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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 16, 2009

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A New Life for Ickes Homes

Demolition marks the beginning of renewal

Having won the support of CHA leaseholders, residents of the surrounding community, and now the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), demolition will promptly begin at six buildings at Harold Ickes Homes – a move that will enhance the safety and security of the community and pave the way for future development.

At its peak, Ickes Homes housed nearly 1,000 families. Five buildings were closed in 2007, but six were still occupied until late last year, when high vacancies - only 132 of 492 apartments were occupied - security concerns and the dilapidated condition of the buildings required the consolidation of six buildings to three. Today, there are just 79 households remaining in Ickes' three occupied buildings.

Pre-demolition procedures for the \$3.1 million project are scheduled to begin on July 20, with actual demolition expected to commence August 3. The 150-day project is expected to reach completion in December.

While many former residents of Ickes had already relocated, current residents of the buildings were given the choice to move into a remaining Ickes building, relocate to another CHA-rehabbed property, or use a Section 8 voucher to rent housing in the private market. The entire process of demolition and rebuilding has been created in partnership with Ickes Resident leadership, community leaders and the office of Ald. Pat Dowell, to ensure that all concerns are addressed and needs are met.

Demolition will be carried out Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – to ensure the safety of area children and the tranquility of the neighborhood. The trucking plan will be adjusted so that traffic is kept a safe distance from remaining occupied buildings. Dust suppressant measures will be undertaken during demolition as well.

Contractors for the Ickes project are Delta Demolition and Heneghan Wrecking, which will adhere to the contract compliance requirement of 40 percent minority and women-owned businesses and Section 3. Six Section 3 security and labor jobs are expected to be created from the project – three per contractor.

“While I am supportive of the demolition which will help safety and security throughout the neighborhood, I am most excited about the work ahead,” Ald. Dowell

said. “CHA has assured me that, concurrent with the demolition, we will convene a ‘working group’ to arrive at a unified vision, and to map future development for the site – with a plan that meets the needs of this growing and vibrant community.”

The Ickes Homes project is made possible by the American Recovery and Rehabilitation Act. In addition to Ickes, CHA plans to rehabilitate 900 units of public housing, enhance property safety and security, and partner with City of Chicago sister agencies to provide training and employment opportunities to low-income residents with its share of stimulus funds.

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