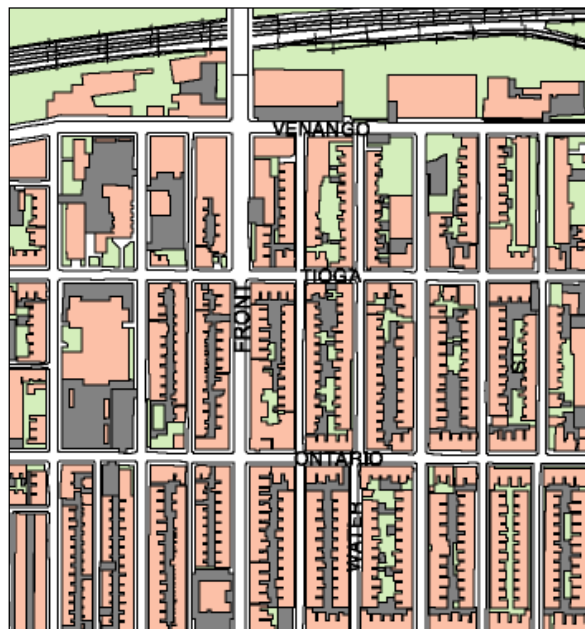


Fairhill and St. Hugh Redevelopment Area Plan

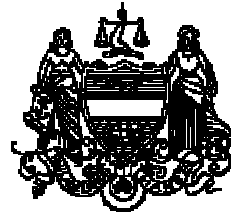


Philadelphia City Planning Commission
March 2003

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Fairhill and St. Hugh Redevelopment Area Plan

Philadelphia City Planning Commission, March 2003

INTRODUCTION

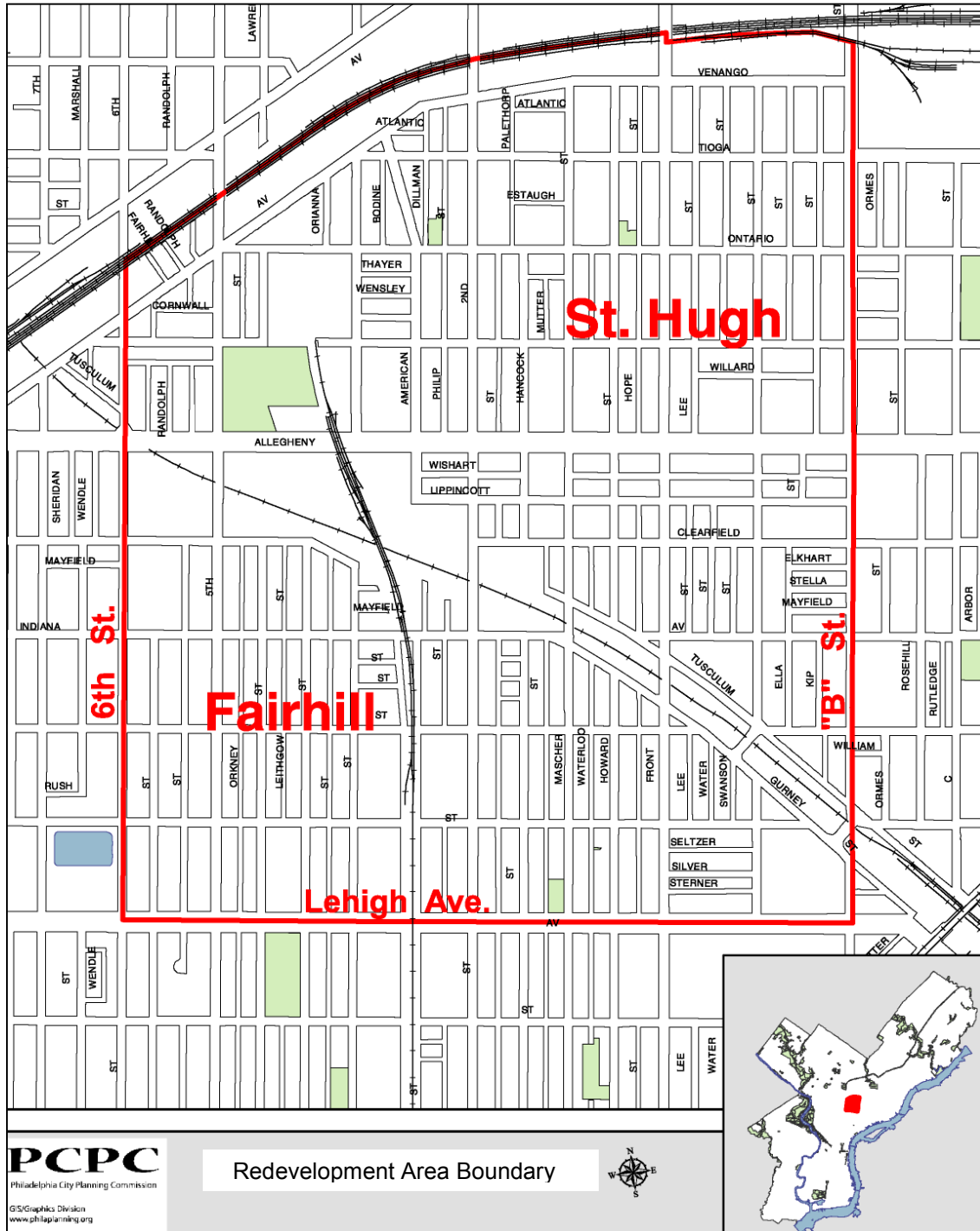
The Fairhill and St. Hugh Redevelopment Area is a 515 acre section of Upper North Philadelphia. The boundary of the redevelopment area is shown on the map on page 2: the northern boundary is the AMTRAK railroad line running north of and parallel to Venango Street. The western boundary is 6th Street. The southern boundary is Lehigh Avenue. The eastern boundary is "B" Street.

