

Mr. R. E. Landers

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CAN COUNT ON ONE PROJECT APPROVAL ANNUALLY DESPITE FUNDS SQUEEZE, EDMUNDS GIVES ASSURANCE

Speaking informally to our executive committee for the first time May 24,

John T. Edmunds, HUD assistant regional administrator for renewal assistance, told us that Atlanta could reasonably expect approval of one new urban renewal project annually, despite the existing squeeze in federal funds. Said Mr. Edmunds: "It now looks as though Congress will appropriate \$750,000,000 for urban renewal nationally for the new fiscal year. This is the same amount as for the past two years. That would seem to mean that Atlanta could count on one additional project being approved each year, exclusive of the model neighborhood program. As it now looks, the second Georgia Tech project probably will be financed. Administrator Edmunds added that HUD is seeking to work out a priority plan for financing of projects in this region. He pointed out that the demand for federal financing of urban renewal in the region already is three times the supply of money available. He stressed the point that top priority would be given projects which are designed to center on residential reuse with low and moderate income housing. Institutional projects, such as Georgia Tech and Georgia State would receive moderately high priority.

CODE ENFORCEMENT TYPE PROGRAMS PRESENT NEW OPPORTUNITIES, ADMINISTRATOR POINTS OUT

The code enforcement type programs offer cities new opportunities

for action, Mr. Edmunds also mentioned. He pointed out that the federal government assumes two-thirds of the cost of these programs, plus site improvement. He explained that particularly suitable for such programs are areas where little demolition is required. He singled out Grove Park area in Atlanta as suitable for this type of program. Mr. Edmunds stressed the point that HUD's regional headquarters is eager to see Atlanta's pioneer projects closed out and that it now appears that this may be possible for Butler Street, University Center and Thomasville within the coming year.

WORK OF JOINING BEDFORD-BUTTERMILK PROJECTS APPROACHING FINAL STAGE, PERSELLS REPORTS

In reply to a question at the May 24 executive committee meeting,

Lester H. Persells, AHA redevelopment director, said that the work of combining the Buttermilk Bottoms and Bedford-Pine projects into a single project now is in the last stage of its first part. The proposal should be turned over to the regional HUD headquarters within two months, he estimated. Mr. Persells also made the point that the city should receive a non cash credit of two and a quarter million dollars in the combined project for the new municipal auditorium and exhibition hall. He also called to the attention of our executive committee that the Citizens and Southern National Bank had obtained a ruling from the comptroller of the currency that bank funds may be used to assist non profit organizations in building low rent housing and 221 D-3 type housing. This opens up an entirely new financing channel, he explained.

LANDERS, GLADIN, HOWLAND HAND DELIVER WORKABLE PROGRAM DOCUMENT TO ADMINISTRATOR

Shortly before noon on May 18, R. Earl Landers, administrative assistant

to Mayor Allen, Collier Gladin, city planning director, and William S. Howland, our executive director, stepped into Room 645 of the Peachtree-Seventh Building to deliver a most important document with illustrative maps to Ed Baxter, regional HUD administrator. The blue bound document, which weighed one pound and was three-fourths of an inch thick, was Atlanta's application for recertification of its workable program for community improvement. This is the basic "charter" under which federal urban renewal funds are made available.

With Regional Administrator Baxter to receive the application were S. Frederick Smith, assistant regional administrator for program coordination and service, and George Papageorge, director of workable program branch. As Mr. Landers handed the document to Mr. Baxter, it was pointed out that delivery was being accomplished 14 days ahead of the June 1 deadline. Included in the application was a four page condensed summary of our committee's activities, supported by various data and photographs. The summary pointed out that during the past year Memphis and Jacksonville had sent their advisory directors to Atlanta to study our citizen participation methods and that a large delegation of South Carolina officials had come to Atlanta for a program arranged by our committee.

NASH-BANS AREA MEETING JUNE 6

meeting of citizens of the Nash-Bans area (formerly called Vine City) will be held at 7:30 p. m. on June 6 in the Cosmopolitan Church. Purpose is to determine if citizens are interested in and will support future designation of the area as an urban renewal project. Mayor Allen and Alderman Cook will be among the speakers.

Our executive committee was informed that a

HOPES FOR MODEL CITY WORD JULY 1, FEELS CHANCES GOOD, GLADIN SAYS

grant are good, Collier Gladin, city planning engineer, told our executive committee he hoped to receive word on the model neighborhood program by July 1. Mr. Gladin also briefly discussed the city's application for recertification of its workable program. He explained that the annual application had become more of a progress report than in previous years and, as such, it was put together this year by two Planning Department staff members. He also expressed appreciation of the cooperation shown by other departments. Referring to the model neighborhood application, Mr. Gladin explained that the type of program to be launched would depend on the amount of money made available. He told our executive committee that the Community Improvement Program is now in its home stretch. The aldermanic planning and development committee is holding three special meetings to review final CIP reports. Mr. Gladin also reported that during the morning of May 24 he had joined Mayor Allen and Rodney Cook, chairman of the aldermanic planning and development committee, in taking Charles Haar, assistant secretary of HUD for metropolitan development, on a tour of Atlanta and a discussion of the city's problems.

