

TWENTY-FIRST 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, 1977

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OF  
CAMBRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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"...The commitment of the Authority to citizen involvement through its Wellington-Harrington Citizens Committee has made the process responsive to the people affected most by the development in Kendall Square. The CRA has been recognized for its democratic style and is proud of its accomplishment."

Editorial  
Cambridge Chronicle  
June 16, 1977

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The year 1977 was an active one on major activity in the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Area as plans for development began to crystalize.

Years of Federal delays, replanning, community involvement, the necessity of an Environmental Impact Study forced by NASA's withdrawal from the area in 1970, and necessary Congressional and

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Presidential actions all finally culminated October 31 in final and unanimous (9-0) approval by the City Council of an amended Urban Renewal Plan and a mixed-use zoning ordinance.

Eight months before--in February--the City Council had given unanimous approval to an initial Urban Renewal Plan amendment and to endorsement of a joint effort by the Redevelopment Authority and the City's Planning Board in preparing the zoning ordinance amendment for exclusive use in Kendall Square, now being referred to as "Cambridge Center."

In April, the Authority announced the availability of "all or most of Parcel 2, comprising approximately 11 acres of land (north of Broadway)...for the development of light industrial, research and development, and related uses..."

Within three months, in cooperation with R. M. Bradley & Co., Inc., its real estate marketing and land development consultant, the Authority had sifted through some 10 expressions of interest. In June, the Authority announced it would negotiate exclusively with the nationally-known real estate firm of Gerald D. Hines Interests, of Houston, Texas, and Boston, to prepare a development proposal for Parcel 2.

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Announcement of the availability of the triangle (Parcels 3 and 4) also was made in June, and called for mixed-use development of the 13 acres, including general and technical office space, hotel, retail, and possible residential uses.

Fifteen developers submitted expressions of interest, and at year's end, the Authority had narrowed those under serious consideration to four.

Some 600,000 square feet of building space is projected for Parcel 2 where the emphasis is solely on job opportunities at a variety of skill levels, including blue-collar and non-professional white-collar employment for Cambridge residents.

The Urban Renewal Plan and mixed-use zoning maximums for the triangle include, in square footage, 830,000 for office space, 150,000 for retail and consumer services, 250,000 for a hotel, and 300,000 for residential use. There is a 250-foot height limitation in the triangle, and an 80-foot height limitation for the light industrial development in Parcel 2.

The Environmental Impact Study, completed in November, 1976, concluded that there would be no unacceptable environmental

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impacts from development to be undertaken in accordance with the amended and approved Urban Renewal Plan. Federal and State approvals were imminent at year's end.

Early in December, the Authority, in cooperation with City Manager James L. Sullivan, named a seven-member Design Advisory Group for the Kendall Square project. The group, now meeting regularly, is headed by Earl R. Flansburgh, president of Earl R. Flansburgh Associates of Cambridge, and includes Paul E. Dietrich, a member of the Cambridge Planning Board; Sarah P. Harkness, a founding partner of The Architects Collaborative of Cambridge; landscape architect Daniel U. Kiley, a member of the Authority's design advisory group for NASA's construction start in the mid-60's; William L. Maini, Cambridge architect and immediate past president of the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce; Frederick A. Stahl and Donald L. Stull, directors of the Boston Society of Architects.

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The conversion of the old Will Scientific Building at the corner of Windsor Street and Broadway from vacant industrial space to attractive apartments was completed in August and occupied in the Fall. The 86-year-old former George Close Building, named for

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the candy manufacturer who first occupied the building, is accommodating 61 families. The conversion was carried out by the Close Building Associates, comprising the Wellington-Harrington Housing Associates, Park Maynard Realty and Mark Hochman, and was financed by the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) with the first all Section 8 low-to-moderate income rehabilitation development in the State. The adaptive reuse of the six-story brick building was designed by Gelardin-Bruner-Cott, Inc., with Ibek Corporation of Clinton as general contractor. Identified as a non-conforming use in a residential area, the building was purchased by the Redevelopment Authority to set the stage for its conversion to an acceptable use.