The Redevelopment Area is also known as the Fairhill and St. Hugh neighborhoods. Total population is approximately 18,000 and the majority of residents are of Hispanic origin. The area was developed in the late 1800's and early 1900's, when factories were built along major streets or railroad tracks and worker housing was constructed on the narrower intermediate streets. The majority of the area occupied by is single-family row homes. Neighborhood commercial use exists along the major streets including Lehigh Avenue, Allegheny Avenue and North 5th Street. The principal and traditional neighborhood commercial district is situated along 5th Street.

Fairhill and St. Hugh is an area that has numerous strengths. It is adjacent to the Empowerment Zone and the American Street Corridor & Industrial Park. It has new schools. The neighborhood has good highway access and bus/trolley service.



Top: typical housing in the area. Bottom: 5th Street north of Lehigh Avenue is the principal shopping district.



Residents have recreational opportunities nearby at Fairhill Park, John Schmidt Pool & Playground, Frederic R. Mann Recreation Center and the Lighthouse facilities.

This Redevelopment Area has been created to facilitate property acquisition for redevelopment and rehabilitation. The initial project to be advanced under this Plan is a proposal from The Archdiocese of Philadelphia to acquire and rehabilitate scattered vacant residential properties in and around the St. Hugh Catholic School and Church at Venango &

Howard Streets. These vacant properties will be rehabilitated as single-family units for resale at affordable rates for the existing population.

This Redevelopment Area Plan also reflects proposals made by the primary neighborhood-based Community Development Corporation, H.A.C.E. (the Hispanic Association of Contractors and Enterprises) as it continues to rehabilitate and develop new housing for



Above: Villas Del Caribe, containing 80 units of new housing developed by H.A.C.E., located on the 100 block E. Allegheny Ave.

Below: Headquarters for Congreso at Somerset Street & American Street.



rental and homeownership for families and the elderly. This community-based CDC has been responsible for most of the redevelopment that has taken place in these neighborhoods over the last 15 years. In the vicinity of the 100-300 blocks of Allegheny Avenue, more than \$15 million was invested during the 1990's by H.A.C.E. in partnership with the City and other private and non-profit entities. This investment began with the renovation of the former warehouse building in the 100 block of Allegheny Avenue which produced 52 rental units of elderly housing. HACE

also developed 80 new garden apartment units. HACE's next project will be the rehabilitation of another former industrial building into 57 additional rental elderly units; and HACE's plans call for the acquisition, new construction and rehabilitation of scattered vacant properties throughout the area. Conditions in Fairhill and St. Hugh have been vastly improved through the work of HACE.

"Congreso" is another community-based organization that is having important positive impacts on the local community. Their work is primarily in the area of social services. Another community-based CDC, Impact Services Corporation, is involved in economic development, job training and community development.

