

THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 720

Approved November 20, 1953

Resolved,

That WHEREAS, the Providence Redevelopment Agency pursuant to the provisions of Article 5 of the "Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act," constituting Chapter 2574 of the Public Laws of 1950 of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, has formulated and submitted on November 2, 1953 a Tentative Plan for a project area within Redevelopment Area D-2 designated by the City Council on July 6, 1948, Chapter 103 of the Ordinances of the City of Providence under the provisions of Section 22 of the Community Redevelopment Act, Chapter 1802 of the Public Laws of 1946 as amended, and

WHEREAS, a copy of said Tentative Plan was transmitted to the City Plan Commission on October 21, 1953, and said Commission reported to the City Council on November 2, 1953 that said Tentative Plan is in conformity with the master or general plan of the City of Providence, and

WHEREAS, detailed inspection of 243 of the 298 occupied dwelling units within said Project Area made by inspectors of the Providence Department of Health using survey methods adopted and recommended by the United States Public Health Service indicate that 99% of the dwelling units inspected have serious deterioration, 78% have no central heating, 76% have no inside hot water, 16% have considerably daylight obstruction, 24% have seriously inadequate room facilities, 37% have no private bath, 37% have no bath available, 26% have serious overcrowding, 6% have no private or adequate toilet, and 14% have no dual egress, and

WHEREAS, the same survey shows that 92% of the dwelling units surveyed are considered inadequate because of insufficient dwelling facilities, deterioration, or obsolescent, hazardous or insanitary conditions, and

WHEREAS, said survey also indicated that 99% of the project area's dwelling units have one or more basic deficiencies, and 25% of the dwelling units have three or more basic deficiencies, and

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That WHEREAS, the Insurance Maps of Providence, Rhode Island, Volume I, published by the Sanborn Map Company, reveal that 45% of the structures containing dwelling units are of predominantly wooden construction three stories or over in height, and that nearly two-thirds of the buildings are less than 12 feet away from other major buildings, and

WHEREAS, it is reported by the Providence Redevelopment Agency that 96% of the lots occupied by dwellings within said Project Area are below the 5,000 square foot minimum for new construction established in the Providence Zoning Ordinance, and

WHEREAS, it is reported by the Providence Redevelopment Agency that one-third of the residential structures in said project area also contain stores or other non-residential uses, and

WHEREAS, the records of the Providence Health Department and State Health Department indicate that the incidence of venereal disease, tuberculosis and illegitimate births is proportionately higher in the area bounded by Blackstone, Plain, and Bogman Streets and Prairie Avenue, of which said Project Area is a part, than for the city as a whole, and

WHEREAS, the records of the Providence Department of Public Welfare and the Rhode Island Department of Social Welfare indicate that the incidence of aid to dependent children cases and training school admissions is disproportionately high in the said area of which said Project Area is a part,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

(1) That redevelopment of the Project Area described in the Tentative Plan submitted by the Providence Redevelopment Agency on November 2, 1953 be and hereby is determined to be in the public interest and would tend to effectuate the purposes and policy of said Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act; and that it be and hereby is determined that said Project Area is an approved redevelopment project area and shall be known as the Willard Center Unit Two Project Area and shall be numbered D2-A2.

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(2) That it be and hereby is determined that said Willard Center Unit Two Project Area D2-A2 comprises that certain tract of land situated in the City of Providence and State of Rhode Island, which is bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at the northeasterly corner of the tract herein described, said corner being the intersection of the easterly extension of the line bounded southerly by the land now or lately of Joseph Herr, and the center line of Staniford Street; thence running approximately S 9°00' E, along said center line of Staniford Street, a distance of 96.27 feet, more or less, to the intersection of said center line of Staniford Street and the center line of Willard Avenue;

thence turning in a clockwise direction an exterior angle of 173°-00', more or less, and running approximately S 17°-30' E, along the said center line of Staniford Street, a distance of 411.06 feet, more or less, to the intersection of the said center line of Staniford Street and the center line of Pilgrim Street;

thence turning in a counter-clockwise direction an interior angle of 91°53', more or less, and running approximately S 74°23' W, along said center line of Pilgrim Street, a distance of 652.71 feet, more or less, to the intersection of said center line of Pilgrim Street and the center line of Hilton Street;

thence turning in a counter clockwise direction an interior angle of 90°21', more or less, and running approximately N 19°30' W, along said center line of Hilton Street, a distance of 80.24 feet to the extension of the line bounded on the northerly side by the land now or lately of John Alexion, and on the southerly side by the land now or lately of M. Finkelstein;

thence turning in a counter clockwise direction an exterior angle of 90°21', more or less, and running approximately S 71°30' W, along said extension of the line bounded northerly by the land now or lately of said John Alexion, and southerly by land now or lately of said M. Finkelstein and along said line, a distance of 120.30 feet, more or less, to the southwesterly corner of land now or lately owned by said John Alexion;

