



Hayti Reborn files protest on behalf of the community over the Durham Housing Authority's plans for Fayette Place

Media Contacts: Keisha Williams, 919-606-7551, kjmarkwilliams@gmail.com
Valonda Calloway, 919-306-7083, ValondaCalloway@gmail.com

For Immediate Release

February 8, 2022

Durham, NC - When the city of Durham awarded the Durham Housing Authority (DHA) a 4.2 million dollar grant to buy vacant land known as Fayette Place in 2017, the agreement required community engagement. That community engagement called for “*meaningful opportunities for the Durham community, including but not limited to the Hayti and North Carolina Central University communities, to contribute input in connection with the redevelopment of the site and the surrounding area.*” Many members of the community say that did not happen.

Hayti Reborn filed a written protest to the Durham Housing Authority Friday, February 4, 2022 on the community's behalf because they want their voices to be heard on a project that will have a significant impact on the community where they live and that they love.

The community protest falls into four categories;

1. Lack of community support
2. Equity scoring
3. Land use
4. Lack of due process

Bishop Clarence Laney has been a faith leader in the Hayti Community for 26 years. He met with the DHA and helped to organize the community for meetings with the Durham Housing Authority. He says the DHA plan has a **lack of community support** and he is floored. “We were

assured that anything that happened on that lot would have the community at the center of the conversation. To my knowledge Greystone (the developer) came into the community and met with residents for a brief afternoon. At no time was the schematics, the plans, none of that was shared with the community prior to being selected by DHA.”

Hilda Smith lived in the Hayti community from 1956 until 1988. Her niece now lives in the family home. She doesn't feel the **equity scoring** used by DHA in its selection was fair. “People of color should be given the opportunity to have owner-interest in something. Tailor shops, shoe shops, shoe shine shops, hat shops. The opportunity for people to say I own my building or I'm working towards ownership. I don't see anything about ownership in the proposal. To have all of the housing lumped together is what they had before.”

Fayetteville Street corridor property owner Faye Calhoun is upset about the **land use**. “The selection of Greystone and the other huge company, Gilbane, is irresponsible on the part of the city of Durham, of the DHA, etc. I think they were selected primarily because of a proposal for land use. I think it has been a done deal for some time because all of a sudden, and not in the RFP, was the idea of putting the headquarters for DHA on that property. Now they come up with that and they are pursued as the people that they want to work with. If somebody is going to build you a brand new house, of course you would be interested in working with them.”

Melvin Speight grew up in Hayti. His father began running his business there in 1938. He feels there was a **lack of due process** from the DHA on the Hayti Reborn proposal. “They almost ignored it, it seems like, because what they want to put there is housing of the same order and then put their facility, for the Durham Housing Authority, there too, which we really don't need.”

The Hayti Reborn team, on behalf of the community, is asking for;

- Reconsideration of the Hayti Reborn development proposal
- Opportunity for Hayti and the Durham community to substantially weigh in on the decision for the project (what goes on the site) and developer (what development partner co-develops the site with DHA) for Fayette Place.

Please direct questions and interview requests to Keisha Williams and Valonda Calloway. Please see the formal letter of protest in the accompanying PDF.