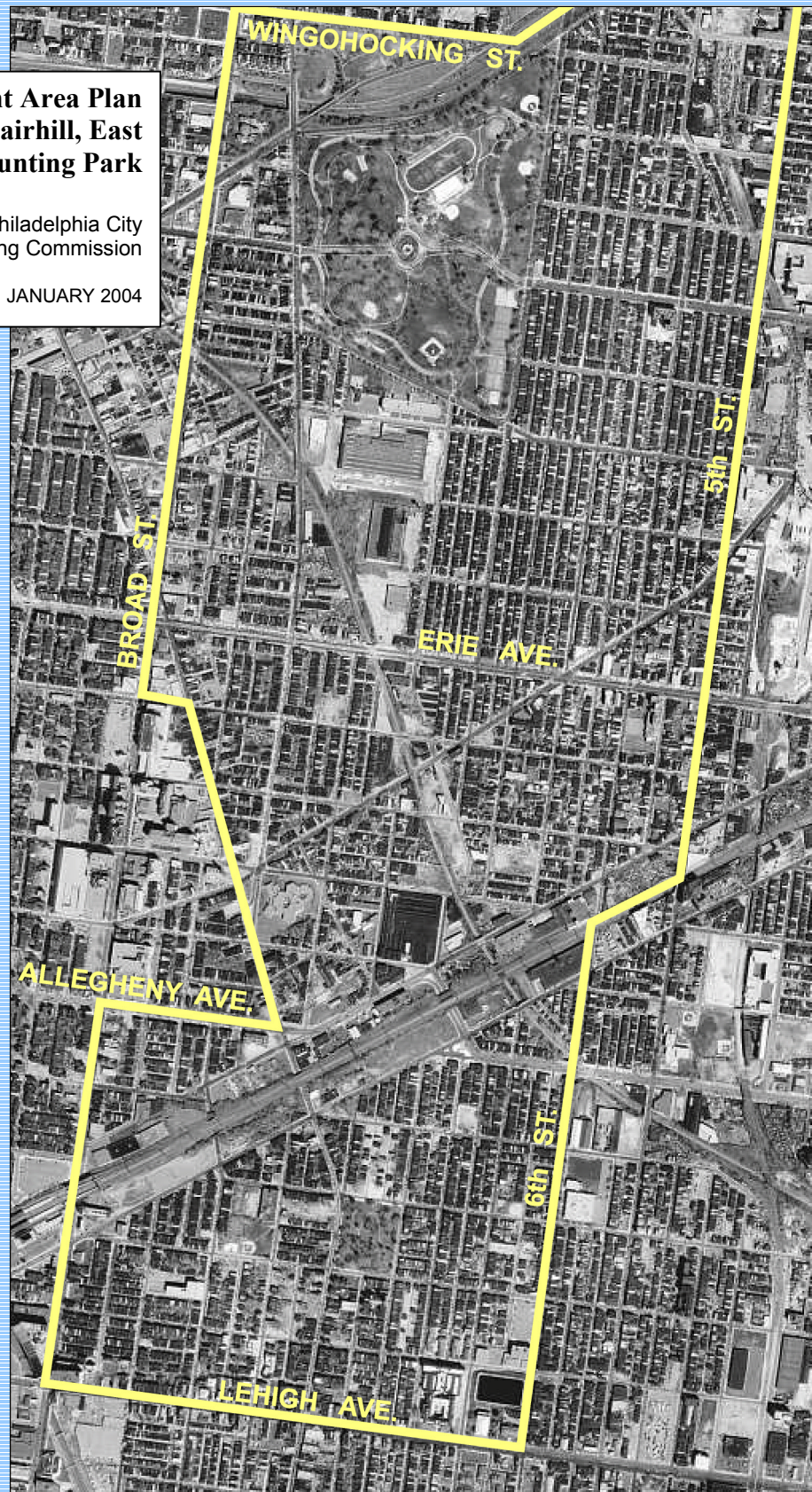


**Redevelopment Area Plan
for West Fairhill, East
Tioga and Hunting Park**

Philadelphia City
Planning Commission

JANUARY 2004



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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1-14-04

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INTRODUCTION

The Redevelopment Area Plan for West Fairhill, East Tioga and Hunting Park covers an 835-acre section of Upper North Philadelphia. The boundary of the redevelopment area is shown on the Land Use map on page 5: the northern boundaries are Wingohocking Street and Roosevelt Boulevard. The western boundary is Broad Street, Venango Street, Germantown Avenue and Allegheny Avenue. The southern boundary is Lehigh Avenue. The eastern boundaries are North 5th and 6th Streets.

