

City Housing Plan Periled In Alexandria

Officials of the Alexandria Re-development and Housing Authority fear that a recently-filed legal complaint may cut 46 units from a proposed 194-unit low-rent housing project in the city.

The proposed development for Negroes is to be located on an L-shaped tract bounded by N. Patrick, N. Columbus and 1st sts., and the old Parker-Gray High School.

Safeway Stores, Inc., and the Mutual Ice Co. are contesting condemnation of one block of the tract. This block is bounded by Patrick, Montgomery, 1st and Alfred sts. Safeway owns most of the block, and its part is zoned commercial for a future supermarket. Mutual Ice owns eight houses rented to workmen.

Both organizations question the authority of the ARHA. Mutual Ice's suit already has been argued in Alexandria Corporation Court, but a decision has not been announced. Safeway's suit is scheduled to come up next month in Federal District Court.

Officials of the ARHA yesterday said this is their problem:

The project is allocated under the Public Housing Authority's 50,000-unit program for the present fiscal year. If construction on Alexandria's project doesn't begin in June, the Government will transfer the allocation elsewhere.

Federal allocations for next year haven't been set yet, but officials figure the unit amount to be considerably below this year's 50,000. Alexandria might be left out.

To offset the possibility of losing all 194 units, ARHA officials have received bids on an alternate project, omitting the block in contention. This would mean a loss of 46 units.

No awarding of contracts will be made until the block litigation is settled or until the last possible minute, officials said. Cost of the project is not settled, pending award of the contract. Original estimate was 2½ million dollars.