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REBUILDING AN OLD CITY

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(Presented at a dinner meeting of the Boston Society of Civil Engineers, held in conjunction with A.S.C.E. convention on October 16, 1960.)

BOSTON is one of the great cities of America. None has made a finer contribution to the history, the culture, the way of life of this nation of ours. Yet too much of Boston's greatness lies in its past.

Today Boston has far more than its share of slums and blight. This decay is sapping the great strength and beauty, vitality and charm which it still possesses in such abundance.

Among Boston's greatest assets are its harbor and rivers, its hills and parks, but above all its people. Bostonians love their city. I believe they are ready to do their share toward making it a better place.

Once started on its way toward rebuilding, Boston will find all America cheering it on and ready to help.

There is, after all, a little bit of Boston in everyone who calls himself an American.

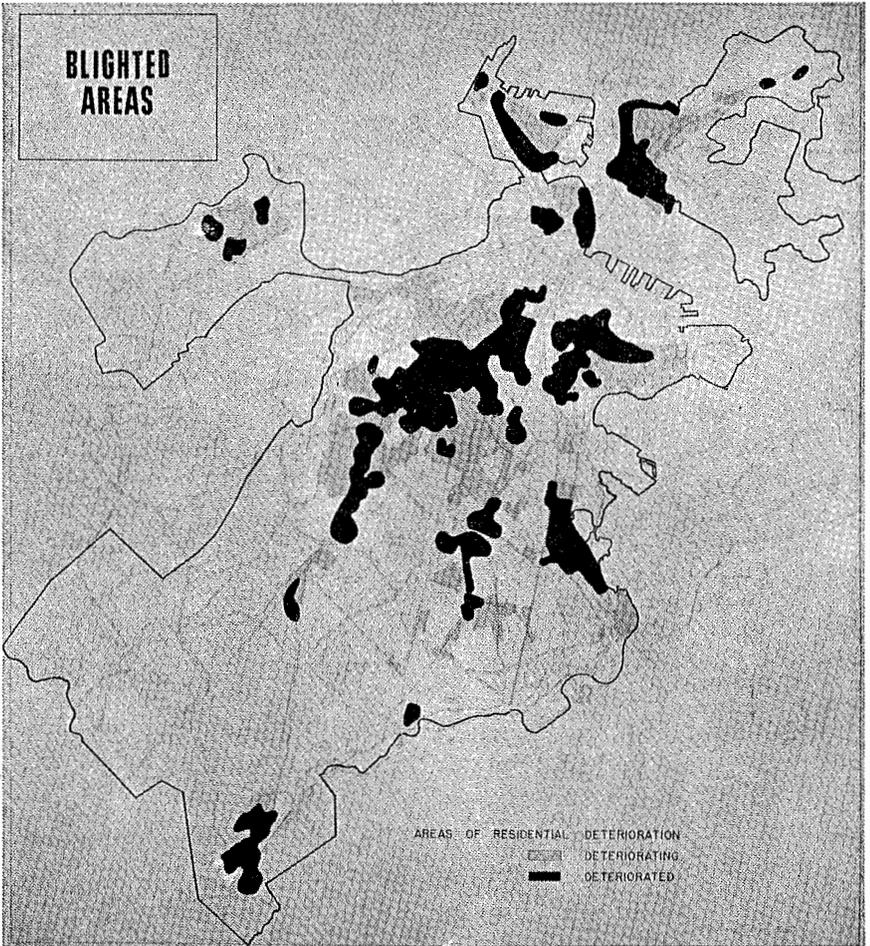
BOSTON HAS TOO MANY SLUMS, TOO MUCH BLIGHT

I have not tried to create or gather any new statistics on the extent of slums and blighted areas in Boston. In the first place, I found those already prepared impressive enough, and depressing enough too, I might add. In the second place, statistics have had only a limited success in moving cities to act on their problems of slum and blight. The blighted areas map is graphic evidence of how widespread and serious the problem is. The charts showing the rising tax rate, declining tax base and population are vivid demonstrations of the seriousness of the City's economic problems.

Boston has all kinds of slums and all kinds of blight. It has overcrowded slums and half empty slums. It has bad housing and badly rundown commercial areas. It needs lots of slum clearance but it offers great opportunities for rehabilitation.

For those who are not convinced or who need their recollection refreshed I suggest that they go and see for themselves. The best way is to walk around the City and have a firsthand look yourself.

Of the many walking tours a citizen might take I suggest two. They will give some idea of the extent of blight in Boston today.



Washington Street from Northampton street to Haymarket square—distance under 2.5 miles (MTA rapid transit stops at both ends).

This walking tour will take you along one of Boston's main

arteries. Starting in Lower Roxbury you will quickly be in the South End, then you pass into the downtown shopping area and finally to the very decayed part of downtown which is to become the Government Center area. Detours into the side streets and back alleys will help to round out the picture.

On your way you will see lovely squares, a beautiful cathedral, the City's first redevelopment project, the big department stores, Old South Meeting House and Faneuil Hall.

You also will see some of the worst slums in the City plus enough shabby rundown commercial buildings to make you uncomfortable about the future of downtown.