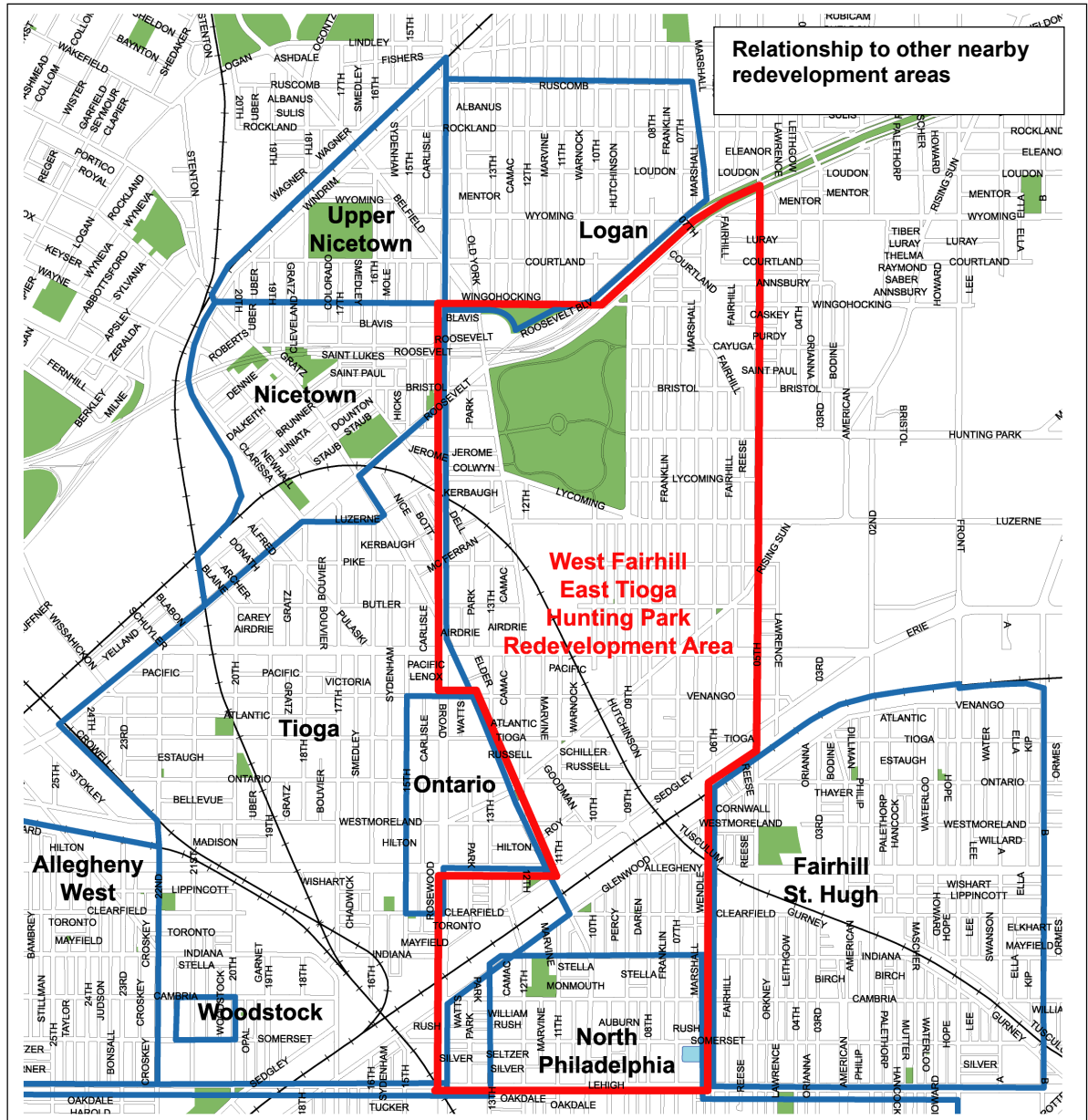
The immediate purpose of the redevelopment area plan is to make the area eligible for publicly-assisted acquisition of vacant land and vacant homes. Properties would be acquired, assembled and conveyed to community-based organizations planning to build new homes and rehabilitate existing homes. In the long term, this eligibility can be useful to various community and economic development initiatives.

