PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
June 6, 1985

PRESENT:

Graham S. Finney, Chairman
William W. Batoff
Lee C. Copeland
Richard G. Gilmore
Rosemarie Greco
Mamie Nichols
Stuart Segal, representing Leo A. Brooks
Charles P. Pizzi, representing David W. Brenner
Dr. Bernard C. Watson

Executive Director: Barbara J. Kaplan
Deputy Executive Director: David A. Baldinger
The Chairman convened the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

1) Minutes of the Meeting of May 16, 1985.

ACTION: Upon motion by Dr. Watson, seconded by Mr. Gilmore, the Commission approved the minutes of the meeting of May 16, 1985.

2) Release of Plan for Philadelphia Riverfronts.

Chairman Finney asked Ms. Kaplan to comment upon this publication. Ms. Kaplan noted that the Commission had reviewed the draft of this plan and the public had an opportunity to hear a presentation of it at a meeting last fall. She stated that this document is a summary of all the planning efforts for both the Delaware and Schuylkill riverfronts since 1980.

Dr. Watson complimented the staff for its work on this publication; Chairman Finney stated he thought it was attractive, informative and easy to read.

2a) INDEPENDENCE MALL URBAN RENEWAL AREA; Unit No. 4, Parcel 5a (NEc 9th and Race Sts.)

PRESENTATION:

Chairman Finney stated that this item concerns a matter in the Independence Mall Urban Renewal Area and is also related to the proposed Convention Center in this area. Mr. Finney stated that many members of the audience were here today because of this item. He asked Ms. Kaplan to comment upon the staff's position on this matter.

Ms. Kaplan stated that when the Convention Center was first proposed two years ago, the Commission was the first City agency to stress the need to properly and fairly relocate those businesses and persons being displaced by its construction. Ms. Kaplan stated that the Commission has been working with other City agencies during these last two years to assure that the relocation program would take place in this manner. Ms. Kaplan stated that the item before the Commission was a Resolution endorsing the Redevelopment Authority as the developer of nine houses for residential relocatees of the Convention Center. She noted that most of these properties are not only residences, but mixed residential and commercial properties since that is the type of structure most of the people who own these properties have today; they have housing over a commercial enterprise or a retail establishment elsewhere in Chinatown. Ms. Kaplan stated that there were not adequate resources within the Chinatown community for persons to buy an existing residential/commercial establishment of this type and the Redevelopment Authority and the City were providing new structures so that anyone who wished to remain in the community could do so. Ms. Kaplan stated that the staff is in favor of this proposal.

Chairman Finney stated that the general reaction to this proposal is positive, but since there are many differing points of view, the Commission has been asked by Councilman Beloff's office to hold this item over for two weeks until a final resolution is adopted.

DISCUSSION:
Mr. Batoff asked the Chair to put forward a motion to delay Commission action until the next session. Mr. Batoff stated he would, however, like to point out the reason for this motion. Mr. Batoff stated that a request for a delay was received from Councilman's Beloff's office. Councilman Beloff stated that he had certain information about this proposal which he and his staff wished to evaluate before the Commission took any action. Mr. Batoff stated that he was making this motion as a courtesy to Councilman Beloff, but did not wish it to be construed, in any way, as a change of opinion on the staff proposal to endorse this proposal. Mr. Pizzi seconded the motion. The Chairman called the question and the Commission voted unanimously to delay action on this proposal for two weeks.

3) Certification of blight under Pennsylvania Urban Renewal Law, as amended by Act 1978-94, to allow City acquisition by eminent domain of vacant properties for the purpose of residential rehabilitation and development utilizing housing programs sponsored by the Office of Housing.

PRESENTATION:

Mr. Peter Denitz, Chief of Community Planning, then addressed the Commission. Mr. Denitz stated that the Commission has been asked by the Vacant Property Review Committee (VPRC) to certify 566 properties under Act 94 of the State Redevelopment Law which allows the "spot condemnation" of vacant property, whether in or out of certified redevelopment areas for residential and related uses. The properties to be acquired here are intended for re-disposition with one of the City's vacant housing rehabilitation programs or for new construction.

