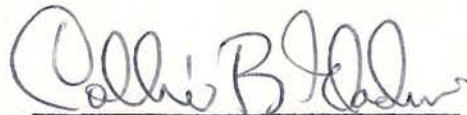


CITY OF ATLANTA PLANNING DEPARTMENT

OFFICIAL POSITION PAPER

RELATION OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT TO MODEL CITIES EXECUTIVE BOARD AND STAFF
—— PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ——

Respectfully submitted,



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Planning Director

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The purpose of this paper is to identify certain problems which have arisen in the comprehensive planning process in Atlanta over the past year. The problem centers around a misunderstanding of the responsibilities of the Model Cities Program staff and Executive Board in relation to the responsibilities of Planning and Development Committee and its professional staff arm, the Planning Department. In November 1967, the Planning and Development Committee of the Board of Aldermen sponsored and recommended approval of a resolution establishing the Model Cities Executive Board. This resolution was subsequently adopted by the Board and approved by the Mayor on November 20, 1967. The resolution specifically stated that "the Model Neighborhood Executive Board is hereby created for the purpose of administering the planning phase of (the Model Neighborhood) program."

The Planning Department invested a great deal of time and effort both in preparing the Model Neighborhood Application and subsequently in assisting in developing the Model Neighborhood Plan. In fact, much of the material contained in all the Model Cities reports and applications originated and was refined in the Planning Department by its staff personnel. It was and still is our intention to work closely with the Model Cities staff in assuring the success

of this program. There appears now to be a lack of understanding on the part of the Model Cities staff as to the role and responsibility of the Planning and Development Committee and the Planning Department. The committee, using the department as its staff arm, is charged with the responsibility of reviewing all plans and programs concerned with urban growth, development, and redevelopment throughout the city. The Model Cities Program, on the other hand, is a special purpose six neighborhood demonstration program primarily concerned with one tenth of the city's residents and less than five per cent of the city's area. For consistency sake, obviously the Planning and Development Committee should review the physical programs, plans and proposals developed by this agency for the Model Neighborhood area as it would review plans and programs of any other area of the city for conformance with overall city policy and goals. The Planning Department's concern is not control over the Model Cities Program. Instead, the department is simply exercising those functions for which it is responsible as staff arm to the Planning and Development Committee and as set forth in the Code of the City of Atlanta. The department, as a general planning agency, must have the opportunity to review plans. When in the department's professional judgment inadvisable proposals have been advocated that lack any justification in view of existing city policy, then the department must have the opportunity of reporting such situations with positive recommendations for improvement to the Planning and Development Committee

and eventually the Board of Aldermen.

We had assumed at the beginning that conflicts could be resolved through a close inter-staff relationship between the city planning agency and the Model Cities agency. Unfortunately and frequently, because of conflict communications have broken down and this has not been achieved. The source of conflict has been a disagreement over the necessary degree of conformity between Model City plans and programs and City overall goals and objectives. The Planning Department has attempted to explore and resolve this problem with the Model Cities staff. However, the Model Cities staff seems to interpret this action as a Planning Department attempt to run their program. An analysis of their lack of understanding indicates no apparent realization of the fact that the planning effort for a portion of the city should be coordinated with the city's overall planning effort. It is important to point out here that we are not attempting to stifle the Model Cities Program or to prevent innovative approaches to problem solving. To take such a view ignores the fact that through the leadership and effort of the Planning Department, with much assistance from other agencies, Atlanta was awarded one of the first Model Cities Grants in the nation.

Perhaps this whole misunderstanding is based on the Model Cities staff's perception of the Planning Department as a line department. Planning transcends traditional departmental lines, is a staff function, and established responsibilities as defined in the Code of the City of Atlanta must be met. One of HUD's underlying goals for the Model Cities Program was to bring into clear focus

problems in governmental organization. The department has been well aware of such problems in the Atlanta governmental system as witnessed in the PAS report, a product of the CIP and planning. Though that report found fault with the governmental system, it indicated that the present system has worked very well, primarily on the basis of mutual trust and cooperation. In order to avoid further conflicts it is imperative that such a cooperative atmosphere be established. It is inadvisable that the aldermanic committee system be used at times and ignored at others, depending on which happens to serve one's purpose best at a particular time. It is difficult enough to make the system work now. The proposed approach being offered by the Model Cities Program (which is to ignore the aldermanic committee system) would invite chaos, unless a suitable and acceptable overall reform is accomplished.