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thence turning in a counter clockwise direction an interior angle of $90^{\circ}21'$, more or less, and running approximately $N 18^{\circ}51' W$, along the line bounded westerly by the land now or lately of Mary Monahan and easterly by the land now or lately of said John Alexion, a distance of 50 feet, more or less, to the northwesterly corner of land now or lately of said John Alexion;

thence continuing approximately $N 18^{\circ}-51' W$, along the line bounded westerly by land now or lately of said Mary Monahan and easterly by land now or lately of Charles Steiner a distance of 37.97 feet, more or less, to the southwesterly corner of land now or lately of John P. Leite;

thence continuing approximately $N 18^{\circ}-51' W$, along the line bounded westerly by land now or lately of said Mary Monahan and easterly by land now or lately of said John P. Leite a distance of 37.97 feet, more or less to the southwesterly corner of land now or lately of Jacob Licht;

thence continuing approximately $N 18^{\circ}51' W$, along the line bounded westerly by land now or lately of said Mary Monahan and easterly by land now or lately of said Jacob Licht a distance of 13.71 feet, more or less, to the southerly line of land now or lately owned by Thomas O'Brien;

thence turning in a clockwise direction an exterior angle of $75^{\circ}00'$, more or less, and running approximately $S 66^{\circ}20' W$, along a line bounded on the northerly by land now or lately of said Thomas O'Brien, and on the southerly side by the land now or lately of said Mary Monahan, a distance of 20.10 feet, more or less, to the southwesterly corner of land now or lately of said Thomas O'Brien;

thence turning in a counter clockwise direction an interior angle of $75^{\circ}00'$, more or less, and running approximately $N 18^{\circ}51' W$, along the line bounded on the westerly side by land now or lately of said Thomas O'Brien, and on the easterly by land now or lately of Thomas O'Brien a distance of 88.26 feet, more or less, to the southwesterly corner of land now or lately of Abraham Wax;

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thence turning in a clockwise direction an exterior angle of $94^{\circ}00'$, more or less, and running approximately $S\ 75^{\circ}30'\ W$, along a line bounded on the northerly side by the land now or lately of Manuel Texeira, and southerly by the land now or lately of said Thomas O'Brien, a distance of 80.24 feet, more or less, to the southeasterly corner of land now or lately of Harry Lury;

thence continuing approximately $S\ 75^{\circ}30'\ W$, for a distance of 40.12 feet along the line bounded on the northerly side by land now or lately of said Harry Lury, and on the southerly by land now or lately of Helen O'Brien and Katherine Crawford to the southeasterly corner of the land now or lately of Minnie Greenstein;

thence continuing approximately $S\ 75^{\circ}30'\ W$, along the line bounded northerly by land now or lately of said Minnie Greenstein, and southerly by land now or lately of said Helen O'Brien and Katherine Crawford, a distance of 40.12 feet, more or less, to the southeasterly corner of land now or lately of Quality Kosher Meat Market Inc.;

thence continuing approximately $S\ 75^{\circ}30'\ W$, along the line bounded on the northerly side by land now or lately of said Quality Kosher Meat Market, and on the southerly side by land now or lately of Abraham Rosenberg and Samuel Schwartz, a distance of 34.4 feet more or less to the southeasterly corner of the land now or lately of Tifereth Israel Congregation;

thence continuing approximately $S\ 75^{\circ}30'\ W$, along the line bounded on the northerly side by land now or lately of said Tifereth Israel Congregation, and on the southerly side by land now or lately of said Abraham Rosenberg and Samuel Schwartz, a distance of 6.30 feet, more or less, to the northwest corner of land now or lately of said Abraham Rosenberg and Samuel Schwartz;

thence turning a clockwise direction an exterior angle of $86^{\circ}30'$ more or less, and running approximately $S\ 19^{\circ}00'\ E$ along the line bounded on the easterly side by land now or lately of said Abraham Rosenberg and Samuel Schwartz, and on the westerly side by land now or lately of Tifereth Israel Congregation, a distance of 8.00 feet, more or less, to the northeasterly corner of the land now or lately of said Abraham Rosenberg and Samuel Schwartz;

