

N.Y. Owner of P.G. Units Seized in Code Violations

By Karen DeYoung

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The New York owner of an apartment project in Seat Pleasant was arrested in Prince George's County yesterday for not complying with five citations for housing code violations filed against the project nine months ago.

Fred C. Trump, 70, was taken into custody at Gregory Estates, a 504-unit complex he owns at 6918 George Palmer Highway. Code officials said they surprised Trump with the warrants after he had flown down from New York, ostensibly to discuss the problems concerning his apartment complex.

Trump is the president of Bruche Real Estate, a Jamaica, N.Y., company that also owns rental and condominium property in the New York City area and Norfolk, Va.

According to C. H. Bennett, chief of inspection and enforcement for the county housing department, Trump was cited for the violations that include broken windows, "rotted" (defective) rain gutters, and the failure to install fire extinguishers, following a routine inspection last January.

The project's multifamily housing license, without which the apartment complex cannot rent vacant apartments, expired in May, Bennett said, and when repairs had not been made by July, Trump's new license application for the project was denied.

Following a number of telephone discussions with Trump, Bennett said, he decided to sign the warrants, which were served during a scheduled meeting with Trump at Gregory Estates yesterday morning.

Joseph T. Healey, the county's housing inspector supervisor, said arrests are rarely made for code violations. "We probably haven't issued four ar-

rest warrants in the past five years," Healey said. "All we want is compliance . . . (and) as long as an effort is being made, we'll work with the owner."

Bennett said that in the case of Trump's apartment complex, however, "so much money and so many inspector man-hours" were spent in an unsuccessful effort to have "what are everyday problems" corrected, that the county decided to arrest Trump.

Bennett described the New Yorker as "a little upset, to put it mildly," at the arrest.

Trump was released by sheriff's deputies on a \$1,000 bond and left immediately for New York. He could not be reached.

In a telephone interview yesterday afternoon, Irving Eskinazi, vice president of the "Trump concerns," in New York, including Bruche Real Estate, said the company has had "problems" with Gregory Estates for the past five years.

"We bought the project 15 years ago," Eskinazi said, "and for the first 10 it was extremely successful." Lately, however, "there has been a very serious change in the area. Low-income people started moving in.

"We've spent a lot of money trying to fix it up, and as soon as we do, it gets ripped up again," he said. "It's heartbreaking."

In response to the cited violations, Eskinazi said, "what is a rotted rain gutter? What does it mean? Aren't we better off spending money on fuel, so (the tenants) can have some heat?"

Trump, Eskinazi said, "is a fine gentleman. He shouldn't even be going to a project like this." County officials, he said, should know better than to "try and louse around with (Trump's) reputation."

See CODE, C4, Col. 3

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CODE, From C1

Although Trump is listed as county manager of the complex as the manager of the complex, Eskinazi said Trump recently applied for HUD real estate subsidies under a new U.S. program that permits such subsidies to be granted to project owners rather than when a project is in danger of bankruptcy.

"You see," Eskinazi said, "we don't manage that job. Unfortunately, the people managing that job didn't take care of the violations."

Tuskegee president Fred Grimes noted in a telephone interview yesterday that the "code violations were there when we got there." The failure to comply with the code, Grimes said was "not a reluctance on (Trump's) part to put the money in and get the work done. His only reluctance has been on how much we should pay to get it done."

Since the project license was denied last July, vacancies at Gregory Estates have not been filled. According to Healey, those vacancies now total 108 out of 504 units. Under the housing code, the county also has the power to completely close the complex, forcing existing tenants to move out.

Healey said such closure was planned by his office for early October, but has now been stayed pending a Trump appeal to the county landlord and tenant commission.

A complex of approximately 40 three-story buildings, Gregory Estates was built 20 years ago with a mortgage guaranteed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Its one- and two-bedroom apartments rent for approximately \$150, according to Grimes.

While Grims said Trump was "not in a frame of mind to be discussing plans" for the repairs following his arrest yesterday, he said Tuskegee planned to "find the buildings and get (the

work) done" before Trump's arraignment in Prince George's District Court on Oct. 1.

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Prince George's County Executive Winfield M. Kelly Jr., has refused to approve another apartment project, Pumpkin Hill in Laurel, and has said he will reject all other such applications. Without the county's endorsement, HUD officials have said they cannot approve the subsidies.

Since his election in late 1974, Kelly repeatedly has tried to thwart the construction of new low-income apartment projects and to upgrade existing projects, charging that the county is overloaded with low-income families.

If Gregory Estates is closed completely, Bennett said, it may well share the fate of Baber Village, an eight-year-old low-income project that was torn down by the county less than a month ago.