The Planning and Development Committee expressed its concern over this problem in its meeting of January 17, 1969. Chairman Cook asked the Model Cities director several questions concerning the role of the Planning and Development Committee, other aldermanic committees, and city departments in the Model Cities Program. Mr. Johnson took the position that the Model Cities Executive Board would report to the full Board of Aldermen through the two aldermanic members of the Executive Board. This procedure, in effect, bypasses the Planning and Development Committee and to a large extent ignores the aldermanic standing committee concept under which the Atlanta City Government presently operates. In effect, the Model Cities area is thus

treated as a separate entity, apart from the total city. It offers no opportunity for the Planning and Development Committee to review Model Cities plans and to make recommendations to the Board of Aldermen concerning plan conformity with city general plans. Chairman Cook further indicated that the Planning Department had certain reservations about physical plans for the Model Cities area and asked what role would be played by the Planning Department in further testing plans for the area. Mr. Johnson stated that he felt the physical plans for 1969 required no change. Here lies the crux of the problem. Mr. Cook stated that the Planning Department was responsible for all planning activities throughout the city, therefore, the Planning and Development Committee has the responsibility to review and evaluate physical plans developed for the Model Cities area.

This paper deals with a confrontation in responsibilities between the Model Cities staff and Executive Board, the Planning Department and Planning and Development Committee of the Board of Aldermen. We strongly suspect that the fundamental problems and issues involved here could spread. Thus, other confrontations could develop between other departments and their aldermanic committees and the Model Cities staff and Executive Board.

In this light, we offer the following recommendations:

The adoption of a formal review procedure by the Board of Aldermen that is consistent with the existing aldermanic committee system is warranted. In other words, every resolution, ordinance, etc., when introduced into the Board

of Aldermen meeting, must be referred to a standing committee of the Board of Aldermen unless such a rule of procedure is waived by majority vote of the full Board of Aldermen. A time limit on the period of review by the standing committee of the Board of Aldermen could be specified. As with all issues concerning the city, the matter will eventually be resolved on its merits by the full Board of Aldermen.

The value of such formal review procedure by the Board of Aldermen should be fairly apparent. It keeps the appropriate aldermanic committees and department staffs informed of proposals and offers an opportunity for reviewing, making recommendations and achieving coordination.

As mentioned earlier, to ignore the aldermanic committee system is to invite chaos, unless a suitable and acceptable overall reform is accomplished. A second alternative approach to the current situation would be to immediately move toward establishing a Department of Administration in the Mayor's Office as recommended by the PAS Report. Such a department would include the following functions: Planning, Budgeting and Management, Personnel, Public Information, and Data Processing. The Model Cities Program, with its innovative approaches and demonstrations, would serve as a testing vehicle for administrative and technical purposes and would be responsible to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen through the Department of Administration.

- EXHIBITS

Chapter 32

✓ URBAN RENEWAL*

- Sec. 32-1. Duties of planning department.
- Sec. 32-2. Duties of planning engineer.
- Sec. 32-3. Determination of phasing and of allocations to be devoted to project areas.
- Sec. 32-4. Determination of locations of projects.
- Sec. 32-5. Rezoning recommendations.
- Sec. 32-6. Processing applications embracing subdivisions, requests for building permits.
- Sec. 32-7. Commitments by builders.
- Sec. 32-8. Minimum structural requirements.
- Sec. 32-9. Varying specifications in description of materials.
- Sec. 32-10. Designation of changes in "description of materials".
- Sec. 32-11. Restriction on issuance of building permits.
- Sec. 32-12. Technical committee.
- Sec. 32-13. Reserved.

✓ Sec. 32-1. Duties of planning department.

Urban renewal activities of the city shall be conducted in the department of planning under the general supervision of the mayor and board of aldermen through the planning and development committee. The department of planning shall study the urban renewal requirements of the city, to determine ways and means for their accomplishment, and to promote and facilitate timely coordination and orderly development of urban renewal plans, projects and other related activities throughout the city. (Cum. Supp., § 56A.3; Ord. of 6-1-64, § 2; Ord. of 12-21-64)

Editor's note—The planning and development committee has been substituted for the urban renewal committee in §§ 32-1, 32-2 and 32-13, pursuant to Ord. of Dec. 21, 1964 abolishing the urban renewal committee and transferring its functions to the planning and development committee.

✓ Sec. 32-2. Duties of planning engineer.

The planning engineer shall devote particular attention to the requirements and commitments of the "workable program", as defined in the National Housing Act of 1954, as amended, and shall call upon the various departments, agen-

*Cross references—Minimum housing standards, § 15-21 et seq.; responsibility of department of building inspector relative to demolition of buildings, § 8-12; director of urban renewal emeritus, § 21-75(y).

State law reference—Powers of municipalities as to urban renewal, Ga. Code, Ch. 69-11.

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cies and agents of the city, as required, to carry out their responsibilities thereunder to include annual revisions for recertifications of the "workable program". The planning engineer shall insure coordination of capital improvement projects with urban renewal project plans in order to obtain the best possible advantage for the city. He shall frequently consult with the mayor and chairman of the planning and development committee of the board of aldermen and keep them informed as to urban renewal requirements and the state of development of the city's urban renewal plans, and shall make recommendations thereon for facilitating progress of urban renewal in the city. (Cum. Supp., § 56A.3; Ord. of 6-1-64, § 2; Ord. of 12-21-64)

Note—See editor's note following § 32-1.