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thence turning counter clockwise an interior angle of $86^{\circ}30'$, more or less, and running approximately $S\ 75^{\circ}30'\ W$, along the line bounded on the northerly side by land now or lately of said Tifereth Israel Congregation, and on the southerly side by land now or lately of said Abraham Rosenberg and Samuel Schwartz, a distance of 21.6 feet, more or less to the southwest corner of land now or lately of Tifereth Israel Congregation;

thence running approximately $S\ 75^{\circ}30'\ W$, along a line bounded northerly by the southerly line of Caswell Court and bounded southerly by land now or lately of said Abraham Rosenberg and Samuel Schwartz a distance of 17.0 feet, more or less, to the northeasterly corner of the land now or lately of Sam Sugarman;

thence turning an exterior angle of $86^{\circ}30'$, more or less, and running approximately $S\ 19^{\circ}00'\ E$, along the line bounded on the westerly side by land now or lately of said Sam Sugarman, and on the easterly side by land now or lately of said Abraham Rosenberg and Samuel Schwartz, a distance of 42.54 feet, more or less, to the southeast corner of land now or lately of said Sam Sugarman;

thence continuing approximately $S\ 19^{\circ}00'\ E$, along the line bounded on the easterly side by land now or lately of said Abraham Rosenberg and Samuel Schwartz, and on the westerly side by land now or lately of Clara Sugarman and the extension of said line a distance of 62.54 feet, more or less, to the intersection of said line extended and the center line of Chester Avenue;

thence turning in a counter clockwise direction an interior angle of $87^{\circ}52'$, more or less, and running approximately $S\ 74^{\circ}39'\ W$, along said line, and along the westerly extension of said line, a distance of 105.24 feet, more or less, to the intersection of said line and its extension and the center line of Prairie Avenue;

thence turning in a counter clockwise direction an interior angle of $92^{\circ}18'$, more or less, and running approximately $N\ 17^{\circ}39'\ W$, along said center line of Prairie Avenue a distance of 490.00 feet, more or less, to an angle in the said center line of Prairie Avenue;

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thence turning in a clockwise direction an exterior angle of $206^{\circ}08'$, more or less, and running approximately $N 8^{\circ}29' E$, a distance of 357.50 feet, more or less, to the intersection of said center line of Prairie Avenue and the center line of Blackstone Street;

thence turning in a counter clockwise direction an interior angle of $94^{\circ}21'30''$, more or less, and running approximately $S 86^{\circ}00' E$, a distance of 446.00 feet, more or less, to the intersection of said center line of Blackstone Street and the northerly extension of the line bounded westerly by land now or lately of Francesco Aquino and Rosina Aquino and easterly by land now or lately of Manuel S. Texiera;

thence turning in a counter clockwise direction an interior angle of $90^{\circ}00'$, more or less, and running approximately $S 4^{\circ}00' W$, along said line bounded westerly by said Francesco Aquino and Rosina Aquino and easterly by land of said Manuel S. Texiera, and the said northerly extension of said line a distance of 76.45 feet, more or less, to the southwest corner of land now or lately of said Manuel S. Texiera;

thence turning counter clockwise an interior angle of $90^{\circ}30'$, more or less, and running approximately $N 86^{\circ}30' W$, along the line bounded northerly by land now or lately of said Francesco Aquino and Rosina Aquino, and southerly by land now or lately of Gertrude L. Newman, a distance of 9 feet, more or less, to the northwesterly corner of land now or lately of said Gertrude L. Newman;

thence turning in a clockwise direction an exterior angle of $74^{\circ}30'$, more or less, and running approximately $S 12^{\circ}00' E$, along the line bounded on the westerly side by land now or lately of Anna Harrigan and easterly by land now or lately of said Gertrude L. Newman a distance of 20.80 feet, more or less, to the southeasterly corner of land now or lately of said Anna Harrigan;

thence continuing approximately $S 12^{\circ}00' E$, along the line bounded westerly by land now or lately of Minnie Gurksy and easterly by land now or lately of said Gertrude L. Newman and along the southerly extension of said line, a distance of 90.00 feet, more or less, to the intersection of said line and the southerly line of Robinson Street;

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thence turning an interior angle of $90^{\circ}00'$ and running approximately $S\ 78^{\circ}00'\ W$, along said southerly line of Robinson Street a distance of 23.00 feet, more or less, to the northeast corner of land now or lately owned by Agnes Carr et al;

thence turning in a clockwise direction an exterior angle of $90^{\circ}00'$, more or less, and running approximately $S\ 12^{\circ}00'\ E$, along the line bounded on the westerly side by the land now or lately of said Agnes Carr et al and easterly by land now or lately of Bessie Goodman a distance of 110.02 feet, more or less, to the southeasterly corner of land now or lately of said Agnes Carr et al;

thence turning a counter clockwise direction an exterior angle of $82^{\circ}45'$, more or less, and running approximately $N\ 70^{\circ}45'\ E$ along a line bounded northerly by land now or lately of said Bessie Goodman and southerly by land now or lately of Mae Katz a distance of 9 feet, more or less, to the northeast corner of land now or lately owned by the said Mae Katz;

thence turning counter clockwise an interior angle of $82^{\circ}45'$, more or less, and running approximately $S\ 12^{\circ}00'\ E$, along the line bounded westerly by land now or lately of said Mae Katz and easterly by land now or lately of Clara Shuster, a distance of 95.01 feet, more or less, to the northerly line of Willard Avenue;