Main Street in Charlestown from Sullivan square to City square—distance one mile (MTA rapid transit stops at both ends).

Here is hallowed ground. There is much that is handsome and worth preserving in Charlestown. It could be one of the most attractive and convenient neighborhoods in the City. Ask yourself how long it can survive the onslaught of the slums you will pass through on your way to City square.

If these walks discourage you try the Freedom Trail. The obstacles today are far less than those which were faced and conquered long ago.

THE BIG DECISIONS

Boston has some big decisions to make if it is going to undertake the major rebuilding program which is necessary if it is to face the future with confidence.

First, has Boston enough faith in itself and its future to make the try?

Boston has its share of prophets of gloom and doom who think the City is too far gone to be rebuilt. It has its share of sceptics who believe that Boston's habits in transacting the public business make a major effort impossible.

Second, is Boston willing to face the full extent of its slums and blight, to stop tinkering with patchwork solutions and support a big, bold, fast moving program?

Third, will Boston have enough patience to understand that cities are not remade in a day or a year, and have enough courage to accept the hardships and disruption that are inevitably a part of rebuilding?

Fourth, will Boston be willing to accept the leadership of its Mayor in this rebuilding effort?

I assume the answers are affirmative, and so make the recommendations which follow.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are divided into several categories in the following order: Proposed development program, financing, staff organization and suggested guideposts.

Proposed Development Program

There is only one program now available or even on the horizon by which Boston can begin to cope with all its major areas of slum and blight.

This program is federally aided urban renewal. Broadly conceived and vigorously administered it can turn the corner. Boston can afford a large scale federally aided urban renewal program. There is no other comprehensive solution available and a patchwork solution is not good enough.

Rehabilitation is the key to the kind of urban renewal program Boston requires. Considerable clearance will still be needed but rehabilitation should be the major emphasis.

With judicial approval of the tax agreement features of the Prudential legislation for blighted areas a major obstacle to new investment in Boston has been removed.

At this stage two kinds of urban renewal action are possible. One, the filing of a survey and planning application for a specified area, leads directly to adoption and execution of an urban renewal plan. The other step is a request for funds to make a general neighborhood renewal plan. The purpose of this plan (known in the trade as a GNRP) is to identify subareas needing urban renewal treatment and to establish priorities for undertaking indicated projects.

This report recommends a comprehensive, action oriented urban renewal program combining survey and planning applications and general neighborhood renewal plans.

The material needed for making the necessary federal applications recommended below has been put together in draft form and can be put into final form very quickly once Authority and Council approval have been given for the filing of such applications.

The first group of recommendations deals with Downtown Boston, the second with the ring of neighborhoods closest to downtown.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR BOSTON PROPER

Boston Proper is the name the planners give the peninsula which stretches back from the Harbor to Massachusetts avenue. It includes the Central Business District and areas adjacent to it.

This area is the most important part of Boston and the primary reason for the existence of the other neighborhoods of the City in their present form. Here are located one of the major financial centers of the United States, the largest retail shopping center in New England, and the regional centers for a whole host of government, professional and commercial activities.

Here also are some of the worst slum and blighted areas of Boston. So large, so menacing, in fact, that they are pushing most new private development steadily out Boylston street if not out of the City altogether. This is an area that is in deep trouble.

Yet potentially this is the most attractive and most interesting downtown in all America, bar none, not even fabled San Francisco.

Its ancient street pattern can be turned to far more of an asset than the more efficient but dull grid pattern common to most other American cities.

Its abundance of historic sites offers islands of strength around which rebuilding can confidently begin.

Its compactness, its walkability give it hope of putting the automobile in its proper place.

Here is Boston's greatest asset, its surest source of continued strength and greatness, if we can but renew the area before too many functions abandon it for the open country or for more efficient downtowns elsewhere.

For the purpose of analysis and recommendation this area is divided into three general neighborhood plan areas: Downtown, Downtown North and Back Bay.

Downtown North is the older and more historic Boston and the one which will receive action treatment first.

DOWNTOWN NORTH—HISTORIC OLD BOSTON

Downtown North is that part of Boston Proper lying to the north and east of the Beacon Hill Historic District and to the east of School and State streets. It excludes the West End project now in execution.

A general neighborhood renewal plan is proposed for the entire area. It would be completed simultaneously with the completion of the Government Center redevelopment plan.

1. Government Center

Downtown Boston is the major governmental center of New England. It is not only municipal headquarters, it contains the State Capitol and most state offices and the most important regional and state offices of the federal government.

These functions are today widely scattered in overcrowded, obsolete buildings. They will be more efficient and more economical if they are gathered together.

The Boston City Planning Board, through consultants, prepared a bold, imaginative and sensitive plan for the creation of a Government Center in what is now the most rundown section of the central area.

This plan has in principle won the support of the federal and state governments as well as the City. It is proposed that the plan be carried out through a nonresidential federally aided redevelopment project.

This project can be one of the most important in Boston's history. Without it the presently blighted area will grow and spill over into the remainder of the central area and seriously weaken it. Contrariwise, with the Government Center on its way a plan for the renewal of the central business district can have some real hope of success.