This neighborhood also has significant problems that need to be addressed. Vacant houses and lots are scattered throughout the area, and vacancy is especially problematic in the Fairhill section of the area. The blocks generally bounded by 5th Hancock, Somerset and Clearfield contains concentrations of



The study area contains many row homes, factories, warehouses and vacant lots.

vacant lots. Another section of Fairhill, east of Front Street and south of Allegheny, contains large vacant land parcels with potential for redevelopment. There are a few large vacant parcels in St. Hugh located along Westmoreland Street. Vacancy is more scattered and less severe in St. Hugh.

Tax delinquency exists at a high level, and the estimated 80-to-100-year-old housing stock is increasingly difficult to maintain. The 5th Street commercial area appears to be healthy, but has some scattered vacancy and improvements to the corridor are needed.

The Fairhill and St. Hugh Redevelopment Area Plan contains reuse proposals that are intended to maintain the quality and character of the community and rehabilitate the housing while adding some new residential, social service, mixed-use and commercial uses at appropriate locations. These proposals are in accordance with The North Philadelphia Plan, which constitutes the City's Comprehensive Plan for this area.

OBJECTIVES

The general goal of this Redevelopment Area Plan is to provide a framework for present and future redevelopment proposals. Clear planning policies for land use, zoning and capital program investment will permit the full potential of the study area to be realized.

The plan has three specific objectives:

- to encourage rehabilitation of vacant homes,
- to eliminate the blighting influence of undesirable land uses by encouraging the redevelopment of vacant land and buildings, and underutilized properties, and

