

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

OF

CAMBRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

City Hall Annex
57 Inman Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts

February 18, 1959

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This is the second annual report of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority organized on February 20, 1957 with headquarters in the City Hall Annex, 57 Inman Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Officers re-elected on February 19, 1958 to serve a term of one year were:

Paul R. Corcoran, Chairman
Raymond S. McLay, Vice Chairman
Thaddeus R. Beal, Treasurer
Charles M. Haar, Assistant Treasurer

Mr. Thomas J. Murphy, the fifth member of the Authority, was elected Assistant Treasurer on July 16, 1958 after Professor Haar resigned his position on the Authority to start an extended study tour in Europe.

On June 23, 1958, John M. Lunn was appointed by the City Manager and confirmed by the City Council to fill the unexpired term of Professor Haar. On October 20, 1958, Mr. Lunn was appointed by the City Manager and confirmed by the Council to a full five-year term starting October 29, 1958.

AUTHORITY FACES FOUR MANDATES

The Redevelopment Authority, at the start of its second year of operation, faced four mandates from the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency as follows:

- a. Sell the Rogers Project land;
- b. Advance the Riverview Project to the Loan and Grant stage;
- c. Advance the Cambridgeport Project to its planning stage; and
- d. Coordinate the urban renewal projects with existing or contemplated highway plans for Cambridge.

Two top Regional Housing and Home Finance Agency officials met with the City Manager and Redevelopment Authority on March 5, 1958 in Cambridge and delivered the first three of these mandates, saying that failure to meet them could mean the withholding of approval of the Donnelly Field Project. They said: "Something must begin to come out of the Cambridge urban renewal pipeline before another project would be put into that pipeline."

The fourth mandate came in the form of a policy statement from the Washington office of HHFA which said in part:

"If the location of a highway has not definitely been decided, it may be necessary to postpone completion of the urban renewal project since any changes in highway plans could vitally affect the boundaries and land uses of a project area." The highway problem is discussed later in this report.

By the end of the year, the Redevelopment Authority was able to convince Federal officials that progress had been made on Rogers sales effort and that the Loan and Grant contract for Riverview would soon be executed. Preliminary work on Cambridgeport has also been completed. As a result, Federal officials approved the Donnelly Field urban renewal project application in January 1959.

ROGERS REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT (UR MASS 7-2)

Area: Approximately 4 1/2 acres of land cleared
Federal contribution: Approximately \$238,355
City contribution: Approximately \$109,666

In February 1958, the Authority completed the relocation of 57 families and all but one of the commercial tenants located in a Rogers project area building. The Authority continued to grant extensions of time to this lone commercial tenant in order that he could be relocated to his satisfaction. This tenant moved in April.

The last of the buildings in the area was demolished in May and the land made available for sale.

While it is disappointing that in the nine months since the land was cleared, the Authority has not been able to announce the acceptance of an offer from a redeveloper of the site, it is encouraging to note that several separate negotiations are continuing with prospective redevelopers for the purchase of the Rogers project land.

Sales promotional efforts have included the writing of letters to leading firms throughout the country signed by the City Manager, Chairman of the Board of Assessors, and the Chairman of the Redevelopment Authority; the contacting of brokers in Boston and other leading cities; and the advertising in Boston and New York papers.

The Authority is determined that the land will be disposed of in the best interest not only of the Federal government, which is paying two-thirds of the net project cost, but also in the best interest of the City of Cambridge which has more at stake in this project than just the monetary return from the sale of the land.

The Authority believes there is merit to one suggestion that when the Authority expeditiously carried out the mandate of the City Council to demolish the slums which existed on most of the Rogers project land, one major objective of the City's urban renewal program was accomplished.

RIVERVIEW REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT (UR MASS 7-1) (R-21)

Area: 2 1/2 acres approximately
Federal contribution: Approximately \$*336,977
City contribution: Approximately \$ 112,326

After the City Council on September 16, 1957 approved of an application for Federal planning funds for the Riverview Project, the Redevelopment Authority prepared and submitted, in January 1958, a Redevelopment Plan and Application for Loan and Grant to the Housing and Home Finance Agency.