Mr. Denitz showed the Commission a map which showed the locations of the sites involved. He stated that over half of the sites were located in Lower and Upper North Philadelphia; the others being in South Philadelphia, West Philadelphia, Bridesburg, Kensington, Richmond, Olney, Oak Lane, Germantown, Southwest Philadelphia and some in the Near Northeast.

Act 94 specified 8 criteria for blight certification. All of the properties certified here, however, have used the following criteria: a) they have been declared a public nuisance by the Department of Licenses and Inspections and/or b) they are unoccupied properties which are two or more years tax delinquent. Mr. Denitz stated that VPRC has provided the staff with photographs and block surveys from the Department of Licenses and Inspections and documentation from the Revenue Department that these properties are, indeed, public nuisances and/or tax delinquent.

Mr. Denitz stated that there were 5 exceptional cases in this grouping of 566 properties. He stated that all of these represent portions of a site intended for new housing construction by the Advocate Community Development Corporation. Mr. Denitz stated that 4 of the sites are now owned by the Philadelphia Housing Authority and negotiations are being conducted presently between the Housing Authority and the ACDC. These negotiations have not been productive so condemnation was seen as the most effective method of acquisition and has been approved by the Philadelphia Housing Authority who has given its consent. Mr. Denitz stated that the fifth, or additional, property in this grouping was acquired by the City at a Sheriff's sale in April of this
year. Mr. Denitz stated that this property has been included in this condemnation procedure in order to eliminate the former owner's right of redemption which will not expire until the middle of 1985.

Mr. Denitz distributed a list of the 566 properties involved to the members of the Commission and stated that the Commission was being asked to take these actions today. He stated that the Commission is being asked to certify that the disposition of properties for residential or related uses is in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan, that no single lot is capable either in lot size or in zoning of accommodating more than 10 dwelling units and finally, certifying a recommendation to VPRC to transfer properties to the Redevelopment Authority for acquisition under Act 94. VPRC is scheduled to consider these properties at its June 7 meeting. Mr. Denitz said that two representatives of VPRC were present today - Ms. Sullivan and Mr. Perez. Mr. Denitz stated that the staff recommended approval.

DISCUSSION:

Chairman Finney asked Mr. Denitz if he was correct in assuming that the Commission had seen some of these VPRC properties last year and that there would be more forthcoming. Ms. Kaplan replied that the Commission had seen approximately 48 of these types of property condemnations in September, but today was the first time such a large number had been considered at one time. Ms. Kaplan stated that it had been her belief in September that the Commission would be receiving about 50 a month, but we had not received any until this time.

Ms. Kaplan stated that the staff reviewed all the information prepared by the Department of Licenses and Information, the Revenue Department, the Housing Office, and the Vacant Property Review Committee. She stated that the staff looked at photos, certifications of L & I inspections, evidence of Revenue Department non-collections. Ms. Kaplan stated that these formed the basis for making an informed decision based upon the criteria cited by State Act 94.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Hajji Abdullah Ahmad Bey addressed the Commission. He said it was a major concern to him that persons would not lose their properties automatically during a condemnation process. He stated that consideration had to be given to property owners who may not have been properly notified by the City or private interests of the process involved and who could be in danger of unwittingly losing their property because of misinformation, or in some cases, no information.

Chairman Finney replied that he had checked with the staff about this matter and questioned how each step in the process was done so that the possibility of error could be avoided. Mr. Finney stated that the Law Department had reviewed the proceedings, the Office of Housing had conducted a review and the staff of the Commission had done yet another review. It was a very thorough process in Mr. Finney's opinion and precluded a chance for error and he stated he felt this list of properties was duly certifiable.
ACTION: Upon motion by Dr. Watson, seconded by Mr. Batoff, the Commission voted to approve the Certification of blight under Pennsylvania Urban Renewal Law, as amended by Act 1978-94, to allow City acquisition by eminent domain of 566 vacant properties.