thence turning in a clockwise direction an exterior angle of $90^{\circ}00'$, more or less, and running approximately $N\ 78^{\circ}00'\ W$ along said northerly line of Willard Avenue a distance of 376.60 feet, more or less, to an angle in said northerly line of Willard Avenue;

thence turning in a clockwise direction an exterior angle of $163^{\circ}45'$ more or less, and running approximately $N\ 61^{\circ}45'\ E$ along said northerly line of Willard Avenue and the northeasterly extension of said northerly line of Willard Avenue, a distance of 36.15 feet to the intersection of said northeasterly extension of the northern line of Willard Avenue with the center line of Gay Street;

thence turning in a clockwise direction an exterior angle of $102^{\circ}38'$, more or less, and running approximately $N\ 15^{\circ}37'\ W$ along said center line of Gay Street a distance of 19 feet, more or less, to an angle in said center line of Gay Street;

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thence turning in a counter clockwise direction an interior angle of $173^{\circ}23'$, more or less, and running approximately N $9^{\circ}00'$ W, a distance of 107.30 feet, along said center line of Gay Street, to the intersection of said center line of Gay Street with the westerly extension of the line bounded on the northerly side by land now or lately of Morris Ladd, and southerly by land now or lately of Miriam Weisman;

thence turning in a counter clockwise direction an interior angle of $90^{\circ}00'$, more or less, and running approximately N $81^{\circ}00'$ E along said extension of the said line and the said line bounded northerly by land now or lately of said Morris Ladd, and southerly by land now or lately of said Miriam Weisman, a distance of 125.73 feet, more or less, to the westerly line of land now or lately of Joseph Herr;

thence turning in a clockwise direction an exterior angle of $90^{\circ}00'$, more or less, and running approximately N $9^{\circ}00'$ W along the line bounded westerly by land now or lately of said Morris Ladd, and easterly by land now or lately of said Joseph Herr a distance of 8 feet, more or less, to the northwesterly corner of land now or lately of said Joseph Herr;

thence turning in a counter clockwise direction an interior angle of $90^{\circ}00'$, more or less, and running approximately N $81^{\circ}00'$ E, along a line bounded northerly by land now or lately of Henry Ucello, and southerly by land now or lately of said Joseph Herr, and the easterly extension of said line, a distance of 100.68 feet, more or less, to the intersection of said line with the center line of Staniford Street, at the place and point of beginning.

The within described tract may otherwise be described as being all of lots 766, 625, 118, 150, 149, 148, 120, 144, 145, 658, 562, 572, 555, 375, 415, 414, 374, 108, 373, 372, 371, 540, 370, 369, 378, 505, 123, 124, 125, 293, 296, 291, 143, 103, 783, 126, 138, 782, 139, 140, 141, 777, 776, 312, 775, 793, 774, 769, 225, 634, 8, 759, 773, 667, 639, 38, 637, 379, 451, 452, 453, 367, 366, 365, 364, 363, 362, 361, 764, 794, 360, 359, 358, 461, 460, 297, 295, 250, 251, 254, 294, 292, 290, 253, 289, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 288, 287, 286, 285, 284, 283, 179, 180, 181, 182,

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183, 184, 187, 209, 188, 189, 190, 191, 193, 559, 186, 557, 564, 563, 450, 596, 165, 252, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, and 594 on the City of Providence Assessor's Plat No. 45, dated December 31, 1951, together with those portions of Staniford Street, Pilgrim Street, Hilton Street, Chester Avenue, Prairie Avenue, Blackstone Street, Robinson Street, Willard Avenue, Gay Street, and Ash Street as contained within the Project Area boundary line hereinbefore described.

(3) That it be and hereby is found and determined in relation to Willard Center Unit Two Project Area D2-A2 on the basis of the facts set forth in the reports and documents mentioned in the Preamble of this Resolution:

- (a) That within the Willard Center Unit Two Project Area D2-A2;
 - (i) 99% of the dwelling units surveyed have serious deterioration;
 - (ii) 78% of the dwelling units surveyed have no central heating;
 - (iii) 76% of the dwelling units surveyed have no inside hot water;
 - (iv) 16% of the dwelling units surveyed have considerable daylight obstruction;
 - (v) 24% of the dwelling units surveyed have seriously inadequate room facilities;
 - (vi) 37% of the dwelling units surveyed have no private bath;
 - (vii) 37% of the dwelling units surveyed have no bath available;
 - (viii) 26% of the dwelling units surveyed are seriously overcrowded;
 - (ix) 6% of the dwelling units surveyed have no private or adequate toilet;
 - (x) 14% of the dwelling units surveyed have no dual egress;
 - (xi) 92% of the dwelling units surveyed are inadequate because of insufficient dwelling facilities, deterioration, or obsolescent, hazardous or insanitary conditions;
 - (xii) 99% of the dwelling units surveyed have one or more basic deficiencies, and 25% of the project area's dwelling units have three or more basic deficiencies;
 - (xiii) 45% of the structures containing dwelling units are of predominantly wooden construction three stories or over in height and the narrow passageways between the buildings constitute serious fire hazards;