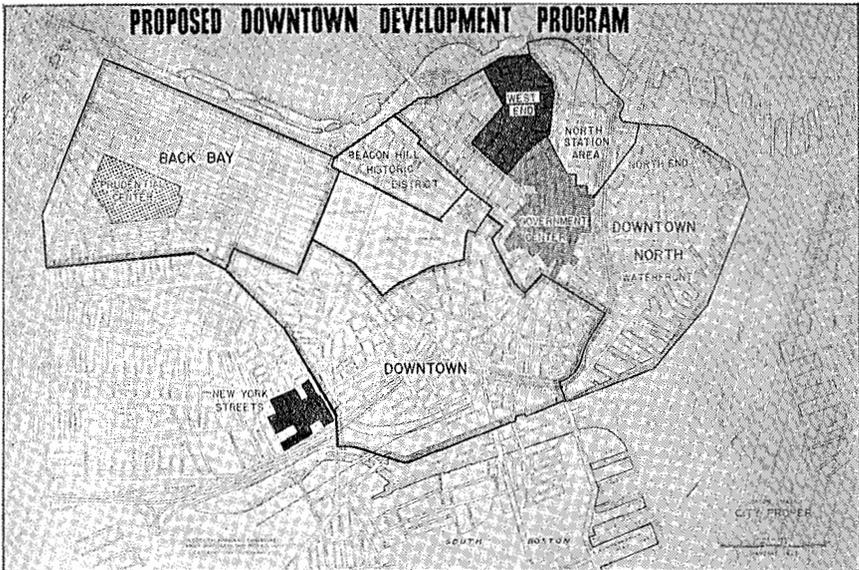
The Federal Urban Renewal Administration has just approved an application for federal survey and planning funds for the Government Center project.

The U. S. General Services Administrator has indicated a willingness to locate a large federal building in the project area provided he has satisfactory assurances that suitable buffer buildings will guarantee that the federal building will not be isolated. The City has given the necessary assurances concerning the City Hall. The General Court has given similar assurances regarding state participation. The assurances and other matters relative to federal participation must now be put in acceptable form.

The Government Center Project should have top priority in the city government. Though the basic planning work has been completed much more remains to be done to make the project a success. Govern-

ment Centers have a tendency to be rather dull and uninspired. By keeping the spirit of the consultant's report Boston can avoid such a failure.

During the planning period careful study should be given to certain fringe areas which might well have been included in the survey and planning study area. For example, the area bounded generally by Congress street, Hanover street, the Central Artery and State street is an area of prime historic significance for the whole nation.



Some of the buildings such as Faneuil Hall and the Quincy Market are in daily use for their original purposes. This is living history at its best.

Some other parts of the historic area are street patterns and not much more. Scornful as the purists may be of Sturbridge or Williamsburg, they help make history come alive for young and old alike. A restoration of old Boston in this area would be quite appropriate despite the shadow of the Central Artery. This section could have been included in the Government Center as a rehabilitation section. The desirability of so including it should be thoroughly explored in the project planning period now beginning.

2. *North Station Area*

This area is bounded approximately by the North Station complex, the Central Artery and the Government Center and West End Projects.

A group of merchants and property owners in this area have sponsored and published a very competent study and report on their area making specific redevelopment and renewal recommendations. The report is now being analyzed by the planning staff. It could be regarded as a second priority project directly following the Government Center. The self-help approach taken here deserves in response priority attention and action from the City government.

3. *The North End*

The North End is one of the most lively neighborhoods of Boston. It has a flavor and a way of life which should be preserved, not destroyed. A clearance project for the North End would be an outrage. The City would never be the same.

Every effort should be made to rehabilitate and strengthen this unique neighborhood. The general neighborhood renewal plan will help achieve this goal.

Early in this planning process the City should begin working with a broadly based and representative North End neighborhood improvement committee.

4. *The Atlantic Avenue Waterfront Area*

This area used to be Boston's window on the world. From here clipper ships traveled the sea lanes of the world. Today the area is stagnant, unattractive and deteriorating. Most of the port functions have moved elsewhere in the harbor. The old wharves and warehouses have been left to adjust as best they can. And some of the adjustments are fascinating indeed. Who would ever believe that an ancient harbor-front warehouse could be converted into apartments so attractive as to enjoy a long waiting list?

This waterfront area can and should again become Boston's window on the world. A seafaring city should be able to look upon the sea and the harbor as it goes about its daily rounds. The great port cities of the world, New York, San Francisco, Naples, Bombay, Colombo, Hong Kong, all enjoy the sights and sounds of their harbors, the sight and smell of the sea.

What is needed is an action program aimed at rebuilding and redeveloping this area.

The first and biggest job is to think through the kinds of development which will make the best use of this land. A second and equally important job is to determine how many of the existing uses can better be located elsewhere.

Once plans and programs are made for the redevelopment of the area it is likely that the urban renewal process will be called into play.

The Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce has long had an interest in a waterfront development program for the Atlantic Avenue area. Boston is fortunate in having a vigorous Chamber with a far deeper and more practical understanding of urban renewal than is usually the case.

The Chamber was among the first to propose redevelopment of the Waterfront Area. The Chamber might very well be willing to undertake and finance an urban renewal study of the area. In seeking such help from the Chamber the City should make clear that it will cooperate in every way including, of course, the work to be done in the preparation of the proposed general neighborhood plan for this area. The City should also freeze the disposition of City owned property in the area until a program can be established.

It would of course be essential for the Chamber to work with the various state agencies which have a present or potential interest in the area.

The interest and excitement generated by the Golden Gateway Redevelopment Project in San Francisco is an indication of the potential a waterfront rebuilding program can offer.

DOWNTOWN BOSTON

The area bounded approximately by the Common, the Public Garden, Arlington street, the railroad tracks, the Central Artery and State and School streets is recommended for a general neighborhood renewal plan.

This area contains the retail core, the financial and entertainment centers.

When people think of Boston or almost any other city, they are thinking of downtown. It is the downtown area particularly the shopping area which gives a city much of its flavor and character.

Boston's downtown can be uniquely attractive. The narrow old streets, the lovely Public Garden and Common, the many historic buildings combine to give downtown Boston a setting which any city anywhere in the world would be proud to have. Add to that a mass rapid transit system which is underground and you have something very special indeed.

Yet most Bostonians would agree that downtown leaves something to be desired. Everybody has ideas about what ought to be done. Everybody agrees that a big rebuilding program ought to be undertaken and soon. But then there are the taxes. Downtown Boston has its problems, and these problems seem to be getting worse instead of better.

What can be done?

The City Planning staff has completed what it calls a "General Plan for the Central Business District." The planners see great opportunities for downtown. To them this is the most exciting, most promising part of Boston.

The planners' General Plan has been approved by the Planning Board and the question, always the question with a Plan, is, what happens next.

Conceptually sound, imaginative, thorough the planners' plan is but it is not self-executing.

If Downtown Boston is to be rebuilt we need to put together an action program.

The first step is the preparation of a general neighborhood renewal plan. Out of this broader area plan will come specific action projects.

The Retail Trade Board has indicated its awareness of the serious problems affecting the retail core and its desire to cooperate with the City in achieving workable practical solutions.

The City should welcome this interest and cooperation and should encourage the Retail Trade Board and its membership to undertake extensive studies of their own.

It is entirely possible that a rehabilitation project for the retail core can be undertaken simultaneously with the preparation of the general neighborhood renewal plan for the downtown area. If the Retail Trade Board is ready to support it, this approach should be taken.

The growth of suburban shopping centers, the number of empty

stores downtown, the tremendous importance of the retail core to the tax base all point toward the need for early action.

Large scale area clearance should be avoided. Emphasis should be on making the retail core more attractive and separating vehicular and pedestrian traffic as much as possible.

THE BACK BAY AND PRUDENTIAL CENTER

The remainder of Boston Proper, the Back Bay, is also recommended for a general neighborhood renewal plan. This is particularly urgent in view of approval of the Prudential Center legislation by the Supreme Judicial Court and the General Court.

The Prudential Center can be a great boon to the Back Bay area and to the City as a whole. However, without proper planning and zoning controls speculators could destroy the special quality of the existing Back Bay residential area.

This area is bounded by the Public Garden, the Charles River, Massachusetts avenue and the alley between Commonwealth avenue and Newbury street.

It is ideally located for residential use and is one of the hand-somest urban districts in the United States. Its wide, tree-lined streets, its large and pleasant houses are worth preserving, perhaps even to the extent of having the area designated as an historic district. Though these houses are not as old as those on Beacon Hill, we will not see their like again.

The Beacon Hill houses have proved adaptable to modern single family use. The larger houses of the Back Bay are virtually obsolete for such use.

A debate is now under way on whether the height restrictions should be taken off and high rise apartments allowed to dominate the area. Serious concern has also been expressed about the rate at which institutions are acquiring property in this area.

The even scale, the harmony of these blocks is one of their chief attractions. Once lost, it can never be regained. While tall apartment buildings might be appropriate for the water side of Beacon street, they will not be helpful in retaining the character of the remainder of the Back Bay residential area.

A general neighborhood renewal plan for this area, the neighborhood of the Christian Science Church and the area between Huntington

avenue and the tracks, can do much to insure that the impact of the Prudential Center on the Back Bay is all good.

THE REST OF BOSTON OUTSIDE BOSTON PROPER

Ninety per cent of Bostonians live outside Boston Proper. Slums and blight have found their way into many of these outside areas. Other areas are almost totally free of blight. A balanced, comprehensive urban renewal program cannot safely ignore the decay which menaces too many of Boston's residential neighborhoods. Some need urgent treatment now. Others will benefit by general neighborhood renewal planning. The healthier neighborhoods will benefit by having the most blighted neighborhoods renewed.

Set forth below are more detailed proposals concerning certain of these areas.