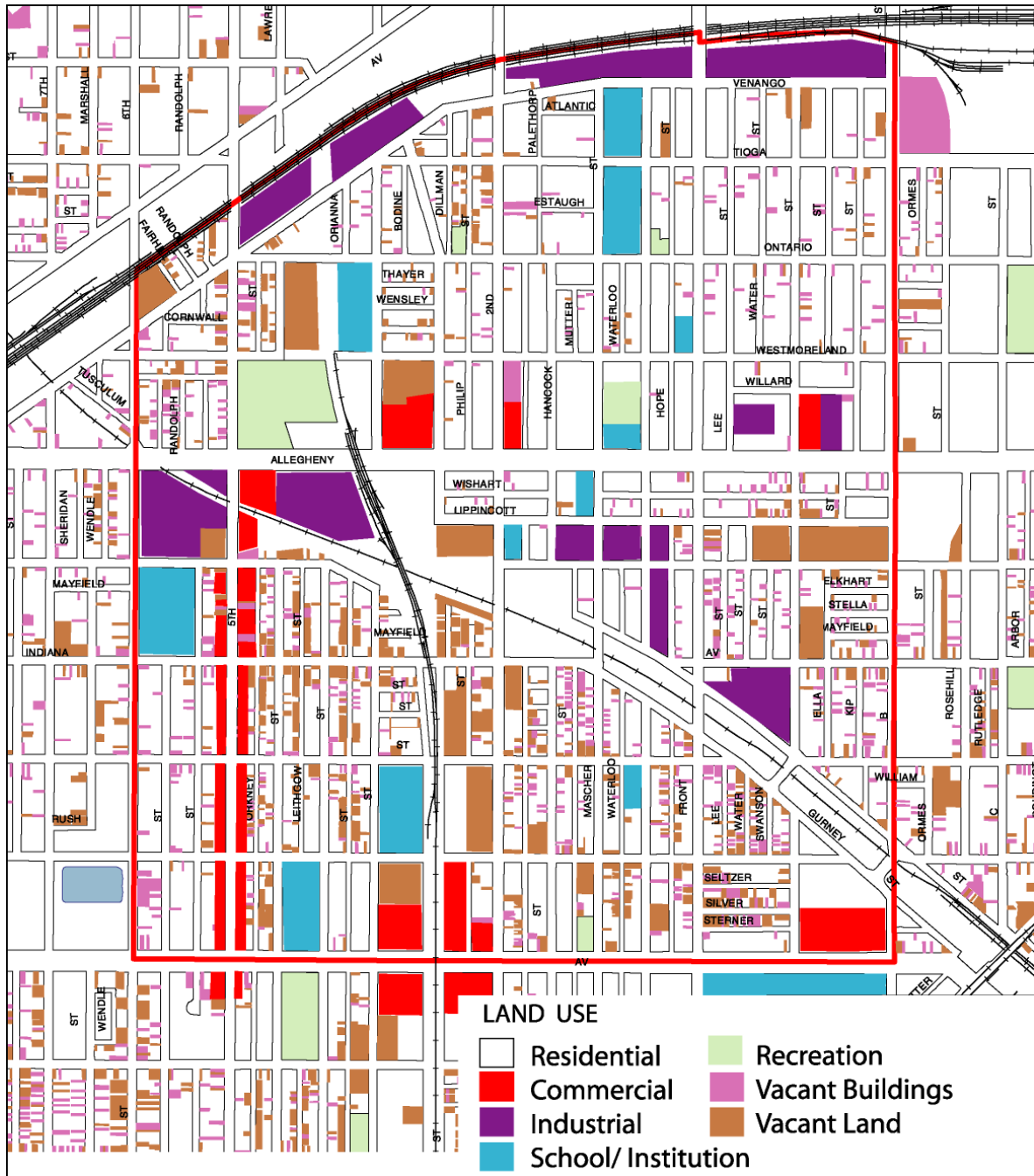


Medical center in the 5th Street commercial district.

- to replace substandard or economically obsolete buildings with new construction where rehabilitation is impractical.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Fairhill/ St. Hugh area is being certified by the Planning Commission on March 18, 2003, concurrent with the approval of this Redevelopment Area Plan. Blight does exist in the area. Designation for redevelopment is warranted by the following criteria having been satisfied:



- Unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate conditions
- Inadequate Planning
- Faulty Street and Lot Layout
- Economically undesirable land use

These conditions have a deteriorating effect on the neighborhood.

Of the 8,793 properties in the study area, 1,793 are vacant. Many properties have unsafe and unsanitary conditions, which are representative of economically undesirable land use. Tax delinquency is pervasive. Property values are low: the value of single-family homes in the Redevelopment Area is less than one-half of the citywide median value. There are presently 2,785 properties in the area with Code violations as determined by the Department of Licenses & Inspections in April of 2002.

EXISTING LAND USE

Residential is the predominant land use. Commercial uses exist along North 5th Street, Allegheny Avenue, Lehigh Avenue and American Street north of Lehigh Avenue. Industrial properties are located near the railroads at the edges of the neighborhood. Elementary schools are situated in both neighborhoods: St Hugh and William Cramp in the St. Hugh section, and the new Julia deBurgos middle school on Lehigh Avenue across from Fairhill Square. There continues to be a significant amount of industrial use still active in the area, sometimes scattered amongst the residential blocks. However, vacant land and vacant buildings also comprise a significant portion of the area. The Land Use map is on page 5.

PROPOSED LAND USE

The "Proposed Changes in Land Use" map on page 7 has been prepared to lay the groundwork for appropriate treatment of the major opportunity sites. The Plan also encourages housing rehabilitation and new construction, and anticipates that many of the vacant homes scattered throughout the neighborhood will be rehabilitated and brought back into productive residential use.