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(xiv) One-third of the residential structures also contain stores or other non-residential uses resulting in close intermixture of business and industry and housing;

(b) That within the area bounded by Blackstone, Plain, and Bogman Streets and Prairie Avenue of which said Project Area is a part:

(i) The incidence of venereal disease, tuberculosis and illegitimate birth cases is proportionately higher than in the city as a whole;

(ii) The incidence of training school admissions and aid to dependent children cases is disproportionately high;

(4) That it be and hereby is found and determined that said facts demonstrate that because of a predominance of conditions of dilapidation, deterioration, obsolescence, inadequate provision for light, sanitation and open spaces between buildings, overcrowding of population, insanitary and unsafe character and condition of physical construction, mixed character of uses which injuriously affect the entire area and constitute a menace to the public health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the area and of the community generally, said Project Area is a slum-blighted area within the meaning of Section 2 (a) and 7 (a) of the "Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act" of 1950 and that said Willard Center Unit Two Project Area numbered D2-A2 is hereby determined to be a slum-blighted area.

(5) That the following constitutes the approved Tentative Plan for the Redevelopment of Willard Center Unit Two Project Area, D2-A2;

(a) LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF BOUNDARIES

The Willard Center Unit Two Project Area is located in Upper South Providence. A legal description of the boundaries of the Project Area is included in Section (2) of this Resolution;

(b) DESCRIPTION OF CONDITIONS EXISTING IN THE PROJECT AREA

That part of the Tentative Plan describing the condition of housing and social conditions is set forth in the Preamble and Section 3 of this Resolution. Within the 14.7 acres of land in the Project Area, approximately 1023 people occupy 298 dwelling units. Social data on the larger blighted area bounded by Blackstone Street,

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Plain Street, Bogman Street and Prairie Avenue, of which the Project Area is a typical part, reflect the severe social pressures placed upon many of these people, particularly the children, living in an area of poor housing.

The Willard Center Unit Two Project Area is a predominately residential area, but the housing is intermixed with incompatible land uses. 68 per cent of the net project area is occupied residentially based on predominant use, although land in wholly residential and supporting use occupies less than 40 per cent of the net project area. Both sides of Ash Street are occupied by salvage yards. Retail outlets, located for the most part on the ground floors of deteriorated frame residential structures, are concentrated along both sides of Willard Avenue, as well as along Prairie Avenue. There are 131 residential structures in the area, and business establishments occupy space in 31 of these.

About 70 per cent of the dwelling units in the neighborhood were built before 1900, and all but 2 per cent of the remaining units were built between 1900 and 1920. No dwellings have been constructed in the area during the past twenty years. 7.8% of those dwelling units in the project area reporting tenure are owner-occupied, as compared with about 30% for the City of Providence as a whole.

The Willard Avenue and Prairie Avenue commercial frontages are congested, the spaces between the predominately wooden structures ranging from one or two feet to eight or ten feet in width. 40% of the 63 structures in the project area containing non-residential uses are entirely of wood frame construction, 36% have frame construction in some portion of their exterior walls, and 24% are entirely of masonry construction. The Ash Street area is considered one of the worst fire hazards in the City by the Providence Fire Department's Fire Prevention Bureau.

There are 44 retail establishments in the project area including 25 selling food or liquor and 19 variety, dry goods, hardware and personal service shops. At the time of survey, some 15 per cent of the stores in the area were vacant, some of these being located in the street-level basements of residential structures. About 40 per cent of the operating business units were found to be owner-occupied. Most of the retail business units lack adequate off-street parking and delivery facilities.

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The project area ranges in elevation from slightly less than 60 feet above mean sea level at the corner of Willard^{*Avenue*} and Staniford Streets to about 75 feet along its Prairie Avenue boundary, and there are no abrupt topographical changes.

Since 1945, assessed land values in the project area decreased 11 per cent, while the value of land within the city generally held virtually even. By 1950, while building valuations increased 22 per cent throughout the city as a result of a general reassessment, building valuations in the project area increased only 18 per cent. The increase for total valuations in the city was 14 per cent, while in the project area, the increase was only 9 per cent.

The quality of the neighborhood environment was carefully evaluated by block frontages through the use of American Public Health Association methods. 29% of the neighborhood's blocks are characterized by extreme land crowding, 39% of its block frontages have an extreme incidence of non-residential land uses, and the residential premises in 100% of the blocks have a serious lack of minimum unbuilt yard area. The dwellings in the project area are located in an environment which is inadequate for the needs of sound, wholesome neighborhoods. The increasing inadequacy of environment has provided the area's home owners little encouragement to improve their properties or to resist the continual overcrowding of land and the physical deterioration which has ultimately placed their homes and their neighborhood beyond the point of economically feasible rehabilitation.

