You must remember that Alberto Alcala had sole responsibility for this project and at the time, was extremely lax and slow in implementing the program.

Date 1/8/79 Signed

David Wilson

REPLY

Date

Signed

Wilson Jones

RETAIN WHITE COPY, RETURN PINK COPY

1177



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DIVISION OF RENEWAL

25 West Fourth Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota, 55102
612-298-5338

GEORGE LATIMER
MAYOR

May 24, 1979

William C. Reyes
Administrative Assistant
Hispanos en Minnesota
1162 Selby Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104

Dear Mr. Reyes:

Thank you for your letter of May 21, 1979, requesting certain information regarding your lease with the City of St. Paul on the property located at 69 W. Congress. I will be happy to provide the answers to the questions you have raised, however, I would like to direct to you the following sources for any additional information:

- 1) If you have any further questions regarding the rules and regulations governing the funds being provided your organization under this agreement, you should contact Mr. Robert Kessler, of the Community Development Division at 298-5586; and
- 2) if you have any questions regarding the terms of your lease agreement you should contact Ms. Carolyn Larsin, Property Management Section, Renewal Division at 292-6418.

I will respond to your questions in the order presented in your letter.

- 1) How did H.E.M. (H.I.A.) acquire the property?
 - H.E.M. has not acquired the property at 69 W. Congress. They have the use of the property under a lease between the City of St. Paul and H.E.M.
- 2) How was the money received by H.E.M. (\$30,000) to be used for this property?
 - The \$30,000 was approved to cover the costs of rehabilitation for the property.
- 3) What are the binding commitments - if any between HRA & H.E.M.?
 - The only binding commitment/agreements is the lease agreement referred to above.
- 4) What is the difference between the property purchase arrangement with the HRA and Womens Advocates, HRA and Urban League and HRA and H.E.M.?
 - The purchase agreement between HRA and Womens Advocates was made at a time when the rules and regulations allowed the City to transfer properties to organizations like the Womens Advocates. The agreement

Mr. Reyes
May 24, 1979
page two

between HRA and the Urban League simply provides rehab funds for a building that was already owned by the Urban League. The agreement between the HRA and H.F.M. first, is the only agreement of the three involving HRA property and secondly, since it took almost twenty-six months for H.F.M. to take possession of the property from the time that the \$30,000 was approved, the federal regulations regarding property disposition had changed.

- 5) Will H.F.M. be able to purchase the property at 69 W. Congress for \$1.00 at the end of its lease July, 1980?

- This is a matter that would have to be recommended by staff and finally decided by the HRA Board of Directors.

- 6) Does any type of purchase agreement exist with this agency and the HRA for 69 W. Congress?

- No.

- 7) What obstacles if any would prevent outright ownership of 69 W. Congress by H.F.M.?

- Outright ownership of 69 W. Congress would be determined by, 1) federal regulations regarding the use of funds referred to above, and 2) a staff recommendation to the HRA Board of Directors.

Personally, were I requested to comment as to whether or not this property should be transferred, I would have to indicate that the track record of your organization in drawing down these funds and undertaking the activities as originally presented to the City three years ago has been one of non-performance. I would further state unless your organization can prove up a track record, you are probably going to have an extremely difficult time in getting staff to recommend that ownership of this piece of property be turned over to your organization. This is especially true, given the fact that there was a great deal of controversy in even leasing this facility to your organization in the first place.

The lease has been executed for over ten months and the Community Development Office has indicated that they have received absolutely no information regarding the use of those facilities to date. If it is your intent to approach the City and request ownership, I strongly suggest that you begin making use of the property for the program required under your lease. If you have any additional questions regarding this piece of property and your organization's relationship to the City of St. Paul through your lease agreement please contact the parties identified above.

