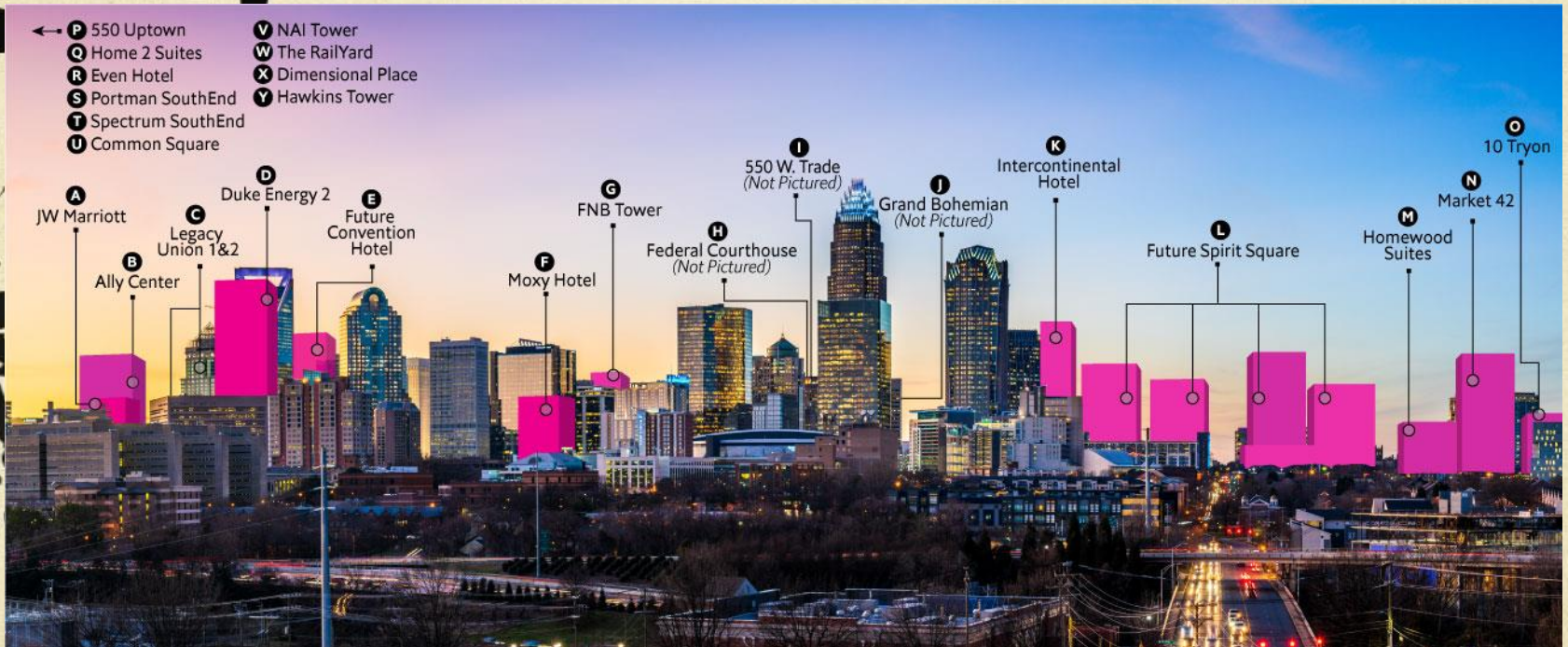


A History of City Planning in Charlotte



15 significant episodes of Charlotte-Mecklenburg African American history



Charlotte's Brooklyn community, a prominent African American neighborhood in the late '60s.

1850 Seventy Charlotteans each had more than 20 slaves. About 700 others had from one to 20. Only one farm had more than 1,000 acres. Free blacks and hired out slaves lived at the edge of town and might meet there, but were discouraged from meeting in town. After slavery, rural blacks poured into Charlotte, living where they could find inexpensive housing. The cheapest housing was in low-lying areas, in places near creeks like Second Ward.

1860 In North Carolina, 6,800 of the state's 17,000 people were slaves; 293 were free blacks. After Reconstruction, integrated neighborhoods existed. In the 1880s and 1890s, Charlotte began to develop distinct neighborhoods segregated by race and class. By the 1920s, the city had become a checkerboard. African Americans had a black Main Street and a black street-car suburb (Washington West, N.C.).

1865 In May, Clinton Chapel AME Zion Church was formed. It possibly was Charlotte's first church formed by blacks who hadn't split from a white church.



Clinton AME Zion Church in 1993. Blacks had worshiped with white slaveholders, but weren't given authority in the church. At some point, separate seating areas were built for blacks. After the Civil War, history books say blacks left "out of the balconies" and worshiped on the main floor in their own churches. They also wanted a voice in the church.

1870 A private educational institution, The Peabody School, for black people opened in Third Ward. One of the teachers was Charles Chesnut, who became a celebrated black novelist.

1882 W.C. Smith established the first secular black newspaper, the

Charlotte Messenger. His editorial message stressed hard work, temperance and Republican politics in a state dominated by Democrats. The paper lasted until 1890.

1890 Second Ward, known as "Log Town" because of the cabin homes built there, became a popular place for blacks because of the Myers Street School, the only school blacks could attend. Land for the school had been donated by W.R. Myers, a white Republican. The school was at Myers and Stonewall, and known as "Jacob's Ladder School" because of the stairwell outside the building.



Charlotte's Good Samaritan Hospital in 1961.

1891 Good Samaritan Hospital, known as "Good Sam," was built. It was Charlotte's first black hospital, located on the block between Graham and Mint streets. In the 1960s and '70s, Good Sam became a nursing home. The building was demolished in 1990.

1899 Isabella Wyche became the first black female principal in the Charlotte public school system. She had taught at Myers Street School and became principal there. She died in 1905. A school was later named for her, but eventually it was transformed into a jail.

1904 The Broad Street Library was built for black people. Andrew Carnegie had earlier given a grant to build a facility on North Tryon. Charlotte officials erected the Broad Street building for black patrons. They provided no books or furniture.

1912 Log Town had come to be known as the Brooklyn neighborhood, named after the New York City borough. In September, The Charlotte Observer predicted: "The Second Ward is already populated by blacks, many owning comfortable homes, but farsighted men believe that eventually this section, because of its proximity to the center of the city must sooner or later be utilized by the white population."

1930 Urban-renewal money became available. That led to dramatic changes in uptown Charlotte. In the 1960s, Brooklyn was destroyed. Much of what once was that neighborhood is now the John Belk Freeway.

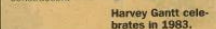
1940 Kelly Alexander Sr. became president of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg NAACP. In 1948, he became state NAACP president, a position he would hold for 36 years.



1971 Swann vs. Charlotte-Mecklenburg decision. The U.S. Supreme Court ordered Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to let black and white students attend school together, even if it took cross-town busing.

1983 Harvey Gantt was elected Charlotte's first black mayor.

1992 Mel Watt, a Charlotte resident, and Eva Clayton were elected the first N.C. blacks elected to Congress since Reconstruction.



Harvey Gantt celebrates in 1983.

1912 "Log Town had become known as the Brooklyn neighborhood, named after the New York City borough. In September, the *Charlotte Observer* predicted: "Second Ward is already populated by black, many owning comfortable homes, but farsighted men believe that eventually this section, because of its proximity to the center of the city must sooner or later be utilized by the white population."

Pivotal black-community events: A conversation

By BOB MEADOWS
Staff Writer

Bertha Maxwell-Roddey has lived through some of Charlotte's key historic events. So has Dan Morrill. Both have chronicled the city's history and taught it to others.

Roddey, the first black principal in an all-white Mecklenburg County school, co-founded the Afro-American Cultural Center and developed the Afro-American Studies Department at UNC Charlotte.