The boundaries of the redevelopment area were chosen with two major considerations. First, this redevelopment area can fill a gap that exists between other nearby redevelopment areas (see map on page 2), making a larger contiguous area eligible for redevelopment activities. Second, the boundary was chosen to include areas where important community-based project plans are being formulated. The initial project to be advanced under this Plan is a proposal from Women's Community Revitalization Project (W.C.R.P.) to construct new affordable housing along Percy and Hutchinson Streets (between Indiana Ave. and Clearfield Street). Located in West Fairhill, this housing plan has received the support of OHCD and the Redevelopment Authority. WCRP has successfully developed new homes in other sections of North Philadelphia.

Other community development initiatives are in earlier stages of planning. Ebony Development Corporation (a non-profit CDC based in Pittsburgh, PA) is working in conjunction with two established neighborhood based community organizations, H.E.L.P. (Homeless Enrichment Liaison Program) and the Hunting Park Neighborhood Advisory Committee to plan for reuse of the vacant high-rise Buery Building, located at Broad Street & Germantown Avenue. This partnership also has the goal of rehabilitating scattered vacant homes in the East Tioga and Hunting Park neighborhoods. And finally in the area between Broad Street and the Hunting Park, the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge (4301 North Broad Street) has established a community development corporation seeking to acquire and rehabilitate vacant homes in the vicinity of the Lodge. The CDC is known as the Absalom Jones Foundation.



Above: NW corner 13th & Blutler Streets
Below: 600 block Schiller St. (near 7th & Tioga) with Temple medical building in the distance



EXISTING CONDITIONS

The redevelopment area encompasses the West Fairhill, East Tioga and Hunting Park neighborhoods. Total population is approximately 32,000 and the majority of residents are of African-American and Hispanic origin. The Hunting Park neighborhood is named for the 90-acre park located between 9th Street and Old York Road, to the north of Lycoming St. The Fairhill neighborhood name is reflected by the name of the historic Quaker cemetery at 10th & Indiana – the Fair Hill Burial Ground. East Tioga is part of the larger Tioga neighborhood existing on both sides of Broad Street. The area experienced urbanization during the late 1800's and early 1900's when factories were built along major streets or railroad lines and worker housing was constructed on the narrower intermediate streets.

The majority of the area is occupied by single-family row homes. Over the years poverty has increased and housing conditions have worsened. Today the population can be characterized as low income in

some sections and moderate income in other sections of the study area. Household incomes tend to be lower in the southern section, near Lehigh Avenue. Housing vacancy is more prevalent in the southern section, as well.

The area has numerous strengths: excellent highway access and bus/trolley service, abundant parkland,



Buery Building overlooking Broad St. & Germantown Ave.: a vacant high rise building adjacent to commercial district and medical complex

proximity to large employers in the Hunting Park and American Street industrial districts, and relatively good shopping choices. Neighborhood commercial districts are conveniently located along major streets including Erie Avenue, Germantown Avenue and North 5th Street. Larger stores and strip malls exist along the Broad Street corridor. There are some residential areas with high rates of homeownership, and a major institution is located nearby on Broad Street: the campus of the Temple University Health Sciences Center.