Sincerely,

Henry M. Nellis
Henry M. Nellis
Project Manager

THH

cc - Robert Resaler
Carolyn Larkin

R E P O R T

TO: ALBERTO HERNANDEZ ALCALA
FROM: WILLIAM C. REYES
DATE: 5-28-79

RE: 69 W. CONGRESS

ALBERTO,

This report is in response to your request to know the particulars of ownership for the property at 69 W. Congress. The four specific questions you had about this property were the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| a) history of the property | c) binding committment-if any |
| b) how M.I.A. acquired it | d) when does ownership of the property take place |

To begin with, the total scope of the relationship between the city, the HRA board and this agency is to say the least cumbersome.

Hopefully the following information will answer some of these questions.

- A) The property was originally a single family dwelling built during the 1900's. After being vacant during the early 70's the property was acquired by the HRA and used as a housing site by them. The HRA then transfered the ownership of the house to the city of St. Paul, which in turn took the property and leased it to M.I.A. for Emergency Housing.
- B) M.I.A. was interested in purchasing a piece of real estate and made application for a \$30,000 Community Development Block Grant. This was done in conjunction with 1) Womens Advocates and

- B) 2) The Urban League so that as a group they would be able to request \$90-100,000 in Emergency Housing money from the CDBG program. M.I.A. was originally interested in a property located in the 900 block of Marshall Av. which was owned by a church. However, certain difficulties arose which prevented its purchase and as a result M.I.A. negotiated with the city for the lease of the house at 69 W. Congress. When the West Side Community became aware that M.I.A. intended to use the property for Migrant Emergency Housing it created resistance. It became necessary to get the support of the West Side Citizens Organization (W.S.C.O.) and the Govenors office of Spanish Speaking People to assist M.I.A. in its attempt to lease the property. Finally, M.I.A. was given permission to use the house, but this was subject to the completion of needed repairs and the establishment of an advisory board to monitor the use of the house. M.I.A. then obtained insurance to cover liability expenses so that the rehabilitation of the property could begin. Upon issuance of the insurance, the Community Development office assured Frank Guzman that the final stage would be to transfer use and responsibility through a lease agreement. When this occurs, the city of St. Paul will receive a check for the lease from the Community Development funds as propsed and prescribed. At this time H.E.M. will acquire the use of the house for purposes of Emergency housing.
- C) To my knowledge at the moment there are no real binding committments for the purchase of 69 W. Congress. My interpretation of a binding committment would be either 1) Purchase agreement or 2) A Contract for Deed. There is a lease agreement between the city

C) and H.E.M. permitting occupancy for (1) one family. H.E.M. is not the owner, and I have not seen any documents which to me would indicate ever becoming the owner. If H.E.M. desires to purchase the property at the end of the lease it must do the

following:

- 1) contact the city of St. Paul six (6) months in advance of expiration of the lease to inform the city that we wish to continue to lease the property.
- 2) Place our intentions to purchase before them in the form of a proposal.
- 3) Provide proof of ability to purchase.

D) The city of St. Paul will establish feasibility of purchase and evaluate H.E.M.'s efforts to improve and maintain the property.

If at the end of the lease the city is satisfied with H.E.M.'s efforts to improve and maintain the property and finds it's purchase proposal acceptable then ownership may be possible.



GEORGE LATIMER
MAYOR

CITY OF SAINT PAUL
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DIVISION OF RENEWAL
25 West Fourth Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota, 55102
612-298-5338

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William C. Reyes
Administrative Assistant
Hispanos en Minnesota
1162 Selby Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104

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Sincerely,

Terry McNeill
Terry McNeill
Project Manager

TM/lb

cc: Robert Kessler
Carolyn Larsin

MEMORANDUM

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ALBERTO MEIRA
FROM: RICARDO FLORES
DATE: FEBRUARY 12, 1980
SUBJECT: REPORT ON PROPOSED RIVERVIEW HOSPITAL SITE

We have received notification from Riverview Hospital's Administrator, Richard Anderson that space is available for Hispanos en Minnesota. The space in mention is located in a house directly adjacent to the hospital. The entire house is available to us for administrative and program purposes, and contingent upon agreeable lease arrangements.