Eight more months of working out special problems were required before HHFA would give its approval of the Plan and the application for Loan and Grant.

The Cambridge Planning Board worked diligently with the Redevelopment Authority in preparing the material requested by HHFA in working out the special problems.

Also during these months, the Authority was required by HHFA to have a complete title search made, not only of the properties within the project area, but of abutting properties as well in order to determine ownership and potential consequential damages.

In August, HHFA gave its initial approval of the Riverview Plan upon condition that it be accepted by City Council. Whereupon the Redevelopment Authority arranged a public hearing on the Plan on September 8, 1958, in the City Council Chamber with most of the members of City Council present. Approximately 150 Cambridge residents appeared at the hearing. Twenty-eight of those who spoke at this hearing were in favor of the Plan and 18 registered their opposition. Subsequently the City Council favored the Plan 5 to 4.

After Council approval, the Authority set to work to establish criteria for the buildings to be erected on the project site and prepared documents containing the criteria for HHFA approval. The Authority also interviewed all prospective redevelopers who expressed an interest in the site.

Because the Authority has no control over or knowledge of what additional information the Housing and Home Finance Agency might require before making further decisions on Riverview, the Redevelopment Authority feels it unduly risky to forecast a timetable for future events at the project site.

However, since HHFA approved the Loan and Grant contract in January 1959 the Authority anticipates that it will soon have HHFA approval of the criteria documents. The Authority will then be able to make a public announcement of the Riverview specifications for the guidance of prospective redevelopers and all will be informed as to how a redeveloper will be chosen.

The Authority feels that there should be no demolition of buildings at the Riverview site until a redeveloper is ready to start construction within a reasonable time.

CAMBRIDGEPORT URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT (MASS R-11)

Area: 262 Acres

Federal contribution: Approximately \$4,980,000

City Contribution: Approximately 2,490,000

(It is hoped that the City's contribution will be covered for the most part by about \$1,300,000 credit representing the cost of the new Morse School within the project area.)

Although the City Council on September 16, 1957 approved the filing of an application for Federal planning and survey funds for the Cambridgeport Urban Renewal Project (where rehabilitation and conservation of existing structures are to be emphasized with a minimum of demolition) the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency did not approve the application until May 20, 1958, eight months later.

In January 1958, the Redevelopment Authority discussed with the City Manager the possibility of having the Redevelopment Authority enter into a contract with the City of Cambridge for planning work in the Cambridgeport area.

It was determined as a result of these talks early in 1958 that the Planning Board was then not staffed sufficiently to handle the Cambridgeport

project. It was thought inadvisable (even if a sufficient number of planners were available for temporary assignment) for the city to engage planners especially for the Cambridgeport project.

The hope was expressed at that time that the Planning Board staff would be increased sufficiently on a permanent basis to handle the Donnelly Field project later along with the regular work of the Planning Board.

It was decided therefore that the combined planning consultants doing business as Cambridgeport Associates (consisting of three Cambridge firms, Planning and Renewal Associates, Sasaki and Walker, and Architects Collaborative) should be placed under contract to the Redevelopment Authority for the Cambridgeport planning task.

The original 1957 Cambridgeport budget submission to HHFA contained a request for \$145,000. HHFA notified the Redevelopment Authority in March 1958 that only \$92,000 would be approved. The Authority recognized that this sum was totally inadequate to do even a minimum planning job in an area as large as Cambridgeport. Of the \$92,000, approximately \$70,000 was allocated for items such as land surveys, appraisals, legal services, collection and processing of basis data on quality of housing, family data, etc.

The remaining \$22,000 for professional planning services was determined by the Redevelopment Authority to be unrealistic for a project area of 262 acres in which it is planned to spend about \$7,470,000 net.

In the belief that a \$92,000 budget could not produce a Cambridgeport urban renewal plan which would be either adequate or fair to all, the Redevelopment Authority spent four months interviewing experts in city planning at Harvard and M.I.T. as well as private planning consulting firms in order to prepare an adequate budget. The Authority also talked with experts in the fields of architecture, economics, real estate, appraisals and law. The results of

these talks were discussed informally with HHFA officials. On the basis of encouragement received from these officials, the Redevelopment Authority filed a revised budget for \$257,000 of which \$110,000 is earmarked for planning on a cost basis. This compares with \$22,000 mentioned above.