CHARLESTOWN

Charlestown is the site of the Battle of Bunker Hill and the home of an estimated 21,000 people. The hills of Charlestown offer some of the best views in the City and the flats have some of the worst slums. The slums are moving up the slopes of the hills. For all its history and all its charm Charlestown has been treated as a stepping stone to downtown Boston from the North. The elevated and the Mystic Bridge do a pretty thorough job of blighting Charlestown all by themselves.

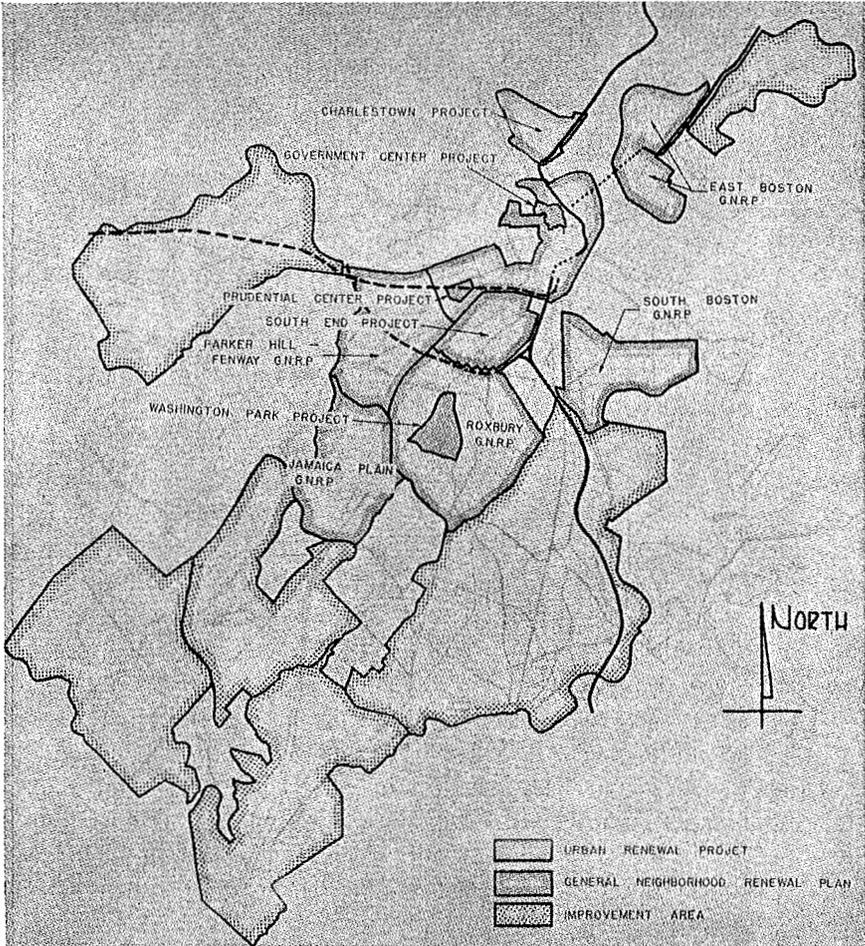
Despite these adverse influences and long standing neglect of the area by the City government, there is a large amount of good housing and more which can be saved if a rehabilitation program is begun promptly enough.

An urban renewal program can provide for rehabilitation of sound housing, clear the slums and spur the City to provide long needed schools and other community facilities.

A meeting has been held with a representative group of Charlestown residents to gain their views and to explain the urban renewal process to them.

Their response was encouraging. Charlestown should be formally designated as an urban renewal area and an application filed for survey and planning funds. Close contact with the neighborhood committee should be maintained throughout the planning period. Much more can and should be made of Charlestown's historic past. It can help Charlestown to renew itself.

The City's share of the cost of carrying out an urban renewal project can be met almost entirely by providing long scheduled community facilities such as the new Harvard-Warren School, scheduled for construction in the fall of 1961. This school is estimated to cost



almost \$2,000,000. Since it will serve the Charlestown area it can be used to make available almost \$4,000,000 in Federal funds without additional cost to the City. Other scheduled community facilities can make up nearly all the remaining City cost.

SOUTH END

The South End is an area of faded elegance where some 42,000 Bostonians live. It is bounded by the B. and A. tracks, the Central Artery and the Inner Belt. The outer South End is sometimes identified as part of Lower Roxbury. However, the Inner Belt will cause it to become part of the South End.

Once a residential area of great charm its day of fashion was brief and it has become seriously blighted. It now contains some of the worst housing in Boston, a good part of Skid Row and some very run-down commercial areas.

Opposed to this decay are some great strengths around which a renewed neighborhood can focus. They include the handsome and still sound blocks such as Union Park, the Squares, the great Cathedral, the area's institutions and many other churches.

Above all, however, is the indomitable spirit of the people who live in the South End and the great faith of their friends and supporters in the rest of the City.

The South End is too promising to ignore, too near the edge of disaster for remedial action to be delayed.

The South End needs a major renewal effort. It will call for substantial clearance to cut away the slums. Much of the clearance area should go into nonresidential uses. It will require resourceful rehabilitation on a very large scale. There are some very good reasons why rehabilitation can work in the South End.