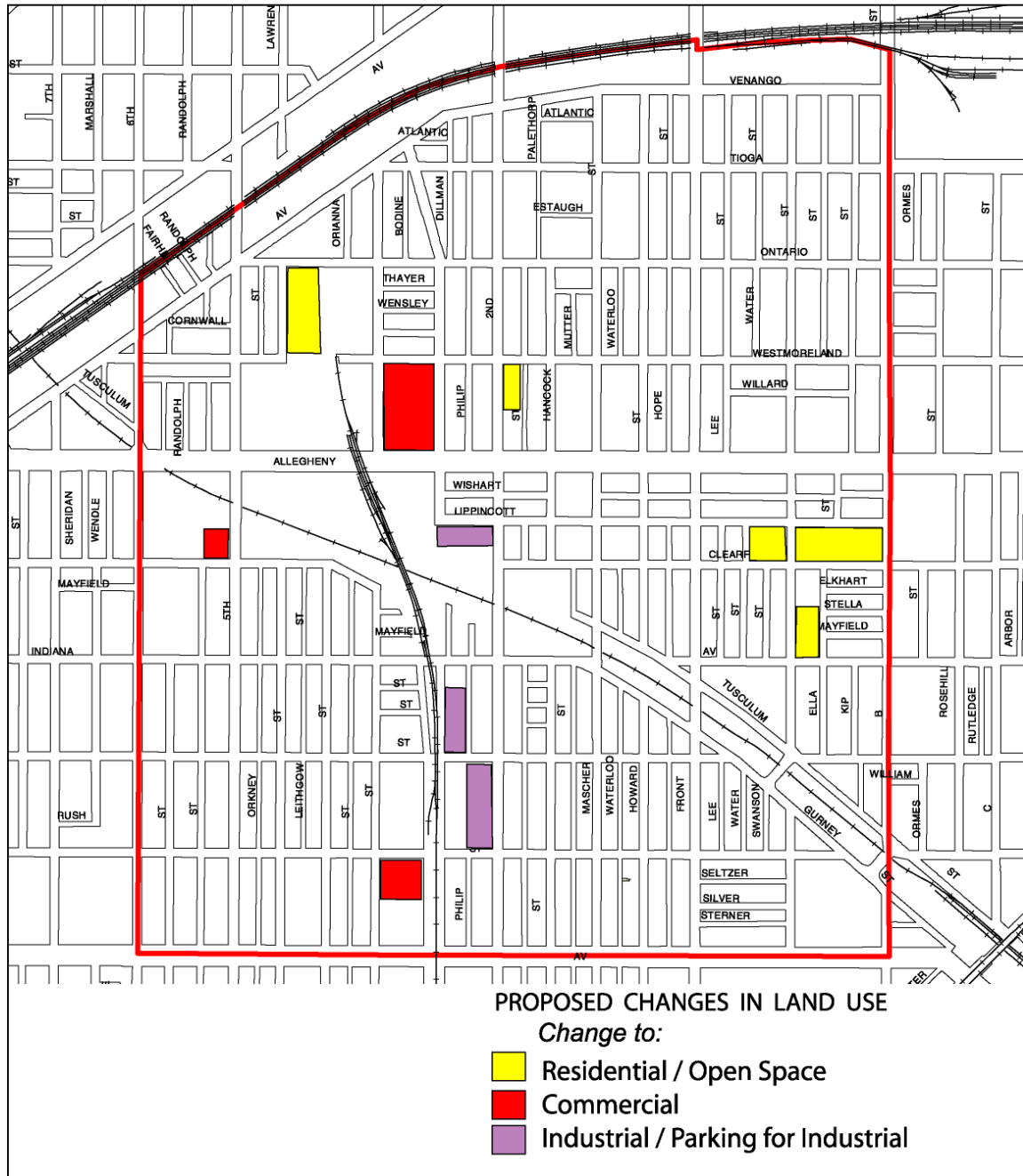
A large vacant parcel located at the Southeast corner of 3rd & Westmoreland Streets is proposed for commercial development in the future. Another large vacant parcel at Lawrence & Westmoreland, adjacent to the new elementary school should be considered for either new residential development or school-related open space.

There are 3 more vacant parcels along Clearfield Street, between Water and "B" Streets that lend themselves to new residential development, similar to the surrounding uses. The same use is proposed for a vacant parcel at the northeast corner of "A" & Indiana Streets.

A recent demolition has created a site on North 2nd Street between Somerset and Cambria Streets, which will be appropriate for parking for the adjacent Industrial buildings. At the Southwest corner of 2nd & Lippincott Streets there is a vacant parcel, which could be considered for interim parking and, in the long term, new industrial or commercial development.

