

A Report of Citizen Participation in the  
Pittsburg Community

The Pittsburg Neighborhood Service Center, as is true of all other centers, has a citizen's advisory committee, whose primary function is to keep the staff of the center advised on changing needs and suggested remedies. Since the Pittsburg Neighborhood Service Center is still operating with a temporary committee, and is only now holding elections for its first permanent committee, the ad hoc committee in this community is much larger and has a broader base than normal. The prior function of this group had been to generate sufficient community concern and interest, and to demonstrate to EOA Headquarters a need for a center in the Pittsburg Community. To this end, meetings were held over a period of a year during which all of the committees and sub-committees functioned.

When the Pittsburg Neighborhood Service Center opened, this temporary committee continued to advise. Representing approximately four hundred (400) people, this group has been able to give direction to the center from a variety of experiences, and from a general knowledge of community problems. Things for which this community is or has been directly responsible are:

- 1 - recommendations for indigeneous and indigent persons to be employed
- 2 - determination of priorities of service
- 3 - selection of site
- 4 - advocates for the center.



A further evidence of citizen involvement may be demonstrated by the neighborhood elections which are now in progress. The entire community, which has been subdivided into groups called area blocks, is at work electing persons to represent them on a permanent committee, and this is being accomplished via the same procedure used in all local and national elections. The same machines used in general elections are being used in these neighborhood elections, and the same registration procedures are being employed. After a survey conducted by the center staff, and after finding that voter registration did not account for a reasonable percentage of the total community population, the ad hoc committee of the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Service Center felt that in conjunction with the election process, some emphasis should be placed on voter registration. In all of these instances, the entire staff of the center has operated both at the direction of the committee, and in response to the obvious need for organization.

One major project, which is still continuing, is a cooperative effort of the center and the Pittsburgh Civic League toward the acquisition of a community center. The extension and housing departments, along with the director, have had plans drawn up, inspected sites and written proposals, all at the direction of the Pittsburgh Civic League. Contact has been made with Dr. Phillip Weltner of The Whitehead Foundation with the hope that funds for this project may be made available. Due to some difficulty with a will, the first choice was reluctantly rejected. Title searches are in process to determine the availability of other sites, and, hopefully, the Pittsburgh Civic League will be able to realize this ambition in the very near future.

There are other instances of general community involvement which are usually on a smaller scale, and would require a more specific and numerical presentation.

All of the above are submitted as examples of the involvement of the Pittsburg Community through the Pittsburg Neighborhood Service Center in the solution of their own problems.