The South End has lots of light and air, far more than Beacon Hill. The streets are wider, the backyards are ample.

The rehabilitation project of the Friends Neighborhood Guild in Philadelphia offers a stirring example of what can be done to restore and re-invigorate such an area. A wholesale application of the design ideas of the Friends project with the application of all the available tools of urban renewal could make the South End a pleasant surprise to one and all.

There are proposed schools, a fire station, a library and other community facilities which can defray most of the City's share of the cost of carrying out the project. It is unfortunate that the opportunity was neglected to use the \$2 million Franklin-Rice School to obtain \$4 million in federal aid without additional cost. That money could have

given the school itself a much more adequate site, and made possible very substantial rehabilitation.

Every renewal project needs not only to be strong in itself but to tie on to something strong. A well conceived urban renewal plan can orient the South End toward the Copley Square-Prudential Center business and shopping area.

It is not much of a walk. Hundreds of commuters who work in that area prove it every day by parking their cars in the South End and walking to work.

Urban renewal of the South End should have a high priority. The South End is a well organized neighborhood and the City and the neighborhood should develop and maintain a close working relationship through the preparation and carrying out of the urban renewal plan.

The proposed Castle Square project area should be incorporated in the South End project and planning for its redevelopment should proceed on that basis. If whenever tenants and financing are assured for developments of the magnitude proposed, the project can be pulled out and moved ahead, if early acquisition legislation can be obtained.

Concentrations of blight are found outside the central area, Charlestown and the South End in several other districts, principally Roxbury-North Dorchester, Parker Hill-Fenway, South Boston, East Boston and Jamaica Plain.

For each of these areas the general neighborhood renewal plan approach is proposed.

For the outer areas less affected by blight a nonfederal improvement area program is proposed.

ROXBURY-NORTH DORCHESTER

The proposed area would be bounded by the Inner Belt, the New Haven tracks, Columbus avenue, Seaver street, Columbia road and Massachusetts avenue.

This area is deteriorating rapidly. A program must be prepared for the whole neighborhood before it is too late.

The area contains many attractive features, particularly the adjacent parks which give hope that the neighborhood can be restored.

Community organizations are active in the area. Their participation and support can help greatly in making the general neighborhood planning program a success.

The Redevelopment Authority has received approval for survey and planning activities for a renewal project in the Washington Park area of Roxbury. This can be an attractive project if it is part of an overall area program. A general neighborhood renewal plan will go a long way toward insuring the success of Boston's first effort at urban renewal.

PARKER HILL-FENWAY

This is Boston's prime institutional area. It is bounded by Parker Hill, the town of Brookline, the Charles River, Massachusetts avenue and the New Haven tracks.

The area has many natural assets and can be one of the most attractive in Boston. It has, however, its full share of blight. The likely expansion of the many major institutions in the area can have a blighting effect on the tax paying land which is left.

With integrated planning for the whole area a new tax base can be created as a result of the expected institutional growth.

Individually held property can be maintained and improved if there is definite knowledge of what the future of the area will be.

Under a 1959 amendment to the housing act the expenditures of educational institutions for property acquisition can be used toward making up the City's share of the cost of carrying out improvements in the area. Substantial credits will be available to Boston from this area.

If neighborhood groups and the institutions can work together this area can become one of the showplaces of Boston. If they go their separate ways, in the long run no one will benefit.

SOUTH BOSTON

South Boston has some of the best located and maintained residential areas in Boston. It also has some of the most important industrial plants and port facilities in the City. These two very different land uses are not on friendly terms. Rather there is a belt of slum and blight between them which is dangerous to both.

The slums and blight menace the sound residential areas of South Boston and are no asset to the industrial users either.

A general neighborhood renewal plan will identify various project areas and indicate desirable areas for rehabilitation and for clearance for industrial or residential reuse.

South Boston has too many advantages, its people have too much pride and hope for their neighborhood to let it be neglected any longer.

The General Neighborhood Renewal Plan approach should be submitted to the people of South Boston and if they give it their support, work should get under way at once.

EAST BOSTON

East Boston would be divided into two parts. The Orient Heights section to the east of the highway and railroad tracks is proposed as an improvement area. A program of general neighborhood renewal planning is proposed for the rest of the area. This program would identify and schedule areas for rehabilitation and areas for clearance for industrial, commercial or residential reuse. The geographical advantages of East Boston's location are so great that there would be little difficulty in developing cleared areas for new uses. With the worst of the blight removed, rehabilitation of the remaining area could proceed with confidence.

Neighborhood participation is essential to the success of such a program, particularly when it comes to the selection of priority project areas.

JAMAICA PLAIN

The Jamaica Plain neighborhood is one of the less blighted older neighborhoods of the City. Yet blight is substantial enough to cause concern. A general neighborhood renewal planning study can help identify the strong and weak points of the area and suggest ways of strengthening the healthy portions and correcting the deficiencies that exist.

The approach again would emphasize rehabilitation and cooperative work with a representative neighborhood organization.

OPPORTUNITY PROJECTS

It seems likely that as the program moves along there will be opportunities to carry out small-scale projects which can have major benefit to the City. The program should be flexible enough to permit this.

FINANCING THE PROGRAM

The City of Boston can afford to undertake this program now and all at once. The more serious question is can it afford not to.

The proposals made here will cost the City an estimated \$30,000,000 in capital funds. There is ample bond margin for this amount. It will require approximately \$60,000,000 in new federal funds.

The federal share of the funds can be made available. The City's share of the cost can be financed through long-needed neighborhood improvement such as schools. The cost of these capital improvements can be met without exceeding the amount presently paid each year for already outstanding debt service. The decline in debt service charges over the years ahead gives the City this opportunity to finance a major rebuilding program without the already burdensome tax rate therefor.

STAFF ORGANIZATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Rebuilding a city is no simple matter. A major development program requires a wide variety of activities all of which must be meshed together if the program is to move ahead. It is one thing to propose such a program. It is another to carry it out. A workable administrative arrangement is essential if this program is to succeed.

The special-provisions for Boston in the Prudential legislation go a long way toward providing Boston with the set-up it requires.

The policy-making function is divided among the Mayor, the City Council and the Redevelopment Authority. The function of the Council is legislative and is traditionally separate and apart. Administrative responsibility is divided between the Mayor and the semi-autonomous Redevelopment Authority. A good program can get lost quicker by divided responsibility than in any other way. The challenge here is to devise a method which will make it possible for the Mayor and the Authority to do their work on this big program as an effective team while preserving to themselves their respective prerogatives under the law.

There are many ways to provide for this unity of approach. Committees are often proposed and seldom work. The Mayor and the Authority could endeavor to work out problems which might arise at the "summit." This is a dubious time-consuming solution for a Mayor who is chief executive officer of the whole city government and for Authority members who each have private careers to follow.

The Mayor and the Authority could each set up a separate staff representative. This solution provides as many opportunities for conflict as for cooperation.

PROPOSED BOSTON DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
ALLOCATION OF FEDERAL FUNDS

	GNRP Planning Cost	Survey and Planning Cost	Federal Capital Grant
I. NEW PROJECTS			
1. Roxbury GNRP	\$188,000	see below	see below
2. Downtown North GNRP	277,000	see below	see below
3. Back Bay GNRP	277,000	—	—
4. Charlestown	—	\$365,000	\$9,828,000
5. South End	—	526,000	24,267,000
6. Parker Hill—Fenway GNRP	191,000	258,000	2,642,000
7. Downtown GNRP	277,000	1,000,000	10,000,000
8. South Boston GNRP	213,000	199,000	5,554,000
9. East Boston GNRP	200,000	226,000	3,690,000
10. Jamaica Plain GNRP	193,000	289,000	4,180,000
TOTALS	\$1,816,000	\$2,863,000	\$60,161,000
II. PROJECTS PENDING AND APPROVED			
Washington Park	—	\$295,000	\$2,554,000
Government Center	—	320,000	9,352,000
III. PROJECTS IN EXECUTION			
New York Streets	—	\$175,000	\$3,200,000
West End	—	181,000	9,232,000

A simple and direct solution is for the Mayor and the Authority to agree on one man as the top administrator to be in charge of the development staff and program, subject to the dual control of the Mayor and the Authority. He should be removable at the pleasure of either the Mayor or the Authority and should explicitly waive any tenure rights he might acquire under state law. Thus whatever power he might have he could be removed from office at any time.

This report proposes the creation of the position of development administrator to fill that function. The development administrator would serve in the dual capacity of head of the Authority staff and head of a proposed office of development responsible to the Mayor.

In the Redevelopment Authority the Development Administrator would have the following functions:

Develop and carry out plans and program of the Authority subject to appropriate review by the Authority;

- Direction of Authority staff;
- Internal organization of Authority staff and functions;
- Relations with federal and state agencies;
- Recruitment of staff personnel;
- Establishment of staff compensation subject to Authority approval;
- Appointment of personnel, counsel and consultants subject to Authority approval;
- Coordination with Mayor and City departments.

Under the reorganization the Authority staff would be divided into four divisions:

Planning, Project Development, Land, Operations.

The planning staff would consist of the planners transferred from the City Planning Board by the Prudential Center legislation. Additional renewal planners would be recruited. The operations staff would consist of the Authority staff as it existed at the time the Prudential Center bill was passed. New personnel would be recruited for the project development and land sections.

Functions of the divisions would be as follows:

1. PLANNING DIVISION

a. General Planning Section

- (1) Comprehensive Planning
- (2) Capital Improvement; Programming
- (3) Community Planning
- (4) Referrals.

b. Transportation Planning Section

Preparation of a transportation planning program and coordination with other agencies involved.

c. Renewal Planning Section

Preparation of redevelopment, renewal and general neighborhood renewal plans, final project reports and other required documentation.

2. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

- a.* Federal processing to the loan and grant stage
- b.* Federal relations during project execution

- c.* Relocation of families
- d.* Relocation of businesses
- e.* Rehabilitation in renewal areas.

