



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

John F. Street Mayor

**Blight Recertification for the area generally bounded by  
Girard Avenue, 52<sup>nd</sup> Street and Lancaster Avenue**

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Philadelphia City Planning Commission  
October 2003

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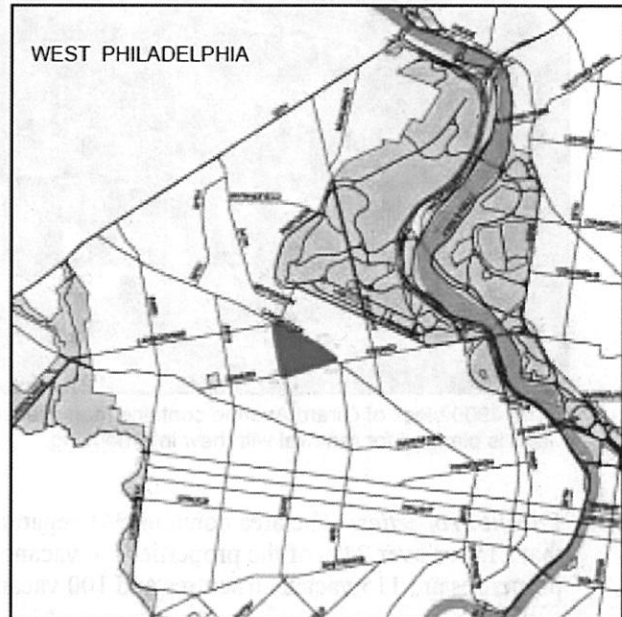
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**INTRODUCTION**

This report presents an evaluation of blight in a section of West Philadelphia known as the “Cathedral Park” neighborhood. The blight recertification boundaries are shown on the map on page 3. The boundaries form a triangular study area. The southern boundary is Girard Avenue. The western boundary is N. 52<sup>nd</sup> Street. The other boundary is the rear of properties fronting on the south side of Lancaster Avenue. Lancaster Avenue properties are part of an adjoining redevelopment area certified in 1997, known as the Parkside-Lancaster Redevelopment Area.

The blight recertification boundaries are entirely within the West Philadelphia Redevelopment Area as certified on August 20, 1963, with subsequent amendments. This 1963 certification is superseded only within the above-mentioned boundaries by this recertification.

The study area is relatively small in size, comprising 40 acres and 16 city blocks. The neighborhood has a population of approximately 2,000 persons, and it is well represented by a neighborhood association involved in planning, housing, commercial revitalization and neighborhood revitalization. Improving the neighborhood will require City assistance in the form of property acquisitions through the urban renewal process. This blight recertification, using updated information and documentation, is an early step in the urban renewal process. The initial project to be advanced will be the renewal of the 4900 block of Girard Avenue. Properties will be assembled for new construction of homes for first-time homebuyers. Funding will be provided by the Office of Housing and Community Development and the City’s Empowerment Zone Office.



The study area is shown in red; centrally located in West Phila.

The recertification 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 four of the criteria. Blight does exist in the area.