

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 163 Our Housing Crisis Demands the Unconventional

Guam's housing crisis has been in the news again recently. I'm Jerry Roberts and if we're going to find ways to have truly affordable housing for Guam's citizens, we need to put a laser focus on the problem. That's what's up today, on The Extra Point.

Fact # 1. When the term "affordable housing" is tossed around these days, it's accompanied by a number exceeding \$300,000. Newsflash, the majority of people in the lower-middle or middle income brackets don't find that to be affordable. It requires a 20% down payment with conventional financing, which is \$60,000 or more and most can't come up with that. Further, in a few years when thousands more military personnel are living here, \$300,000 is going to be remembered as the good old days of bargain-priced houses.

Fact # 2. Renters are being squeezed by the combination of Section 8 vouchers and the much higher military allotments. If you don't qualify for either of those, it's very hard to find affordable rental units.

Fact # 3. This problem isn't going away any time soon and our current crop of politicians don't have a clue in how to solve it. That needs to be said and believe me, I pray that a whole bunch of them call me out on this and show us solid plans for a solution. No empty campaign promises. Real plans.

Sadly, I don't think they're the ones who will figure it out. I know they all mean well and would love to come up with the answer, but this is going to take something different.

Let me fall back on my go-to guy, Einstein. He said, "Only unconventional solutions will solve problems created by conventional thinking."

The ideas and methods of the past aren't going to produce affordable homes and rental

units, but I can almost guarantee that those who aspire to elected office will trot them out with a new coat of paint, and try to sell them.

Three months ago on this program I mentioned the new technology, 3D concrete printing, where computer-based equipment enables you to put together a small house in a single day, not months, at under 10% of the current price per square foot. That's not a number I made up. They claim their prototype houses already built are \$10,000 for 650 square feet. Double that and you get \$20,000 for 1,300 square feet. Now that's affordable. Once this system gets going it will offer houses of all types and sizes. Initial projects are slated for El Salvador and The Netherlands, and China is also using this technology. How about a project right here in Typhoon Alley? Maybe that would help them sell homes to other folks who often are in the path of destructive storms.

There could also be other innovative tech solutions and we need to follow every possible lead, and we need to start following them now if we're going to solve this critical issue.

Some 10 years ago, Directions magazine covered this situation, predicting where we were headed. What have we done in the last decade to make serious improvements? I don't want to imagine what Guam will look like if we go another 10 years with no real answers. I can tell you this...it won't be pretty. So, as the man once said, failure is not an option.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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