Morrill is consulting director at the Char-

lotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, president of the non-profit Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Preservation Foundation and a history pro-



Maxwell-Roddey Morrill

fessor at UNCC.

They recently discussed some key events in Charlotte's history relating to African Americans. They focused on Harvey Gantt's election as Charlotte's first black mayor, school desegregation, 1960s urban renewal and Charlotte's turn-of-the-century segregated communities.

Here's what they had to say: **Harvey Gantt's mayoral election, 1983**
Roddey: "It offered hope for African Ameri-

Please see CONVERSATION page 38

Paul Younts Got Things Done

Charlotte lost one of its premier citizens Monday when Gen. Paul Younts died after a long battle with declining health.

He was among that rare breed of men who are turned to when things are going awry or there is a big job that needs doing. And few big things got done in Charlotte over the past 40 years that Paul Younts didn't have a hand in.

When the community dreamed of a public hospital in the late '40s, Paul Younts put together the campaign that raised the money to build it. When it was threatened with a ring of satellite cities in the late '50s, Younts managed the campaign in favor of annexation.

Sure, he had his detractors, people who were suspicious of his politics and his power. He had a commanding appearance and he could be gruff.

But there was no hint of dishonesty about his methods, no "secret" hold over people and public events. His success was based on doing those things that most of us tire of—working hard, paying attention to detail, following through.

He was good at picking people and

knew the work horses from the show horses. He was very persuasive at getting people to work, the kind of man it was hard to say no to.

In a day when politics wore a tarnished image, Younts saw it as the lubricant that made a community, a state or a nation function. To him it was a pleasure, and as one man said, "a means of paying his social rent."

He played politics and played it hard, but with an eye on the community's interests. He used his political position and persuasion in Washington to get a new Post Office and Courthouse built on West Trade. He pulled strings and cited facts in Raleigh to win highway money for Charlotte.

But his specialty was organizing, whether it was a parade (he loved parades), a political campaign, a fund drive, a trade fair or a funeral. He could put the right people and the right goals together and pull it off.

He died at a time when his kind of energy, talent and commitment is in short supply.



LABOR

Studies in Working-Class History

Volume 15

Number 1

March 2018

The Labor Beat

Max Fraser and Christopher Phelps, Coeditors

Talking Back to the Gilded Age: The Labor Press Amidst the Great Upheaval

Heywood Broun, Benjamin Stolberg,
and the Perils of Socially Committed Journalism

The Clerk and the Postmaster:
How Advocacy Journalism Changed New Deal Racial Policy

Behind *Nickel and Dimed*:
Apotheosis of Feminism and the New Left

Meeting Today's Labor Journalists
Interviews with Steven Greenhouse, Jane Slaughter, and Sarah Jaffe

NEWS AND VIEWS OF THE POSTAL SERVICE

By TREZZVANT W. ANDERSON



COL. YOUNG AND CIV. EMPLOYEE
AWARDED 10 FOR SUGGESTION



C. A. MEES BUYS PROPERTY ON ROSWELL AVE. IN PARK

Only five deeds were filed Monday at the courthouse with consideration totaling about \$12,000.

C. A. Mees paid \$3,750 to Frank F. Jones for a lot fronting 100 feet on Roswell avenue in block 38 of Myers Park.

Paul R. Younts, Inc., conveyed to John H. Trescot for \$100, including a \$3,800 indebtedness, three lots each fronting 50 feet on Booker avenue, Washington Heights, and John H. Trescot made a similar conveyance to Paul R. Younts, Inc., for \$100 etc., including the balance of \$2,000 in

1923

**FOR RENT—SIX-ROOM APART-
MENT. DILWORTH: BREAK-
FAST ROOM; INDIVIDUAL HEAT
ING PLANT; TILE BATH; GAS
STOVE FURNISHED. CALL
PAUL R. YOUNTS, INC. PHONE
4816. 26**

Own Your Home

Statistics show that the average rent payer in his lifetime will pay out enough money in rent to buy several good homes and furnish them throughout.

Our plan of building enables you to pay for a home like rent.



PAUL R. YOUNTS

INCORPORATED

S. H. WHITSETT—SALESMEN—H. S. BOST

REAL ESTATE—INSURANCE

Phone 4816

404 South Tryon Street

1926



Don't Close Your Eyes to These Facts:

If you are ever going to own a home, you will have to make a beginning.

Charlotte real estate is constantly increasing in value.

It will mean a good investment to buy now.

PAUL R. YOUNTS can make it as easy to buy as to rent.

PAUL R. YOUNTS, Inc.

408 South Tryon Street

Phone 4816



A Home Is Your Best Investment

Homes in Charlotte are rapidly increasing in value. Buy now. Enjoy your home while you are paying for it.

IT IS JUST AS EASY TO BUY
AS TO PAY RENT.

Let us finance your home-buying and give you several years to pay for it.

PAUL R. YOUNTS, INC.

Phone 4816

408 South Tryon St.

Press Head



Exposed racial abuses in the administration of New Deal programs.

D. C. Press Club Seeks Equal Privileges.

Cover NRA Conferences
WASHINGTON. (ANP)—Trezza-vant (Andy) Anderson, Washing-ton correspondent of the Associa-

Keep Eye On NIRA

By T. W. ANDERSON

TREATMENT IN SOUTH IS BARED

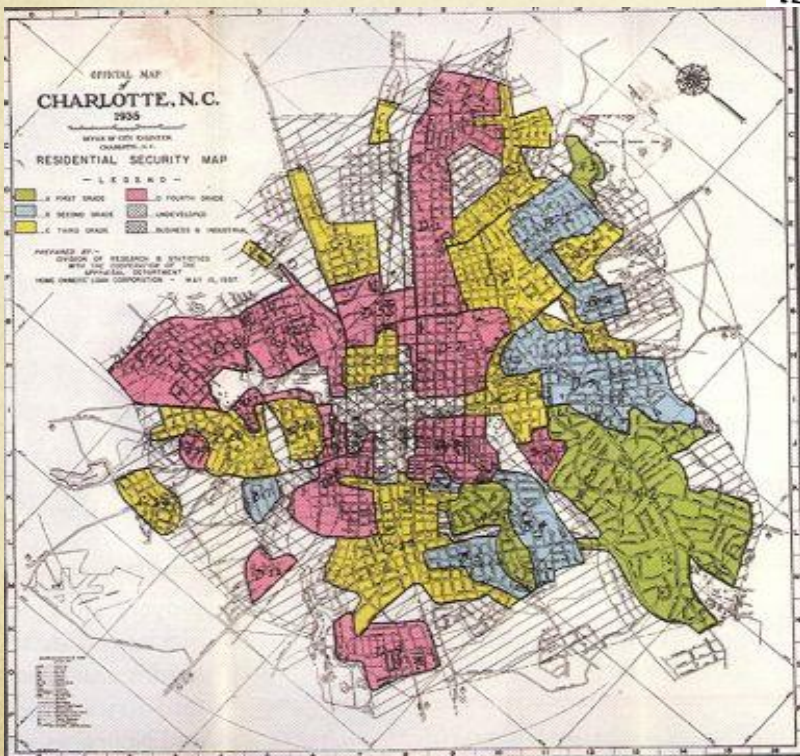
D. C. Press Club President Makes 3,000 Mile Tour to Obtain Facts
HOPKINS GETS REPORT

Propose Steps to Remedy Bad Housing Conditions

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7 (By T. W. Anderson, Staff Correspondent of the N. P.)—The Committee on Negro City the total density for the city was 223 per acre, while the Negro density was 336 per acre. A study

ERASE JIM CROW IN U. S. HOME LOAN BANKS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 12—(By T. W. Anderson for the A. N. P.)—



FOUNDED 1860

CHARLOTTE, N. C., SUNDAY MORNING, AUGUST 15, 1943

PRICE: 5c DAILY—10c SUNDAY

Roosevelt Library Sets New Pattern

CAPITAL AGOG, CHURCHILL HOP BEHEVED VITAL

Washington Takes Visit as
Sign For New Victories.

REGRET STALIN'S ABSENCE

Nazi Crackup Foreseen—Vet-
erans' Rehabilitation Dis-
cussed—OCD Worried.

BY HERBERT HOLLANDER.
WASHINGTON, Aug. 14.—No one could have moved about the capital during the last week without sharing in the feeling of keyed-up expectancy so noticeable in official quarters.

It was the same feeling which has existed each time Prime Minister Churchill has come to this shore—only more so. For this time there was a new ingredient, namely, an all-prevailing sense that we have entered into a final decisive stage of the war in Europe. Recent, pending, and planned developments on both the military and psychological fronts combined to provide Washington with one of the most bang-up weeks of the war. That was true despite the appointment at the absence of the main leaders from the scheduled Roosevelt-Churchill conversations; despite the continued delving of the Italian government in Italy; and despite the carefully stage-managed and remarkably publicized shuffle of power in the Reich.

The war of nerves is on with a vengeance. The air here fairly crackles with it. Now, however, our war on this vital front is rendered powerfully potent by knowledge, on both sides, that the United Nations at long last are able to back up their demands with overwhelming blows. The results of the present Anglo-American meeting will not be long in making themselves apparent in both a political and a military way.

WITH MOVES NEARBY, official circles here are under no illusions as to the meaning of the visitation in the Reich. The attitude is that even if it has gone through, as reported so anxiously from "neutral" sources, nothing essential has been changed. At the same time, however, the Capital is not underestimating the significance of the move as indicative of a conviction on the part of the German leadership that victory no longer is possible.

If the generals and the Nazi party chiefs believe Washington will regard their action as a sign for a

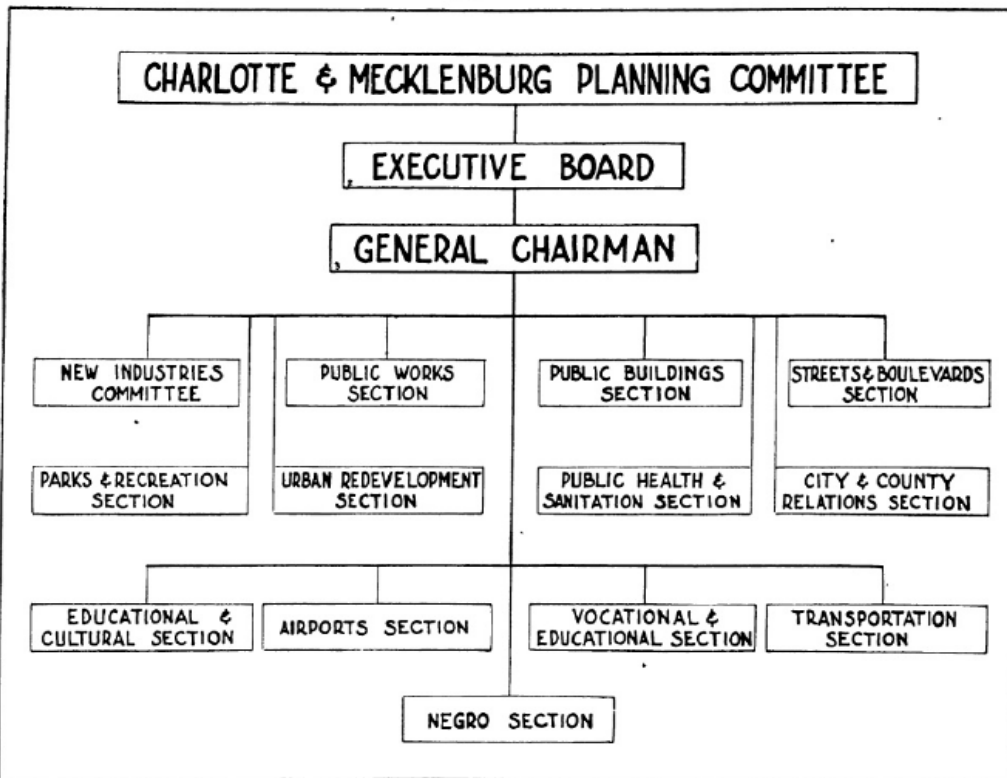
PRESENT AND POST WAR PLANS—Eleven sections of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg planning committee have been appointed by Chairman Coleman W. Roberts. One other is yet to be named. The Charlotte industrial committee is being continued as a section. Below is an organization chart, showing the committee set-up. The chart was drawn up by S. H. Schrophire, draftsman in the office of City Engineer Lloyd M. Ross. All sections will hold meetings of the Chamber of Commerce last February 18, and in this fall, when objectives will be discussed. Recommendations will then be referred to a general meeting of the

Pulpwood Valuable Crop For Farmers

One of the finest things about the campaign for greatly increased production and cutting of pulpwood, a program considered highly necessary in order to avert a big short-

ALLIES GET AID OF MARTINIQUE

French Caribbean Isle Has
Magnificent Harbor, Good



PROJECT BEGUN BY PRESIDENT ATTRACTS MANY

Houses Official Papers, Ameri-
cana and Relics.

IMPORTANT FOR FUTURE

Specific Period of American
History Covered By Records
and Relics Exhibited.

BY RICHARD TOMPKINS.
HYDE PARK, N. Y., Aug. 14.—The Franklin D. Roosevelt library is not only a reservoir of in-
valuable state papers, preserved for
research students and future his-
torians. There is a wealth of Ameri-
cana in the museum wings and it
is acquiring a unique collection of
war trophies.

Thus, more than half of the space
in the \$350,000 buildings, is given
to pictures, ship models, ancient
vehicles, mementos of war, and
other objects of Rooseveltian flav-
or, reflecting nevertheless the en-
terprise, desires and thoughts of
America.

DUTCH COLONIAL.
The structure, built on land do-
nated to the government by the
President and his mother, is an
adaptation of Dutch Colonial archi-
tecture found in older buildings of
Dutchess county.
The house, faced with fieldstone and
guarded by an old gnarled oak, is
divided at the end of a lane lined
with young apple trees, several
hundred yards back from the Al-
bany post road and a shorter dis-
tance from the family home where
Mr. Roosevelt was born, now a
summer white house and a hospi-
table hearth that has seen King
George and Queen Elizabeth, Queen
Wilhelmina and other Royal vis-
itors.

Although the papers and books
in the library are not yet avail-
able for public use, the exhibit
rooms are open. A visitor may
see almost anything from a 16-
cent store extant to objects
of real value, all gifts to the
President.

DIRECTOR.
The director of the library is
Frederic W. Shipman, former chief
of the State Department archives,
a division of the National archives
which was organized in 1933 for
the preservation of the inactive re-
cords of the Federal government.
Shipman, a soft-spoken, efficient
librarian, has picked each member
of his staff on the basis of profes-
sional standing. The institution is
administered under the archivist
of the United States, though it is
also a museum of Americana and
something of a community center.
"It will have to be called a hy-

Planning Committeemen Are Facing Big Problem

COMPLETE outline of the lotte, opening and widening of streets



Dr. Buford F. Gordon
Chairman, Press & Publicity Committee
Charlotte Branch of NAACP

The Negro and Future Planning.

To The Observer:

The Sunday Issue (August 15th) of The Charlotte Observer presents an excellent and an illuminating graphic representation of the Charlotte and Mecklenburg Planning Committee, showing the committee setup and organization plan. The chart, as drawn by S. H. Schropshire, draftsman in the office of the city engineer, shows the relationship of the Executive Board to the General Planning Committee, and the General Chairman as the direct supervisor of The New Industries Committee and the twelve sections:

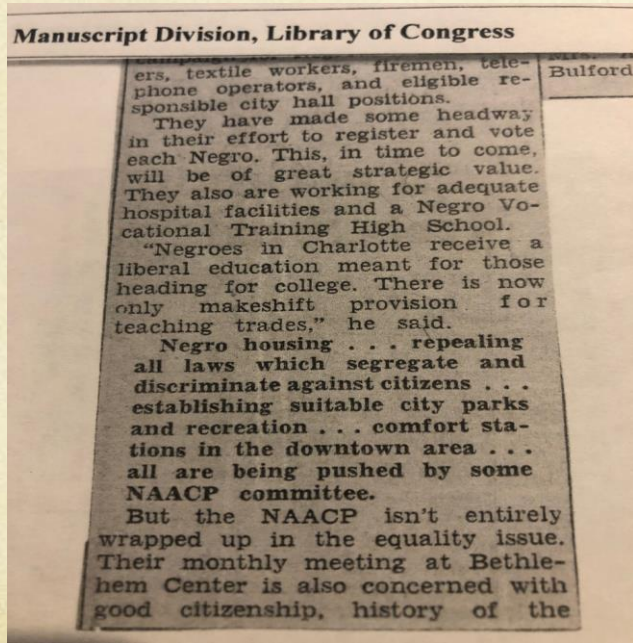
Public Works section, Public Buildings section, streets and boulevards section, Parks and Recreation section, Urban Redevelopment section, Public Health and Sanitation section, City and County Relations section, Educational and Cultural section, Airports section, Vocational and Educational section, Transportation section, Negro section.

Full explanation was given of the organization and the objectives of all of these sections, excepting the Negro section, to which no reference was made.

It appears, from the chart, that the Negroes are not to be integrated into the General Planning committee. May be, they are to be studied as one of the problems apart from all the other people of the city, for the Negro section is on parity with

Charlotte Observer August 22, 1943

NAACP & Citizens Committee for Political Action (1948)



Public Hearing on Slum Clearance & Rent Control (1949)

Slum Issue Causes Furor In Council

YANCEY TELLS REASON VACATE NOTICES SENT

Councilmen Become Involved In Debate Over Report Of Threatened Demolition Of Houses On Pine Street.

The threatened demolition of houses on Pine street in the current slum clearance program became a point of concern yesterday for Councilman Basil M. Boyd, who previously had pleaded for a speed-up in the elimination of unfit housing.

Rising to a point of personal privilege, Mr. Boyd interjected the Pine street situation into the afternoon discussion by the governing heads.

He had been advised, he reported, that a number of homes in that area have been condemned and the tenants given notice to move.

"They can't move, he added, because they haven't any place to go."

"I'm not trying to interfere with slum clearance," he said, "but I just wonder—here in the dead of winter—whether that's quite human."

WILKINSON JOINS IN DEBATE
Councilman Emmett Wilkinson, who has been cold to the standard house program, jumped into the debate.

"That's what I objected to," he told Mr. Boyd, "but you put up the argument that it was the thing to do."

"No, I didn't," Mr. Boyd declared loudly. "No, No. What I said was that I assumed—assumed—that the slum clearance director would use good judgment and some discretion."

Councilman W. I. Coddington couldn't keep quiet any longer. Addressing Mr. Wilkinson, who has sided with property owners in urging the lifting of rent controls, Mr. Coddington said:

"Why can't these people find a place to move? You've been telling us that there are plenty of vacancies in Charlotte."

Mr. Wilkinson didn't reply.

YANCEY STILLLS WATERS
Called upon for comment, City Manager Henry A. Yancey supplied oil for the waters.

The same vacate notices, he said, were served on the same Pine street families more than a year ago. This is just a revival of the effort to get them out so that the houses, none of them equipped with inside water or sewer facilities, can be torn down.

No long as the houses are con-

RENT DECONTROL ARGUED BEFORE CITY COUNCIL

MASS MEETING HELD TO HEAR FROM CITIZENS

Speakers For Proponents Of Ending All Controls And Those Opposed To Move Air Views; Councilmen Slated To Vote Today.

BY RANDOLPH NORTON
Observer Staff Writer.

City councilmen listened last night to 35 speakers tell them how to vote today on the proposal to lift rent controls. All manner of pro and con arguments were presented at the three-hour mass meeting which began with prayer and ended with good humor.

The criminal court room was well filled, with many standing along the sides and some seated in the balcony. It was difficult to determine whether proponents or opponents were there in greater number.

The proponents of the proposal to ask Governor Scott to lift local rent controls were represented by 23 speakers. Twelve persons spoke out in favor of continuing the controls.

The council had called the mass hearing on the issue after the Charlotte Property Management association petitioned the city to request decontrol. Mayor Victor Shaw presided and all members of the council, as well as City Manager H. A. Yancey and City Attorney John Shaw, were present.

TO ACT TODAY

The council is expected to take action on the matter at its regular meeting today.

The Mayor gave each side \$0

National NAACP: Shifts Focus to FHA Discrimination

Division, LIBRARY

NAACP Housing **June 3, 1952** Alexander Box 12/11

MEMORANDUM TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FROM THE SECRETARY

RE: F. H. A.

One of the most important problems faced by Negroes in the United States at the present time is the matter of a decent and adequate place in which to live. The matter of home building, sale and rental units has been one in which the United States Government has been an active participant since 1934. This participation has taken the form of the government being an insurer of mortgages in the field of privately financed housing. As such, it has controlled the pattern of living in America to an unprecedented degree. The matter of site selection, type of house, quality of materials, room size, sales prices, rental scales, valuation and appraisal of the property, etc., have all been set forth or administered by this agency.

During the period 1935-1950, approximately 2,761,000 dwelling units were built under the FHA insuring program and probably no more than 50,000 of these units were available to non-whites*. In the New York area alone in the field of rental and cooperative housing, 91,936 units were built for whites as against 919 units for open or minority group occupancy**. The present policy of the FHA with regard to occupancy is one which leaves the builder and sponsor free to choose his own tenants or buyers. He may build for whites, he may build for Negroes, or he may build for open occupancy. The agency states since its program is entirely voluntary, engaged in by private enterprise, it has no control over the manner in which the sponsor or builder chooses the occupants

*Address by Robert C. Weaver at National Conference on Discrimination in Housing at Hotel McAlpin, New York City, May 20, 1952.

**As of March 1952.

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA Dec. 1952

Housing: The Branch encouraged the enforcement of a sub-standard housing ordinance that had been on the books for years but never enforced. The law provides for the minimum requirements of: kitchen sink and indoor toilet for each family unit; installed running water; electric lighting facilities; adequate heating facilities and screens for all windows and doors. The law also provides that indoor bathing facilities are compulsory. In Charlotte since the enforcement of this ordinance more than 5,075 dwellings have been brought up to standard within the definition of the ordinance. Together with this an additional 884 units have been demolished as unfit for human habitation. One new FHA project has been completed recently and a Charlotte builder has completed more than 1,000 rental units for Negroes in the middle income bracket.

It may be noted that segregation in housing is a deep-seated tradition and Negroes are discouraged from living outside the jim crow areas. When Negroes move into so-called white areas the whites move out. There is no private agency or government commission making a study of how discrimination can be eliminated or on how interracial housing could or would work. The housing programs in Charlotte are aimed at perpetuating both public and private segregated housing. The Charlotte Branch is the only organization that has advanced the idea and is fighting for integrated housing in cooperation with the State Conference.

The Branch has fought for Negro representation on the Charlotte Urban Redevelopment Commission and has urged the Commission to redevelop blighted areas not only for commercial and industrial purposes but for residential use as well. The North Carolina Urban Redevelopment Act contains a proviso which forbids the Commission from using eminent domain proceedings to acquire a specific piece of property if such property does not conform to the Act's general description of "blight."

AS A RESULT NEGROES ARE NOW APPOINTED

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA Consideration for 1952

Public Accommodations: The Branch won the first round in a court battle to determine whether Negroes are to be allowed to play golf on the Bonnie Brae Course, a city-owned and operated course. The case was won in Civil Superior Court.

Walden C. Smith
St. Louis, Mo.

Reproduced from the Collections of the Manuscript Division, Library of Congress



HEAD REALTORS—The 1955 officers and new directors of the Charlotte Board of Realtors elected at a meeting at Thacker's yesterday are shown. From left, those seated are: Robert R. Rhine, president; G. A. Hutchinson, secretary-treasurer; and Henry G. Newson, the retiring president.

Standing, Willis I. Henderson, Hubert Jerman, and John M. Dwele, all directors. W. Banks McClintock Jr., newly elected vice president, was absent when the picture was made. (Observer Staff Photo—Kelly)

Charlotte Realtors Elect New Officers

New officers of the Charlotte Board of Realtors and the Charlotte Multiple Listing Bureau, today at a meeting at Thacker's are approximately 150 persons attended. Robert R. Rhine, president; W. Banks McClintock Jr., vice president; G. A. Hutchinson, secretary-treasurer; and Henry G. Newson, the retiring president.

Directors elected at a Christmas party meeting preceding the one in which the officers were chosen are Willis I. Henderson, John M. Dwele, and Hubert Jerman. The new directors will succeed C. W. Kistiah, Henry G. Newson, and Paul Youngs whose terms will expire at the end of the year. The 1954 officers are Henry G. Newson, president; Robert R. Rhine,

NEW MOREHEAD STREET BRIDGE TO OPEN FRIDAY

Motorists homeward bound from Christmas shopping trips will be among the first to drive over the new Morehead street bridge tomorrow afternoon. The bridge will open with official ceremonies at 2 p. m. Division Highway Commissioner James A. Harrison announced the opening date recently, and city officials praised the State Highway Commission and the contracting firm for finishing the job several months ahead of schedule.

It paves over an underpass which is still under construction in the big westward extension of Independence boulevard.

1954

Slum Clearance Showdown Slated

City To Ask Back Taxes On Jan. 1

City Tax Collector John H. Mills yesterday announced his office will start an all-out collection drive on back taxes Jan. 1.

The city has a total uncollected balance of \$280,772 in the last 10 years' tax accounts, a report from City Accountant George Livingston showed.

And Mr. Mills said city collectors will be instructed to collect, or definitely determine as uncollectible, as many accounts in this fund as possible.

Garnishee of wages or levy against property will be the tax office's weapons wherever necessary, said Mr. Mills.

He indicated that the approach of the April 15 deadline on federal income tax returns dictated the timing of the city's crackdown campaign.

Mr. Livingston's weekly report showed that the city has collected 97.81 per cent of its 1953 levy. This is slightly better than the 97.60-per-cent level which was reported for 1952 taxes on the same date last year. But Mr. Mills said it is his office's intention to widen the gap further.

The uncollected balance of 1953 taxes as of Thursday totaled \$118,693. Last year at this time, Char-

Urban Redevelopment Bill To Go To Council

By HARRY GOLDEN JR., Observer Staff Writer

Planning commissioners will call for a showdown within two weeks on the proposal for reviving the Urban Redevelopment program here, it was learned yesterday.

Chairman Spencer Bell and Vice Chairman W. W. Hanks announced that the City-County Planning Commission will send an Urban Redevelopment bill to the City Council before the governing board's final legislative conference Dec. 28.

The Council will be asked to recommend to the Mecklenburg legislative delegation an amendment to the state enabling act that would "make the program workable," said Mr. Hanks.

The bill, supplied to planning commissioners by the North Carolina League of Municipalities, is the same one that was defeated during the last General Assembly.

Slum clearance under the federal program died in Charlotte and in all other interested North Carolina cities after the bill's defeat.

QUIT IN 1953
Charlotte's Redevelopment Commission, headed by Col. Paul Youngs, resigned in a body in August 1953 with the statement that the program was not practical without the amendment.

The amendment provides for condemnation of all land in a so-called blighted area.

In urging revival of the movement here Mr. Hanks pointed out to the commissioners' two weeks ago that the U. S. Supreme Court has recently ruled that the use of the right of eminent domain in condemning property in slum-clearance projects is proper. He said

areas are cleared of structures and are redeveloped for sale to private interests. When the program died here, commissioners had done all the preliminary work for redevelopment of two Charlotte slum areas and they had scheduled work on a third.

During the commission's existence, approximately \$42,000 in federal funds was spent on the program here, but no action was ever taken.

BOARD AGREES

The Planning Board agreed at its last meeting to fight for revival of the program. Mr. Bell and Mr. Hanks said yesterday that the bill will be in the hands of the City Council before that board presents its legislative program to the legislators at the Dec. 28 conference.

A hot fight on the proposal is assured. Opponents contend that condemnation of their land in the Urban Redevelopment program amounts to confiscation of private property for the benefit of private interests.

Supporters of the bill say that the land cannot practically be redeveloped and cleared of slum structures if the owner of a vacant lot in the midst of the blighted area is permitted to hold out. They want the power of eminent domain if 80 per cent of the structures in the area are deemed substandard.

MARSH REALTY ASSOCIATES, INC.



TELEPHONE EDISON 4-8631
201 WILDER BUILDING
CHARLOTTE 2, NORTH CAROLINA

September 13th, 1957

Mr. Fred A. Griffin
1325-A Horne Court
Charlotte, N. C.

Dear Mr. Griffin:

We are very happy to attach hereto a copy of contract covering your purchase of the property at 1515 Hunter Street. The loan application is now being processed through the Federal Housing Administration and we will advise you as soon as we receive approval.

Sometime before closure, we would like for you to inspect the property with Mr. M. C. Clark of our Construction Department, and with Mr. Gammage who will arrange an appointment to make this inspection.

We would like to emphasize to you that this inspection is very important, as it is a practical impossibility for us to make adjustments after you move into the house. We have built hundreds of houses over a period of thirty years and feel that we are delivering to you a well built home. You realize of course that certain items, such as the fit of windows and doors, are problems that every home owner will have and no amount of adjustment now will forestall a recurrence at a later date. Any change that can be brought about by settling, change of weather, or natural drying out cannot be foreseen and we have found no way in which the condition can be prevented.

We hope you will enjoy living in your new MARSH HOME.

Yours very truly,

MARSH REALTY ASSOCIATES, INC.

Mary Parks Stewart

MPS/mm



COMMUNITY PLANNERS—A "do-it-yourself" plan for improving the Lincoln Heights community is discussed by (left to right) the Rev. D. G. Burke, Miss Muriel Dockery, M. L. Green and T. H. Harshaw. (Observer Photo—York)

Charlotte Observer,
December 12, 1955

At The Movies

Attention Film Fans: All Charlotte theater advertisements are grouped for your convenience. Today you will find them on page 4B.

The Charlotte Observer

Founded 1869

Fri., Nov. 22, 1957

SECTION B

EDITORIALS SPORTS
RADIO-TV THEATERS

OFFICIAL REACTION FAVORABLE

City May Get Slum-Clearance Aid

TRAVISTIES



By
GUS
TRAVIS

Black Swan Swats Editor

It's too bad that many of the great spectacles of the world take place so unexpectedly that they can't be promoted ahead of time.

Admission receipts donated to charity could alleviate much of the world's suffering.

One of these unexpected spectacles took place the other day when the new Observer farm editor, Clyde Osborne, got an unusual assignment. Had it been advertised ahead of time one of the biggest crowds ever assembled in the Southeast might have flocked to it.

Clyde was sent to write a story and get photos of a muma and papa black swan and their three baby swans on a lake owned by Glenn MacDonald who lives just beyond Gastonia on the Kings Mountain highway.

When he got there Mr. MacDonald gave him many interesting facts on the origin and habits of the black swan, including the fact his muma and papa swans were valued at \$400 each.

But in telling their habits he forgot to mention that the black swan when aroused would make a hungry blonde dropped by her near-dad's area like a gal with an overdose of tranquillizers.

After his spiel Mr. MacDonald took Clyde down to the lake and pointed to the swans.

They were startingly beautiful. Papa Swan was nodding along in front majestically leading the procession. Mama Swan came next, with her long neck proudly arched and the three baby swans trailed behind.

They waded, leisurely gliding gracefully through the water made Clyde catch his breath and he yanked his camera out of the case, ran to the lake's edge and prepared to get a shot that would make readers tear out and save The Observer's farm page.

Well, when he aimed his camera Papa Swan probably thought the Rams were getting ready to launch a Spirit at his family and he rose up on the water like a helicopter.



PRESENTATION—Dr. Harry P. Harding receives plaque with design of Harding High School from Mrs. Morella P. Jansen, English teacher. (Observer Photo—Sturkey)

Educator Foresees More College Aids

A return to college preparatory courses in high school curricula was predicted Thursday night by a veteran Charlotte educator.

FORESIGHT

Maybe It'll
Make Him
Run Faster

Dr. Harry P. Harding, superintendent of Charlotte city schools, 1912-40, drew a sharp distinction between his early teaching days and today.

"I think the principal difference lies in the stress once given to college preparatory courses. In later years more attention has

Dynamiting Attempt Is Probed

Bomb In Temple Fails To Go Off

Charlotte police are investigating the attempted dynamiting of a Jewish house of worship, Temple Beth El, on Nov. 11.

They are also trying to trace anonymous phone call threats received by at least three Jewish families in recent weeks.

One police official who declined to be quoted attributed the incident to two Klan agitators who, he said, are active here.

The abortive dynamite attempt was discovered at 3:15 p.m., only a few minutes after a group of women had left the temple at 1727 Providence Road.

Informants said that six sticks of the explosive equipped with pressure caps were left in an outside corner of the church building.

The charge was encased in an aluminum type roofcase. The fuse, about 14 feet long, had been lighted.

After the fuse traveled a few inches over the line it apparently went out.

The incident was reported to police by temple officials who requested no publicity.

Police authorities continued to maintain official silence Thursday night.

One officer confirmed, however, that The Observer's information was substantially correct.

He added that underground Klan activity has increased here and that the police department is concerned over recent developments.

Of the three Jewish families that have received telephone



REDEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION—Chamber of Commerce officials J. E. Dowd (left), Paul Younis and Ed Vinson discuss urban redevelopment with Urban

Renewal Administration representative R. V. Comerford of Atlanta's second from right. (Observer Photo—Walters)

Federal Program Is Eyed

Brooklyn Area Likely First Target

By LOYE MILLER

Resurrection of an urban renewal slum-clearance program for Charlotte, with the blighted Brooklyn area as a likely first target, seemed highly probable Thursday.

City and state officials voiced exceedingly favorable reactions to the idea, following an explanation of the federal urban renewal program by field representative R. V. Comerford of the Urban Renewal Administration.

"There is a great need for it" (an urban renewal program), said Mayor Jim Smith. "The thing for us to do is get together on it, decide what we want to do and get going."

"There's nothing else to do but get the needle in the right place and get going," said Commissioner Herbert Baxter.

At the mayor's invitation, City County Planning Director William McIntyre spent the afternoon with Comerford going over the procedural steps involved in setting up such a program. Smith said he's asked McIntyre to give him a full report on these discussions.

Also Wednesday, the Chamber of Commerce announced that its Urban Redevelopment Committee will meet next Tuesday to consider a positive renewal program. The chamber sponsored Thursday's meeting, with Comerford, which was attended by city and county officials, Mecklenburg state legislators, local architects and others interested.

Any recommendation from the chamber committee will be passed to the Chamber's board of directors, which might then pass

Reassignment Time Limit Step Taken

The Charlotte Board of Education Thursday took a first step toward establishment of a

LAND BARGAIN LURE

New County Office Site May Change

By JOE DOSTER
Observer Staff Writer

Charlotte Observer, November 12, 1957

Group III
NAACP Branch Files (1960-1965)
Box C-112
6066

Jan. 28, 1960

CHARLOTTE BRANCH
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

SUBJECT: A DISCUSSION OF SLUM CLEARANCE, URBAN REDEVELOPMENT, URBAN RENEWAL AND THE NEGRO IN CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

TO: REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE

FROM: CHARLOTTE BRANCH, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

The Charlotte Branch, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People mailed to the Redevelopment Commission of the City of Charlotte and members of the Charlotte City Council on January 7, 1960, copies of "A Discussion of Slum Clearance, Urban Redevelopment, Urban Renewal and the Negro in Charlotte, N. C., and requested a conference with the commission to discuss this matter.

May we take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation for this conference and it is our wish it will prove advantageous and productive for all concerned.

We who are here today regard urban renewal as one of the most progressive housing programs ever undertaken by the Federal Government.

I would like to emphasize at this point that we have read very much concerning the bad housing of the Negro in Brooklyn. It is very necessary that we point out here that the problem of housing accommodations for Negroes in the area is a complex one of low income, neighborhood restrictions which confined them to small areas plus a housing shortage within those areas. This resulted in overcrowding, congestion and blight, slums were naturally created or accentuated. The advancing age of the structures coupled with the lack of maintenance by indifferent and greedy absentee owners, who knew it was not necessary to maintain the properties to hold tenants when the shortage was so acute, was the primary cause of the slum condition - the dwellers were not.

Many Whites observing Negroes living under those conditions are prone to blame the Negro for that condition, whereas the Negro was the victim - not the cause.

It is our understanding that urban renewal is now broadened in concept to include not only the removal of slum conditions through slum clearance but also provides for the prevention of slums by aiding the rehabilitation of sound structures and encouraging the conservation of desirable property.

The basic purpose of the program as we understand it, is the improvement of the housing conditions of American families and "the achievement of a decent home

January 28, 1960

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF COLORED PEOPLE

20 WEST 40TH STREET
NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

ROY WILKINS
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

JACK E. WOOD, Jr.
SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR HOUSING

K. Alexander
Box 12/8
NAACP
HOUSING
NEWSLETTER

February, 1962

Feb. 1962
Housing

The constructive interest of the NAACP in the housing affairs of this nation and our support for legislation seeking better housing and living conditions for all Americans is a matter of record. This effort is typical of the responsible leadership the Association provides in many areas of American life. Consistent with this interest, NAACP Housing Department has supported for several years various proposals to consolidate the many federal housing agencies in a single unit administered from a cabinet level. Although the names that have been proposed for such a department have changed from time to time, the basic objective has remained the same; the centralization of all federal housing agencies in a single unit to enable the Government to provide this nation with a co-ordinated and more effective program of housing assistance than it presently offers.

On January 30, 1962, President Kennedy submitted a plan to Congress for the creation of such a Department. The President's plan would transfer the Housing and Home Finance Agency to a cabinet Department of Urban Affairs and Housing and would achieve the centralization and effectiveness which we have long supported. The plan automatically goes into effect April 1, 1962, unless rejected by either the Senate or the House of Representatives. The proposal has been subjected to severe criticism by conservative interests across the nation. Although many reasons for opposition have been cited much of this criticism may be attributed to the President's indication that Robert Weaver, HHFA Administrator, would head the new department and thereby become the first Negro cabinet officer in this nation's history. Resolutions disapproving the plan have been introduced in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. It has been reported that action by the House will be delayed until there is a vote in the Senate where prospects are more favorable. The Senate probably will vote on this issue on Monday, February 19.

Disregarding for the moment the pride we would all share in Dr. Weaver's elevation to cabinet rank, the value and importance of a co-ordinated federal housing effort is sufficient reason alone to press for support of the plan. NAACP housing committee personnel, consistent with the Association's traditional support for sound legislative and administrative advances in housing, therefore, have a responsibility to urge that their congressmen support this plan.

Some of the arguments in support of the proposal are cited below for your information and possible use. It is extremely important that the members of Congress receive a large volume of mail from their constituents in support of the proposal. Your letters and telegrams to your congressmen should be signed as private individuals and support for the proposal should be based on any of the following points:

1. Approximately 70 per cent of our nation now resides in urban areas and, like other interests (labor, agriculture, and commerce), are entitled to representation on a cabinet level. A Department of Urban Affairs in Housing would meet this need and for the first time in history, would expose the Executive Branch to a comprehensive view of the problems, needs and interests of the whole American population;
2. The present Federal set-up is a bureaucratic monstrosity. The loose federation of autonomous housing agencies now within the HHFA should be streamlined and centralized. Public Housing, FHA mortgage insurance programs, Urban Renewal, etc. all should be placed under one agency with a single administrator to avoid the piecemeal, independent efforts which now stifle the national housing program;
3. Establishment of the

The magnitude of the various federal housing operations which would be brought under the new Department of Urban Affairs and Housing is one of the strongest arguments for its creation. Some of the services presently being provided by the collection of six constituent agencies and offices now within the HHFA are as follows:

ASSISTANCE TO STATES AND COMMUNITIES IN —

- The elimination of slums and blight through urban renewal programs
- The preparation of comprehensive plans for community development
- The preservation of open space for ^{recreation} ~~reaction~~ and conservation
- The preservation and development of urban transportation systems
- The planning and construction of community facilities

ASSISTANCE TO PRIVATE INDUSTRY —

- The financing of residential construction and rehabilitation
- The financing of private home ownership
- The financing of private home improvement
- Financial market support for Government insured mortgages

The availability of these many services to our cities can be effective only if administered from a single agency. Their close relationship to one another logically demands that they be co-ordinated in order to avoid confusion and disunity.

Gravel Sidewalks Urged

Dr. R. A. Hawkins, making a newspaper clipping about a hit-and-run death on Newland Road, asked the city planning to lay about two miles of gravel sidewalks in the neighborhood where the death occurred Saturday night.

"This is what we were trying to avoid," said Hawkins, a local Negro leader.

An earlier request for the sidewalks, which would cost about \$10,000, was turned down on the basis of police and Traffic Engineering Department reports.

The city Council instructed City Manager William Webster to take another look and come up with a recommendation.

The streets are Newland Road, La Salle Street and Commerce Avenue, between Statesville Ave. and Interstate 77.

Hawkins said the greatest fear for the hazard was to children on their way to West Charlotte School and, beginning in September, the new Statesville Road Junior high school.

PUBLIC HOUSING? Negroes Seek Renewal Probe

They Hope
To Block
U.S. Funds

By DOUGLAS CONNAR JR.

A Negro political group headed by Dr. R. A. Hawkins has asked for a federal investigation to see if Charlotte needs more public housing for families displaced by Brooklyn slum clearance.

The group — the Mckinstry Organization on Political Affairs — also has asked the federal government to withhold federal money for slum clearance so long as a Negro is appointed to the Charlotte Redevelopment Commission.

A letter with these requests has been sent to William H.

Brooklyn's 220 acres of slums are being cleared in a 10-year federal aided urban redevelopment project. One of the city's most important points of contention is the possibility that the building of new public housing units would require the housing of public housing has been the Charlotte branch of the Mckinstry Organization, which operates the Mckinstry Redevelopment project.

The group — the Mckinstry Organization on Political Affairs — also has asked the federal government to withhold federal money for slum clearance so long as a Negro is appointed to the Charlotte Redevelopment Commission.

A letter with these requests has been sent to William H.

ON HOUSING

Rouzer Rejects Hawkins' Charges

The chairman of the Charlotte Redevelopment Commission Sunday rejected charges by a Negro political group concerning the operation of the urban renewal program here.

Elmer E. Rouzer, a lawyer who heads the commission, declined to discuss the charges except to say that there was no validity in them.

The allegations came in a letter to federal urban renewal officials in Atlanta, and Washington from Dr. R. A. Hawkins and the Rev. H. R. Moore of the Mckinstry Organization.

Housing Remarks Are Ill-Timed

Dr. R. A. Hawkins was shooting from the hip when he criticized Charlotte's week.

The local Negro leader fired hastily and with bad aim, and the welfare of Negro citizens could conceivably be injured by the shots.

Hawkins demanded a federal investigation to determine whether the city needs more public housing for families displaced by slum dwellings in the Brooklyn area, and he charged that Negroes had been "purposely excluded" from membership on the policy planning committee of the city's Redevelopment Commission.

Hawkins knew, of course, that the city has already conducted a survey — that showed no public housing is needed to accomplish a relocation of the families in the second section of the project. There is no question but that the relocation will provide substantially improved living conditions over what the families now enjoy.

The Negro leader's advocacy of public housing is poorly timed, coming on the heels of the study.

By injecting the issue of public versus private housing into redevelopment work at this stage, he gives encouragement to enemies of the whole concept of urban renewal.

The city has found that the job can be accomplished in its first stages, at least, with the help of private initiative, but reopening the argument not only delays this work, but to jeopardize future progress.

If private investors do not take up the challenge with sufficient vigor as the time may yet come when public housing will be the only solution.

That time is not now.

Hawkins' demand for Negro representation on the Redevelopment Commission is specious. The commission is a legally constituted body vested with authority to act on phases of redevelopment. Its membership has been, and should continue to be chosen on the basis of leadership and special abilities, not by such criteria as sex, religion or race.

A number of Negro citizens are now working closely with the newly formed Citizens Committee on Urban Renewal areas throughout the city. There undoubtedly will be Negro representation on committees and sub-committees as work continues.

Charlotte needs the direct support of its Negro leadership in these matters, not specious issues and delay tactics that may serve to slow or stop the improvement of conditions of life for so many

Negro Group Charges Bias In Local Urban Renewal Unit

Continued From D

tion of Brooklyn that will be cleared next.

The commission said to more public housing would be needed but that perhaps a family might need help in paying higher rent elsewhere.

The families are ones that are especially large or that have especially low incomes.

Hawkins letter asking for a federal investigation challenges this finding, however, he received no response. Commission officials conferred several times with Urban Renewal Administration people during the study, and the government, in effect, has approved what the commission found.

Hawkins says, "We totally agree with the basic philosophy of urban renewal. . . . Yet we know that if the program is improperly administered it will have a damaging effect upon the involved families and Negroes in particular."

The letter says a survey by the MOPA has found that "there are 400 families with six or more persons in each who qualify for public housing."

It accuses local urban renewal officials of turning their backs on this need to oppose opponents of public housing.

Indirectly, it accuses the City Council, which appoints members of the Redevelopment Commission, of deliberately keeping Negroes off the commission, thus denying them a voice in urban renewal policy.

