

Phase 6 – Housing Services Management and Operations

Hello again, Me James Wilson! Esteemed NCAD Members and Friends of NC Deaf Community! Now I wanted to narrate, specifically about Tillinghast Place that has already been in existence for 30+ years, imagine how fast time had gone by. All of these years started with the grant and now full occupancy of Deaf tenants except one hearing female tenant who had moved since its inception. She is one of a few first tenants that moved in during the year of 1998. More than 90% occupancy are all Deaf and use ASL. That is something to be proud of!! (Pause)

Now I wanted to take advantage and time to thank the NCAD (North Carolina Association of the Deaf, Inc.) as the sponsor of the grant for their continued support to Who? Of course, the North Carolina Independent Living of Deaf Persons, Inc. (NCILDP). Because of NCAD's support toward the NCILDP, which is the ownership board of seven members, I wanted to thank all the NCAD Presidents during the era of Tillinghast Place. Can't name them all but with this in mind, they were appreciated for their support. Secondly, I wanted to take time to thank several housing service management companies for taking good care of Tillinghast Place property as well as maintaining services and operations. First was the Community Housing Partners, then North Carolina Housing Services Management and now just merged with another housing management called Anchor Affordable Housing Management. I wanted to thank them for their housing services and management. Now on the third finger-listing handshape, I wanted to thank the on-site managers, starting with the first manager, Euwayne Rockett. She did a good job starting from nothing to full occupancy of tenants and stayed on her job for several years. She had to retire due to personal reasons but proved to be instrumental during the first years of Tillinghast Place. The second manager whom I would not name did a good job, too, for a few years.

Now, the current manager is Carolyn Cobb, a person of color, female and Deaf. With that, diversity was significant especially for Anchor Affordable Housing, the NCILDP, NCAD and HUD! Now, I wanted to take the opportunity to recognize several past NCILDP Presidents and leaders. Lynn Dey, Hope Turpin Turner, Donnie Dove (Vice President), Larry Smolik (member for a long time), Donnie Stewart, really many of them I wanted to express thanks, oh also Darius Dunham, Donna Smolik for their passion for the Tillinghast Place property and tenants. I really thank them!! Now, fourth finger-listing handshape, I wanted to recognize several organizations for using Tillinghast Place Community Room for their meetings. Charlotte Association of the Deaf and North Carolina Association of the Deaf Board have used the room a couple times. Central Piedmont Community College has sponsored a social event several times, throwing cookouts (hamburgers and hot dogs), coordinating games and inviting the Deaf Community to join the event. The tenants always enjoyed socializing (with students and Deaf community attendees), and I hope they are still doing it. Another recognition I mentioned was the Charlotte Regional Center of NC Division of Services for the Deaf who provided tenants with training needs such as self-advocacy, independent living, and technology support. Right now, they aren't doing this but hopefully they would reconsider providing these essential services for them soon. Now, done with this and move forward to the next thing. (Pause)

I wanted to recognize the North Carolina Independent Living of Deaf Persons, Inc. for thirty years of leadership! There were a lot of things going on during the era but I will just pick two major accomplishments. First, we worked with the City of Charlotte Transportation Department to make the bus line available near the property. During that time the property was pretty remote, deep in the country. The road, Mallard Creek Road, was two-way. Two bus lines available were far from reach. After working with the Charlotte Transportation Department for one year, the bus line was finally added, very close to the property. The tenants were able to catch the

bus or get off really easily. With that being added, the tenants were thrilled with the accessibility and convenience of the bus line. They were able to go wherever needed like shopping, grocery shopping and enjoy their independent lifestyle. Really a blessing! That accomplishment was a done deal for us! Secondly, the biggest challenge was, again, with the Charlotte Department of Transportation. As a result of rapid growth, the City of Charlotte recognized the need for road improvements in that area where the Tillinghast Place Apartments were located. At one time, the City of Charlotte planned widening the Mallard Creek Road on the same side of the property, marking and posting wooden sticks very close to several units of the property. That would mean that those tenants living in these units would be a lot closer to the road. As soon as I visited, I was shocked and did not accept the city planning. They contacted me about purchasing small land for the road. They were planning to cut down beautiful trees, build a wall near the property. I refused to accept their plan but instead, I asked the City to modify it by widening on the opposite side. Most of that side was pretty open so simply a common sense to go from there. The City of Charlotte decided to take the case to NCDOT. They contacted me about this issue, and I refused to agree with them, arguing that the widening project should be on the other side. Then the HUD representative showed up on the premise and met with me. He saw the whole thing, wasting no time that he supported my decision. I was really relieved that tenants could enjoy the beauty of nature, freedom of space and convenience. I was proud that I was able to protect their own space! I do have many stories I could tell you but that is as much as I could share with you in a nutshell! Again, I wanted to thank NCAD for putting trust in our work, and the best interest of serving tenants. (Pause)

Sooner or later, the NCAD will embark on finding a new slate of seven members from across the state. They will discuss the future of the Tillinghast Place Apartments, and I, myself, will still be involved in a consultative role. Now that I believe I am closing, thank you for

watching my videos and learning about the rich history of Tillinghast Place Apartments. Really hard to describe my experiences but simply very rewarding!! Thanks again, bye!