

Phase 1 – Conditional Commitment

Hello again, NCAD members and friends of NC Deaf community! Most recently, I shared a video message telling you about the history of Tillinghast Place apartments, and how it was established. I also mentioned a little about my background, only related to NCAD, nothing to do with my personal and family life, and career. Can't believe I forgot to introduce to you my name, can't believe I did and was embarrassed by this. Now, this is James Wilson. (Pause)

Now, remember I mentioned about NCAD receiving a \$1.4+ million grant to build a low-income housing property. I also mentioned that the grant consisted of five phases. I will start with Phase 1 which is called "Conditional Commitment". (Pause)

Conditional Commitment started off with me and a NCAD representative together, several representatives from PCCA (Perry C. Craven Associates in Winston-Salem, NC) and several representatives from the HUD Regional Office gathered in a meeting room. That time the Director of this regional office was Dan McCanless and knew a Deaf female employee working under him for numerous years. Her name was Martha Nichols Johnson. She stopped by to greet us and chatted with us for a moment. The purpose of this initial meeting was to get us acquainted with each other and make us aware of what to expect from Phase One. We were informed that the HUD has worked with their real estate agency (vendor) to look for property in Charlotte so NCAD basically sits tight and waits for them to locate the property. The grant is in good standing for one year until the property is a done deal. We were fine with this plan. As we waited for six months, I became nervous, got in touch with the status and was told that they were still searching. Approaching nine months of waiting I became more nervous, acknowledging the fact that we would lose the grant if we missed the one-year deadline. I really fretted. Until one week left, that was it. I decided to do it with the NCAD blessing. My colleague

from Charlotte Regional Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and myself, two of us, began the property search on our own during the final week. With this in mind, the goal was to locate property just in Charlotte. At first, we found a property in the Hickory Grove area but unfortunately, the property was within a half mile of the other HUD property. The HUD policy required more than a half mile apart so the Hickory Grove property was out. As we kept searching, we found the second property available on Central Ave near downtown Charlotte and had the busline, very nice area. Unfortunately, the soil test took place and found soil containment not safe for health, so it was out again. Only one day left, imagine one day left, we actively searched so we decided to go northeast of Charlotte and found a property sign posted on land property showing "Snyder Associates, Inc." with large phone numbers displayed on the signage. We took the number and reached them. They replied "Yes and still available"! The sale of land was for \$27,000.00 but came short with the HUD's \$15,000.00 commitment. \$12,000.00 dilemma? Snyder, the owner of land, was generous by reaching NC Housing Charitable Foundation asking for donation and they did. Then the property was officially sold to NCAD! Therefore, the grant remained intact. Of course, I was thrilled. So in that case, the conditional commitment was completed and moved forward to Phase Two, Firm Commitment which was a bit complicated. Stay tuned for Phase Two, and thank you for watching me!!