

Blight Certification
For the Area Generally Bounded by
Ivy Hill, Broad Street, Cheltenham Avenue and Stenton Avenue

Philadelphia City Planning Commission
May 2005



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

John F. Street, *Mayor*

Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Jeffrey S. Batoff, *Chairman*

David Adelman

Lynette M. Brown-Sow

Patrick J. Eiding

Vincent Jannetti

Gloria Levin

Marcia Moore Makadon

Stephanie Naidoff

Pedro A. Ramos

Maxine Griffith, AICP, *Executive Director*
Richard L. Lombardo, *Deputy Executive Director*

Community Planning Division

Victoria Mason-Ailey, *Division Director*

Richard Redding, *Deputy Director*

Report by:

Esther Ibarra, *Northwest Philadelphia Planner*

Contributions by:

Michael Thompson, *Community Planner*

Brian Wenrich, *Community Planner*

Manisha Gadia, *Student Intern*

Contributor from the GIS/ Graphics Division:

Brian Lightner, *GIS/Graphics Specialist*

**Blight Certification
For the Area Generally Bounded by
Ivy Hill, Broad Street, Cheltenham Avenue, and Stenton Avenue**

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to determine if conditions are present that would warrant a certification of blight for sections of West Oak Lane and Upper Mt. Airy in Northwest Philadelphia. The boundaries of the Blight Certification area are shown on the vacancy map on page four (4). The boundaries generally include the area bounded by Ivy Hill and Upsal Street, Cheltenham Avenue, Old York Road and Broad Street, and Stenton Avenue. Properties abutting either side of the boundary streets are included except for Cheltenham Avenue (City limit).

To the west of Upsal Street, four additional areas are included in the boundaries:

- Cheltenham Avenue corridor: Properties abutting the 2500 through 3200 blocks of Cheltenham Avenue, from Upsal Street to Ivy Hill Road.
- Stenton Avenue corridor: Properties abutting the 6400 through 8300 blocks of Stenton Avenue, from Upsal Street to Ivy Hill Road.
- Wadsworth & Cheltenham commercial area: Properties abutting the 1500 and 1600 blocks of Wadsworth Avenue, also including 8301-49 Pickering Avenue.
- Vernon Road & Greenwood Street area: The predominantly commercial block bounded by Vernon road, Greenwood Street and Fayette Street; also including the area bounded by Cheltenham Avenue, Mt. Pleasant Avenue, Michener Avenue and Vernon Road (former Temple Stadium site).

Blight certification is an early step in the redevelopment process. As a result of this report and other redevelopment approvals, the City plans to assist with acquisition of properties in the area for housing rehabilitation and commercial revitalization. Redevelopment will be carried out primarily by community-based development organizations with support from local elected officials. The blight certification boundary includes two previously certified areas, specifically the Stenton Avenue and Ogontz Avenue Redevelopment Areas. These two earlier certified areas are superseded by this blight certification.

Conceptual redevelopment plans are discussed in a companion document entitled, West Oak Lane Redevelopment Area Plan.

The blight certification study reviews existing conditions in relation to seven criteria used to determine whether blight exists in an area. The criteria are set forth in Pennsylvania Redevelopment Law, which stipulates that only one of the criteria must be met in order for an area to be deemed blighted. The law also states that blighted conditions need not be evident throughout the area under study. The fact that individual properties are free from blight does not make the finding of blight arbitrary, according to the law, because comprehensive planning requires that areas be considered in their entirety and not in their unservable parts.

This report cites specific examples of the conditions listed in 3 of the criteria. Blight does exist in the area.

The study area is located in Northwest Philadelphia and includes the neighborhoods of West Oak Lane and Upper Mt. Airy.

