

April 10, 2017



***Florida Minority Community Reinvestment Coalition***  
***Baltimore Minority Community Reinvestment Coalition***  
[WWW.ASSETSANDHOPE.ORG](http://WWW.ASSETSANDHOPE.ORG)   [WWW.FMCRC.ORG](http://WWW.FMCRC.ORG)

City Tampa Official (Dennis Fernandez) Who is leading Racial Gentrification in Tampa  
Speaks To All White Architectural Review Board-



PRESS RELEASE:  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**CITY OF TAMPA OFFICIAL DENNIS FERNANDEZ**  
(DIRECTOR OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW/HISTORIC PRESERVATION)  
**WHITE DOMINATED HISTORIC/ARCHITECTURAL BOARDS**  
**ATTACKS LOW INCOME AFRICAN AMERICAN HOME OWNERS**

**CITY OF TAMPA MOVES TO FORCE LOW INCOME AFRICAN AMERICAN HOME OWNERS AND  
RENTERS OUT OF HIGHLY SOUGHT AFTER HOUSING AREAS NEAR DOWNTOWN TAMPA  
THROUGH RACIAL GENTRIFICATION**

**FMCRC TO MEET WITH LEGAL CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS ACLU AND PRIVATE  
ATTORNEY'S TO EVALUATE LAWSUIT AGAINST CITY OF TAMPA FOR RACIAL GENTRIFICATION**

**FMCRC CHAIR AL PINA "WE WILL BATTLE THESE RACIST ECONOMIC THUGS AT THE CITY OF TAMPA  
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS TO THE GATES OF HELL AND BACK TO BRING  
ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR THESE AFRICAN AMERICAN HOME OWNERS AND RENTERS"**

Tampa, Florida:

Gentrification—the socioeconomic upgrading of previously low-income, central city neighborhoods—Gentrification is a process by which low-income central city neighborhoods undergo reinvestment and renewal and experience an in-migration of middle- and upper-middle class residents (Smith 1998:198). It is a process of neighborhood selection, in which individual households, commercial businesses, state and corporate actors, and/or institutions make decisions to invest in a low-income neighborhood. As middle- and upper-middle class residents and businesses continue to move into the neighborhood, the neighborhood experiences a socioeconomic transformation, altering the physical, cultural, and political character of the neighborhood.

Two FMCRC licensed general contractors meeting with Mr. Dennis Fernandez, Director of Architectural Review & Historic Preservation, to review an FMCRC affordable housing project in Tampa Heights area, implore to Mr. Fernandez to be more sensitive to housing costs in this low income census tract that needs more affordable housing. The City of Tampa reply was “while I understand your position on affordable housing we don’t care about cost we care about the neighborhood”.

From forcing African American low moderate income home buyers to purchase PPG hurricane impact windows that are up to 60% more expensive than other State of Florida approved hurricane impact windows to demanding architectural design requirements that make affordable housing impossible, the City of Tampa is systematically forcing African Americans, and other minorities, out of highly sought after areas of Tampa. States FMCRC Chair Al Pina “with the major development of Channelside, Riverwalk, Downtown Tampa and soon the Harbor, the city of Tampa is creating Historic and Special Preservation districts in predominate minority communities near downtown that have building and remodeling requirements that

will sooner than later force most of these families out of open up these areas for much more expensive housing. Mr. Fernandez is nothing more than a punk and a thug who likes to pick on people who are not able to defend themselves”

Tampa census tract 45300-12-057-0030.00 is example of targeted racial gentrification being waged by the city of Tampa. FMCRC demolished a home located at 413 E. Adalee St in this census tract to build an affordable home and help raise home values in this low income census tract. In 2016 census, this tract was 88% minority (predominate African American) with median family income of \$18,168. After demolition, FMCRC finds that this area is now under historic preservation department, board and architectural review committee. States Al Pina “I find it rather disgusting that a city department with no African Americans, an all-white historic and architectural review commission is dictating to minority families and home owners how they assimilate to their desires and wishes. But more importantly, who are systematically racially gentrifying these areas around downtown Tampa to make room for wealthier white families that wish to own \$350,000 and above homes”