4) MODEL CITIES URBAN RENEWAL AREA, Parcels 11-F, G, I, 20, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29 (Advocate Community Development Corp.)

a) To approve a Redevelopment Agreement for the construction of twenty new housing units. Size: Approx. 30,000 sq. ft. Cost: $10,000.

b) First Modification to the Second Urban Renewal Plan to provide for the acquisition of seven properties and portions of two alleys under Act 94, and for the sale of the resulting land for the development of low/moderate income housing.

PRESENTATION:

Mr. Bruce Wiggins, Area Planner, addressed the Commission on this item. Mr. Wiggins stated that the Commission is being asked to approve the First Modification to the Second Amended Urban Renewal Plan for the Model Cities Urban Renewal Area and the Redeveloper's Agreement for 16 parcels in North Philadelphia.

Mr. Wiggins described the area as being in the vicinity of Temple University, between Morris Street and Diamond Street. He stated that the proposal is to construct 20 new townhouses on the 1700 block of Page Street on approximately three-quarters of an acre of land. Currently the site is occupied by vacant houses or vacant land. The Zoning is R-10 and C-2 and the Urban Renewal Plan is Residential. Mr. Wiggins stated that the sponsor of this proposal is the Advocate Community Development Corporation, known as ACDC, which is a community-based non-profit developer; Christine Washington, President. The land planner is Rahenkamp and Associates, Philadelphia.

Mr. Wiggins stated that the construction cost will be $340,500; the disposition price $10,000 ($500 per unit) and the source of funding will be grants from the Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs; the City of Philadelphia (Community Development Block Grant); the William Penn Foundation and a loan from Provident Savings Association. Mr. Wiggins stated that the projected sales price per unit will be $25,000. He stated there may be a Section 235 mortgage subsidies from the Federal government, but this is uncertain at this point in time. Mr. Wiggins stated that almost all of the properties are owned by the Redevelopment Authority - 9 throughout this site. He stated that, in addition, 7 properties are being acquired by condemnation under Act 94. Mr. Wiggins stated that when all these actions have been undertaken, the properties will be assembled as a package and sold to the Advocate Community Development Corporation for development.

Mr. Wiggins stated that the City is requiring bids on this proposal; therefore a builder has not yet been chosen. Mr. Wiggins presented elevations for the buildings which ACDC would like to build. Care is being taken to have the houses be compatible with the older row homes in the area. Variances will also be necessary because parking is not provided on each lot. Mr. Wiggins stated that community opinion is in favor and the staff recommends approval.
Mr. Wiggins qualified the staff's approval with one reservation about the design of the proposal. He stated that three parking spaces in the southeast corner of the site could be relocated to the other parking lots, or eliminated since public transportation is good in the area. He stated that by doing this a small parcel within the development could be utilized as a play area or a garden area. Mr. Wiggins stated that the staff would like to discuss this with the developer, but not make this a condition of the approval today.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Mr. Batoff, seconded by Mr. Pizzi, the Commission voted to approve a Redevelopment Agreement for the construction of 20 new housing units in the Model Cities U. R. Area and to approve the First Modification to the Second Amended U. R. Plan to provide for the acquisition of seven properties and portions of two alleys under Act 94.

**DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Copeland wished to note that he supported the staff's recommendation that the parking be reviewed. He also wanted to complement and support the intention of the developer to develop the houses in a manner sympathetic to the historical context of the area. Mr. Copeland wished to include this in the motion as a recommendation, but not as a condition of the motion.

Mr. Batoff stated that he would amend his motion.

Mr. Hajji Abdullah Ahmad Bey inquired if there was going to be any priority given to lower-income persons living in the general area of Page Street so that they may have a chance to purchase these new homes. Ms. Kaplan stated that the development would be subsidized by the Federal government and the price of these houses, under subsidy, would be $25,000. She also stated that this funding was assured.

Mrs. Nichols commented that she wished that the availability of some "green space" be considered not only today, but in all future developments of this kind.

Chairman Finney and called the question; the Commission acted on the question voting aye unanimously and the Model Cities U. R. Area redevelopment agreement and modification was approved.