Sec. 32-3. Determination of phasing and all allocations to be devoted to project areas.

The planning department, in coordination with the housing authority of the city, will determine the phasing considered desirable for construction of F.H.A. 221 housing allocations and what portions thereof, if any, should be devoted to urban renewal project areas, and shall make recommendations accordingly to local F.H.A. officials. (Cum. Supp., § 56A.4; Ord. of 6-1-64, § 2)

Sec. 32-4. Determination of locations of projects.

The planning department will study proposed locations for such projects and determine those considered most suitable from the city's standpoint for 221 housing projects and shall coordinate thereon with local F.H.A. officials. (Cum. Supp., § 56A.5; Ord. of 6-1-64, § 2)

Sec. 32-5. Rezoning recommendations.

The Atlanta-Fulton County joint planning board will make timely recommendations to the zoning committee for rezoning such areas as it considers appropriate in order to facilitate the 221 housing program. (Cum. Supp., § 56A.6; Ord. of 12-21-64)

Editor's note—Ord. of Dec. 21, 1964 redesignated the planning and zoning committee as the zoning committee.
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recommendations with references to civil defense; to supervise the expenditure of appropriations made to civil defense by the city for civil defense purposes, and to handle all matters in connection therewith. (Code 1953, § 28.11; Ord. No. 1966-46, § 2, 6-20-66)

Amendment note—Ord. No. 1966-46, § 2, enacted June 20, 1966, and effective December 31, 1966, amended § 2-39 to add the provisions codified herein as subsection (b).

Cross references—Duty to grant permits to places selling sandwiches, soft drinks, §§ 17-159, 17-160; duty to formulate rules and regulations for police department, § 25-1(a); duty to pass on permits and licenses, § 25-1(b).

Sec. 2-40. Special duty of finance committee relative to annual tax ordinance.

In addition to the powers, duties and authority set forth in sections 2-29 and 2-31, the finance committee shall prepare and report to the mayor and board of aldermen the annual tax ordinance. (Code 1953, § 28.12)

Cross references—Duty of building and electric lights committee to supervise department of building inspector, § 8-3; power of tax committee to cancel business license penalties and fi. fa. costs, § 17-24; petitions for license to peddle articles not enumerated in annual tax ordinance to be referred to finance committee, § 17-323.

Sec. 2-40.1. Planning and development committee.

(a) *Creation.* A committee of the board of aldermen is hereby created to be entitled the planning and development committee.

(b) *Membershsip.* The planning and development committee shall be composed of six members and a chairman (total of seven) to be appointed by the mayor. The mayor shall appoint the planning and development committee so that a representation is obtained of aldermanic committees concerned with community development, redevelopment and improvements.

(c) *Functions, responsibilities.* This planning and development committee shall have the primary responsibility to review and coordinate the long range plans and programs of all city efforts in the fields of community development, redevelopment, facilities and improvements, and to make suggestions to other appropriate aldermanic committees or recommend actions and policies for adoption by the board of aldermen to

insure maximum coordination and the highest quality of urban community development. This responsibility shall include the review and evaluation of the elements of the comprehensive (general) plan development by the planning department with guidance from the Atlanta-Fulton County Joint Planning Board; this comprehensive plan to be composed of at least a land-use plan, a major thoroughfare plan and a community facilities plan with public improvements program. The committee shall further be responsible for developing policy recommendations on all other matters concerning the planning and coordination of future city developments including, specifically, the community improvements program (CIP), the 1962 Federal Highway Act, the workable program for community improvement, urban renewal preliminary and project plans, and other related urban renewal matters. (Ord. of 12-21-64)

Editor's note—Ord. of Dec. 21, 1964, from which § 2-40.1 is derived, did not expressly amend this Code, hence the manner of codification was at the discretion of the editors. That part of said ordinance abolishing the urban renewal committee and providing for transfer of its functions and activities to the planning and development committee, has not been codified as part of this section.

Sec. 2-40.2. Urban renewal policy committee; membership.

There is hereby established a standing committee of the board of aldermen to be known as the urban renewal policy committee, to consist of five (5) members of the board of aldermen, to be appointed by the mayor, including the chairman, the vice-chairman and one other regular member of the planning and development committee, and two members to be appointed by the chairman of the Housing Authority of the city. (Ord. of 1-18-65)

Editor's note—Ord. of Jan. 18, 1965 did not expressly amend this Code, hence the manner of codification was at the discretion of the editors. The preamble to said ordinance recited the fact that said committee, pursuant to resolution, is coordinating urban renewal activities and programs between the city and its urban renewal agent, the housing authority.

Sec. 2-41. Duties of zoning committee.

The duties of the zoning committee shall be to hold any public hearing required to be held by the provisions of the Zoning and Planning Act of the General Assembly of Georgia approved January 31, 1946, and contained in Georgia Laws

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