

PSF

FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION

PSF

Box 

199

Subject File "F"

PSF: *Federal Housing Admin.*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 19, 1938.

MEMO FOR THE PRESIDENT

Ray says their position is sound on this but if you want very much to have them waive the requirement in this case, they can probably do it.

G. G. T.

Yes

FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

November 19, 1938

RAYMOND T. CAHILL
ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt
The White House
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

Permit me to acknowledge receipt of your letter of November 15 with enclosures from the Honorable Frederick Stuart Greene, which are returned herewith.

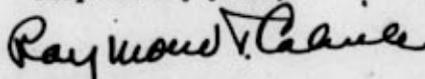
Apparently Mr. Greene has been misinformed regarding our construction requirements as applying to his son's home at Warrenton, Virginia. This commitment for insurance was issued on condition of strict adherence to our minimum construction requirements for new dwellings for Virginia, a copy of which was attached to the commitment. Our Insuring Office is not at this time making requirements which were not set forth in the above-mentioned booklet.

The cement base and metal shields to which Mr. Greene refers are required in order to prevent or at least minimize deterioration of the wooden posts by exposure to dampness or water, rather than as a protection against termites. This requirement is part of our general requirements for floors and roofs as set forth on page 10, paragraph "A" (4) of the attached marked copy of "Minimum Construction Requirements for New Dwellings" located in the district covered by the Richmond Insuring Office. Our requirements regarding termite prevention are contained on page 18, paragraph 1, of this booklet.

The matter of approving sewerage systems or private utilities is left entirely in the hands of the State Board of Health, explanation of which procedure is attached. We require that a Certificate of Approval, issued by this Board, be obtained before insurance is issued.

I trust this will satisfactorily explain our position in this matter.

Respectfully yours,



Raymond T. Cahill
Assistant Administrator

Enclosures

Commonwealth of Virginia

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

RICHMOND

July 9, 1937

FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

RELATIONSHIP, STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO SANITATION IMPROVEMENTS ON FHA PROJECTS

The State Department of Health is actively cooperating with the Federal Housing Administration to secure safe private water supplies and safe sewage disposal on all proposed improvements. To enable property owners to obtain prompt and correct information as to how they should proceed in getting approved sanitation devices, the following instructions are issued:

The Federal Housing Administration requires certificates of approval from the State Department of Health on both the private water supply and on the sewage disposal system for the property before the FHA will close and insure the case. The final inspection of the representative of the State Health Department must show that the water supply is protected and the sewage disposal system is constructed in accordance with good practice, and a sample or samples from the water supply must be satisfactory bacteriologically.

To most quickly and efficiently get the above final approvals, the borrower of funds and his contractor should be advised, at the time the loan is being considered, that the following procedure is recommended in dealing with the State Department of Health's representative for that county or district:

(1) In districts and counties having full-time health service get in touch immediately with the health officer, who will advise on Federal Housing Administration sanitation. He will have received from the Federal Housing Administration, through the State Health Department, notification that this certain property owner, living at a certain address, proposes to make a housing improvement. He will look up the owner and offer assistance and advice. It is particularly important that a preliminary inspection be made before any contracts are let for improving the water supply or sewage disposal arrangements.

(2) In counties not having full-time health service, write to the State Department of Health, Richmond, Virginia.

(3) The property owner will be definitely advised by bulletins and instructions on the ground by a State Health Department representative, how to protect the water supply, and how to build a satisfactory sewage disposal system. These directions must be followed if final approval is to be obtained on the sanitation project.

July 9, 1957

- 2 -

(4) On completion of the water and sewerage systems the property owner should notify the health officer of the district or county, or the State Department of Health. A representative of the Department will then make another inspection, test the water supply, and see that a sewage disposal system has been properly constructed. If the work has been done in a satisfactory manner, he will complete and sign the certificate of approval, which, when countersigned by the State Health Department, goes to the Federal Housing Administration at Richmond, thus enabling the case to be closed. If the borrower does not comply with sanitation requirements, his final insurance papers cannot be completed.

I. C. RIGGIN, M. D.
STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER

By F. M. Chichester
F. M. Chichester, M. D.
Assistant Director
Bureau of Rural Health

By Richard Messer
Richard Messer, Director
Bureau of Sanitary Engineering

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 15, 1938.

MEMORANDUM FOR

HON. RAYMOND T. CAHILL

Will you be good enough
to look into this and let the
President have a report?

M. A. Le Hand
M. A. Le Hand
PRIVATE SECRETARY

6.
DIVISION OF CANALS
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
DIVISION OF ENGINEERING
DIVISION OF ARCHITECTURE
DIVISION OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS



FRED'K STUART GREENE
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
ALBANY

November 12, 1938

The President
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

I hate to bother you about so small a thing as a termite - but the F. H. A. Inspector has again demanded we jack up the nine locust posts in the cellar of my son's house at Warrenton, Virginia, and place a copper sheet underneath them.

To jack up these posts is bound to throw detrimental strains upon the house, and is unnecessary. Termites come into a house through the soil; this house is built on ledge rock, over which is laid a 4-inch cement floor. Under the locust posts is an extra 6-inch footing, and above the floor an extra 2-inch concrete base. No termite could possibly penetrate the rock, or this thickness of masonry, and a termite does not attack locust.

This useless demand to jack up the house is unfair. The direct cost would be \$90.00, and there would be structural injuries likely to cost much more. The F. H. A., after approving the plans, did not make this demand until the roof was on and the house ninety per cent completed.