The area also has significant problems. Housing vacancy is especially problematic in West Fairhill and East Tioga. Code violations exist at a high level, and the estimated 80-to-100-year-old housing stock is increasingly difficult to maintain. Neighborhood commercial corridors are not perceived to be safe and pleasant places to shop, and they continue to need supportive programs aimed at stabilization and commercial revitalization.

OBJECTIVES

The general goals of this Redevelopment Area Plan are to (1) enable publicly-assisted acquisition in support of community development projects, and (2) provide a framework for present, planned and future redevelopment proposals. Clear land use policies and development priorities will permit the full potential of the study area to be realized. The plan has three specific objectives:

- to encourage rehabilitation of vacant homes and vacant commercial buildings,



Temple University Health Sciences Center is located on Broad Street.

- to eliminate the blighting influence of undesirable land uses by encouraging the redevelopment of vacant land and buildings and underutilized properties, and
- to replace substandard or economically obsolete buildings with new construction where rehabilitation is impractical.

The Redevelopment Area Plan for West Fairhill, East Tioga and Hunting Park contains reuse proposals that are intended to maintain the quality and character of the community and rehabilitate the housing while adding some new residential, institutional, 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.

There are small geographic areas where this redevelopment area overlaps with previously-approved redevelopment areas. In these cases, the previous redevelopment areas are superseded by this Plan.

SUMMARY OF BLIGHT CERTIFICATION STUDY OF JANUARY 2004

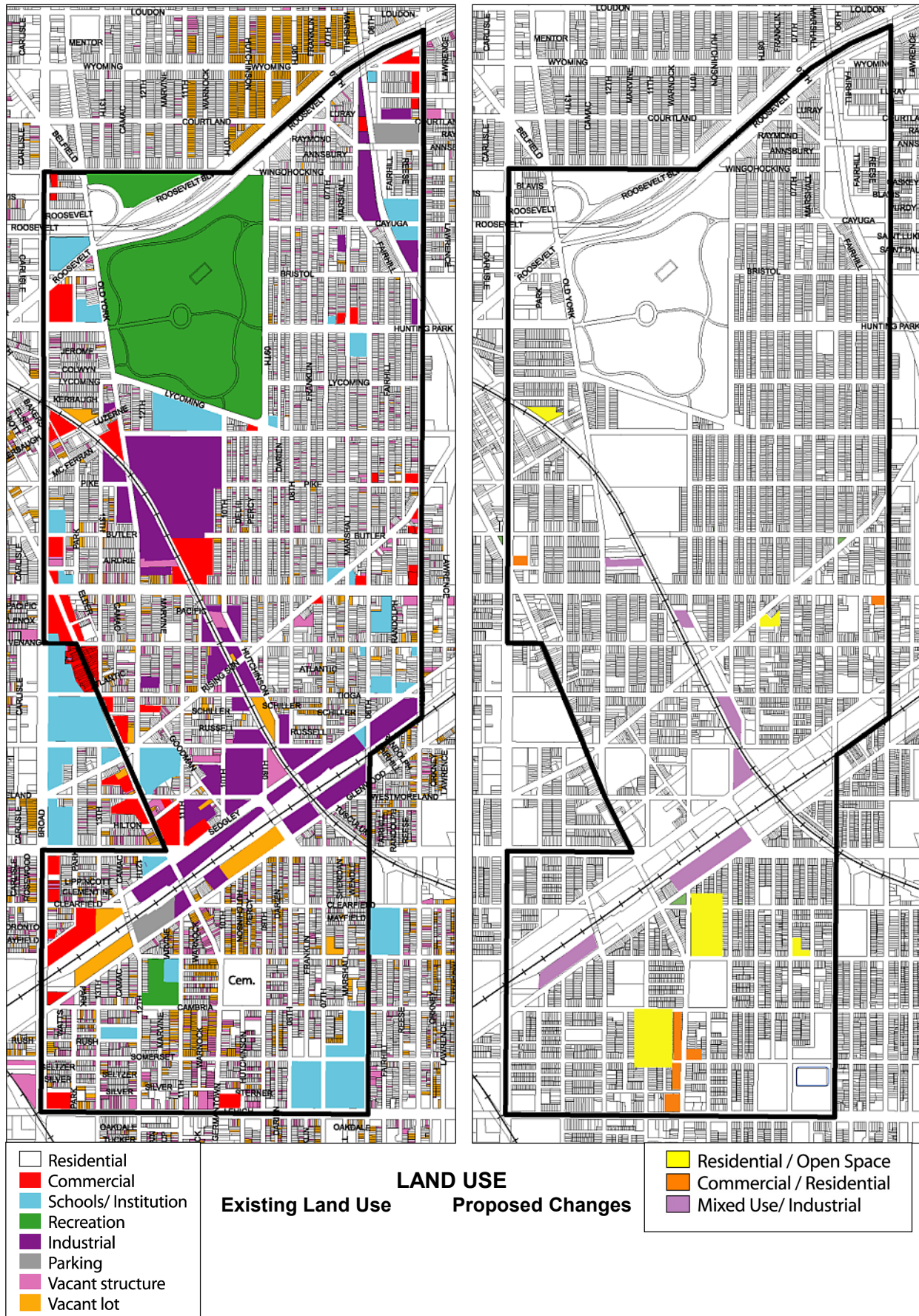
The West Fairhill, East Tioga, Hunting Park area is being certified as blighted by the Planning Commission concurrent with the approval of this Redevelopment Area Plan. Designation for redevelopment is warranted by the following criteria having been satisfied:

- 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 approximately 12,550 properties in the study area, more than 2,200 are vacant. There are 4,448 properties in the area with Code violations as determined by the Department of Licenses & Inspections. Property values are low (generally less than one-half of the citywide median value). There are sections of the area where streets and lots are designed in a manner that is not in accordance with current City standards. It is concluded that blight does exist in the area.

EXISTING LAND USE

Residential is the predominant land use. Commercial uses exist along North Broad Street, Germantown & Erie Avenues. Industrial properties are located near the railroads at the edges of the neighborhood. Schools and public facilities are situated in all three neighborhoods. Public schools in West Fairhill include the Fairhill School in the 600 block of West Somerset Street, the G.C. Clymer School on the 700 block of West Rush Street, and the Julia Deburgos Middle School on Lehigh Avenue. In the East Tioga section, public facilities include the Mary McCleod-Bethune School on the 1100 block of Ontario Street, the R.L. Wright School on the 1100 block of Venango Street and the Bayard Taylor School & Playground on the 500 block of Erie Avenue. The Hunting Park neighborhood is home to the Little Flower Catholic High School for Girls (1000 block of Luzerne Street) and the Alexander McClure School on the 600 block of Hunting Park Avenue. 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 appears on the following page.



PROPOSED LAND USE

The "Proposed Changes in Land Use" map has been prepared to lay the groundwork for appropriate treatment of the major opportunity sites. The Plan encourages housing rehabilitation. It assumes that scattered vacant homes will be renovated and brought back into productive use, except in areas where larger-scale redevelopment is recommended.

Two sites in West Fairhill are recommended for large scale redevelopment: a series of vacant parcels located in the 3000 blocks of North Hutchinson and Percy Streets are recommended for new housing as proposed by WCRP, and another large grouping of vacant parcels on the 2800 blocks of North 11th and Warnock Streets is proposed for residential redevelopment (a land use category which also allows for open space and off-street parking). The 2700 and 2800 blocks of Germantown Avenue are recommended for commercial/ residential reuse and revitalization.

Along the two railroad corridors near 9th & Westmoreland, there are several large vacant buildings and lots that traditionally had been used for industrial activity. Given current business trends, these kinds of tightly-constrained inner city industrial corridors cannot be expected to be entirely successful in attracting major industry in the future. There is a need for greater flexibility when considering future uses. Therefore, vacant and underutilized sites in these corridors are recommended for "mixed-use/ industrial," generally encouraging light industry, warehousing, trucking and truck support, as well as offices, warehouses, commercial, residential or open space. Also located near the railroad is a vacant site at NW corner of 13th & Luzerne Streets. This parcel is recommended for residential use or open space.

