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SECTION F

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NAREB Looks At Open Housing; Local Board Sees Transition Need

BALTIMORE N.A.R.E.B.

By CARLETON JONES

BALTIMORE'S real estate industry is faced with a "period of transition" before it complies totally with provisions of the Supreme Court's new ruling on racial discrimination in housing.

This is the opinion of J. W. Ulrich, president of the Real Estate Board of Greater Baltimore, who, in a policy statement for the 2,700 members of the local board, noted last Thursday that while the effect of the decision is immediate "there probably will be a period of transition, prior to complete compliance with and acceptance of the ruling by all persons."

Realtors and their sales representatives, added the board president, now have an additional responsibility to carefully inform property owners that they "cannot reject buyers on the basis of race."

To the consternation of Congress, which was drawing a deep breath after completing a complicated new measure pushing for open housing in stages by 1970, the court on June 17 outlawed all racial discrimination in the sale or rental of all property.

The Baltimore board's stand in the face of the resulting confusion is to point out the need for orderly transition into the climate of the new ruling, while emphasizing that the decision does not cancel out traditional qualification methods.

"Prospects," said Mr. Ulrich, "may still be disqualified from the purchase or rental of housing because of credit, or other detrimental personal record that could apply equally to any individual."

During the transitional period, the board will "continue to work with community groups throughout the metropolitan area to assist in the preservation of neighborhood stability.

"Through our neighborhood committee, which has been in existence for eight years, we shall make every effort to allay fear and misconceptions of residents, while at the same time urging complete and prompt compliance with the court's decision," the real estate board president concluded.

THE nation-wide quandry of real estate men, faced now with not one, but two open housing laws, was put in high relief last week by a policy statement of the National Association of Real state Boards.

In a letter to its 85,000 members the N.A.R.E.B. said its legal advisors felt that the Supreme Court's ruling earlier this month wiped out exemptions on open housing written into law by Congress in the Civil Rights Act of 1968.

At the same time, the real estate association said most legal experts agreed that there was no inconsistency between the two laws.

While "countless questions" are raised by the Supreme Court action, N.A.R.E.B. said, certain things seem clear:

1) The Court decision has the effect of "wiping out the exemptions of the 1968 open occupancy law, without negating the measure itself."

No Local Laws

2) Any local or state open housing laws will now be unnecessary and will serve no useful purpose.

3) local boards and state real estate associations should consult their legal counsel and determine what action should be taken in the light of local or state laws.

4) Open housing is now supremely the law of the land and "any documents relating to transactions in property should not now restrict on racial grounds."

Lyn E. Davis, N.A.R.E.B. president, said the Court decision was "probably the most far-reaching action of the court in our times."

The Court's decision was based on wording of a 1866 law declaring "All citizens of the United States shall have the same right, in every state and territory, as is enjoyed by white citizens thereof to inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold and convey real and personal property."

Private And Public

In its ruling, the Court, on the basis that this is a valid exercise of the power of Congress to enforce the Thirteenth Amendment, held that this law "bars all racial discrimination, private as well as public, in the sale or rental of property."

The 7 to 2 Court decision involved a St. Louis case—Jones versus Mayer—in which a couple had sought to buy a house in a subdivision and had been refused on the basis of the husband's race.

Supreme Court action came on top of a detailed open occupancy law that is to go into effect nationwide in three stages. The first phase forbids discrimination now in the sale or rental of federally-owned or assisted housing.

The second step, which becomes effective January 1 of next year, covers all other housing, except single-family homes and structures of four or less units, with the owner on the premises.

The third step in 1970 would preserve freedom of choice

Continued on Page 5

Goodwill Industries of Baltimore has acquired this $600,000 warehouse at 4001 Southwestern boulevard as a headquarters building. It will replace the organization's present structure at Pratt and Commerce street, scheduled to be razed this fall in inner harbor renewal plan. New center is on 4 acres and includes 105,000 square feet.

Thomas W. Campbell has been appointed manager of a new multi-family housing division by the James F. Ryan Company. A former official of the Marathon Oil Company, he will oversee Ryland Homes town house plans at city of Columbia.

Building Rate Drops

BUILDING in Baltimore county is running at less than half the 1967 rate. Total permit values of $37,594,274 had been recorded for 1968 through June 1.

This contrasts with $82,541,364 in planned construction for the same five month period of 1967.

There has been a marked shift upward in alteration permits for construction, while individual building units have dropped from 756 for early 1967 down to 118 units, according to data of the Department of Permits and Licenses.

Sediment Control Aired

MARYLAND'S sediment control problems were aired in front of the nations architects, and Mrs. Lyndon Johnson, last Wednesday in a national convention address by Dr. M. Gordon Wolman, Johns Hopkins geographer.

Only a "conscious awareness" of general physical principles can cope successfully with problems such as those that confront Maryland watersheds, Dr. Wolman told the one-hundredth annual convention of the American Institute of Architects, meeting in Portland, Ore.

"A clear river, bay, harbor, or waterfront is any city demands that the land be managed, not simply the water," he said, adding that "20 per cent of the mud in the Potomac at Washington comes from construction activities in the metropolitan area. Clearly, treating the water is not likely to solve the problem.

Regulate Land Use

"My reading of the real estate section of the paper," continued Dr. Wolman, "tells me that lakes are the rage in suburban housing. Many of these will probably fill with mud before the project is even finished, ironically with mud from construction of the houses themselves.

"In the small and in the large it will not be enough to treat the confined effluents, it will be necessary to regulate land use, to reduce erosion and sedimentation and to control run-off if the local site and the larger across are to be truly livable."

The continuity and wholeness of the environment is "nicely illustrated by stream valley parks," Doctor Wolman maintained.

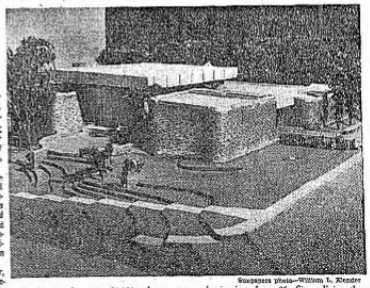
"These ubiquitous symbols of urban planning, despite the best intentions will be sorry, degraded sloughs unless it is recognized that they are part of the watershed and attention focused on runoff regulation, on the quality of surface runoff and on the aesthetic design required by the dynamic behavior of both watershed and channel systems."

'Part Of The Environment'

In attempting to solve environmental problems, the natural scientist must serve the public and give them what they want, Doctor Wolman concluded, but he should also "ask them what they want and tell them what they are getting."

"Technology notwithstanding, man is part of the environment, and to live he must modify it. Yet this need not be done in ignorance," said Doctor Wolman, who is Isaiah Bowman professor of geography at the Hopkins.

Doctor Wolman joined Mrs. Lyndon Johnson and Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman as speakers in the environmental science section of A.I.A.'s national convention.



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Stack space for up to 50,000 volumes, a reference section and community meeting room will be leading features of the new Odenton Library. Ground was broken on the project June 25. Site adjoins the Odenton Shopping Center on Route 677. Design is by Earle S. Harder & Associates. Robert N. Pyle, Inc., is contractor.

Leasing Program

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