

METRO GRANTS FOR ROSSI FARMS DEVELOPMENT & AFFORDABLE HOUSINGIF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, **PRINT** YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

NAME (PRINT)

ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE (Optional)

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I have been accused lately of having a total lack of awareness of the housing inequities that exist in Portland. After our conversation, Madeline Kovaks from "Portland for Everyone" recommended I read the book titled "The Color of Law".

After reading only 35 pages, I was sick to my stomach. After I finished the book I came away with outrage towards our past leaders; not just in Portland but throughout the country that caused and continued to perpetuate the most heinous of housing inequities

The Portland housing crisis has a number of serious issues but, in my mind, there is one tragedy that stands above all... Housing for People of Color

Here are several things that I became aware of from reading this Book:

- FDR's "awesome" New Deal - both employment and low cost housing programs excluded African Americans
- The Federal Housing Administration and Veterans Administration refused to insure home loans to African Americans. Bank of America, Wells Fargo and other major banks had the same policy
- In December 1949 this practice was outlawed, but the law didn't take effect until February 15th 1950. Developers rushed to get their projects on record before the February deadline (sounds familiar)
- In the 1950's, cities across the nation increased minimum lot sizes to make affordable housing impossible (Also sounds familiar)
- On page 238 is the most important point of the book (quoted in full below)

"What's important is that until we arouse in Americans an understanding of how we created a system of unconstitutional, state-sponsored, *de jure* segregation, and a sense of outrage about it, neither remedies nor reparations will be on the public agenda."

“The Color of Law” debunks the theory that all housing is good housing – over-supplying cities with market rate and luxury apartments continues to create even more segregated communities.

*In March 2014, Housing Commissioner Dan Saltzman, dedicated an additional \$20 million to affordable housing **to begin to address the ongoing threat of displacement and gentrification.***

As much as I applaud that effort, it’s simply not enough. How about in 2018 we add another \$200 million to address this problem?

Or how about we start on a much smaller scale -- **prohibit displacement of single moms of color** – we are creating incredible instability for their children who move from school to school, spiraling deeper into fear, anger and isolation. Give these women and their children a chance. **They need affordable, family size housing.**

I am just an old, empathetic, white guy with average intelligence, that can’t possibly understand the Black experience; but from this day forward, on this issue, you can consider me an awakened and outraged American.

Together we can do better...much better!

Mayor Wheeler and fellow commissioners I have a copy of “The Color of Law” for each of you. Even if you don’t have time to read the whole book, I have carefully placed 11 tabs highlighting excerpts that I’m sure at least one of them will shock you – please read them.