Mr. Finney then asked Mrs. Nichols if she wished to frame a resolution about neighborhood development and "green space."

Mrs. Nichols stated that as new development takes place, that the staff should have a dialogue with developers so that they are requested to include green space within the development, particularly when rehabilitation is taking place in formerly blighted areas.

Chairman Finney stated that he wished the staff and Mrs. Nichols to work on the framing of the language of a resolution concerning green space. He stated that the Commission would consider a completed Resolution on Green Space at its next meeting.

5) OSAGE RENEWAL AREA: To approve the Redevelopment Proposal, includ-
ing Renewal Plan in order to rebuild the site with new residential homes to replace those destroyed.

PRESENTATION:

Mr. Cornell Pankey, Area Planner for West Philadelphia, addressed the Commission on this item. Mr. Pankey stated that the Planning Commission is being asked to approve a Redevelopment proposal and Renewal Plan for the Osage Renewal Area. This proposal is in response to the major fire which occurred on the 6200 block of Osage Avenue on Monday, May 13, 1985. This Renewal Plan is in the westernmost section of West Philadelphia, south of Market; an area bounded by Pine Street on the north, Addison Street on the south, Cobbs Creek Parkway on the west and 62nd Street on the East.

This proposal is to rebuild the site with new residential homes in an attempt to replace, as closely as possible, those units that have been destroyed. Mr. Pankey stated that the predominant land use was residential.

Mr. Pankey stated there are 116 properties within the redevelopment area boundary. Fifty-three were destroyed by fire, and 8 received significant damage. All 61 of the fire-damaged properties were two-story attached dwellings located on Osage Avenue and Pine Street. Of the remaining 55 structures within the redevelopment area boundary, all are two-story residential, except one. The corner property at 400 South 62nd Street is commercial on the ground floor with residential above.

Mr. Pankey stated that this renewal plan is to facilitate development which will help area residents return to their neighborhood as quickly as possible. He stated that the staff recommends approval.

ACTION: Upon motion by Mr. Batoff, seconded by Dr. Watson, the Commission voted to approve the Redevelopment Proposal and Renewal Plan for the Osage Renewal Area.

6) Bill #593 - Amending Title 14 of the Philadelphia Code, by amending and adding new provisions to Section 14-1506, entitled "Flood Plain Controls" to conform with the regulations of the Department of Community Affairs.

PRESENTATION:

Ms. Kaplan stated that the Pennsylvania State Department of Community Affairs notified the City several months ago that in order for the City to continue to receive funding from the State Department of Community Affairs, the City was required to bring its local flood plain ordinance into compliance with the State ordinance, known as the "Pennsylvania Flood Plain Management Act" or Act 166 of 1978. Ms. Kaplan stated that the local ordinance did not have a passage dealing with the placing and storage of hazardous materials within the floodway and the floodway fringe. She stated that the City and the DCA have been working over the past several months to draft an ordinance that would meet the State's requirements.

Mr. Richard Lombardo, Chief of Project Planning, then addressed the Commission in order to explain the provisions of the new flood plain ordi-
nance. Mr. Lombardo stated that since 1978, the City has had, within its zoning codes, special controls for development within floodways and flood plains of various tributaries, basically the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers as well as various creeks - the Frankford, Pennypack, Poquessing, Wissahickon and Cobbs Creek - through the City. Since that time, the State has requested that these controls be strengthened. The tightening up of these controls deal with two aspects: a) the storage of hazardous chemicals within the floodway (the area which actually floods during a storm). Mr. Lombardo stated this refers mainly to the Schuylkill River since there is no floodway on the Delaware, and b) those chemicals which are stored within the Floodway Fringe would have to be floodproofed and 1 and 1/2 feet above the flood level established for the area. Mr. Lombardo stated that these regulations bring the City in compliance with the DCA regulations and is recommended for approval by staff.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Mr. Batoff, seconded by Mr. Pizzi, the Commission voted to approve Bill #593.

7) **Bill #594** - Authorizing the revision of the lines and grades on 2 portions of City Plan #169 by widening Drexel Road on the easterly side, southeastwardly from City Ave.

