

Corktown Redevelopment Conference Minutes

After the above staff presentations, the meetings were, in each case, opened for general discussion and, as was to be expected, there was a great deal of repetition from meeting to meeting on questions. Therefore, the following is a compilation of the questions and answers presented at each of the meetings.

Q - Would you please review the specific boundaries of the Corktown Project?

A. - The boundaries begin with the intersection of Twelfth and Bagley; traveling east to the intersection of Trumbull and Bagley; south on Trumbull to Porter, and Trumbull; east along Porter to the intersection of John Lodge; south along John Lodge to the alley between Howard and Lafayette; west along the alley to Tenth between Lafayette and Howard; north for one-half block to the intersection of Howard and Tenth; west along Howard to the intersection between Howard and Twelfth; and north to Twelfth and Bagley, the point of beginning.

This area represents 61 gross acres, which includes all streets and alleys and land within the boundary.

Q - Where will people affected by redevelopment in Corktown go?

A. -- The Housing Commission is obligated, both by the Common Council and by the Federal agency, to aid the residents in finding decent, safe and sanitary housing in keeping with the requirements of Section 105 (c) of the Housing Act of 1949.

Q. - Will these families in the redevelopment area be able to afford rents in other areas?

A - The present rents in Corktown are exorbitantly high per unit, and comparable rent but better housing can be expected to be available. There is evidence of a growing supply of rental units as portrayed in classified sections in the local newspapers.

Q - Where in Detroit would the families from redevelopment areas find a home?

A - In the past, many families, after receiving condemnation awards, were able to purchase new homes by using F.H.A. commitment or other mortgage methods. It was further pointed out that under the act now in Congress, provision is being made for families from redevelopment areas to obtain more favorable terms in buying new or used homes.

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Q - What happens to churches?

A - It was pointed out that substantial church structures may be retained, and have been retained in the Gratiot project. Many factors must be considered here, such as the church itself, condition of the building, its use in the future plan, etc.

Q - You talk about redevelopment, is it for improvement or for industry?

A - The purpose is the removal of blight. However, it is again brought out that the master plan which was developed in the late Forties, indicates the area now under discussion as being recommended for light industrial use.

Q - Why don't we redevelop Skid Row first?

A - It was pointed out that the Skid Row project is now under consideration, and it is merely a question of timing - that actually, in the redevelopment program, it might work out that these two projects, Corktown and Skid Row, will run concurrently.

Q - What about the race problem, is it being thought of in redevelopment?

A - As mentioned before, the City has a responsibility to prepare a relocation program to aid all people in relocating from any area being cleared. It is recognized that minority groups in the Corktown area will need more assistance in finding decent, safe and sanitary housing than would the others, but all are helped. Under the Federal law, new residential projects built on cleared land can not be restricted on the basis of race, creed or color.

Q - Why not have a form letter you can give these people of Corktown indicating that you are going to find them housing, that you are obligated to have a relocation plan?

A - When the time comes, a Relocation Office will be set up in the area by the Detroit Housing Commission which will help people secure rentals, refer them to proper real estate offices to purchase new homes, or qualify those eligible for public housing. It was further pointed out that all concerned will be properly informed of all or any impending action, through a newsletter or brochure.