

**Haddington
Blight Recertification**

Philadelphia City Planning Commission
March 2006

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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Philadelphia City Planning Commission

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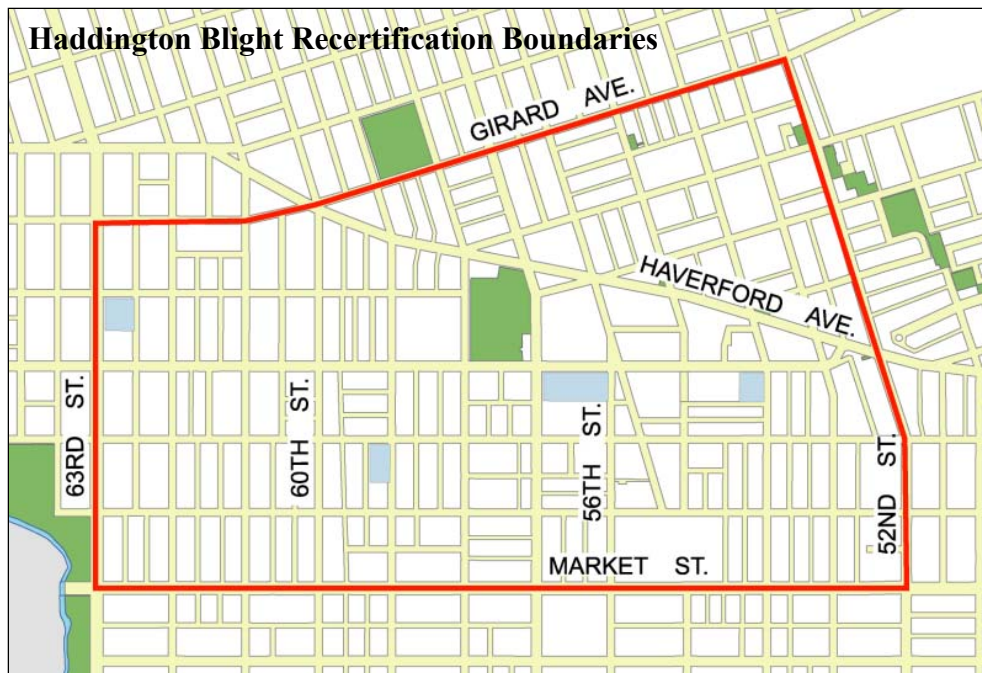
INTRODUCTION

This report presents an evaluation of blight in the Haddington neighborhood of West Philadelphia. The blight recertification boundaries are shown on the map below. The boundaries are Market Street on the south, 63rd Street on the west, Girard Avenue on the north and 52nd Street on the east. Haddington was originally certified as blighted in 1960, and it was certified again in 1963.



This blight 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 Urban Redevelopment Law, which stipulates that only one of these criteria must be met to make a finding of blight in an area. 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 unseverable parts.

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



CRITERIA

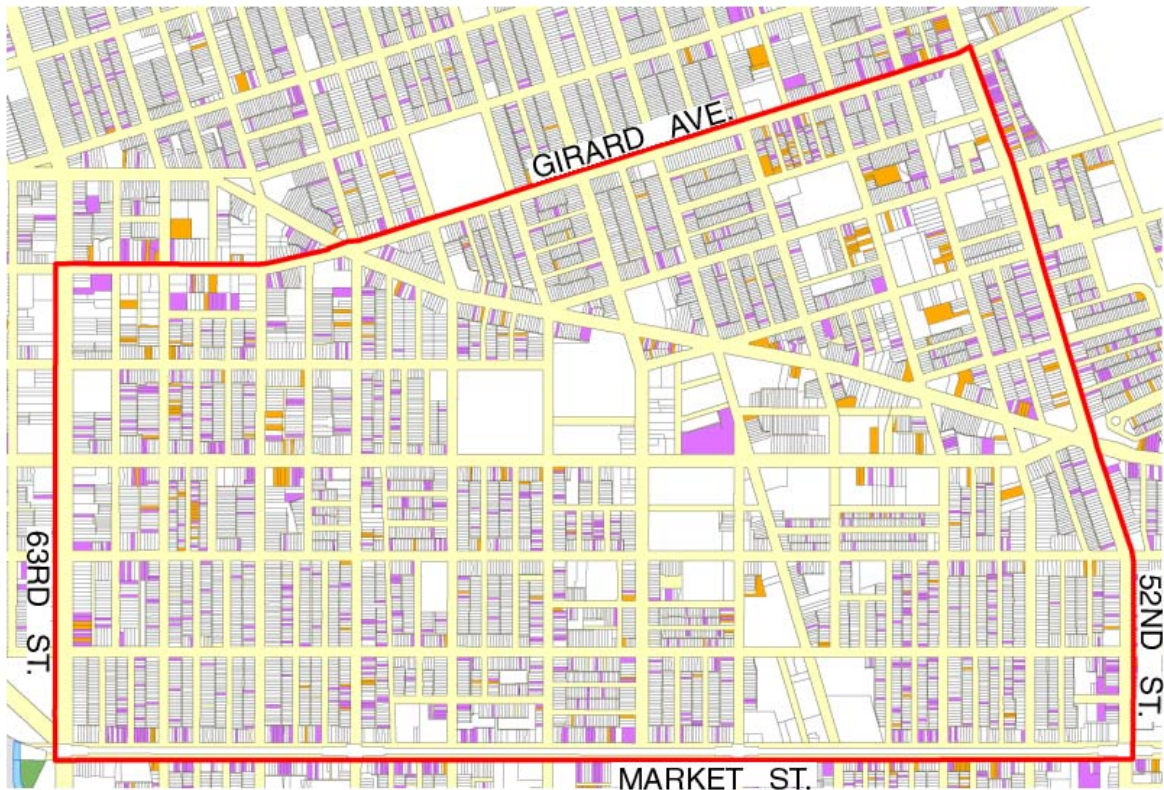
Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law contains the following criteria for establishing the presence of blight in a particular area:

1. Unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate or overcrowded conditions
2. Inadequate planning
3. Excessive land coverage
4. Lack of proper light, air and open space
5. Faulty street and lot layout
6. Defective design and arrangement of buildings
7. Economically or socially undesirable land use

ANALYSIS OF BLIGHT INDICATORS IN HADDINGTON (see tables & map on page 4)

Vacant Properties

A significant number of vacant properties exist in Haddington. The vacancy map (below) shows vacant homes and lots in every section of the neighborhood. In the four Census tracts corresponding with Haddington (tracts 94, 95, 96 and 102), a total of 799 vacant properties were identified in the most recent survey by the Department of Licenses & Inspections. The 2000 Census indicates there were 1,163 vacant dwelling units in the four tracts. This generates vacancy rates for Haddington that are significantly higher than the City rate. A more recent measure of vacancy is available from the US Postal Service, which identified 670 vacant properties in 2004.



Vacancy map showing vacant buildings (lavender color) and vacant lots (in gold).
Source: Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections, 2000.

Vacant properties are evidence of unsafe, unsanitary and inadequate conditions. Vacant lots and homes are safety hazards for children who are looking for places to play. Vacant lots become targets for short-dumping and they often contain trash and debris. In Haddington there are more than 180 vacant lots (source: L&I survey), and many of them are strewn with trash. This is a danger for anybody who ventures onto the site. Dumping and debris attract mosquitoes and vermin, causing poor sanitation and unsafe conditions. Vacant buildings are targets for arson that can threaten occupied homes located nearby. Abandoned properties represent economically and socially undesirable land use because they downgrade the overall physical environment of the neighborhood, reduce the area's vitality and property values, and increase the potential for vandalism, drug dealing and other crimes. Residential abandonment reduces local purchasing power and deprives the neighborhood and the City of revenue through sales taxes, income taxes and real estate taxes.

Code Violations

In Haddington, more than 1,700 properties have Code violations, according to L&I (2004). Code violations can involve maintenance problems, fire hazards, lack of cleanliness, or problems with plumbing and electrical systems. Code violations provide clear evidence of unsafe, inadequate or unsanitary conditions. Code violations constitute economically undesirable land use because the conditions result from a lack of investment by property owners. Code violations have a negative effect on the neighborhood's appearance, desirability and property values.

Property values

As shown in the data on page 4, Haddington's property values are very low in comparison to median values for the City. Property value indicators are provided by the U.S. Census and the Philadelphia Board of Revision of Taxes, and both sources show a significant disparity between Haddington and the City in general. Low property values are evidence of economically undesirable land use. The real estate tax base is reduced when property values are low.



58th Street opposite Cherry Street
BELOW: Yewdall Street near Race Street
BOTTOM: 60th Street near Haverford Avenue



Haddington: Vacancy and Abandonment Indicators

(Sources: US Census, University of Pennsylvania Neighborhood Information System, and the Philadelphia Association of CDCs)

Census Tract	Vacant Properties L&I 2000	Vacant Properties Postal Service 2004	Vacant Units 2000 Census	Vacancy Rate 2000 Census	Code Violation Properties L&I 2004
94	193	173	311	15.7%	428
95	184	193	300	18.1%	510
96	251	236	385	18.3%	492
102	171	68	167	11.4%	311
Total	799	670	1163	--	1741
(City)	--	--	--	(10.9%)	--

Census Tract	Med. Value Owner-Occupied 2000 Census	Median Res. Sale Price BRT 2002
94	\$29,900	\$13,950
95	\$33,500	\$16,500
96	\$34,000	\$17,950
102	\$38,100	\$18,500
(City)	(\$59,700)	(\$55,000)



The four Census tracts occupy the area shown in blue.

CONCLUSION

In Haddington, existing conditions are consistent with two (2) of the criteria necessary to produce a finding of blight under Pennsylvania Redevelopment law. Those criteria are:

1. Unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate or overcrowded conditions
2. Economically or socially undesirable land use

The preceding analysis has demonstrated that the two criteria are satisfied and the area is eligible for recertification.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law, Act of May 24, 1945 (P.L. 991) as amended, authorizes the Philadelphia City Planning Commission to certify as blighted specific areas which may then, in whole or in part, be made the subject of redevelopment proposals formulated by the Redevelopment Authority in accordance with said Act, and

WHEREAS, after substantial review and study, the Commission's staff has presented a report concluding that the area known as Haddington continues to exhibit characteristics of blight as defined by the Act, and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission concurs with the findings and conclusions set forth in said staff report,

NOW THEREFORE on this 30th day of March 2006, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission hereby finds, based upon its staff report dated March 2006 that the Haddington area bounded by Market Street on the south, 63rd Street on the west, Girard Avenue on the north and 52nd Street on the east exhibits the following characteristics of blight as established by Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law:

1. Unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate or overcrowded conditions
2. Economically or socially undesirable land use

and hereby recertifies the above described area as blighted under the terms and provisions of the said Act.