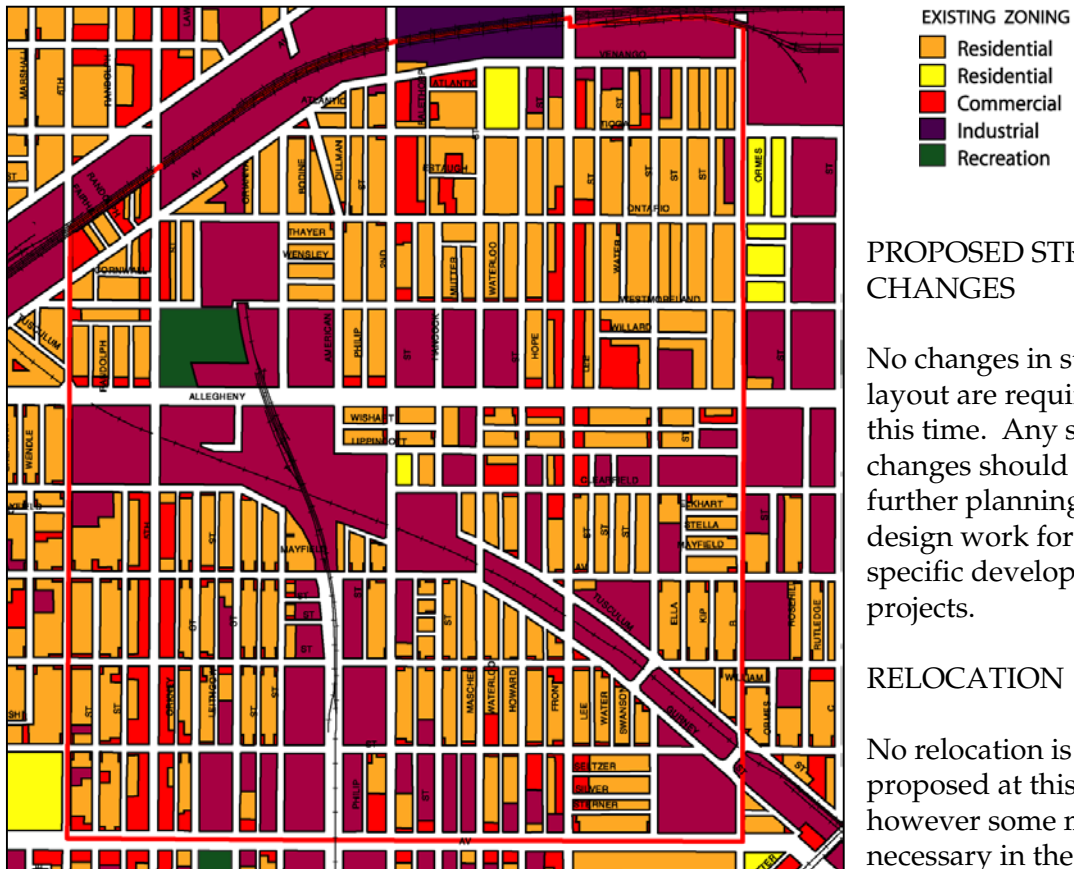
The large vacant parcel at the Southwest corner of American & Somerset Streets should be considered for commercial redevelopment consistent with adjacent commercial uses. Another vacant parcel recommended for commercial development is located at the northwest corner of 5th & Clearfield Streets where a retail/ office complex with off-street parking would be appropriate.

HACE has already secured funding for a project called Caribe Towers at 3231 North 2nd Street for residential rehabilitation of an existing former warehouse building into a 57-unit rental rehab for the elderly. Accordingly, residential use is recommended.



PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

No changes in the zoning are proposed at this time. The projects that are envisioned will require more planning and design work before the appropriate zoning strategies can be determined. Therefore, zoning changes by ordinance or use certificates or variances from the Zoning Board of Adjustment may be required depending on the specific development plans that are ultimately prepared. Housing rehabilitation, a major goal of this plan, is generally allowed under existing zoning.



All relocation will be accomplished in accordance with the terms and conditions of the federal Uniform Relocation Act.

