June 20, 2006

Dear Friends:

I have spent a considerable amount of time thinking about my next project. I've decided to continue an idea I first started developing in 2003 – the creation of a museum of housing in Chicago.

I see the purpose as twofold. One is to preserve the history of types and issues of housing in Chicago. Secondly is to provide an entity to develop new mechanisms of housing, financing and development for future generations – a think tank if you will.

This will not be an easy or inexpensive task. But, I think with your help a housing museum can and will become a reality.

This e-mail is to inform you of what I will be doing in the coming months. I hope also it will serve as a notice to you to become involved. I hope in the coming months you will receive my calls and e-mails with openness as I put this museum together.

I know from past experience a task like this takes the efforts of many. You all have been part of efforts to bring housing to Chicago. Now I hope you can help with the documentation of these efforts and creating a basis for housing policy to benefit future generations of people in this city and perhaps elsewhere.

I will be calling you to talk about specifics in the coming months. With your help I know this effort will be successful.

Below you will find a concept of the museum I have developed to begin those discussions. Please feel free to contact me about this museum idea. If you know of others that would be interested, please feel free to forward this e-mail to them.

Doug Dobmeyer

### Concept for a Housing Museum in Chicago

# Concept Paper: Museum for Housing in Chicago
# A Seven-Year Plan for Phase I - III

By Doug Dobmeyer

The concept for this idea flows from other museums or memorials to significant issues in American life. The immediate value of this new institution would be a single-minded focus on the example of issues of and development of housing for all walks of life in Chicago. Given the oral

histories and scattered written history of housing development in Chicago, it would make sense to collect this material in one place for preservation and archiving for future generations to study this history.

A secondary value would be to make the museum a center for creative thinking on housing issues. As a "think tank" it could become a local, regional and national center for housing related issues.

There are many players in the housing field and thus many potential funders. Groups such as foundations, non-profit and for-profit developers, private sector funders, architects, state, federal and local government as well as specific individuals and the general public are all potential funders of the short and long-term aspects of this project.

Chicago's rich history of the two-flat, the bungalow, the CHA, the homeless, high rises, SRO's, courtyards and upscale housing all beg to be told in a focused history.

While this concept is just that, the following lays out a plan to approach the development and administration of such a housing museum:

**Phase I- Part A:** The first phase must concentrate on research, testing the strength of support for the idea and potential for monetary support and development of the site. While I believe this would be a unique idea in the country that point needs to be ascertained.

Other aspects of Part A of the First Phase would be:

- Identify and organize a working group as an initial governing board that includes representatives for all phases (government, developers, organizers, private funders and others) of those involved in Chicago housing;
- Determine the basis of artifacts and materials that could be used in the museum;
- Determine a budget for development and the first two-years of operation;
- Determine the basis to acquire the funds for this development and initial operation budget;

**Phase I- Part B:** If this is a go at this point, then continue on part B of the First Phase:

- Acquisition of a property for rehab or new construction for the museum (architectural plans, construction and all other aspects of a development);
- Identify and develop a permanent governing board for the post-development phase

**Phase II:** The second phase would be the first two years of operation for the museum. This phase would include getting commitments for exhibits as well as a two-year program of policy issue sessions.

- Setting up exhibits and the basis for Phase II;

- Scheduling the first two-years of policy issues seminars;
- Scheduling the opening of the museum
- Follow the fund raising plan previously developed.

**Phase III:** Continual operations of the museum in a manner that maintains the purpose of the museum and with sufficient funding.

The initial Phase I-Part A work will require the support of one or more foundations in the form of:

- developer's salary and benefits;
- use of an office in the Loop with a computer, printer and fax;
- expenses that include: mailings, entertainment and related costs;
- some travel to meet with others in the Midwest and elsewhere;
- other miscellaneous

The total budget for year I would be developed. If the foundation judged there was sufficient progress being made at the end of year I, then the grant could hopefully be renewed for year II or a new one created.

**The new plan for the United States must involve Peace, Prosperity and Equality**