

January 31, 1969

A meeting of the Planning and Development Committee of the Board of Aldermen was held on Friday, January 31, 1969 at 2:30 P. M. in Committee Room #2, Second Floor, City Hall.

All committee members were present as follows:

Rodney Cook, Chairman
Gregory Griggs, Vice Chairman
John Flanigen
Charlie Leftwich
Jack Summers
Q. V. Williamson
George Cotsakis

Other Aldermen present:

Everett Millican, Fifth Ward
Sam Massell, Vice Mayor

Other city officials, department heads, representatives of civic organizations, the Atlanta Housing Authority, Model Cities Program, and the press were also present.

Chairman Cook explained the purpose of the meeting is to meet with a group of Congressmen from predominately rural and suburban areas to provide them with an opportunity to see and discuss first hand the problems of our inner cities and to assess the adequacy of current Federal programs in alleviating urban problems. This tour is being sponsored by the United States Conference of Mayors and is intended to be educational, rather than investigative. He then recognized and welcomed to the meeting the following people:

Honorable Wendell Wyatt, (R) Oregon
Honorable James Mann, (D) South Carolina
Honorable James Hastings, (R) New York
Honorable Paul McCloskey, (R) California
Honorable William S. Stuckey, (D) Georgia
Mr. Lowell Beck, Urban Coalition
Mr. Eugene J. Murphy, U. S. Conference of Mayors
Mrs. Janet Kohn, U. S. Conference of Mayors

Chairman Cook gave a brief opening statement on how Atlanta has approached and dealt with urban problems to date; there was then a free exchange between the Congressmen and city officials.

Following this discussion, Mr. Cook asked the members of the Planning and

Development Committee to retire to Committee Room #1 to conduct a business session of the Committee. He asked the Congressmen to keep their seat for a presentation by the Department of Finance, after which they would take a tour of the Model Cities area and continue their itinerary for the day.

The Committee reconvened in Committee Room #1 at 3:30 P. M. and the following business was considered:

STATUS OF URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT AREAS - CLOSE OUT

Howard Openshaw, Director of Redevelopment for the Atlanta Housing Authority, presented each committee member present a written status report of Atlanta's Urban Renewal Program as of January 29, 1969. (See copy attached to original of these minutes).

Because of the lengthy agenda only the Butler Street, Rawson-Washington, and University Center Projects were discussed at this meeting.

The highlights of the discussion on each project follows: (Secretary's note - the discussion on each project centered around the Status Report and reference should be made thereto.)

Butler Street:

The Butler Street Project is the closest to completion, awaiting only the construction contract of the middle school and disposition of a small area of land. The conversion of the school from elementary to middle has caused a delay in that the architects had to start over. It appears now that the earliest date construction can start will be the middle of August.

The Chairman then requested that Mr. Openshaw prepare a letter for his signature to Dr. Letson urging that every step possible be taken to expedite this matter.

It was pointed out that a Resolution had been passed by the Board of Aldermen designating the area around Ebenezer Baptist Church as a historic site (Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial) and the Housing Authority subsequently removed the property from the market for commercial reuse; while this will not prevent the close out of the project, it does need to be resolved before the Housing Authority can complete their work.

Chairman Cook also asked Mr. Openshaw to draft a letter to Mr. Baxter of

the Department of Housing and Urban Development urging rapid approval on Parcel C-5 and to send him a carbon copy with a note reminding him to personally call Mr. Baxter about the matter.

Chairman Cook continued to ask questions and make these requests because of his concern, and the Committee as a whole shared his concern, about the mounting cost to the city, through interest charges, resulting from delays in closing out the urban renewal projects.

Rawson-Washington:

The Chairman asked Mr. Openshaw to report what the project situation would be (relative to the 95% disposition requirement) if any two of the three parcels (Ebenezer Project, park and school) were disposed of; specifically, could the project be closed out under the condition that the community facilities buildings 14% non-cash credit would be lost. He also asked Mr. Persells to verify with HUD whether or not the credit would, in fact, be lost, since he was not positive about the requirement.

