

January 20, 2016

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Settlement house: an institution in an inner-city neighborhood providing educational, recreational, and other health and family social services to the community.

Dear Director Hessler-Radelet,

You might remember when John Coyne wrote you on October 8, "I was discussing the headquarters building situation with Tom Hebert and he brought up an old idea of his that might work today about moving the agency into the heart of the District."

And on the evening of October 8th you wrote back: "Great! I'm always open to good ideas and I do care a lot about keeping the Agency in DC. So I am all ears." That was a high-fiver!

But upon reflection such a move showed its impracticalities. And crueler, for the life of the lease, your downtown headquarters is what it is: a dull building of several stories of ordinary offices. But since you're always open to good ideas and do care about keeping the Agency in DC, there is a strong way forward.

As an alternative to relocating the Agency, the Peace Corps could help create a settlement house in Washington's Ward 8 across the Anacostia River. As a former resident of Washington and as an RPCV I deeply believe that *Peace Corps House*, as an NGO, would implant the Peace Corps Community deep in Washington for decades to come while contributing to both the redevelopment and culture of our home city—something long overdue.

Given that launching projects of this magnitude has its challenges, to assure that Peace Corps House gets a competent, business-like start-up, NPCA President Glenn Blumhorst has agreed that the NPCA, working with settlement house professionals, is prepared to take the initial lead and then assume overall management of the neighborhood center. But as you will read in the following Concept Paper there is an important function of Peace Corps House that could belong to the Peace Corps itself.

Everything detailed in the Concept Paper and 3-ring binder is possible. Managing a similar project in the 1980s leading a team that moved the Tennessee Valley Authority—for the first time—into an inner city location with a large institution that "would also nurture innovation and change." If TVA can do it, so can Peace Corps.

Lastly, Peace Corps House in Ward 8 will stamp your tenure as director with a memorable legacy project for the Peace Corps we both know and love. Also enclosed in the binder are several letters of support and a comprehensive job description for a professional executive director of Peace Corps House.

Looking forward to hearing from you, I remain,

Tom Hebert

P.S. By the way, I am not seeking work or a contract. Because, for the foreseeable future, I will also be working with Congressman John Garamendi and staff to develop a federal authority to mitigate—through prepositioned science-driven regional offices—the long-term impact of disasters, of all kinds.

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