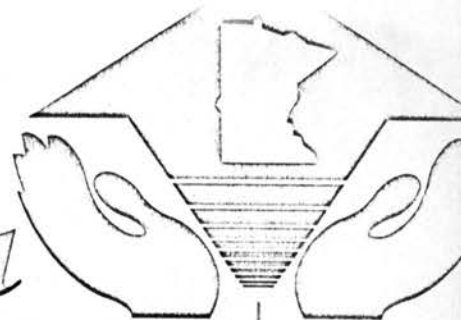
An appointment to inspect the property has been scheduled with Mr. Anderson and if terms can be agreed upon the liklihood of our relocating before March is very real.

The appointment with Mr. Anderson is scheduled for February 14, 1980 at 11:30 a.m.

RF/sf

Hispanos en Minnesota

Formerly Migrants in Action



December 11, 1979

Richard Anderson
Administrator
Riverview Hospital
225 Prescott
St. Paul, Minnesota 55107

Dear Sir:

Hispanos En Minnesota was established in February, 1979. Its base was built upon an already existing social services organization formerly known as Migrants In Action. The culmination of events that led to the creation of an essentially new organization were several and began with the resignation of a former Migrants In Action Executive Director in December of 1978. Pursuant to Mr. Frank Guzman's resignation as Executive Director, and the gradual election of a new Board of Directors, the decision to more aptly identify the organization's target population was made by the new Board of Directors. The reasoning supporting an organizational name change was based upon a gradual expansion of the agency's total service capability which occurred during the administration of Mr. Frank Guzman. Appropriately, the decision to more accurately identify the agency's total services capability with a more accurate organizational title was made by the new Board of Directors.

As a multi-faceted social services agency, Hispanos En Minnesota, a United Way member agency, presently provides services in Health, Substance Abuse, Housing, i.e. emergency and resettlement, Manpower Training and Employment, and advocacy services for Battered and Abused Women. Services provided also include i.e., housing assistance, translation, transportation. The agency's 1980 budget is presently \$289,000.00 with a projected additional \$70,000.00 over the next year.

As a natural consequence of expanding our services, the decision was made by the Board of Directors to centralize within an area of high Latino density. The West Side has traditionally been a high density area for Latinos; for this reason H.E.M. has studied the possibility of relocating within this area. We will, of course, maintain satellite offices in other parts of St. Paul to ensure a continued delivery of human services to other areas of Latino concentration.

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Agency

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C.A.S.A. • 203 Prescott Street • St. Paul, Minnesota 55155 • (612) 227-0831

Richard Anderson
December 11, 1979
Page Two

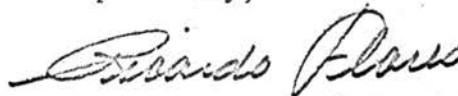
In our search for space availability in the West Side community, our staff became aware of a possibility of space within the Riverview Hospital. As you know, our C.A.S.A. component has been officed at the 203 Prescott site since 1977. We are very grateful for your donation of space to our Substance Abuse Program. Due to this coordination we have succeeded in extending services to many West Side residents.

We would like you to consider leasing space to Hispanos En Minnesota for purposes of administrative and program offices. We are currently searching for space to accomodate our Administrative staff and the Health Advocacy and Education component. We also anticipate a need for additional space to house a proposed out-patient program sometime in 1980.

Our estimates indicate a need for 3500 square feet of space. We are prepared to discuss leasing arrangements and space costs for 12-24 month terms. If in your estimation a leasing agreement is considered feasible, we would like to pursue an agreement at your earliest convenience.

Allow me to conclude by reiterating that our interests are in extending and making available the full complement of human services to our target population. In the past, your Board of Directors has greatly assisted us in our substance abuse efforts. We are hopeful that you can see fit to assisting us in our present need for additional space.

Respectfully,



RICARDO FLORES
Executive Director

RF/km