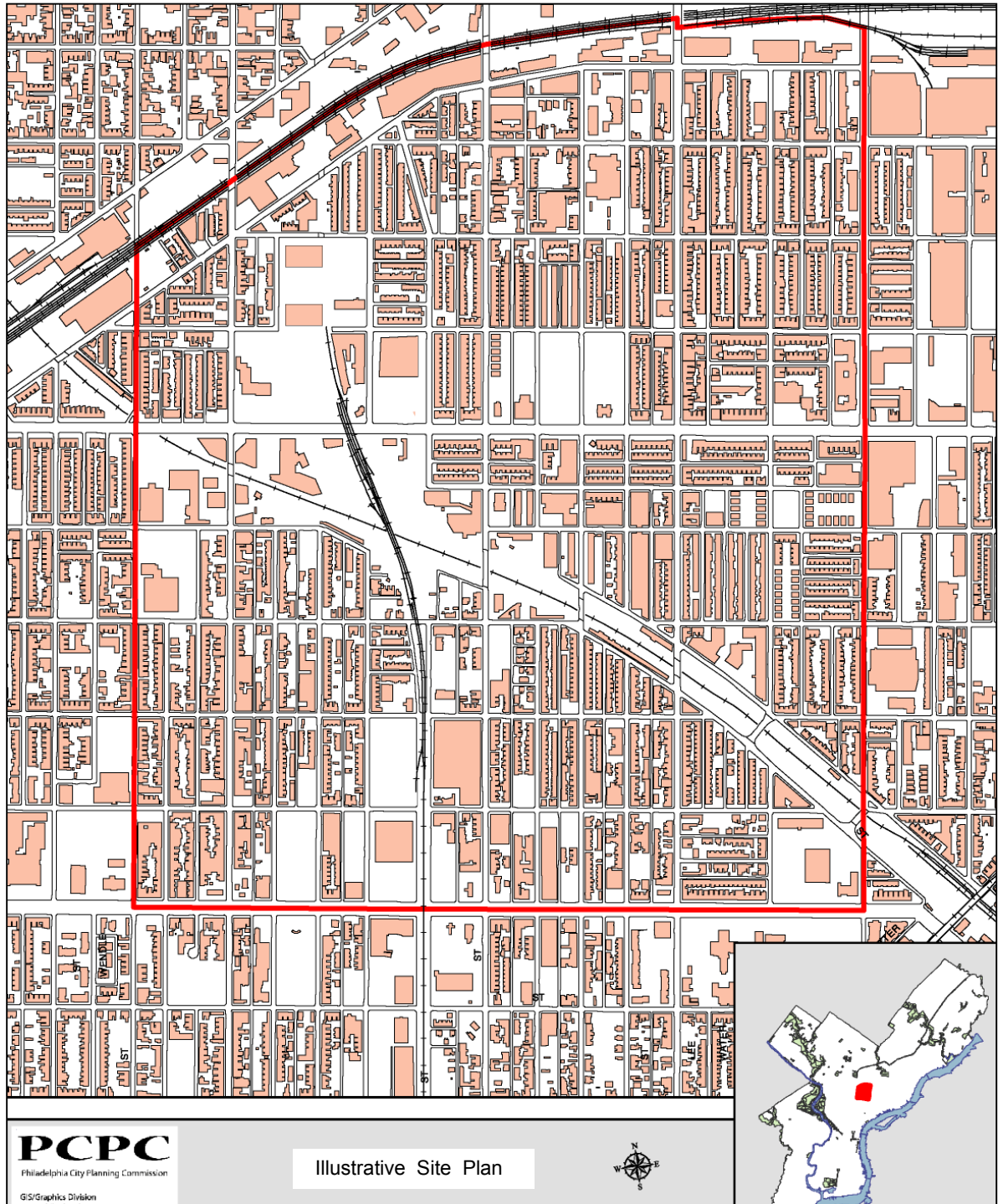
ESTIMATED COSTS OF REDEVELOPMENT

Cost estimates will be prepared by the Redevelopment Authority, in consultation with CDC's and developers, at a later time when development projects become better defined.

ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN

The Illustrative Site Plan is a conceptual plan showing new buildings on major opportunity sites, in accord with the land use recommendations; and the Illustrative Site Plan assumes the future rehabilitation of scattered vacant houses in the redevelopment area.

Although not shown on the Illustrative Site Plan, site improvements are recommended to support the various redevelopment projects that are implemented. Site improvements are also recommended for the 5th Street commercial district. Site improvements will involve improvements to the streetscape, including new sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, bus shelters, lighting and various street furnishings and amenities. Care should be taken to ensure that these site improvements are in keeping with the architectural character of this commercial and cultural district.



All new construction and rehabilitation in the Fairhill and St. Hugh Redevelopment Area should be designed to fit in with the existing qualities of the area. In general, new housing should be designed and constructed at lower densities than existed in the original development of the neighborhood.

PROPOSED STANDARDS AND CONTROLS

Standards and controls for uses, density, land coverage, building area, parking and off-street loading will be established by the Philadelphia Zoning Code. All impacts of redevelopment on the surrounding residential community will be minimized through development controls regulating site design, building materials and landscaping. These controls will be established by the Redevelopment Authority, and reviewed and approved by the City Planning Commission.

The Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law of 1945, as amended, and the United States Housing Act of 1949, as amended, regulate Redevelopment and Urban Renewal in the City of Philadelphia.

Redevelopment in the Fairhill and St. Hugh Redevelopment Area will be in conformity with the provisions of this Redevelopment Area Plan and with the requirements of any Urban Renewal Plan prepared by the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Philadelphia for this area, and will comply with the Code of General Ordinances of the City of Philadelphia. All plans and proposals prepared by the Redevelopment Authority will be subject to the recommendations of the City Planning Commission and the approval of the Council of the City of Philadelphia.