There have been no Negroes on the commission. Last week the council appointed Richard

BY FEDERAL AGENCY Negroes Reassured On Housing Project

HAWKINS Says Nothing Of Inquiry

Continued From D-1

tion by the Redevelopment Commission does not mean that a relocation plan has been prepared. However, the approval of the relocation plan will not delay approval of the relocation plan.

"We may be assured," Hawkins said, "that the Housing and Home Finance Agency will not approve any urban renewal plan which does not include a relocation program that adequately meets the needs of the displaced families."

"We would like to call to your attention that the submission of the survey and planning application,"

— The Observer, Sept. 16, 1962, Col. 1

"The Redevelopment Commission survey of the second relocation area in the city is the first of the kind to be conducted in the city since the federal government resumed its role in the city's urban renewal program."

The federal Housing and Home Finance Agency said Thursday that it would not approve urban renewal plans here that would move people from one slum to another.

The agency was made by Nicholas Rabinoff, the agency's regional administrator in Atlanta, in a letter to Dr. R. A. Hawkins and the Rev. H. R. Moore of the Mckinstry Organization on Political Affairs.


Rabinoff's remarks were prompted by a letter last week in which Hawkins and Moore asked for a federal investigation to see if the city needed more public housing for families displaced by slum clearance.

Hawkins and Moore also asked the federal government to withhold funds for local slum clearance until a Negro is appointed to the Redevelopment Commission, the agency is charged of urban redevelopment here.

Indirectly made an mention of a federal investigation into the need for public housing. On the other hand, the agency's regional administrator, Nicholas Rabinoff, said that the commission, which is appointed by the City Council, is not under federal law.

"Should you have any suggestions as to increasing the effectiveness of the commission," he said, "you would please make your views known to the mayor and the city commission."

— The Observer, Sept. 16, 1962, Col. 1



THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

Brooks S. Griffith
Editor and General Manager

Perry E. Morgan
Managing Editor

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1962

**Urban Renewal and Public Housing:
Charlotte Must Prove Its Good Case**

The City of Charlotte has good reason to believe it can successfully carry out its Urban Renewal program without new public housing and it ought not to submit easily to a seeming ultimatum posed by the Urban Renewal Administration.

based on phrases such as "it is believed" and "in our opinion" and "we think" and "it may be possible."

Only generalities are offered to support the city's proposal to utilize private housing, with possible cost savings.



REGION III

HOUSING AND HOME FINANCE AGENCY SEP 20 1962

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

645 Peachtree-Seventh Building

Atlanta 23, Georgia

*Housing/Urban
Redevelopment*

*Brookshire
Paper*

September 19, 1962

Dr. R. A. Hawkins, Chairman
Rev. Ezra Moore, Chairman, Housing Committee
Mecklenburg Organization on Political Affairs;
Citizen-Student Coordinating Committee
Brooklyn Presbyterian Church
418 South McDowell Street
Charlotte, North Carolina

Dear Messrs. Hawkins and Moore:

Subject: Relocation Requirements
Project N. C. R-24
Brooklyn Section # 2

Thank you for your letter of September 13, expressing your concern for the urban renewal program and plans of the Charlotte Redevelopment Commission.

As you know, the Charlotte Redevelopment Commission has recently submitted to this office a Survey and Planning Application for the purpose of obtaining an advance of funds to undertake the necessary surveys and prepare plans for the Brooklyn Redevelopment Section #2. Planning activities for this project will be undertaken only after review of this application and approval by the Urban Renewal Commissioner.

We would like to call to your attention that the submission of the Survey and Planning Application by the Redevelopment Commission does not mean that a Relocation Plan has been prepared, likewise, the approval of the application will not infer approval of their estimates of relocation resources, but rather will make funds available to the Commission to prepare a specific relocation program for the proposed project. You may be assured that the Housing and Home Finance Agency will not approve any Urban Renewal Plan which does not include a Relocation Program that satisfactorily meets the Federal relocation requirements and assures a supply of housing within the means of those persons displaced by the particular project together with the needs for concurrent displacement within the community which is caused by other public action.

In response to your comment regarding the membership of the Charlotte Redevelopment Commission, please be advised that the conditions and requirements for the

Developers Shaping Growth, Study Says

Charlotte - Mecklenburg planning process is controlled as much by real estate developers as by the professional planners, a report by a Charlotte chapter of architects task force concluded Wednesday.

"It would not be an understatement to say that much of what we find good or bad in the physical environment of Charlotte can be directly attributed to the professional developers," the report states.

(The developers), "because

Skiping Tornado Hits County

Continued from Page 1B

tornado sightings, and Civil Defense warning sirens were

of their skill and knowledge of the planning process are able to exploit the process to their advantage, but not always to the advantage of the community. As such they are as much planners and shapers of our environment as the public planners."

The task force recommended two alternative solutions:

- Eliminate the appointed planning commission and send planning matters directly to the city council or the county board of commissioners.

- Create an elected planning commission, with the members representing districts throughout the county.

Both alternatives, the task force believes, would make officials who decide planning and zoning issues more responsive to the general public.

The present appointed commission, the task force says, is unresponsive because it represents no one and because the developers are far more skilled at dealing with the

planning process than is the general public.

But task force chairman Harvey Gantt said the architects have no specific strategy for implementing their recommendations.

"We are just one group that is willing to work with other groups to help solve Charlotte's planning problems," Gantt said. "But we certainly would be disappointed if this report goes the way of other reports just to gather dust on some shelf."

Gantt said he hoped that the city council and board of county commissioners would invite his task force to appear before them to talk about the report. But he says there are no plans to attempt to initiate such meetings.

Gantt and his fellow task force members, Bruce Brodt, Ed Easton, Marshall Mauney and Wayne Roberts, have spent a year studying Charlotte-Mecklenburg's planning process.

The Future City

Who Will Be Planning It?

One look at Charlotte proves that the community's chief designers have been its private developers. The unsightly commercial strips and apartment complexes along North 29, Eastway Drive, Independence Boulevard, Sharon-Amity Road, Park Road, South Boulevard, Freedom Drive, Albemarle and other streets shout the evidence of the developers' domination of the local planning-zoning process.

A committee of Charlotte architects headed by Harvey Gantt spent two years looking into the role of planning here. Last week it called for a shift in the balance of power. The architects warned that "serious problems" are ahead.

They pointed out that the costs of developer-dominated planning are twofold. First, the average citizen is forced to pay higher taxes for the roads, streets, schools and other public facilities that are required for development that often is bad. Second, the taxpayer suffers when the quality of his neighborhood and his community decline.

Just as the architects were issuing their report, the city's Traffic Engineering Department announced plans corroborating what they said. To accommodate Eastland Mall, a shopping center opposed by planners but approved by developer interests, the city must widen parts of Central Avenue to seven lanes. The widening not only will cost money; it will encourage more traffic, greater develop-

ment and greater deterioration of the area.

The architects asked that the extension of public utilities, such as water and sewer services, lead rather than react to development. They also suggested that city and county agencies consider public ownership of some of our undeveloped land, adopt penalties (such as higher taxes) for development in undesirable areas, and make cost-benefit studies of proposed developments.

Those responsible for planning in Charlotte-Mecklenburg have only advisory authority, and the architects' committee wants to change that. It suggested that the planning department be given status equal to that of the city and county managers, under an elected board, with authority to make planning recommendations stick.

These and other recommendations, the architects acknowledged, are controversial. But they pointed to the great unrest and frustration of citizen and neighborhood groups, such as the Myers Park Homeowners Association and the Albemarle Road Action League, as evidence that the present planning-zoning system does not meet community needs.

We have reservations about some of the architects' conclusions, such as the call for an elected planning commission, though that idea should not be dismissed out of hand. The architects have given the community a good agenda for consideration.

Future 2040

The Way Forward?