MEMORANDUM

TO: Richard Kennedy
FROM: Henry Johnson
DATE: June 2, 1982
RE: Regent Gerald Dunn's Request for Information on Trotter House

Attached is a draft of a letter to be sent to Jerry Dunn which I hope answers his concern about Trotter House. As you will recall, I discussed this matter with you a few weeks ago after receiving a letter from Jerry (see attached copy) asking me for background material on Trotter House. Please read it over and add any pertinent information I may have overlooked or make changes where necessary and return to me.

Thanks!

HJ: dmg

Enclosure
Mr. Gerald R. Dunn  
Regent  
University of Michigan  

Dear Jerry:

I have received your correspondence dated April 23, 1982 in which you requested information on the establishment of Trotter House. The following is my response:

First it appears as though the "Black Students Center" referred to in the March 1970 Regents minutes you referenced did evolve into the William Monroe Trotter House which was located on the corner of South University and East University. It is, however, unclear as to how the portion of the $170,000 of the general fund money referred to in the minutes was in fact used to purchase the house. You will recall that the Regents ruled in the Spring of 1970 that general fund monies could not be used for a "segregated" facility. The administration, therefore, financed the purchase and renovation out of a grant from the Martin Luther King Scholarship Fund (see enclosed Michigan Daily article).

Subsequent to the purchase and establishment of the first house, discussion continued both within the Regents' meeting and outside regarding the establishment of living-learning cultural centers. These discussions reached a peak in the Spring-Summer of 1972 (I assumed the Vice Presidency for Student Services in June 1972). One of the first tasks former President Fleming requested of me was the living learning cultural centers issue. We were trying to find a means for dealing with the requests of black students that areas in the residence halls be designated as living-learning centers.

The solution we arrived at was to establish cultural lounges in the residence halls -- the first was located in South Quad followed by Stockwell, etc. This issue was compounded by the fact that the first Trotter House (occupied in October 1971), was destroyed by fire in May 1972.
Regent Gerald R. Dunn  
June  
Page 2

Thus we were engaged in two ventures simultaneously, i.e., establishing cultural lounges and finding and purchasing a replacement facility for the Trotter House programs. I have enclosed for your information the Regents Communication, Request for Action, dated July 1972 for the purchase and renovation of the new Trotter House.

It was during the discussion of the second Trotter House approval that I understood the new location/facility would be a multicultural enterprise. In fact, Trotter House II was approved under the rubric of the Regental resolution pertaining to cultural living units (in its early days, Trotter House II did in fact have students, staff and non-staff, residing there). While Trotter House II has in effect been a de facto black student facility, it was my understanding it was to be multicultural. The cultural lounges in the residence halls were black in designation from their inception.

In a technical sense, I suppose the original Trotter House designation could be extended to the second but I would have to submit, it would be done with difficulty.

Finally, until the 1981-82 year, the scope of program and lack of outreach by prior Trotter House staff gave the impression that other minorities were not welcomed on an equal basis as blacks, thereby, negatively reinforcing the de facto black designation. I believe that we now have a director who has expertise in managing a program that is multicultural which responds to the interests of specific ethnic minority student constituencies, simultaneously.

I appreciate the opportunity to chronicle the evolution of the William Monroe Trotter House and look forward to your continued interest and support.

Sincerely,

Henry Johnson  
Vice President for Student Services
April 23, 1982

Mr. Henry Johnson, Vice President
for Student Services
The University of Michigan
Administration Building
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

Dear Henry:

I have been in communication with Regina Hunter the coordinator for the Council of Black Student Organizations, concerning the Trotter House. In reviewing the minutes of the March 1970 meeting, page 392, item #7, it appears to me that Trotter House was to be strictly a black student center and that other individual minority student centers would be developed at appropriate times.

Please furnish me with the background concerning the decision to change Trotter House from a black to a minority center. I will be calling you after I have had a chance to review the material that you are going to send me.

Best Wishes,

Gerald R. Dunn

GRD/tsr

cc: Regina Hunter
August 28, 1982

Dear Gerry:

Since Henry has been on vacation it has taken me a day or two to piece all the facts of the "black student center" issue together. As I understand it, the situation is as follows:

(1) In 1970 the Regents passed a long and comprehensive resolution regarding many issues that had been raised by BAM. A part of this resolution dealt with a $170,000 allocation to LS&A for a number of purposes, one of which was the establishment of a black student center. The actual amount to be allocated for the center itself was left to LS&A.

(2) For various reasons, LS&A never did establish a black student center. Instead, a student center was established by Student Services in a building belonging to the School of Education. From the very beginning, it served various minority student groups.

As far as I can tell, therefore, actual developments here on campus never were in strict conformity with the Regents' resolution. In the mid-1970's, Vice President Johnson asked President Fleming if the de facto campus situation ought to be recognized officially by the Board of Regents. Apparently, however, no official action was taken.

Thus, this particular aspect of the 1970 Regents' resolution was never formally followed here on campus. Further, my own judgment is that it would be inappropriate to do so now. In 1970, immediately following passage of the Regents' resolution, other minority groups were quick to put forward their own claims for special centers. This may explain why the University administration at that time decided on a minority student center rather than a student center for blacks only. At the current time we do not have the resources to build and operate separate student centers for each minority group. Further, in my judgment, it is a poor idea.

I would be glad to discuss with you what you believe to be the next advisable step.

Sincerely,

Harold T. Shapiro

cc: Board of Regents