3. LAND DIVISION

- a.* Land acquisition including appraisals and negotiations except in West End and Whitney street
- b.* Land disposition except for West End and Whitney street
- c.* Negotiation of 121a contracts, including tax agreements.

4. OPERATIONS DIVISION

Complete responsibility independent of all other divisions for the substantial work remaining to be done in the West End and Whitney street projects and for the closing out of the New York Streets project.

In addition, the Operations Division will have the following responsibilities for new projects:

- a.* Title searches
- b.* Closings
- c.* Property management
- d.* Demolition
- e.* Project engineering
- f.* Site improvements
- g.* Controller—payroll and project accounting.

In addition to the work of the divisions the Development Administrator's office will contain a unit for administrative management, legal staff and special counsel.

The Operations Division would continue to occupy space at 73 Tremont street. The rest of the Authority's work would be carried on from City Hall Annex. Assuming refurbishing and refurnishing sufficient space is available for present needs and likely future expansion.

OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT

The proposal here is that an Office of Development be created by ordinance. It would be headed by the Development Administrator by appointment of the Mayor.

The Office of Development would have responsibility for coordination with other city department heads and with a citizens advisory committee to be appointed by the Mayor. It would also have responsibility for coordination of code enforcement in improvement areas.

The Office of Development would have the following staff functions:

1. **COMMUNITY RELATIONS.** To be transferred from the Mayor's office.

2. **CIVIC COORDINATOR.** The civic community should be able to look to one person in the development office to get information on what is going on, to contribute suggestions and ideas and to maintain contacts. One function of the Civic Coordinator would be to step up plans and programs for the creation of a development fund.

Since this is a new function the Civic Foundation could be asked to finance it for a beginning period.

3. **HOUSING EXPEDITER.** Promotion of housing programs and policies is a highly specialized, much neglected and very important area. One of the Housing Expediter's functions would be to promote the establishment of a private housing development fund.

Since this, too, is a new function the Civic Foundation could be asked to finance it for a beginning period.

4. **PUBLIC INFORMATION.** The public is entitled to as much information as possible about the development program in the most useful form possible. An experienced full-time information officer can be very useful in meeting this need. So can a publication budget.

Whether or not this is a new function it would be appropriate for the Civic Foundation to finance it for a beginning period.

The Zoning Commission and the Board of Adjustment are now homeless and could be transferred to the Office of Development for housekeeping purposes.

The carrying out of an ambitious development program requires the help of many professionals with specialized talents and a high order of competence. The demand for such people far exceeds the supply. Boston can obtain such people if it offers sufficient compensation and establishes a workable administrative set-up.

GUIDEPOSTS

The success or failure of an ambitious urban renewal program will be determined in large part by the guideposts or ground rules which govern it. The best plans can come to naught without public confidence in the program and the way it is being carried out.

Here are some of the policies which will help insure public confidence:

1. PUBLIC INFORMATION

The citizens should be fully informed about the progress of the program in its various stages. The primary means of accomplishing this should be through the newspapers and the television and radio stations. Talks before interested groups can also be useful. The individual citizen should also be able to walk in off the street and get the answers to his questions.

Reporter and citizen alike, however, must understand that at some stages in a project there are many questions which have no answers except speculative ones. Here the best possible answer must be given with proper caution that the final answer is not known.

2. NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION

The residents of a neighborhood for which renewal is proposed should assume an active role in the replanning and renewal of their area. Neighborhood participation can best be secured through a renewal committee composed of representative citizens of the neighborhood.

A basic assumption of this program is that it will be carried out on a partnership basis between City Hall and the people of the neighborhoods through neighborhood renewal organizations.

3. FAMILY RELOCATION

One major purpose of a renewal program is to relocate families from substandard dwellings into decent, safe and sanitary housing at prices or rentals they can afford to pay at convenient locations. This is not just a pious principle; it is the basic requirement of the law. It is of prime importance that such relocation of families as may be required be done with decency, humanity and a firm determination that the spirit as well as the letter of the relocation law be observed.

4. BUSINESS RELOCATION

Some dislocation of businesses is just as inevitable as that of families, and the hardship is at least as great.

Even though there is no legal requirement to do so, a business relocation office should be established and staffed to assist displaced businessmen in finding satisfactory new quarters.

5. PROJECTS AND PATRONAGE

A large scale urban renewal program offers tremendous oppor-

tunities for patronage and the dispensing of favors. Job opportunities are opened up; contractual services are required. The purchase and then sale of large amounts of property offers many opportunities for doing favors.

However, neither the public nor the federal government can be expected to provide the support such a program requires unless they are confident that patronage and favoritism are out.

6. A CITY BEAUTIFUL

Renewal and rehabilitation do not guarantee beauty. It is entirely possible to rebuild Boston in an unattractive, unimaginative way which will make people wonder whether the new is in fact better than the old. This can be avoided with sufficient forethought and courage.

It is the function of distinguished architecture and imaginative civic design to see that beauty is the hallmark of the renewed city. Beauty once flourished in Boston. It must again. The Public Garden, the State House are marvellous examples of what can be accomplished.