

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT

OF

CAMBRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

City Hall Annex  
57 Inman Street  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

December 31, 1959

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

Whereas the first two annual reports of this Authority were dated as of the annual meeting of the Authority in February, this report is dated December 31 by direction of the State Housing Board, which points out that the statute requires the annual reports of Housing and Redevelopment Authorities to be submitted during January for each year ending the previous December 31.

Officers of the Authority elected at the Annual Meeting on February 18, 1959 to serve until the next annual meeting in February 1960 are:

Paul R. Corcoran, Chairman  
Raymond S. McLay, Vice Chairman  
Thaddeus R. Beal, Treasurer  
Thomas J. Murphy, Assistant Treasurer

The fifth member of the Authority is John A. Lunn.

ROGERS BLOCK

Eighteen months after the last building was cleared from the Rogers Redevelopment Project (UR Mass. 7-2) in May 1958, the Authority approved a sale price of \$320,000 for 237,571 square feet of land to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Cabot, Cabot & Forbes Co. for the erection of an Industrial Research Center, every square inch of which will be tax paying.

Approximately five acres of the Rogers Block are being combined with the nine-acre Lever Bros. Co. tract to make up the 14 acres for the Research Center.

M.I.T. and Cabot, Cabot & Forbes Co. plan to organize a corporation or trust to finance, erect and manage the Research Center, estimated to cost at least \$15 million and which could provide up to 3000 jobs in varied skills including scientists, craftsmen, office workers, and maintenance tradesmen.

This is believed to be the first instance in the United States where the funds and efforts of the Federal government, a City, an educational institution, and a private development firm have been coordinated in a program combining an urban redevelopment area with vacated industrial property to be rebuilt as a fully tax-paying and job-producing industrial development.

An added feature of this Research Center is its importance to the national defense in as much as the Center will be in the heart of a vital advanced scientific production area.

For 1960 there remains the task of completing administrative details so that construction on the first building may start as quickly as possible.

In the interim, the Rogers land is being used under contract with Fitz-Inn, Inc., the high bidder, for off-street parking to service nearby industries.

#### RIVERVIEW

All within eight months after January 1959 when the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency approved a Loan and Grant Contract for the Riverview Project (Mass. R-21), the City Council gave its final approval to this project, the Redevelopment Authority on June 1 took possession of the approximately 2 1/2 acres within the project area, in July the Authority approved specifications for the redevelopment of the area, and in August received four proposals and plans from redevelopers for the construction of 77 dwelling units.

The Authority selected a redeveloper subject to the signing of a contract, details of which were being worked out on the date of this report.

A public announcement will be made on the specific plans for this development when this contract is signed, Building is expected to start early in 1960.

The 12 families and 5 single persons living in the project area were relocated as of November 1, as were four of the six commercial establishments.

More time consuming and difficult for the Authority than the relocation of the families was the evacuation of the 54 garage stalls, many of which were used for the storage of household goods, commercial and industrial supplies and sundry articles. Of the 54 garages, only 13 were occupied by automobiles of residents of Cambridge and students living within a mile of the Riverview Project.

As of December 31, approximately 80% of the buildings on the Riverview site had been demolished.

#### CAMBRIDGEPORT

In its last Annual Report, the Authority made two statements concerning the Cambridgeport Urban Renewal Project (Mass. R-11) worth repeating as follows:

"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," (Quote from a policy statement from the Washington office of the Housing and Home Finance Agency); and

"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."

On March 3, 1959, Mr. Corcoran, speaking at the Boston College Seminar on Urban Renewal, announced that he had received a telegram from the Housing and Home Finance Agency which read in part:

"Contract for planning Cambridgeport Project cannot be approved until proposed highway route is fixed. Any detailed planning until location of clearance for highway is determined would be unwarranted."

Mr. Corcoran also told the Seminar audience:

"We do not urge that a Belt Route be built; we do not advocate a particular route; we simply point out that until a decision is made our work on this Cambridgeport Project is effectively terminated."

Within a week of the Boston College Seminar, the State Department of Public Works announced that contracts would be signed for determining "With all possible speed" the route for the Inner Belt Highway.

Nevertheless, on April 1, the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency suspended any further expenditures for the Cambridgeport Project. This action automatically raised the serious threat that the project might be terminated unless an exception could be obtained by the Authority to a Housing and Home Finance Agency policy decision which set October 4, 1959 as the final date for the presentation to HHFA of an acceptable plan for the Cambridgeport Project area.

Mayor Thomas M. McNamara, City Manager John J. Curry, Governor Foster Furcolo, Congressman Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr., the State Housing Board and the Citizens Advisory Committee For Cambridge cooperated with the Authority in appealing to Washington for the lifting of this October 4 deadline.