The City Council on February 3, 1959 voted 7-0 in support of the new budget.

Some progress has been made in the meantime on the Cambridgeport project. The Redevelopment Authority signed a contract with the City of Cambridge to have firefighters in their off-time make a survey of the project area.

During July 1958 this survey was conducted under the immediate supervision of a Health Department Inspector. The survey revealed there are 1,280 structures used for residential purposes, of which 71 also have a commercial use located inside. The area contains 3,690 dwelling units. Inspectors were able to complete information on 45% of the structures and 44% of the dwelling units. The size of this sample is deemed to be more than adequate for planning and statistical purposes since structures and dwelling units were surveyed in each of the 102 city blocks within the Cambridgeport project area. The area has 240 structures which are entirely devoted to industrial and commercial use.

Every city department which will have an important role to play in the planning of the Cambridgeport area has met or will meet with the City Manager's Urban Renewal Coordinating Committee to discuss his department's future requirements in the project area. Thus the department heads will be prepared to discuss these requirements with the planning consultants.

In order that the residents of the Cambridgeport area might be kept up to date on developments and in order that they might contribute their ideas to the project affecting their neighborhood, the Cambridge Community Services has

engaged a community organizer to be the liaison between the people, the Redevelopment Authority and planners.

The Authority hopes (but it cannot be certain) it will be in the position to offer to the City Council early in 1960 the urban renewal plan for the Cambridgeport area.

DONNELLY FIELD URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT (MASS R-14)

Area: 84 acres
Federal Contribution: Approximately \$1,457,689
City Contribution: Approximately 728,845

The approval of the Donnelly Field Urban Renewal Project in January 1959 by the Housing and Home Finance Agency was doubly important. It meant that \$92,804 in survey and planning funds would be available for this project. The approval also meant that Cambridge could now start construction of the Charles G. Harrington School at Donnelly Field and apply the cost of that school as the City's contribution to the net cost of the urban renewal project. Such credit would not have been allowed if the school construction had started prior to approval of the urban renewal project by HHFA.

Because the Cambridge Planning Board staff has been increased as the result of increased appropriation by the City Council, it is hoped by the Authority that a contract may now be signed between the City and the Redevelopment Authority to have the planning Board staff do the planning of the Donnelly Field Project.

The original application to the Federal government for the Donnelly Field Project as approved by the City Council in December 1957 covered 187 acres and called for a Federal contribution of \$4,800,000. The cutback during 1958 of

Federal urban renewal funds available to U.S. communities resulted in the size of the project being reduced to 84 acres and a Federal contribution of approximately \$1,457,689.

HOUGHTON URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT

An application approved by the City Council on September 16, 1957 for Federal funds for the Houghton Urban Renewal Project was returned to the Redevelopment Authority by HHFA with the explanation that there were insufficient funds available for this additional project in Cambridge. The Authority plans to resubmit the application later.

MID-CAMBRIDGE (non-assisted) PROJECT

The Redevelopment Authority stands ready to cooperate with the Cambridge Planning Board which is working on an application for the Mid-Cambridge (non-assisted) Project, which means that no Federal funds will be contributed to the project but that property owners in the area could receive more favorable terms on mortgage money and loans with which to improve their properties. There are the same benefits planned for property owners in urban renewal project areas.

The City of Cambridge would commit itself, among other things, to make certain civic improvements in the Mid-Cambridge project area designed to upgrade the entire neighborhood.

SALE OF TEMPORARY LOAN NOTES

Twice during the past year, the Redevelopment Authority offered \$400,000 six-month loan notes for bid to finance the Rogers Redevelopment Project.

On July 8, 1958 the successful bidder was Salomon Bros. and Hutzler, 60 Wall Street, New York with the Chemical Corn Exchange as the paying agent. The interest rate was .80 on \$400,000 with a premium of \$10.

On January 27, 1959, J.P. Morgan & Co., Inc., 23 Wall Street, New York, was the successful bidder and was its own paying agent. The interest on \$400,000 was 1.68 and the premium \$6.00.