The Buery Building is a vacant high-rise office building located at the northeast corner of Broad & Airdrie Streets, near the prominent intersection of Broad, Germantown & Erie Avenues. A well-known North Philadelphia landmark, this historically certified building has remained vacant for more than 20 years. Its location suggests near the Temple/ Children's medical centers indicates that medical offices and employee housing would be viable here. There is some development interest being directed at this building and it is recommended for commercial/ residential rehabilitation. While rehabilitation is preferred, there needs to be recognition that the building has been a highly visible eyesore for decades. Demolition must be considered if rehabilitation is not possible within a reasonable time period.

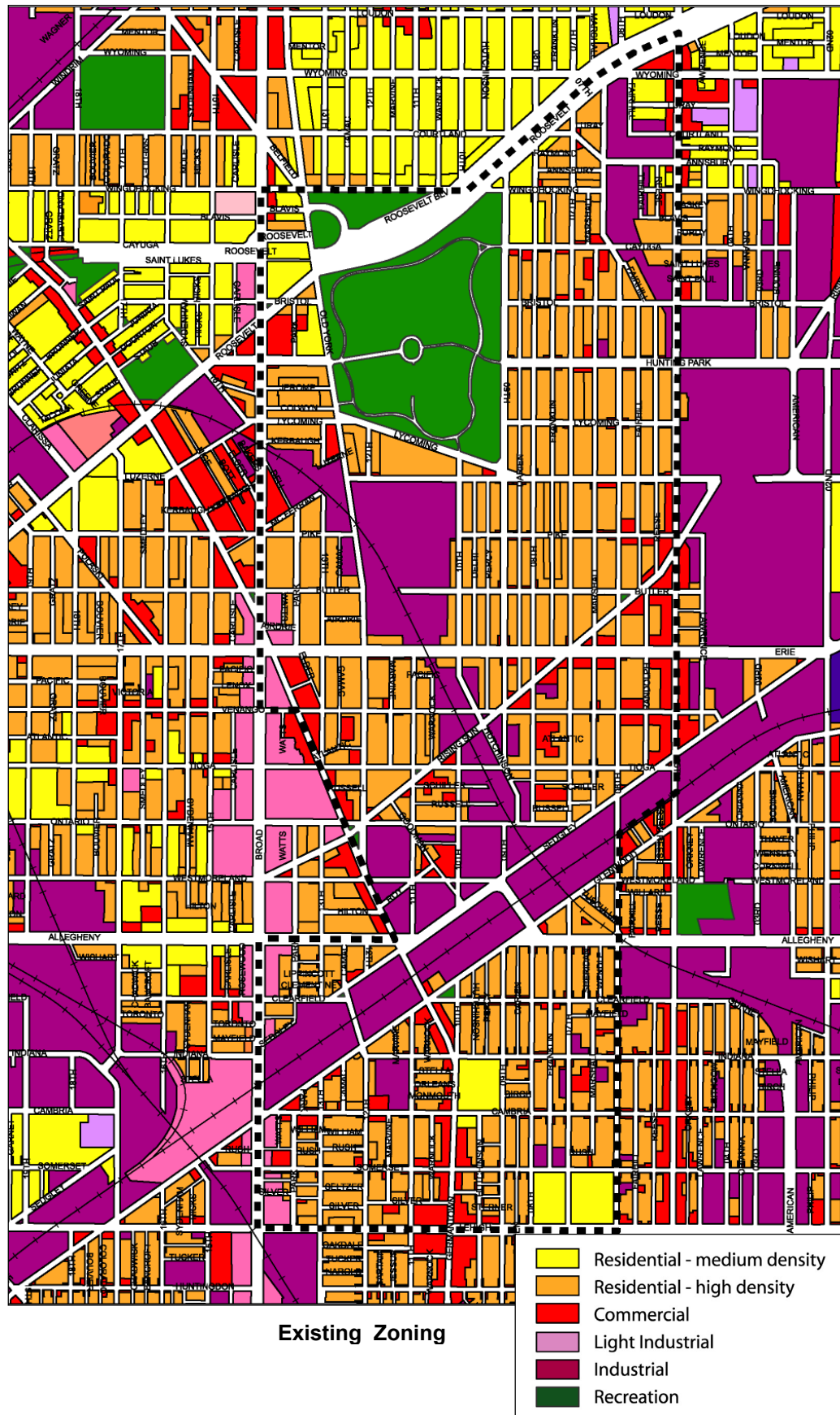
The former SEPTA transportation depot, a large vacant industrially-zoned property at 10th & Luzerne Streets, is planned to be sold to a paper box company. Therefore in the land use plan, it will remain in the industrial use category.

PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

No changes in 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 and residential redevelopment, major goals of this plan, are generally allowed under existing zoning.

PROPOSED STREET CHANGES

No changes in street layout are required at this time. However in the long term, residential redevelopment proposed for the area near 11th, Somerset and Warnock Streets may involve striking of



streets or a new street pattern, depending on final designs. In general, street changes should await further planning and design work for specific development projects.

RELOCATION

No relocation is proposed at this time; however some may be necessary in the future. All relocation will be accomplished in accordance with the terms and conditions of the federal Uniform Relocation Act.

ESTIMATED COSTS OF REDEVELOPMENT

The first phase of redevelopment by WCRP has an estimated development cost of \$8 million. Cost estimates for other projects will be prepared by the Redevelopment Authority, in consultation with CDC's and developers, when the proposed actions 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. On this page, one segment of the site plan is enlarged to highlight the two areas in West Fairhill recommended for redevelopment. The Illustrative Site Plan assumes the future rehabilitation of scattered vacant houses in the redevelopment area.

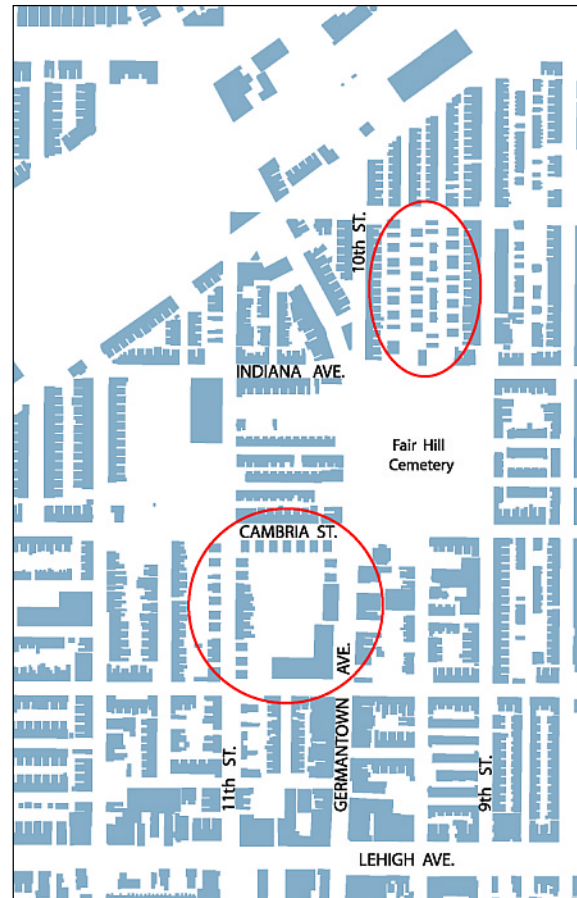
All new construction and rehabilitation should be designed to fit with the existing qualities of the area. In general, new housing should be designed and constructed at lower densities than existed in the original development of the neighborhood.

Although not specifically shown on the Illustrative Site Plan, site improvements are recommended to support the various redevelopment projects that are implemented. New sidewalks, street trees and other similar public improvements should accompany new housing and commercial construction.

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.