An exception to the policy ruling was obtained on the condition that, since the State intended to go ahead with the planning for the Belt Route, the State show continued progress in this planning.

The Federal capital grant reservation of \$4,980,000 for Cambridgeport was saved through excellent cooperative effort.

Federal, State, City and Authority officials have conferred since then on the planning progress of the Belt Highway. Consultants for the State are committed to produce a recommended route for the Belt Highway not later than February 2, 1960. Failure by the State to make satisfactory progress after February 2 in establishing a final route could result in the Housing and Home Finance Agency reviewing the Cambridgeport situation to determine what action should be taken on the Federal allocation of \$4,980,000 for this project.

Present indications are that, barring unforeseen circumstances, a preliminary plan for the 260-acre Cambridgeport urban renewal area should be ree

in 1961. The plan will place emphasis on the rehabilitation and conservation of existing properties with demolition kept at a minimum.

DONNELLY FIELD

Preliminary planning funds of \$92,804 for the Donnelly Field Urban Renewal Project (Mass. R-14) were approved by the Housing and Home Finance Agency in January of 1959. By terms of a contract between the City and the Authority, Cambridge firefighters, in their off-duty time, Cambridge Health Department and Cambridge Planning Board staff members, under the supervision of the Executive Director of the Authority, conducted a house-to-house survey of the 84-acre Donnelly Field area.

A report on the findings was forwarded to the Housing and Home Finance Agency and approved.

Financial information on the project area was compiled with the assistance of Cambridge banks by the Citizens Advisory Committee For Cambridge, for the Authority.

Active planning for the area will be undertaken as soon as there is some indication where the Belt Highway is to be located.

HOUGHTON PROJECT

This project, originally approved by the City Council in 1957, but held in abeyance by the Housing and Home Finance Agency for lack of sufficient funds, will be resubmitted to the Federal authorities at an opportune time by the Authority.

SECTION 221 MORTGAGE INSURANCE

At the request of the City Manager and the Redevelopment Authority, Cambridge was designated as an area eligible for 200 units of FHA Section 221 mortgage insurance for relocation housing.

This is an important, but little understood, "tool" in the urban renewal program. Persons interested in building or rehabilitating structures in the City for relocation of displaced families may apply through mortgage lenders to the FHA for commitments to insure loans. FHA may issue such commitments within the present 200 unit limit certified for Cambridge, a limit which could be increased if demand warrants.

One task before the community at the present time is to study this program so that all of its provisions may be fully understood.

#### PAYMENTS TO THE CITY

For work thus far completed by the City departments on the building of Bradbury Street in the Riverview Project, the Redevelopment Authority has paid the City \$9,701.51.

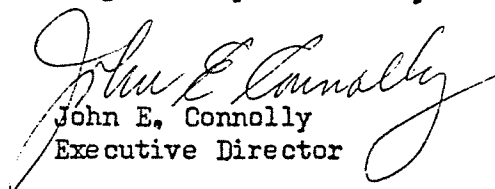
For survey and planning work done in the Donnelly Field Project under contract between the City and the Authority, the Authority paid \$4,711.39 to the City in 1959.

In final settlements with property owners in the Rogers and Riverview project areas, the Authority collected \$2,038.62 in taxes due the City and \$149.01 for water bills, making a total of \$2,187.63 the Authority turned over to the City for these items.

#### COOPERATION

The Redevelopment Authority appreciates the cooperation extended in 1959 by Mayor Thomas M. McNamara, City Manager John J. Curry, the City Council, heads of the City departments, the Cambridge Housing Authority, civic groups and State and Federal officials.

Respectfully submitted,

  
John E. Connolly  
Executive Director

CAMBRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
Cambridge, Mass.

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET  
December 31, 1959

ASSETS

Cash		291,036.31
Accounts Receivable		15,922.95
Investments - U.S. Securities		103,000.00
Project Costs		684,366.48
Reimbursable Relocation Payments		<u>11,580.19</u>
Total Assets		<u>1,102,905.93</u>

LIABILITIES & CAPITAL

Accounts Payable		28,132.57
Accrued Interest Payable		
Housing and Home Finance Agency	1,596.45	
Others	<u>5,571.72</u>	7,168.17
Notes Payable - Temporary		
Housing and Home Finance Agency	44,752.00	
Others	<u>700,000.00</u>	744,752.00
Capital:		
Local Grants-in-Aid	205,278.00	
Federal Capital Grants	105,995.00	
Relocation Grants	<u>11,580.19</u>	<u>322,853.19</u>
Total Liabilities and Capital		<u>1,102,905.93</u>

Certified Correct

Approved

By \_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_

Lawrence S. DeCoursey  
Accountant

John E. Connolly  
Executive Director