(c) REASONS FOR SELECTION OF WILLARD CENTER UNIT TWO AS A PROJECT AREA

Redevelopment of the Willard Center Unit Two area is to be undertaken at this time for the following reasons:

(i) The Removal of Blighted Conditions

The conditions described in the Preamble and Section 3 of this Resolution demonstrate that the Project Area is severely blighted. The redevelopment of the project area is designed to eliminate this severe blight by removing inadequate housing and non-residential activities which are detrimental to a neighborhood of homes.

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(ii) The Improvement of Adjacent Housing Areas

It is expected that the removal of substandard housing and blight-producing non-residential uses from the Project Area and the provision of new recreation facilities and new shopping facilities to replace those now inadequate will promote the recovery of real estate values in adjacent areas and will stimulate the investment of funds by private owners for improvements on their property.

(iii) The Scheduling of Other Public Improvements

The Master Plan for Playgrounds and Playfields published in January of 1953 states "A playground of approximately 2.4 acres is proposed in the vicinity of Blackstone Street and Prairie Avenue to serve Upper South Providence. This playground should be acquired and built at the same time as the proposed Upper South Providence School." "A new playfield is needed to serve the densely populated South Providence neighborhood. The site should contain a minimum area of 6.6 acres and should be located adjacent to the proposed Upper South Providence Elementary School and Playground. The plan for development of all three facilities as a single integrated school and recreation center will afford opportunities for a most efficient layout."

The elementary school is scheduled for the Willard Center Unit One Project Area. In conformity to the Master Plan, Willard Center Unit Two proposes a unified site for playground and playfield adjacent to the school site.

The Capital Improvement Program 1953-1959 published in May 1953 states "\$470,000 has been requested for 1953-1954 and \$1,130,000 for 1954-1955 for the (Upper South Providence Elementary School) recommended in the master plan." "This will coordinate (the school) with the Willard Avenue Redevelopment Project expected to begin in the fall of 1953." This publication further states that \$90,000 has been requested for 1958-1959 to construct a much needed playground and playfield in the Willard Avenue vicinity. Its recommendation is "that this project be scheduled for 1954-1955 and be financed with bond funds. This earlier date will be coordinated with the opening of the new elementary school."

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Surveys and studies made by the Redevelopment Agency indicate that the Willard Center Unit One and Unit Two project areas are in the only location in South Providence where such severe blighted conditions can be eliminated and these proposed and much needed public improvements can be developed.

(d) GENERAL STATEMENT OF REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The redevelopment plan shall provide for the elimination of the blighted housing within the Project Area and shall provide for the acquisition of lands, buildings or improvements necessary to assure the proper clearance and redevelopment of the entire area and to prevent the spread or recurrence of conditions of blight thereby protecting the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the City of Providence.

A playground, a playfield, and a commercial shopping center are the proposed re-uses on the cleared sites in the Project Area.

No less than one off-street automobile parking space will be required for each 500 square feet of gross floor area in the shopping center building or buildings. The height of said building or buildings shall not exceed 3 stories or 45 feet. Off-street loading facilities will also be required.

(e) CONFORMITY OF REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS TO THE MASTER PLAN

All the proposals conform to the Master Plan for the community.

The Project Area is within Redevelopment Area D2 defined by the City Plan Commission in the Master Plan for Redevelopment of Residential Areas adopted by the City Plan Commission November 25, 1946.

The playground-playfield re-use is in conformance with the Master Plan for Playgrounds and Playfields approved by the City Plan Commission on January 13, 1953.

The shopping center re-use is in conformance with the Master Plan for Land Use and Population Distribution approved by the City Plan Commission on August 12, 1946. The redevelopment proposals are also in conformance with the recommendations of said Master Plan for Land Use and Population Distribution which call for a reduction of

RESOLUTION
OF THE
CITY COUNCIL

THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No.

Approved

Resolved,

That

densities in the higher density residential districts such as Upper South Providence; for a substantial increase of play facilities in residential neighborhoods; and for the removal of industrial uses, (such as the salvage yards in the congested Ash Street vicinity) from residential neighborhoods.

There is no conflict with the Master Plan for Thorofares (1946).

(f) FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY OF THE TENTATIVE PLAN

Preliminary studies of the problems of land acquisition and re-use, marketability and such clearance and development activities as planning, relocation, management, demolition, site improvement and administrative overhead indicate that the gross cost of making the land in the project area available for the new users will be approximately \$2,000,000. Estimating that the return to the Agency for sale of the land will be approximately \$300,000, the net redevelopment cost is estimated at \$1,700,000.

This project appears to be eligible for the Federal financial assistance needed to enable the City of Providence to finance redevelopment under provisions of the Housing Act of 1949, and therefore two-thirds of the cost of redevelopment could be paid with Federal funds. The one-third cost of redevelopment which the City of Providence may be required to pay could be financed from the \$2,000,000 bond issue for redevelopment purposes authorized by the voters in 1948.