Under Mayor Buckhorn, the number of historic and targeted city of Tampa controlled housing districts within 3 miles of downtown Tampa has grown dramatically. Within these housing controlled districts, both the Historic board and Architectural Review Commission create expensive housing requirements that dramatically increase the costs of building or remodeling a home that force low and moderate income home owners to sell and keep minority home buyers out. States Chair Al Pina “in 2015, minorities accounted for only 7% of FHA, VA and conventional home loans with the top 5 banks in Tampa mostly due to the serious lack of affordable housing. Mayor Buckhorn and Dennis Fernandez might as well place a sign up stating BLACKS NOT WELCOME TO LIVE HERE through this systematic gentrification they have created via these special housing districts. We at FMCRC have set up meetings with legal experts and now have the option of filing a lawsuit against the City of Tampa for racial discrimination on the table. This type of racial discrimination should not and will not be tolerated. But with Mr. Fernandez telling our licensed general contractors the city of Tampa does not care about costs and its impact on affordable housing it is clear that Mayor Buckhorn and his administration see African Americans as nothing more than economic slaves”

## **TAMPA MAYOR BUCKHORN & CITY OFFICIALS:**

**TARGETS HIGHLY SOUGHT AFTER BLACK/MINORITY  
NEIGHBORHOODS FOR RACIAL GENTRIFICATION**

**USES HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICTS GOVERNED BY WHITE BOARD  
TO DIRECT ORDINANCES THAT LEADS TO RACIAL GENTRIFICATION**

**2016 BLOOMBERG STUDY RANKS TAMPA AS TOP  
CITY WITH HOUSEHOLD INCOME INEQUALITY**

(<http://www.tampabay.com/news/business/economicdevelopment/when-it-comes-to-household-income-inequality-florida-cities-top-the-charts/2297022> )

**TARGETS BLACKS RIDING BIKES-RACIAL PROFILING**

(<http://www.iheart.com/news/justice-department-calls-out-tampa-police-14643077/> )

**MAYOR BUCKHORN & CITY OF TAMPA:  
RACIAL ECONOMIC SEGREGATION AT ITS WORST**

(official FMCRC letter sent to Mayor Buckhorn regarding racial gentrification below)

### **FMCRC CHAIR AL PINA:**

Our letter below to Mayor Buckhorn sums up the fast rising racial gentrification issue in Tampa; A 2016 Bloomberg study released last week and reported by the Tampa Bay Times shows that minorities are in economic segregation under Mayor Buckhorn with Tampa ranking #6 in nation for household income inequality. But far worse is the fast rising racial wealth gap in Tampa that is driven by lack of minority home equity and dropping home ownership. We stepped in affordable housing development ([www.wassetsandhope.org](http://www.wassetsandhope.org)) so we could better understand this growing racial economic disparity. Between the banks home lending to minorities dropping in Tampa and the City of Tampa targeting of highly sought after neighborhoods (such as Seminole Heights) and designating them as "historic districts", Blacks and minorities do not stand a chance under Mayor Buckhorn. Under Mayor Buckhorn, Blacks are being placed into neighborhood "stables" such as Sulphur Springs to give them alternative low value housing options to move to. To demonstrate this point, we took 3 census tracts in 3 of the Seminole Heights that are highly sought after due to its location near downtown and other key services. Below you will see that from 2010 census data these were on average made up of over 73% minority residents. Since there is no current population data to show what the minority population, I personally did a hands on study of these tracts by looking at each house in these 3 tracts to see the racial makeup of the household. On average we see the minority household population in these three census tracts cut by over 40%. This

goes hand in hand with fast rising home prices.

