

Hot off the Press MHOAA News!

MHOAA held a Midwest Sectional Conference in Elk Horn, Illinois in December. There we were apprised of Mn/DOT planning to expand their highway system. Their plans at that time was to save the baseball field but demolish Jackson Heights.

After months of controversy, Mn/DOT announced in April that they are leaning towards a route that will demolish the Jackson Heights manufactured home community. Jackson Heights is home to nearly 200 low-income Latino people and the only neighborhood in the area where 95% of residents are people of color. The other routes under consideration would impact wetlands, high-income homes and manufactured home communities where a majority of residents are white. The department's preferred route would have the most disparate impact on people of color despite federal orders that explicitly discourage this type of discrimination.

MHOAA responded to the need by asking many across the nation to write letters of support to specified Mn/DOT personnel. We know letters came from many, including Washington, Oregon, California, Utah, Arizona, Rhode Island, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin, for we have copies. State Home Owner Presidents, a Lobbyist, a House Representative, an organizer, a resident, a commissioner, our MHOAA President and Executive Directors wrote.

Mn/DOT sent a letter back to each one. They made some important commitments, such as, *“We are continuing to refine the C-2 to further minimize impacts to the many competing interests along this corridor. This refinement effort includes a review of moving the corridor to avoid any direct impact to Jackson Heights in this process. This can be accomplished by moving two of the interchange ramps farther from the park or by moving the entire system interchange slightly to the north. While there could be indirect noise and visual impacts with this revised alignment, it may be possible to leave the entire Jackson Heights community at its existing location.”*

With these commitments in writing to people all over the nation, we are sure they feel a lot of pressure to do the right thing. And, people have some power to hold them accountable if they don't! Mn/DOT and Jackson Heights residents have their first working group meeting scheduled for June 13th.

MHOAA will support and be an advocate for residents in manufactured housing across America on issues that affect many residents. We will encourage the forming of co-ops in order to benefit the homeowners, working with management, developing a relationship with their own legislators and being a source of information, direction and encouragement to all.

Russ McPherson, Secretary