This total cost of redevelopment and the net redevelopment cost to the City will be precised in the redevelopment plan.

(g) HOW PURPOSES OF THE SLUM CLEARANCE AND REDEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1950 WOULD BE ATTAINED BY THE PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT AREA

Article 2 Section 4 of said "Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act" of 1950 declares that "The purposes of this Act are . . . to eliminate and redevelop slum-blighted areas . . . in the manner and by the means provided in this Act, thereby to carry out the policy of this State . . . to protect and promote the health, safety and welfare of the people of the State . . ."

RESOLUTION
OF THE
CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No.

Approved

Resolved,

That

- (6) That it be and hereby is determined that it is necessary that the blighted conditions be eliminated and said Project Area be redeveloped in accordance with the approved tentative plan to attain the purposes of the Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act, and
- (7) That the Providence Redevelopment Agency be and hereby is directed to prepare and submit a redevelopment plan for said Project Area based upon the approved Tentative Plan, and
- (8) That the City Clerk be and hereby is authorized and directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to the Redevelopment Agency and to the Inspector of Buildings Department, and
- (9) That the City Clerk be and hereby is authorized and directed to file in the Registry of Deeds of the City of Providence a description of the land within the Project Area and a statement that proceedings for the redevelopment of said Project Area have been instituted under the "Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act" of 1950.
- (10) That this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

IN CITY COUNCIL

NOV 19 1953

READ and PASSED

Harmon J. Young
President
Robert W. Whelan
Clerk

APPROVED

NOV 20 1953

Walter H. Reynolds
MAYOR

RESOLUTION
OF THE
CITY COUNCIL.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND & PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

CITY OF PROVIDENCE

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

PUBLIC HEARING

re

TENTATIVE PLAN FOR WILLARD
CENTER, UNIT TWO, PROJECT AREA D2-A2.

THOMAS LUONGO, PRESIDENT, PROVIDENCE CITY COUNCIL, PRESIDING

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1953

Vincent A. Walsh,
Court Reporter.

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MR. LUONGO: The City Council meeting of the City of Providence is now open for public hearing pursuant to the requirements of Sections 26 and 31 of Chapter 2574 of the Public Laws of Rhode Island, 1950.

This public hearing of the City Council of the City of Providence is concerned with the "Tentative Plan for Willard Center Unit Two, Project Area D2-A2."

All persons or agencies who desire to speak will be given an opportunity to make a statement, and all persons or agencies who desire to submit communications in writing will be given an opportunity to read or submit such communications.

We will now hear from Chester R. Martin, Chairman of the Providence Redevelopment Agency. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Luongo.

MR. LUONGO: Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Members of the City

Council and people who are interested in Project Area D2-A2 of the tentative plan of Willard Center known as Project Unit 2, it is indeed a great pleasure for me as chairman and I know for my two colleagues who are on the agency and who are here tonight to welcome so many people who are interested in this particular project which we think is for the betterment of the City of Providence, particularly in that area. It covers a great range of business as you well know and as we know from the conversations and discussions we have had with many of the businessmen there. It also covers a great area of people who live in that area.

We are very much interested now in discussing with you a more detailed plan. President Luongo, with your permission I would like to have Mr. Graham present to the Council and to the members present that plan.

MR. LUONGO: Mr. Graham.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. President.

MR. LUONGO: Mr. Graham.

MR. GRAHAM: Members of the City Council, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Last February we had a public hearing on the tentative plan for Unit One, and last May we had the public hearing on the Redevelopment Plan for Willard Center Unit One. Tonight we are considering the tentative plan for Willard Center Unit Two and some time in the future another public hearing must be held to consider the Redevelopment Plan for Willard Center Unit Two, if and when the City Council directs the agency to prepare that Redevelopment plan.

We all know that Unit One is an area of about four acres and in that Unit One area we proposed the site for the South Providence Elementary School. Tonight we are considering the area which is adjacent to that, the area which affects part of Blackstone Street, Robinson Street, Willard Avenue, Prairie Avenue, Ash Street, Pilgrim Street, Hilton Street, Gay Street and Staniford.

Some of you have already seen copies of this tentative plan for Unit Two. Others of you

that would like a copy may find them available in the Providence Redevelopment Agency office on the first floor.

I do not want to take up too much of your time tonight discussing the details of existing conditions which are contained in the tentative plan. I think we all agree that the area is sub-standard and some action is required in the area in order to promote the public health, safety and welfare to maintain the human values in South Providence and to stabilize the property values in South Providence. The recommendations that the agency is making tonight are made with the conviction that in this way we can best preserve those human values and best stabilize the property values of the South Providence neighborhood.

We all know that our neighborhoods in Providence are growing older. Our houses are getting older. Our stores are getting older. Our streets are congested. People are finding the suburbs more and more attractive as every day goes by. In other words, now is the time we must take

action to make areas like South Providence a more desirable place to live.