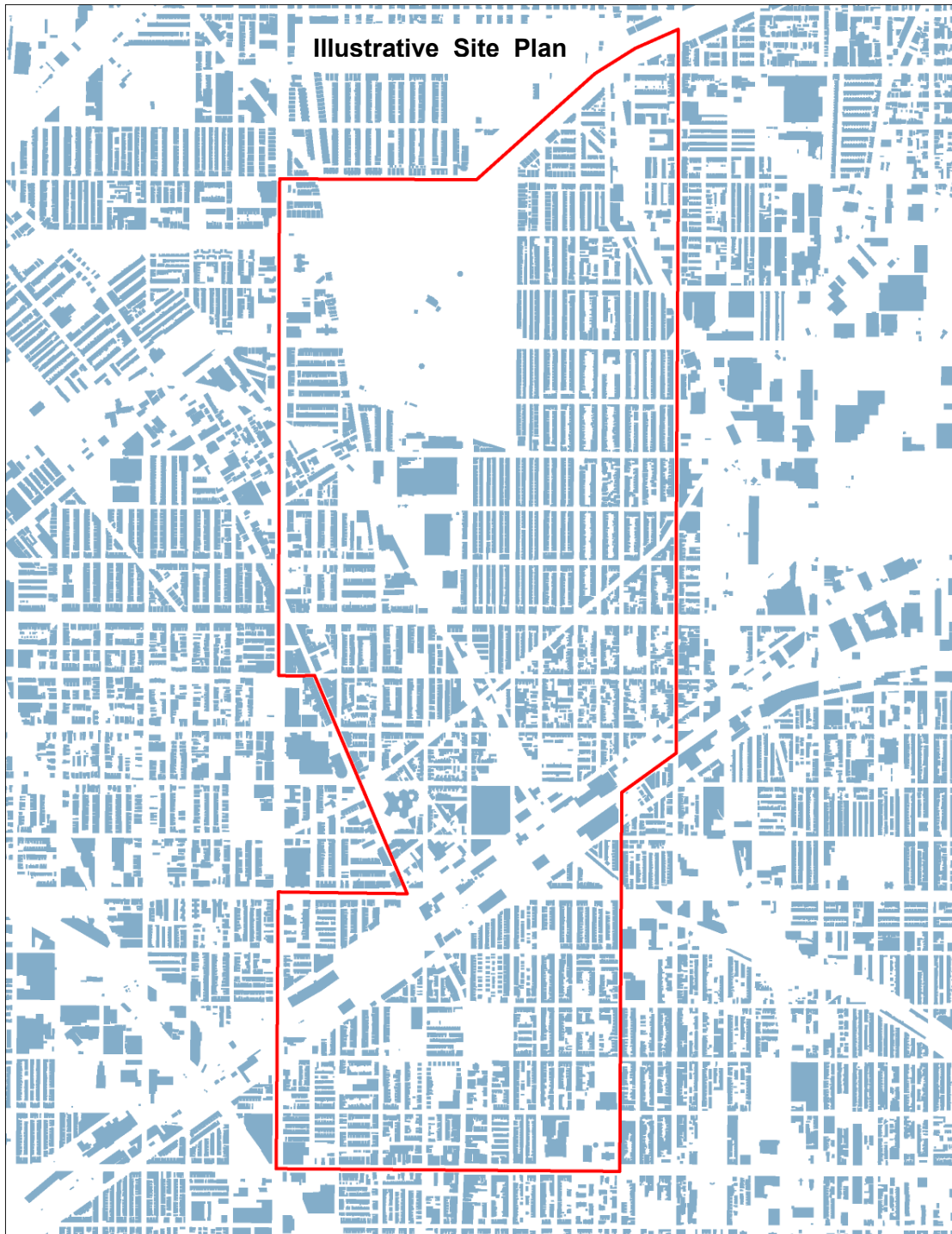
The Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law of 1945, as amended, and the United States Housing Act of 1949, as amended, regulate



A segment of the Illustrative Site Plan; see next page for full plan

redevelopment and urban renewal in the City of Philadelphia.

Redevelopment in the West Fairhill, East Tioga, Hunting Park 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.





Top:
Hunting Park
and homes on 9th Street



Middle:
Hunting Park Avenue,
1300 block between Broad Street
and Old York Road

Bottom:
Cemetery sign,
Germantown & Indiana Avenues;
Robert Purvis is the name
obscured by fence