### 3 Seminole Heights Area Data:

MSA-State-County-Tract: 45300-12-057-0021.00

2010 Census: 68.2% Minority population

2016 (Sept/Oct-Physical Observation): 45% minority population

2010 Census/Tract Medium Income: \$36,111

To Purchase a Rebuilt 50 year plus home: \$161,000

MSA-State-County-Tract: 45300-12-057-0029.00

2010 Census: 70.4% Minority population

2016 (Sept/Oct-Physical Observation): 38% minority population

2010 Census/Tract Medium Income: \$39,511

To Purchase a Rebuilt 50 year plus home: \$166,000

MSA-State-County-Tract: 45300-12-057-0030.00

2010 Census: 88.78% Minority population

2016 (Sept/Oct-Physical Observation): 71% minority population

2010 Census/Tract Medium Income: \$17,596

To Purchase a Rebuilt 50 year plus home: \$148,000

You can very well see that the home prices are fast outpacing the last average household income which gives us verification on why minority population is dropping significantly in these minority neighborhoods. **We call this racial gentrification.** As a point, it is absolutely critical to raise home values in these minority neighborhoods. But there is a limit to how high the home prices (per sq ft cost) should rise. Too fast too high results in racial gentrification and economic segregation. At this rate, home values in 3 more years will raise to over \$250,000 on average that will cut the number of minority household owners by another 60%. What Mayor Buckhorn and the city planners are using to drive this racial discrimination are "historic overlay" districts. The number of these districts have almost doubled under Mayor Buckhorn and most of these are in predominate minority neighborhoods. I am disgusted by the actions of Mayor Buckhorn to find more appealing areas for mostly all White home buyers. We at FMCRC Assets & Hope will take this issue head on. When the new U.S. President steps into the office, we will move forward with specific actions regarding this racial gentrification. I gladly take this battle on for racial justice and do so with God protecting me. Faith-Honor-Strength

**We call on Mayor Buckhorn To Stop Racial Gentrification**

**We call on Mayor Buckhorn To Revise & Reduce Historic Overlay Districts**

**We call on Mayor Buckhorn To Bring Racial Inclusion To Tampa**

COPY OF OFFICIAL LETTER TO MAYOR OF TAMPA:

## *Florida Minority Community Reinvestment Coalition*

[www.assetsandhope.org](http://www.assetsandhope.org) [www.fmcrc.org](http://www.fmcrc.org)

October 11, 2016

City of Tampa  
Honorable Bob Buckhorn  
Mayor  
City of Tampa  
306 East Jackson Street  
Tampa, Florida 33602

RE: Racial Gentrification of Predominant Minority/African American neighborhoods that have been designated historic/special housing areas. Communist like behavior of Historic Department & Commission Leads us to cancel 513 E. Hugh St redevelopment project and all future similar rebuilding projects in historic designated areas.

Honorable Mayor Buckhorn:

A study this week by Bloomberg showed that the city of Tampa was the #6 city in the United States with the highest income/wealth inequality. The city of Miami being #1. Your policies to clean up poorer minority communities are not only contributing to this widening income/wealth gap, but far worse it is leading to racial gentrification.

We at FMCRC/Assets & Hope Housing have significant concerns about your administrations push to increase the number of historic/special designated areas in predominant minority/African American neighborhoods that without doubt is leading to racial gentrification in the City of Tampa. With these historic/special designations it is increasing housing rehabilitation costs by over 100-300%. This not only makes much needed home improvements in minority low moderate income communities not financially feasible for these predominate minority homeowners, it is fueling home values to grow to fast & high that locks out 99% of all minority home buyers. In addition, we found out first-hand how the plan reviewers for these historic/special areas have communist like behavior that has led me to cancel the rebuilding of a vacant distressed home. We are respectfully requesting that the City of Tampa review their policies for historic/special designated neighborhoods that are in predominant minority neighborhoods.

When you were first running for Mayor of Tampa we spoke at our office and you spoke with pride about your Irish ancestry and rightfully so. The Irish culture is remarkable in many ways and I have the utmost of respect for the Irish culture and community. Since I was a child, I was appalled at how the country of England was attempting to control the minds, hearts and bodies of all those in Ireland during the occupation by England. How did your ancestors feel about people from another country telling them how to live, eat, worship and think? Without doubt most of Ireland fought such dictatorial (communist like) actions by England until its independence. I find the actions by the Historic board/commission and their oversight of the historic designated areas no different than that of England.

