

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
THRU: ROBERT G. WELLS, CITY MANAGER
FROM: BARBARA A. ROBERTS, CPRP, DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY SERVICES
SUBJECT: AUTHORIZING LETTER SUPPORTING PUBLIC HOUSING DEMOLITION

ISSUE

The Housing Authority requests a letter supporting demolition of Orchard Village.

RECOMMENDATION

Council is asked to authorize the Mayor to sign the attached support letter.

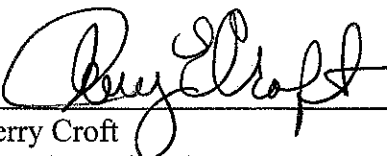
BACKGROUND

September 19, 2007, the Salem Housing Advisory Committee (HAC) hosted a hearing which focused on plans to demolish Orchard Village, a 35-year old Public Housing complex of 30 units located in the Highland Neighborhood at 3112-3122 Broadway NE (see Attachment 1 – location map). Testifying at the hearing were members of the Housing Authority's Resident Advisory Board and residents of Orchard Village. The HAC recommended that the Housing Authority Commission authorize the demolition plan.

October 1, 2007, the Housing Authority Commission authorized the Salem Housing Authority to submit an application to HUD seeking authorization to demolish structures at Orchard Village. The recommendation to demolish structures at the property stems from environmental and obsolescence problems that cannot be cost-effectively rectified. In the spring of 2008, the Authority will bring forward plans to redevelop the property with subsidized rental housing. All Orchard Village residents are aware of the demolition plan and are currently being relocated to comparable subsidized rental housing. The Highland Neighborhood Association has received a briefing on the proposed plan.

FACTS AND FINDINGS

Among the requirements to obtain HUD approval of the demolition plan is a letter from local government acknowledging the plan. Council is requested to authorize the Mayor to sign the support letter labeled as Attachment 2.

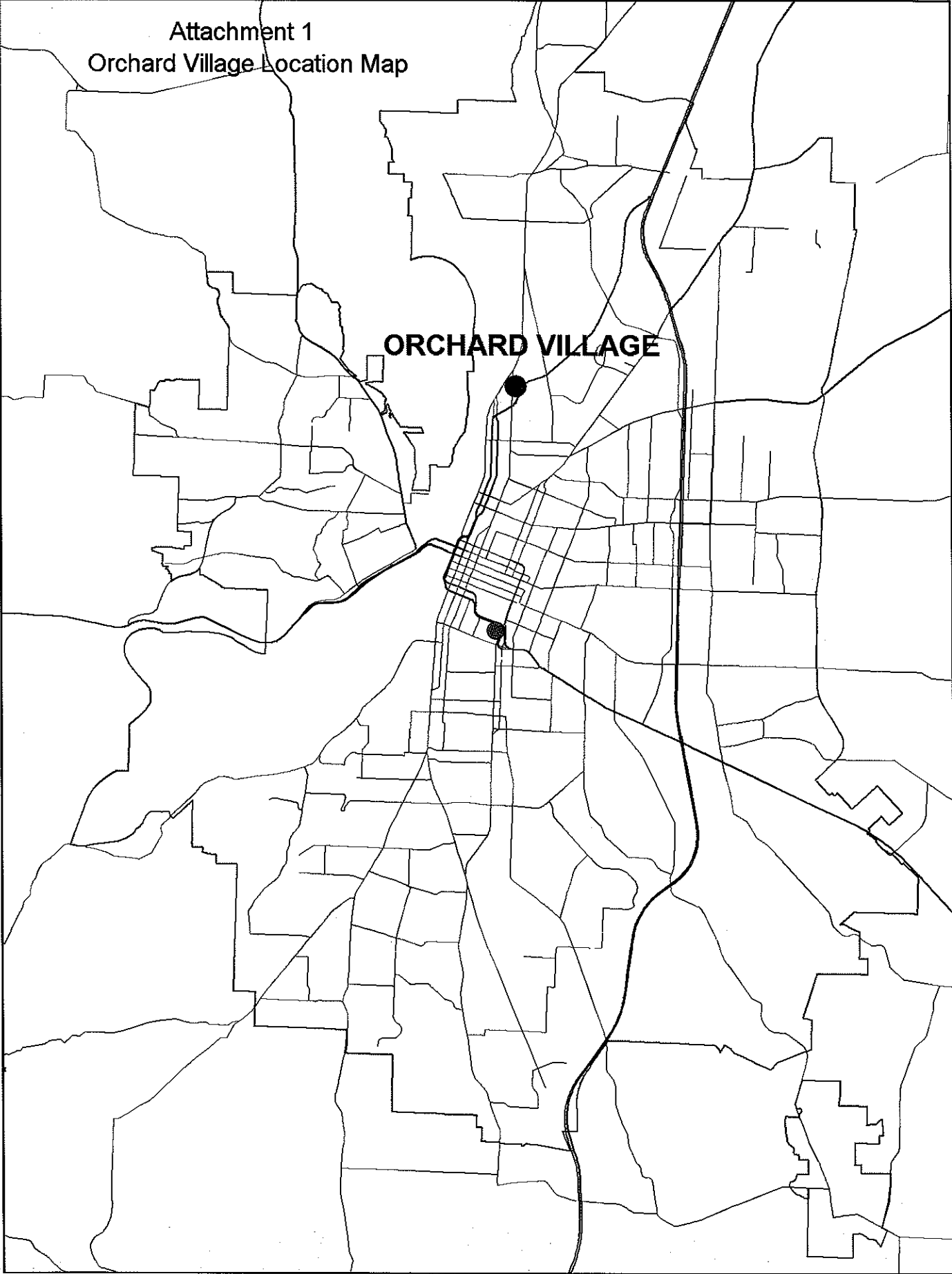


Jerry Croft
Housing Administrator

Attachment 1 – Orchard Village Location Map
Attachment 2 – Proposed Support Letter

Attachment 1
Orchard Village Location Map

ORCHARD VILLAGE



Attachment 2

**Proposed Letter Supporting
Demolition of Orchard Village**

October 24, 2007

Mr. Ainars Rodins, Director
Special Applications Center
Department of Housing and Urban Development
77 West Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604-3507

Subject: Orchard Village; OR 11-3

Dear Mr. Rodins:

The Housing Authority of the City of Salem has advised the Salem City Council of the intent to seek HUD approval to demolish structures containing 30 Public Housing units at Orchard Village. The Housing Authority has also consulted with Orchard Village residents, the Highland Neighborhood Association, members of the Resident Advisory Board and the Housing Advisory Committee in establishing plans for the property.

The City of Salem supports the demolition plan as the best means of eliminating obsolete dwellings which may become unsafe, while retaining the land for redevelopment of subsidized housing.

The existing site plan and unit floor plans at Orchard Village offers a less than ideal living environment for residents and can no longer be efficiently maintained and marketed by the Housing Authority. These factors coupled with the documented presence of mold and an aging electrical system renders Orchard Village obsolete beyond a reasonable program of cost-effective modifications.

The Housing Authority's plan to clear the site and redevelop subsidized housing at Orchard Village will offer a betterment to the neighborhood and deliver modern, affordable rentals that the community greatly needs. Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Janet Taylor
Mayor