**PRESENTATION:**

Mr. Richard Lombardo, Chief of Projects, made this presentation. Mr. Lombardo stated that this is a minor streets adjustment at City Avenue and Drexel Road in the Overbrook section of the City.

Mr. Lombardo stated that this street adjustment, to widen Drexel Road on the easterly side southeastwardly from City Avenue, has to do with ingress and egress for the Executive House parking facility and is in accord with an agreement between the owner of Executive House and the surrounding community.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Dr. Watson, seconded by Mr. Batoff, the Commission voted to approve Bill #594.

8) **Preliminary Plat** - Parcel of ground located on the northerly side of Norwalk Rd., west of Bustleton Avenue, for the construction of 16 single-family semi-detached dwellings.

**PRESENTATION:**

Mr. Lombardo stated that this was a proposal to permit the development of 2 1/2 acres of ground in the Far Northeast section of the City. Mr. Lombardo described the boundary of the site as being Bustleton Avenue at Norwalk Road, 275' east of Morefield Road, through to the southeast side of Fenwick Road in the Bustleton section of the City. Mr. Lombardo stated that this proposal is to allow for a new cul-de-sac street coming off Fenwick and Bartlett Streets to serve a development of 16 semi-detached single-family dwellings. Mr. Lombardo stated that zoning variances were needed because of the narrow aspect of some parts of the site. Mr. Lombardo stated that variances had been granted by the Zoning Board of Adjustment on November 26, 1984.

Mr. Lombardo stated that this site is bounded to the north by a City recreation facility and to the southeast by a drainage right-of-way (Paul's
Run creek) and to the south by Norwalk Road. The developer has agreed to donate as open space those parcels on the site which are in the drainage right-of-way.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Mr. Batoff, seconded by Mr. Segal, the Commission voted to approve the Preliminary Plat for this aforementioned parcel in the Far Northeast.


**PRESENTATION:**

Mr. Ernest Leonardo, Chief of Comprehensive Planning, stated that the Commerce Department has requested this amendment to the 1986 Capital Budget and the 1986-1991 Capital Program in order to reduce Line number 19, "Tioga I Marine Terminal - Improvements - Foot of Tioga Street" by $2 million in 1986 and to add a new project, "Pier 84 South", with $2 million of City self-sustaining funds in 1986.

Mr. Leonardo stated that the Philadelphia Port Corporation wishes to convert an existing transit shed at Pier 84 South (North of Porter Street) into a heated, insulated facility for the importation of Chilean fruit during the winter. He stated that in order for the facility to be ready for use in December, at the beginning of the import season, construction must begin in September.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Mr. Batoff, seconded by Mr. Pizzi, the Commission voted to approve this proposed amendment to the 1986-1991 Capital Program and the 1986 Capital Budget.

10) **Items in Accord with Previous Policy:**

a) Confirmation Plan #307 - Striking from the City Plan and vacating a portion of Ludlow Street from 17th Street to a point 198' east of 17th Street.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Mr. Batoff, seconded by Mr. Pizzi, the Commission voted to approve Confirmation Plan #307.

b) Confirmation Plan #271 - Striking from the City Plan and vacating Chenango St. from Hancock St. to Sophia St. and Sophia St. from Wildey St. to Chenango St.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Mr. Batoff, seconded by Mr. Pizzi, the Commission voted to approve Confirmation Plan #271.

c) Haddington U. R. Area, Unit #1, Second Modification to the Seventh Amended U. R. Plan to provide a change in the land use of Parcel 12 (SBr 56th and Haverford Ave. from "Commercial" to "Residential C" and to change the maximum dwelling unit density for this parcel from 59 to 70 dwelling units per acre.
Ms. Kaplan noted that this was seen two meetings ago by the Commission and was modified so that the non-profit sponsor could compete in a Federal bidding program.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Mr. Batoff, seconded by Mr. Copeland, the Commission voted to approve the Haddington U. R. Area, Unit #1.

d) Bills #’s 588 and 589 - Amendments to the 1985-1990 Capital Program and 1985 Capital Budget by decreasing various projects and amounts totaling $5,240,000 of City tax-supported funds, as offsets to City Council additions to the 1986-1990 Capital Program and 1986 Capital Budget.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Mr. Batoff, seconded by Mr. Pizzi, the Commission voted to approve Bills #’s 588 and 589.

e) Bill #601 - To create a new Residential zoning classification that will accommodate stacked townhouses of 5 stories or less. Previously approved on 12/6/84.