I have attached a recent email to the historic plan reviewer that specifically outlines our concerns. From requiring us spending over \$3000 for architectural plans just to show the city of Tampa reviewer where the new windows will be placed, requiring the most expensive wood windows, dozens of other requirements to the most offensive of these actions by telling us which front and back doors we must purchase. Last time I checked, the historic board is nowhere to be found when it comes to paying the bills or paying back the debt we take on for all our housing, yet they wish to pick which doors and materials we must use. This at the core is nothing short of racial discrimination because most of these minorities are forced to accept the tastes of the historic board. Here is the very un-diverse historic board for Tampa:



(city of Tampa Historic Board-White Need Only Apply/Blacks Not Welcomed)  
Photos of All White Historic Board

Not much color on this board. I am offended to not see one African American on this board since most of the racial gentrification you are pushing is in predominant African American neighborhoods. Most minorities do not listen to the kinds of music they listen to, eat the kinds of foods they eat, worship as they do, their children do not go to the same schools as their children nor do they have the same heroes. Yet these 6 mostly white male board members are telling us and all the minority home buyers to buy the doors, windows and various materials they like. This is not only communist in nature, but it is just offensive and UN American.

To add insult to injury, our licensed general contractor (I am happy to provide you his contact information) we selected to rebuild this affordable home was extremely frustrated by Ms. Elaine Lund do to her coming back many times with new requirements/hurdles for us. In his last conversation with Ms. Lund he even told her that he hoped that her last surprise requirement would be the last. What Ms. Lund does not understand or care about is that there are workers depending on this work who do not get paid if they do not work and their children suffer. So for to play games with continued additional requirements hurt many children of the workers who would of worked on this home. But in addition to this what I think was purposeful harassment by Ms. Lund (after my email to her, I feel she targeted us as retribution for my email), she attacked the character of our organization when my GC told her FMCRC housing is a respected nonprofit housing developer who never had to go through so many loops as she was giving us. Her reply was to say that we probably built outside the scope of the permits for our homes. I am offended by her attack upon our character and request an apology for this attack.

Mayor Buckhorn, our Assets & Hope affordable home building ([www.assetsandhope.org](http://www.assetsandhope.org)) program focuses on increasing home values in predominate minority communities to increase home equity (#1 driver for wealth) that leads to increased household wealth that addresses the fast rising racial wealth gap in Florida and the United States. But in that our focus is on raising home values, we fully understand that there is a limit to how high these values should go so it does not overprice homes that ultimately leads to racial gentrification, especially in high sought areas (like Seminole Height neighborhoods). Because your historic/special designation of predominate minority neighborhoods is leading to gentrification, I not only cancelled our Hugh project, but I am now in process of developing a website and report that will focus on the racial breakdown of these neighborhoods so we can report to minority home buyers in these areas the degree to which racial gentrification is occurring. We intend to make any racial gentrification very public in hopes that policies will be enacted to reverse such gentrification. Also, it is our hope that there be much more diversity on all historic boards and commissions to include African Americans. Minorities account for over 40% of Tampa's population and that should be reflected in all boards and commissions.

In good conscience, I will not support any efforts towards racial gentrification, be it on purpose or not, so we will no longer be rebuilding any homes in any Tampa historic/special designated districts until this policy is reversed. So I have cancelled the rebuilding of 513 E Hugh St. We thank you for your consideration on this very serious matter. If there are any questions or concerns, please contact myself directly at (813) 598-6361.

Cordially,

**"There are those who say thus is the way of the world....I say NO thus we make it"**

**"It is easy to sing when one sits upon a perch of privilege as compared to those who are drowning in a sea of neglect"**

Al Pina

Chair/CEO

FMCRC

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[www.fmcrc.org](http://www.fmcrc.org) [www.assetsandhope.org](http://www.assetsandhope.org) [www.theracialwealthgap.org](http://www.theracialwealthgap.org) [www.SanDiegoMCRC.org](http://www.SanDiegoMCRC.org)

Attachments: Copy of Email between FMCRC & Tampa Plan Reviewer Elaine Lund: