

# CAC Helps to Save 2000 homes

by G. A. McLAUGHLIN, SR.



George A. McLaughlin, Sr.  
General Chairman

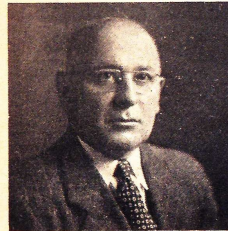
The year 1969 will be remembered as the time when so many hundreds of homes were saved from highways in Cambridge.

It was not a year for new housing; in fact 69 more dwelling units were demolished than were built—150 units were demolished and only 81 constructed.

But this is not to say that City officials, the Cambridge Advisory Committee and many other civic organizations didn't try their best to ease the housing shortage, nor that their 1969 efforts will not bear fruit in 1970 and later.

However, Cambridge did win its big housing victory, when it succeeded in saving more than 2000 dwelling units from the ravages of the Belt Highway and Route 2.

In a home - saving program, the CAC Western Gateway Committee, at the request of City Manager James L. Sullivan on May 8, took a leading role in opposing the State DPW planning of Route 2 through Cambridge. At a public meeting the Committee organized and executed a letter campaign to Governor Francis W. Sargent. On June 5 the Committee personally handed the Governor 3000 individually - signed letters collected at meetings, at church doors, and at homes. Shortly thereafter the Governor cancelled the public hearing on Route 2 planned by the State DPW and he effectively stopped all work on this roadway and also the Belt Highway.

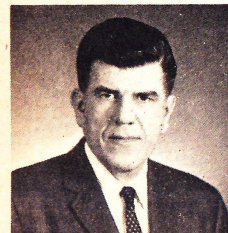


John A. DeLoria  
Western Gateway

## HOUSING DEMANDS MOST ATTENTION

Because of the magnitude of the housing problem and the numerous difficult situations associated with it, the CAC Committee on Housing was active supporting housing wherever it was proposed to be built.

The Committee members consulted with the State Department of Community Affairs as well as the Housing Authority and the City Manager on the proposed Housing for the Elderly at the Green - Franklin parking lot in Central Square. Also, the Committee, in response to the requirement of the Federal Department of Housing and Development, endorsed the Walden Square Housing Project to be built by the Cambridge Interfaith Corporation and the Cambridge Corporation. The Committee met with officials of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on three occasions. Once the Committee on Housing met jointly with the Committee on Zoning on the MIT proposals to construct housing on several sites in the City. The CAC Western Gateway Committee conducted a public meeting in the interest of this MIT Housing.

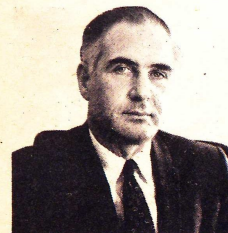


William P. Homans, Jr.  
Eastern Gateway

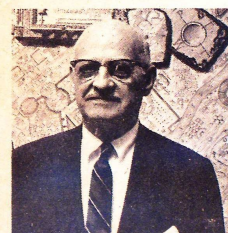
## CRA GUIDELINES

Admittedly one of the most difficult assignments handed to the CAC by the City Administration since it was organized was a Guidelines Study for Future Membership on the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority. The CAC agreed to organize a special group to conduct this study.

The CAC previously had declared frequently that since the Redevelopment Authority was first organized in 1957 not one single unit of



Hans F. Loeser  
Zoning



Edwin T. Steffian  
Harvard Square



Paul J. Murphy, right, succeeded Donald Spencer, Left as Chairman of the CAC Committee on Housing.

# Community Office Plans Surveys

In December of 1967, the Community Development Program was approved and funded by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) by a grant of \$261,800. Three amendatory grants totalled an additional \$304,621. These funds will be augmented by \$283,211 of local share work by various City agencies, most of which would have been performing these services anyhow.

Specific programs which are planned with this funding include:

Comprehensive study of the housing situation.

Policy information system, a survey to include data on population and family characteristics; employment and income; housing; health, welfare and social service needs; and the particular needs of children and the elderly.

The Preschool development program to assess the quantitative and geographic needs for child care, and to make preparations for the implementation of more effective programs of this type.

A high school dropout study in Cambridge High and Latin School to identify a high risk group of potential dropouts; to learn from school personnel and from students the nature of the difficulties experienced by staff and students, and to try to define a feasible intervention program in the high school. Recommendations will be presented to the School Department.

A study of methods for instituting a parent education program.

A Health Care program to improve

low or moderate income housing had been built on land under its control in renewal areas anywhere in the City.

The CAC also pointed out that the Authority, with its Technology Square and Riverway Projects, had caused the tax base of the City to be increased as well as the job opportunities. The CAC noted the potential for the Kendall Square project where NASA was building. The news that NASA was abandoning the site for its Electronics Research Center came as a shock.

Within two years from the time that the City Administration first requested the CAC to study the complex Harvard Square and the proposed route of the MBTA subway extension, the CAC Committee on Harvard Square made its report to the City Manager.

## CAMBRIDGE PLAZA AND ZONING

Unexpectedly the Committee on Harvard Square was drawn into the discussion of the proposed \$20 million Cambridge Plaza plans at the Baird Atomic site. To fortify its position that developments in Harvard Square area should conform to a general plan that is in the best interests of the City as a whole, without at the same time discouraging the investment of millions of dollars in new construction, the Committee drew facts from the Harvard Square Report being prepared at the time by the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority at the request of the CAC and with the approval of the City Council and City Manager.

Out of a long drawn controversy came the demand in City Council meetings for a revision of the Cambridge Zoning Code.

Another CAC group, the Committee on Zoning, went to work in cooperation with the Cambridge Planning Board on this revision. Joint meetings were held with this Board and the effort was continuing at the close of the year.

the availability of quality care to all residents.

A comprehensive study of economic development and manpower problems.

A study of a process for meeting the City's relocation needs as sensitively as possible.

A study of goals for Cambridge.

One of the most significant efforts of the Community Development Section during the past two and a half years has been to aid in the mobilization of a growing political, technical and intellectual movement in the Boston area that is seriously questioning the assumptions, goals, and priorities of the State's transportation policies. The Department organized the mammoth parade to the State House in January to protest the building of the Belf Highway. The effort put in by this office and people from other agencies has finally paid off as indicated by Governor Sargent's suspension of planning for the Inner Belt and the Route No.2 Extension. Current funding for transportation studies by the CDS include \$45,000 of City money plus additional CDS resources. Additional transportation research to be coordinated by the CDS will involve planning studies for the proposed Alewife Brook MBTA Extension.

The Cambridge Summer Jobs Program, which is coordinated by the CDS in cooperation with the Mayor's Office and public and private agencies, is funded with \$44,000 of City money and \$28,000 in private donations. This program provides summer employment for disadvantaged youths in Cambridge between the ages of 15 and 21.

There are two HUD programs now in execution dealing with open space in Cambridge. Both of these are administered by the CDS staff. The first is the Urban Beautification Program, which is in its third year. Grants totaling \$410,000 have been awarded to Cambridge by HUD (including a grant of \$150,000 for 1969) for the purpose of improving existing public open spaces such as playgrounds, parks, malls, etc. So far, Urban Beautification has focussed on Cambridgeport, Riverside, North Cambridge, and the Model Cities neighborhood.

The Open Space Program, also sponsored by HUD, gives cities the opportunity to acquire land and develop it into recreation areas. The CDS staff has obtained Federal grants from HUD totaling \$550,000 to acquire land and build the Gore Street Playground in East Cambridge, which will be approximately 5 acres in size and will include an M.D.C. skating rink.

## VARIETY OF PROGRAMS

In addition, the CDS is engaged in a variety of programs for which it has secured Federal funding.

The Day Care staff of the CDS has been retained by the Cambridge Day Care Association, under a \$10,925 contract, to help implement a range of child - care programs for residents, and to improve and coordinate existing child care programs. A portion of the funding for this effort was provided by local businesses and civic groups. The CDS staff has also assisted the Model Cities Agency staff in securing a \$90,000 Federal grant to establish a day care program for residents of the Model Cities' neighborhood. This grant will be matched by \$30,000 of Model Cities supplemental funds.

Housing activities have focussed on improvement in the condition and supply of housing for low and moderate income households and in the formulation of a long range housing policy. The staff submitted the application for public housing modernization funds to HUD in 1969 which made available \$2.2 million to the Housing Authority for the first year of the modernization program. In addition, the CDS provided technical assistance to the Housing Task force of the Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee and to the City Manager's Ad Hoc Housing Development Task Group, and prepared for this committee its first report, "Homes for People."

A contract between the City and the Riverside Neighborhood Association prepared by the CDS staff provides \$16,000 of City funds for studies directed toward the provision of low - income housing in the Riverside neighborhood.

The law enforcement and delinquency staff of the CDS has prepared grant applications and administered several programs.