Though there are only four bedrooms in this house, the inspector insisted upon an antiquated concrete septic tank and 670 feet of drainage field, costing an extra \$175.00. A modern steel-copper septic tank and 100 lineal feet of drainage field, costing below \$50.00, would have been ample. The sewerage system demanded would be adequate for a hotel of forty bedrooms.

I know that your idea for the F. H. A. is to help people build homes. Through inexperience, or ignorance, the F. H. A. has made this house cost about two hundred fifty dollars more than necessary, for other demands not mentioned here have been complied with.

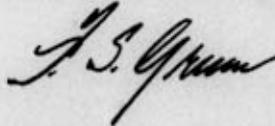
The President, Washington, D. C. 11/12/38

During my eighteen years as Superintendent of Public Works I have spent over a billion dollars in construction, and even the Republicans admit I know my job. I certainly would not build a poor house for my son.

If you will kindly answer this appeal, the case is No. 54-006479, Francis T. Greene, under the direction of C. C. Barksdale, Associate Director, Federal Housing Administration, Richmond, Virginia.

Respectfully yours

FRED'K STUART GREENE



fsg:mmc

PSF: Federal Housing Admin

Stewart McDonald

file personal

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 10, 1939

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

In accordance with your instructions I have asked Stewart McDonald to hold open the post of Principal Contact Representative with FHA from which James Townsend resigned, effective October first. Mr. McDonald asks me to assure you that although he will accept Mr. Townsend's resignation he will not fill the place.

W.D.H.

W.D.H. Asselt -

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Hold

April 9, 1943.

MEMORANDUM FOR

RAYMOND CAHILL:

I have had a note from Tommy Corcoran who is interested in a man by the name of Hubert Langevin, who works in the Minneapolis office of F.H.A. I understand he has worked for F.H.A. for three and a half years, that he has a good record of achievement and is particularly enthusiastic about Federal Housing and all it has accomplished.

I understand that it is necessary during wartime to reduce the office staff in Minneapolis, but at the same time they would like very much for him to retain his place in F.H.A. there. I would appreciate anything you can do to keep him on, but if you can't will you drop me a little note which I can send to Tommy Corcoran?

Grace G. Tully
Private Secretary

PSF F. H. A. folder

THOMAS GARDINER CORCORAN
WASHINGTON, D. C.

April 5, 1943

Dear Gracie:

You will remember John Devaney of Minneapolis. He was a very good friend.

He dropped dead about a year ago. He left a wife and two children - a boy and a girl. The boy is now in the Army overseas.

Devaney died not only insolvent but so insolvent that even some good things he was participating in, in shipbuilding contracts, were swallowed up in the unsatisfied claims of creditors. Mrs. Devaney had to sell the family home and move into a couple of rooms in Minneapolis. Her only pre-marriage occupation 20 years ago was as a music teacher. She's not therefore preeminently fitted to make a good living in Minnesota in these grim times.

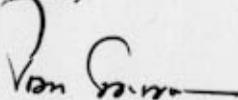
She has been swell about it but she sent me a request the other day that I thought you might be willing to pass on to someone. I enclose her letter. The request begins as marked on page 2. I translate typographically to assist you choreographically -

"Could you tell me to whom I might write among officials in the Federal Housing in Washington in regard to my brother. I know that you are the 'father' of FHA - and must have retained, through your pride in it, certain contacts.

"My brother, through Jack, was given a position in their offices here, and has been with them for three and a half years. He has a fine record of achievement, and has worked hard, with an unabated enthusiasm for Federal Housing and all it has accomplished. He is a loyal, and perhaps too articulate a Democrat, in an office staffed by men of decided Republican and reactionary leanings. Of course it has been necessary during war time to reduce their office staff, but I want keenly for my brother to retain his job, as it means much to me personally to have him remain in Minneapolis.

"He is forty-three years old, past the draft age, and has a family. His name is Hubert Langevin and if there is any way in which you can advise me about helping him to retain his place in FHA, I shall be more than grateful - and more deeply in your debt!"

Yours,



Miss Grace Tully
The White House
Washington, D. C.

1917 West Franklin,
Minneapolis
Minn.

My dear Mr. Coiccan —

Thanks you for your letter of some weeks ago, advising me that the "Russell case" is quite hopeless.

I have realized the futility of trying to collect anything for myself for some time, as Mr. Leonard has tacitly and gently deflated all my hopes in regard to it.

Perhaps it is well for me to look around for nails suitable a middle-aged woman with no particular talents, and I shall

be happier if busy and occupied.

Please know how deeply I value and appreciate your kindness and efforts in my behalf. You will perhaps never realize what it meant to me last May when I saw you in Washington, to find so warm and friendly an understanding of my problems, after months of disillusionment.

May I ask you a question? Though I feel it an imposition to take your time to read so long a letter!

"Could you tell me to whom I might write among officials in the Federal Housing in Washington, in regard to my brother? I know that you are the "father" of F. H. A. - and must have retained, through your pride in it, certain contacts. My brother, through jobs, has given a position in their office here, and has been with them for three and a half years. He has a fine record of achievement, and has worked hard, with an unabated enthusiasm for Federal Housing, and all it has accomplished. He is a loyal, and perhaps too articulate, a Democrat, in an office

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Of course it has been necessary
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office staff, but I want keenly for
my brother to retain his job, as it
means much to me personally to
have him remain in Minneapolis.
He is forty three years old, past
the draft age, and has a family.
His name is Hubert Langerin and
if there is any way in which
you can advise me about
keeping him to retain his place
in F. H. P., I shall be more than
grateful - and more deeply in
your debt!

Sincerely

Beatrice F. Conway

March 16 - 1943