Ms. Kaplan noted that it took several months for the Law Department to approve the wording of this zoning bill, but that now it has been approved and it has come back to the Commission for final approval.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Mr. Pizzi, seconded by Mr. Segal, the Commission voted to approve Bill #601.

f) TEMPLE UNIVERSITY IDD MASTER PLAN - MEc 12th St. & Montgomery Ave., to construct a 4-story, 258,023 sq. ft. computer facility with lot for 84 passenger cars. (Bell of PA and Temple Univ.)

**PRESENTATION:**

Ms. Kaplan stated that in the case of an amendment to an Institutional Development District, once the Planning Commission acts on it, the Commission then notifies City Council of its recommendation. Council has 45 days to comment, reject it, or if they do nothing, their approval is assumed. Ms. Kaplan stated that in this case, City Council has rejected the Planning Commission recommendation. Ms. Kaplan stated there has been some progress in discussions on the matter, and in order to give Council an opportunity to reconsider it, the Planning Commission has to make another positive recommendation on the proposal to amend the Institutional Development District.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Dr. Watson, seconded by Mr. Pizzi, the Commission again recommended the amendment to the Temple University IDD Master Plan which would allow for the construction of a 4-story computer facility.

g) Bill #576 - Confirms the sale of 1709 Wallace St. Size: 2053 sq. ft. Zoning: "R-10 Residential." Consideration: $15,600. Purpose: Residential Use. (Marlene Malloy).

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Mr. Segal, seconded by Mr. Pizzi, the Commission voted to approve Bill #576.
The Chair called for a motion to adjourn. Upon motion by Dr. Watson, seconded by Mr. Segal, the Commission voted to adjourn at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Dolores Techner
Recording Sec'y
PCPC MINUTES
June 6, 1985

SUMMARY

ITEM ACTION

1) Minutes of the Meeting of May 16, 1985. Approved

2) Release of Plan for Philadelphia Riverfronts. Released

2a) INDEPENDENCE MALL URBAN RENEWAL AREA; Unit No. 4, Parcel 5a (NEc 9th & Race Sts.) Tabled

3) Certification of blight under Pennsylvania Urban Renewal Law, as amended by Act 1978-94, to allow City acquisition by eminent domain of vacant properties for the purpose of residential rehabilitation and development utilizing housing programs sponsored by the Office of Housing. Certified

4) MODEL CITIES URBAN RENEWAL AREA, Parcels 11-F, G, I, 20, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29 (Advocate Community Development Corp.) Approved
   a) To approve a Redevelopment Agreement for the construction of twenty new housing units. Size: Approx. 30,000 sq. ft. Cost: $10,000.
   b) First Modification to the Second Amended Urban Renewal Plan to provide for the acquisition of seven properties and portions of two alleys under Act 94, and for the sale of the resulting land for the development of low/moderate income housing.

5) OSAGE RENEWAL AREA: To approve the Redevelopment Proposal, including Renewal Plan in order to rebuild the site with new residential homes to replace those destroyed. Approved

6) Bill #593 - Amending Title 14 of the Philadelphia Code, by amending and adding new provisions to Section 14-1606, entitled "Flood Plain Controls" to conform with the regulations of the Department of Community Affairs. Approved

7) Bill #594 - Authorizing the revision of the lines and grades on 2 portions of City Plan #169 by widening Drexel Road on the easterly side, southeastwardly from City Ave. Approved

8) Preliminary Plat - Parcel of ground located on the northerly side of Norwalk Rd., west of Bustleton Avenue, for the construction of 16 single-family, semi-detached dwellings. Approved


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