

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF

C A M B R I D G E R E D E V E L O P M E N T A U T H O R I T Y

336 Main Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts

December 31, 1969

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
CAMBRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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The year 1969 was a bright one for the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority despite a final-hour note of gloom in the announcement that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration would close down its Electronics Research Center in the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Area on June 30, 1970.

On the horizon as the year neared its end were new-housing developments in Walden Square and on Sites 25 and 26 and the former Kelley School in the Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Improvement Area.

The proposed \$60-million plus NASA Center, given a green light by the City back in 1964 and slated to cover 29 acres of the 42-acre Kendall Square Urban Renewal Area, was about at the halfway point of construction when Dr. Thomas O. Paine, NASA Administrator, revealed the decision to suspend operations at a hastily-called press conference here on December 29.

In a New Year's Eve telegram to Dr. Paine, the Redevelopment Authority said the announcement "appears to have been made with complete disregard to the provisions of the land disposition contract dated June 13, 1966 by and between this Authority and the

United States of America acting by and through your agency, and without advance notice to the Authority." An early conference with NASA officials was requested by the Authority.

Only two weeks before the announcement, the Cambridge City Council, on a 5-4 vote, had approved the closing of a portion of Sixth Street in the project area. This was requested by the Redevelopment Authority to make way for construction of an \$8-million NASA computer and instrumentation research laboratory building, and necessitated a major readjustment in the traffic pattern of the nearby East Cambridge residential area.

In its 712-word telegram to Dr. Paine, the Authority cited 11 major circumstances involved in negotiations since August, 1964, when NASA accepted Cambridge's offer to provide a site for the Electronics Research Center.

In addition, Executive Director Robert F. Rowland noted that the Authority had spent more than a year in the development of preliminary plans and in working with some 70 prospective private developers on a 13-acre triangle area adjoining the NASA site. This area is to be devoted to private, commercial development involving an estimated \$200 million in building construction.

The termination of the Electronics Research Center, Rowland said, would require the Authority to spend some time in reshaping its

plans, but he suggested that such development might now include some 11 acres of cleared land originally scheduled for NASA use. This, he pointed out, could substantially boost municipal tax revenue.

The highlights of the year, by area, included:

WELLINGTON-HARRINGTON (Neighborhood Improvement Area)

- (a) The stage was set for early 1970 groundbreaking for the first new-housing construction, on the 25,000 square foot site of the former Kelley School on Willow Street; 15 units to be constructed by the Model Cities Development Corporation under contract with Neal Mitchell Associates.
- (b) Rehabilitation investments by property owners zoomed over the \$300,000 mark under the Federal three percent loans and outright grants, with some 125 Just-A-Start employees on a 12-week summer schedule in their second year of working as an adjunct to the rehab program.
- (c) Two contracts totaling \$362,011 were executed for the improvement of water distribution facilities through construction of new mains and cement lining of existing mains.
- (d) The proposed developer for Blocks 25 and 26, the Wellington-Harrington Development Corporation, received a commitment from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) of a reservation of Section 236 interest subsidy funds in the amount of \$59,221 annually on the financing of construc-

tion of 56 housing units for low and moderate income families and the elderly.

- (e) The Wellington-Harrington Citizens Committee recommended six scattered sites, in addition to the Kelley School site and Blocks 25 and 26, for future housing development.

WALDEN SQUARE

- (a) The Authority gave tentative designation to the Interfaith Housing Corporation as developer of the proposed 240-260 units of housing for low and moderate income families and the elderly. Present occupants of the development site include the City Stable, an abandoned asphalt plant, and a trucking terminal and brickyard. No family displacement is involved.
- (b) An application for \$2.036 million in capital grant funds and \$2.136 million in a project temporary loan for the nine-acre site was submitted to HUD after approval by the City Council.
- (c) HUD made a commitment of \$324,860 annually in Section 236 interest subsidy funds on the financing of construction of the project.

ALEWIFE BROOK PARK

- (a) An allocation of \$254,375 was approved by HUD for a feasibility survey in this 47-acre triangle bounded by the Central Massachusetts Division and the Fitchburg Division of the Boston and Maine Railroad, and by Alewife Brook Parkway.

The development concept, related to the MBTA rapid transit extension from Harvard Square, is based on the use of air rights over the MBTA facilities for high rise structures accommodating residential, office and other uses.

CAMBRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

There were changes in the makeup of the five-member Authority during 1969, and clear indication of additional changes to come in 1970.

In February, Thaddeus R. Beal, State-appointed member since November 14, 1956, resigned to accept a Presidential appointment as Under Secretary of the Army. He was replaced by John Caswell Smith of 117 Lakeview Avenue, Associate Director of the Alcoholism Clinics at the Cambridge and Mount Auburn Hospitals. Mr. Smith's appointment to fill Mr. Beal's unexpired term to November 27 was followed by a five year appointment to expire November 14, 1974.

The City Council, on April 7, failed to confirm the reappointments of John A. Lunn, a member since 1958, and Prof. E. Robert Livernash, a member since 1966. The decision followed a lengthy public hearing at which Housing Convention members and other neighborhood groups led a plea for appointment of blacks, those affected by urban renewal, and low-income persons from the eastern end of the city to the Authority.

In June, Prof. Livernash, a holdover on the Authority since October

29, 1967, resigned, effective September 30. At year's end, no successor had been named.

City Manager James L. Sullivan in November again submitted Mr. Lunn's name, together with that of Robert W. Bright, a postal employee and member of the Wellington-Harrington Citizens Committee. The proposed appointments were tabled by the Council. A week later the Manager withdrew both names and asked that a special committee of the Citizens Advisory Committee set guidelines for appointments to the Authority.

Also in November, Paul R. Corcoran, Authority chairman, submitted his resignation "for a number of personal reasons" to be effective "no later than December 20." Mr. Corcoran was chairman of the committee that produced the so-called "Corcoran Report" leading to establishment of the Redevelopment Authority in 1956. Mr. Corcoran was first chairman of the Authority and was serving his sixth term in the chairman's position at the time he submitted the resignation. At the request of the City Manager, Mr. Corcoran agreed to remain on the Authority beyond the December 20 date, but no longer than two months--to February 20, 1970.

The Redevelopment Authority paid \$93,819.30 in taxes to the City of Cambridge in 1969 on properties acquired in the Kendall Square and Wellington-Harrington project areas. The Kendall Square tax payment was \$67,493.07, Wellington-Harrington payment \$26,326.23.

Cambridge Redevelopment Authority
 CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET / December 31, 1969

ASSETS

Current:

Cash in banks:

Project expenditures account:

Kendall Square	\$ 51,664		
Wellington-Harrington	<u>1,394</u>	\$	53,058

Project temporary loan repayment fund:

Kendall Square	197,792		
Wellington-Harrington	<u>33</u>	<u>197,825</u>	\$ 250,883

Accounts receivable:

Federal relocation grants		356,881	
Federal rehabilitation grants		8,755	
Tenants		180,574	
Revolving fund		50,000	
Other		<u>486</u>	596,696

Investments held:

Kendall Square			1,382,796
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Project costs:

Kendall Square	14,371,232		
Less sales price of land sold	<u>1,572,850</u>	12,798,382	
Wellington-Harrington		<u>2,910,068</u>	15,708,450

Section 112 credits:

Kendall Square		6,262,798	
Wellington-Harrington		<u>2,048</u>	6,264,846

Relocation payments:

Kendall Square		1,634,607	
Wellington-Harrington		<u>99,728</u>	1,734,335

Relocation payments-City:

Kendall Square		471,667	
Wellington-Harrington		<u>8,505</u>	480,172

Rehabilitation grants:

Wellington-Harrington			<u>64,771</u>
			<u>\$26,482,949</u>

(balance sheet continued on next page...)

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

Current:

Accounts payable:

Kendall Square	\$ 78,899		
Wellington-Harrington	<u>96,760</u>	\$ 175,659	

Loans payable:

Kendall Square	8,300,000		
Wellington-Harrington	<u>2,300,000</u>	10,600,000	

Accrued interest payable:

Kendall Square	63,376		
Wellington-Harrington	<u>17,564</u>	<u>80,940</u>	\$10,856,599

Capital:

Local grants-in-aid:

Cash:

Kendall Square		350,000	
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Non-cash:

Kendall Square	6,262,798		
Wellington-Harrington	<u>2,048</u>	<u>6,264,846</u>	6,614,846

Federal capital grants:

Project capital grants:

Kendall Square		6,812,398	
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Relocation grants:

Kendall Square	1,634,607		
Wellington-Harrington	<u>99,728</u>	<u>1,734,335</u>	8,546,733

Relocation grants-City:

Kendall Square			400,000
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Rehabilitation grants:

Wellington-Harrington			<u>64,771</u>
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			<u>\$26,482,949</u>
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