Saying he thought that Atlanta's chances of obtaining a planning

REGIONAL ACTION SEEN AS ESSENTIAL ON PROBLEMS REACHING BEYOND CITY

many problems for which solutions are sought in Atlanta reach out over areas that do not have workable programs. Pointing out that two of these are housing and transportation. Mr. Gladin mentioned to Mr. Papageorge that such problems were a matter of concern to the planning department. Dan E. Sweat, city director of governmental liaison, joined in to emphasize the point that the city is directly affected by what takes place all over the metro area and stressed the importance of getting other parts of the area to formulate workable programs. He also made the point that areas that receive federal assistance for other programs should share in efforts to solve the housing problem.

In a discussion following Mr. Gladin's talk, it was brought out that

CORE CITY HELP, VACANT LAND USE DISCUSSED IN SPIRITED Q & A SESSION

answer session. Executive Committeeman Bob Bivens asked why residential renewal was being given preference over help to central core areas. In reply, Mr. Edmunds said that central city projects were very costly, but added that cities which have a good record in low rent housing stand better chances of getting help for core projects. Member John Wilson requested clarification on policies for locating low income housing. He asked why such housing should not be placed on land presently vacant, such as in the Nash-Bans area (formerly known as Vine City). In reply Mr. Edmunds made the point that present policy seeks to put new housing in areas other than those known to be preponderantly occupied by one race.

Following his remarks, Mr. Edmunds participated in a lively question and

Executive Committeeman William L. Calloway offered the comment that one thought regarding the Nash-Bans situation was that there were other areas available for such housing. Said he "What is known as ghettoing, and I'll not try to define that word, contributes to the continuation of old slums or the formation of new slums." Mr. Calloway recalled that when the Butler Street project went into execution, his realty company alone transferred a thousand families to the Carroll Heights section. In reply to a second question from Mr. Wilson as to what becomes of vacant land, Mr. Calloway emphasized that this was an old problem to which we are continually seeking solutions. Said he with a smile "There is no finger pointing at anyone". Chairman Sommerville concluded the discussion by commenting "Sooner or later, we are going to have to come to a policy of open housing. Over a long period of time, that will sort of work out a solution to the entire problem, but it is not a short job."

ATLANTA PROGRESS IN CODE ENFORCEMENT
WINS HIGH PRAISE FROM PAPAGEORGE

"Atlanta is really moving forward." That note of high commendation for

the city's advance in code enforcement was struck by George Papageorge, regional HUD director of workable program branch, in speaking to our executive committee May 24. Said he "When the federal housing act was revised three years ago, the housing code provisions gave the cities three years to get set and put their plans into operation. That's just what Atlanta has done. The budget for code enforcement has been raised from \$690,000 to \$1,028,000. The staff has been increased from 99 to 128 employes. We can recall that previously there had been some prodding from HHFA -- and this has not been without results. The records for the eight states in this region shows that 117,000 units have been brought into compliance with workable program standards and that 32,000 additional units unfit for human habitation have been demolished. Right here in Atlanta, 24,000 units have been brought up to code standards and 3,500 units have been demolished. It is very significant that 24,000 units have been brought up to standards. This is the practical way of protecting neighborhoods from deterioration. Rehabilitation is better than demolition because it does not reduce the number of units and displace people. That figure of 24,000 includes only those reported by inspectors. In addition, many have been repaired by property owners without receiving citations." Mr. Papageorge concluded on a warning note saying "There can be no let up on the program of rehabilitation. It must be carried on permanently. For once a neighborhood has been rehabilitated, it is necessary to go back and reinspect it to keep it from deteriorating again. This should be done every two to five years."

HUD OFFICIAL ACCLAIMS COMMITTEE
FOR "EXCELLENT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION"

Explaining that Atlanta's application for recertification of its workable

program was now being reviewed, Mr. Papageorge praised the city's action in making increases to its code inspection staff and commented that there would be no question about approval of the codes section of the application. Then he paid our committee a high tribute. Said he "And there is no question about citizen participation. Atlanta's record on this is excellent. A substantial part of the credit for this excellent record is due to this committee's work."

EDITORIAL COMMENDS CHAIRMAN'S POINT

Saying that he had been impressed by evidences

of individual fixing up that he had seen in the Summerhill area, Chairman Sommerville made the point that all over Atlanta there were little things that could be done by private citizens on their own as well as by the city. On May 28, the Atlanta Journal and Constitution commended our chairman's point. Said the editorial in part: "Little things mean a lot as the song, always, and Robert Sommerville, sometimes, reminds us. Mr. Sommerville issued his most recent reminder of that fact as chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Urban Renewal. The city is apparently making some progress on providing equal service to all citizens. Many things do get done that should be done. It is not a bad thing, however, to be reminded that a better job should be done. And Mr. Sommerville has done the city that service admirably."