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The first step toward development of the seven-acre parcel on Portland Street at Cambridge Street came in mid-year on execution of a letter of understanding between the Redevelopment Authority and the Archdiocese of Boston for construction of a new church and related facilities for the people of St. Anthony's parish on Tract Number 4A, at the intersection of Portland and Cambridge Streets. The development on 58,000 square feet of land will include a 650-seat church, a chapel, rectory, parish hall, and a courtyard.

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In mid-year, the Authority, at the request of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), approved a contract for technical services to be provided by Authority staff in connection with the northwest Red Line extension project in an initial amount of \$80,000. The services will include assistance with land acquisition, building demolition, property management, family and business relocation.

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During the year, the Authority operated 10 programs through the Community Development Block Grant program under contract with the City of Cambridge.

These included Project Development and Technical Services and the Youth Employment and Technical Support Services Program (Just-A-Start) in the Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Improvement Area, and the following programs in the Community Development Block Grant areas: Just-A-Start, Section 312 Loan Services, Home Improvement Services, Better Playgrounds/Parks Services, Advanced Skills Training Development, Environmental Beautification, Home Winterization Demonstration Services and Acquisition and Relocation Services in

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connection with the Inman Square parking facility, the Clarendon Avenue project and City condemnation activities.

The Authority's contract for the administration and operation of the Section 312 Loan Services Program for the CDBG Areas terminated on December 31, and at that time, all Section 312 Loan Program activities were transferred to the City's Community Development Department. Six Authority employees also were transferred to the Community Development Department for the administration and operation of the 312 program, with the employees retaining all rights and accrued benefits.

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During the year, the Authority staff processed and HUD approved \$500,000 in Section 312 funds in the Wellington-Harrington Area and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) areas. In the Home Improvement Program, which is offered through Authority auspices under City CDBG funding and in cooperation with the Just-A-Start Corporation, rehabilitation loans and grants were processed in East Cambridge, Neighborhood Three, and in North Cambridge, resulting in \$484,786 in home improvement investments. The

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housing rehabilitation programs were augmented again through the Authority's tenth year of school and summer Just-A-Start programs.

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The Just-A-Start work-study program during the Summer involved some 200 neighborhood youngsters in rehabilitation work on 66 homes or apartments, six target beautification projects, recreation programs in six locations and the operation of 47 boys and girls sports teams. There were 10 training and seminar programs. In the school-year phase of Just-A-Start, assistance was provided on 53 apartments, 10 homes and at eight beautification sites. There were 47 participants funded by CDBG and charitable sources, and 75 volunteers.

In mid-year, the Just-A-Start Corporation inaugurated a new home construction-training program called Buy-A-House. The Authority designated the Corporation as developer and provided a buildable site on Berkshire Place at a land writedown. Just-A-Start work crews, Authority construction supervisory personnel, and private contractors were nearing completion of the four-bedroom Cape as the year drew to a close. The Just-A-Start Corporation interviewed new-owner applications and held a drawing from the eligible

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pool of six families. Mr. and Mrs. Francis (Rosemary) Fulkerson of 602 Cambridge Street, parents of three children, were chosen to purchase the house for \$29,900.

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The Authority, at its annual meeting in February, unanimously re-elected officers as follows: Charles C. Nowiszewski of 114 Spring Street, Chairman; Thomas J. Murphy of 247 Pearl Street, Vice-Chairman; Frank S. Maragioglio of 305 Hurley Street, Treasurer, and Gustave M. Solomons of 85 Inman Street, Assistant Treasurer. Member Jerry R. Cole of 177 Magazine Street was designated as Authority representative on the Growth Policy Committee while Mr. Solomons was designated as Model Cities Board representative.

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Strong citizen involvement continued with Authority encouragement and technical assistance provided by Authority staff, through the volunteer work of the Wellington-Harrington Citizens Committee, the Wellington-Harrington Development Corporation, the Just-A-Start Corporation, the JAS Community Development Corporation and the Home Improvement Advisory Committee--five community-based organizations that provide formal and informal program-sponsoring and advisory roles.