THE BELT ROUTE

The coordination of the urban renewal and the highways program (roads being built or contemplated) has yet to become an accomplished fact, although the City Council has furnished to the State all the study material on the proposed Belt Route made available to the Council. The decision now rests with the State.

Because highway lines go beyond the boundaries of the urban renewal projects, the Redevelopment Authority must conform to the overall planning for the city as approved by the Cambridge Planning Board and the City Council.

Therefore the decision on the location of a new highway, or whether one should be built at all, is not for the Authority to decide.

But the Authority does feel that the time could be quickly approaching when the lack of a decision (on whether a highway is to be built at all and if so where) could postpone execution of the Cambridgeport urban renewal project. The Donnelly Field, Houghton and Mid-Cambridge projects likewise could be postponed for lack of a decision on the Belt Highway since proposed routes for the Belt Highway touch each of these projects.

Other disadvantages to Cambridge resulting from the lack of a decision is not the proper subject for discussion in this report.

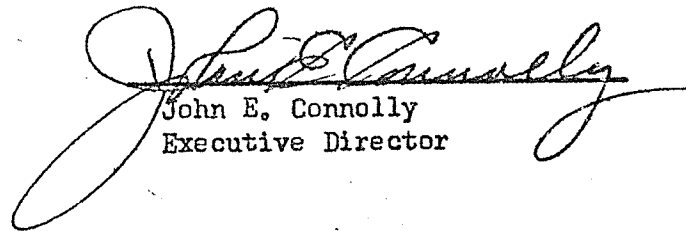
RELOCATION COMMITTEE

The Authority staff has participated as members of an ad hoc committee on Relocation. This committee is composed of representatives of United Community Services and the communities in Metropolitan Boston that are engaged in renewal programs or where new highway construction is scheduled. The purpose of the group is to determine the potential relocation load in the Metropolitan area for the next 10 years and to seek ways and means for an orderly system of family relocation.

COORDINATION

The Redevelopment Authority appreciates the coordination experienced in the urban renewal program and the cooperation given during the past year by the State Housing Board, the Cambridge Housing Authority, Mayor Thomas M. McNamara, City Manager John J. Curry, the City Council, and the heads of the City Departments in Cambridge.

Respectfully submitted,


John E. Connolly
Executive Director

CAMBRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Cambridge, Mass.

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
December 31, 1958

ASSETS

Cash	75,924.90	
Accounts Receivable	5,653.57	
Investments - U.S. Securities	100,000.00	
Project Costs	496,713.88	
Reimbursable Relocation Payments	<u>6,827.69</u>	
Total Assets		<u>685,120.04</u>

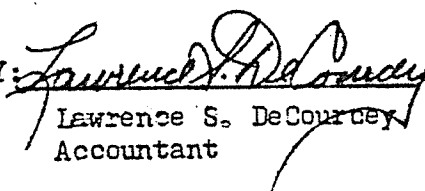
LIABILITIES & CAPITAL

Accounts Payable		30,328.10
Accrued Interest Payable		
Housing and Home Finance Agency	2,082.35	
Others	<u>1,297.78</u>	3,380.13
Notes Payable - Temporary		
Housing and Home Finance Agency	40,747.12	
Others	<u>400,000.00</u>	440,747.12
Capital:		
Local Grants-in-Aid	97,842.00	
Federal Capital Grants	105,995.00	
Relocation Grants	<u>6,827.69</u>	<u>210,664.69</u>
Total Liabilities and Capital		<u>685,120.04</u>

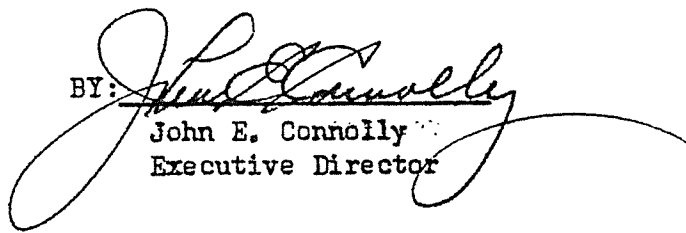
Certified Correct

Approved

BY:


Lawrence S. DeCoursey
Accountant

BY:


John E. Connolly
Executive Director