



10/10/2022

## **BHA Forcing Elderly/Disabled Residents Out of their Units on 1-Weeks' Notice**

This past Friday October 7th, the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) and Judy Cohn Housing and Relocation Consultants notified most of the remaining residents of 24/34 Heath St. (which are elderly/disabled buildings) at the Mildred Hailey Public Housing development that they must leave their apartments by this Friday, October 14th. This is to prepare for the demolition of these buildings and the start of phase 1 of BHA's privatization of the development.

Some of these residents won't be shown a replacement unit until Tuesday. Others were shown an apartment just this past Friday which is too small to accommodate them; when the family noted they needed something larger, the relocation consultants' response amounted to "well all the apartments after redevelopment will be smaller so you should get used to it." Others were pressured into accepting an apartment far away from the neighborhood after initially being shown two apartments that did not accommodate their disabilities. Lastly, others are being kept entirely in limbo, with no knowledge of when or where BHA may find a suitable relocation apartment that will fit their family and accommodate all family members' disabilities.

Giving only one week's notice of a firm move-out date is absolutely unacceptable and illegal. Per BHA's own guidelines during other privatizations/redevelopments, residents were supposed to have been offered a specific unit to relocate to, and told of its address, at least 90 days prior to moving out (See the Uniform Relocation Act requirements under [49 CFR 24.203](#)). Additionally, the final determination of a relocation unit should have been made at least 30 days prior to move out. Moreover, BHA, the developers (JPND, Urban Edge, and TCB), and the Relocation Consultants should have publicly published a detailed relocation plan months in advance, giving residents the opportunity to review and comment on it (see [this example](#)). This never happened. Moreover, many of those who did receive 90-day notices were offered apartments that blatantly failed to accommodate their disabilities, which of course means they had to refuse them; so now, BHA is pressuring them to accept whatever last-minute final offer days before BHA intends to vacate the building, and is threatening to take the residents to court otherwise.

As such, we, the United Front Against Displacement and residents of 24/34 Heath St., **demand at a minimum that this relocation process and any demolition plans be halted until all residents have a satisfactory unit to relocate to, and at least one month to pack and move after agreeing on said suitable unit.**

This utterly sloppy relocation process, which shows no regard for residents' wellbeing or basic rights, is characteristic of these sorts of privatizations/redevelopments. For this reason, Human Rights Watch titled their report on such redevelopments with the words "[The Tenant Never Wins.](#)" This is why, in reality, even fully meeting our minimal demand above would be an unsatisfactory end result. **What should really occur is that the entire plan to demolish these buildings and replace them with denser 'mixed-income' buildings under private ownership and management should be scrapped.** Instead a new plan is needed to rehabilitate all buildings while keeping them as public housing, with all the tenant rights and protections that implies.

### **For more information, please contact:**

Email: [wewontgoboston@riseup.net](mailto:wewontgoboston@riseup.net)

Phone: 617-858-6604