Jay Fountain of the Finance Department was asked to explore the possibility of the city carrying out its commitment in this project through the use of '63 Bond Funds.

Mr. Cook requested that Mr. Openshaw write Mr. Baxter of HUD requesting that amendment #9 (reference status report) be carried out as quickly as possible.

Relative to amendment #9, the question arose as to the disposition of the land in the blocks bounded by Georgia Avenue, Capitol Avenue, Bass and Washington Streets. It was pointed out that the city's Land Use Plan and previous project plans called for some type of commercial reuse for the area. However, a conflict exists with this proposal and the Model Cities proposal, which calls for the development of temporary office facilities and a Housing Center on the sites.

Mr. Cook asked who has control of the Rawson-Washington Project and commented he didn't see how we could plan an area if along the way "half the area gets usurped."

Mr. Gladin emphasized that this problem is stalemated on the basis of two aldermanic decisions and needs to be resolved. It was noted that the Model Cities people expect to occupy their new offices by March 15.

Mr. Cook stated the Model Cities people had well reach some sort of agreement

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or compromise and he entertained a motion to notify them that the entire area south of Georgia Avenue would be considered for commercial reuse.

Mr. Openshaw stated he felt we owed them this kind of direction; further, he didn't think anything should happen to urban renewal project land without the approval of the Housing Authority, Planning Department and this committee.

It was the consensus of the committee that Mr. Gladin notify the Director of Model Cities Program that the entire area in question will be considered for commercial reuse and request that they consider another location. It was also felt there needed to be further clarification on the line of authority in this matter.

University Center:

The committee unanimously approved the Housing Authority proceeding with an amendment deleting from the University Project seven (7) Fulton County owned lots on the south side of Hunter Street, as recommended by the Housing Authority.

The elimination of the grade separation at Northside Drive and Hunter Street will require a plan change to permit disposition of the property; commitments by Central Methodist Church and the Celotex Corporation to acquire and develop the land will be required.

In discussing close out of the Project, Mr. Persells stated to keep in mind the expansion discussions with Atlanta University.

BEDFORD-PINE HOUSING PROJECT

After a brief discussion, the committee unanimously approved the preliminary Bedford-Pine Housing Project Site Plan, as revised January 31, 1969. Mr. Cook asked Mr. Persells if the number of units now proposed would take care of the people in the area who want to remain there, to which Mr. Persells replied affirmatively, stating there would be a total of 66 additional units.

Mr. Openshaw stated the revised plan is the best one to date and the architects have indicated they can live with it.

In response to questioning by Mr. Cook, Mr. Persells also stated the revised plan had been before the Bedford-Pine Committee and approved by them.

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Being a member of the Model Cities Executive Board, Mr. Griggs left the meeting to attend the Model Cities Tour with the visiting Congressmen.

Shortly thereafter, Mr. Cook excused himself from the meeting to keep a previous appointment.

JOINT RESOLUTION BY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCE COMMITTEES SUPPORTING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

Mr. Gladin presented this Resolution, explaining it will give more status to priority items.

Mr. Flanigen stated he felt the Resolution should specifically spell out that the Planning Department would have the responsibility for implementing the program.

Mr. Gladin explained that the Finance Department will ultimately establish the procedures for scheduling of these programs consistent with the Capital Improvements Program; that the intent of this particular Resolution is that the expenditures be based on the program, rather than upon the independent actions of the various committees.

Mr. Flanigen reiterated he felt the Planning Department should have this responsibility. There was no further comment.

Upon motion by Mr. Williamson, seconded by Mr. Cotsakis and unanimous vote, this Resolution was adopted.

DEVELOPMENT OF NEW HOUSING CODE COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

Mr. Gladin presented each Committee member present with a copy of a letter (dated January 10, 1969) to Mayor Ivan Allen from himself and Bill Wofford outlining the procedures for the development of a new Housing Code Compliance Program. Appended to this was a cover letter (dated January 24, 1969) from Earl Landers, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor, stating that Mayor Allen is agreeable to proceeding with the development of the new program as outlined in said letter and Mr. Gladin requested the Committee's support.