We are fortunate in Providence that we have no large slum areas like they have in Chicago or New York or some of the larger cities. Rather we have small core areas of deepest blight and the Willard center area is one of those core areas. Rather than the large so-called slum clearance plan of operation which is going on in other cities, the need in Providence is an operation which requires a little bit of blight clearance and a lot of blight prevention.

Now, we feel this -- we feel in Willard Center in this Unit One and Unit Two Project Area we have the small core of blight clearance and this must be coupled by blight prevention activities in the rest of South Providence. Most of you probably read in the newspapers that the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Housing, the Redevelopment Agency, the Building Inspector, and the Health Department have been working together developing blight prevention measures. Such a

measure is the minimum standards housing code that we want to see in operation before too much more time goes by. That is the kind of operation that we need for most of South Providence, but for the small areas where the blight has extended too deeply we need the kind of thing we are proposing tonight. These new uses that we are proposing for Willard Center Two are being proposed after a careful consideration of all possible uses and in close collaboration with the City Plan Commission which has prepared a master plan for the whole City of Providence. The Plan Commission has already found that these Redevelopment Agency proposals are in conformance with the master plan for the City of Providence.

Now, what are these proposals specifically? We are proposing a playground to serve the new school that we have proposed in Unit One. We are proposing a playfield to serve the teenagers and young adults of South Providence. We are proposing a shopping center on Prairie Avenue to replace the stores existing in the project area today. All of these proposals conform to the master

plan.

Now, the Plan Commission, in preparing its master plan, has made extensive studies. They have found that one of the reasons people are moving to the suburbs is that our older neighborhoods lack open space and play space for the children. They have found, for example, that a playground need, that is, the need for the children of from 5 to 11, is most severe in South Providence, the west end and Federal Hill. They have found that the need for a playfield, the sort of thing to serve children from 12 to young adults of 24, is most severe again in South Providence and Federal Hill. In other words, there is no playground today for school children in upper South Providence and there is no playfield for young adults and teenagers anywhere in South Providence.

In the master plan for playgrounds and playfields, the City Plan Commission proposed that the playground be provided next to the elementary school. It proposed that the playfield be about 6 1/2 acres and be put adjacent to the

playground and school so that the three things can be built together carefully coordinated and be provided with the greatest efficiency. All of these would be located in the vicinity of Willard Avenue because there they would serve the area most conveniently.

In the master plan for land use and population distribution, the Plan Commission proposed that some of the neighborhood shopping areas in the city must be modernized if the merchants are to keep their trade, otherwise, the city and the merchants can watch the trade and the business move out to the suburbs.

One of the areas that they propose to modernize was in the vicinity of Prairie and Willard Avenue to serve the upper South Providence neighborhood.

Now, let me explain the role of the Redevelopment Agency. We were organized in 1947 by state act and by action of this City Council to study and propose remedial measures for our blighted areas such as South Providence. We proposed a

removal of those blighted conditions and proposed new uses and everything that we did must be by law in conformance with the master plan. After approval by this Council of our proposals, then we are directed to undertake those proposals.

In studying South Providence, we found that one of the cores of blight, cores of deepest blight is the section around Robinson Street, Willard Avenue and Ash Street. After very careful study we found that -- our own conclusion was that the most effective way of treating the problem in South Providence would be to remove the junk yards from this residential neighborhood, to replace these old stores by newer stores, and to provide recreational space which is so critically needed.

The Redevelopment Agency feels in these proposals we have an opportunity to create a new center for community life. The school children can enjoy the new school during the day. Neighborhood groups can use it at night. In the recreation area, supervised by the Recreation Department, the problems of juvenile delinquency can be met, problems which are of such a concern to our Juvenile

Court today. We find that in proposing the shopping center we have an opportunity for creating attractive stores which would encourage the housewives of South Providence and other areas to shop there rather than seeking other stores elsewhere.

Of course, if we are going to bring about these improvements that we all want there are certain difficult things we must face. One of these difficult tasks is the relocation of families and business. The Family Relocation Service which was established in Olneyville and carried out a very successful operation there will be available for the families in Willard Center. The Business Relocation Bureau established in Olneyville will be available for the businesses. In addition to this, we propose that the businesses interested in moving into the new shopping center remain in their present stores until the new shopping center is available. Therefore, they will not find it necessary to move somewhere else temporarily.

We must say that under the law every family and every business must be offered a decent

place to go, a reasonable place to go, by the Relocation Service or the Relocation Bureau, or they must find a place on their own before they can be asked to move by the Redevelopment Agency.

Now, as far as the time is concerned I must remind you again that this is only the tentative plan. The redevelopment plan must be prepared, must be presented to this Council, and there must be another public hearing and the Council must approve that plan as well as this one.

Now, you are all invited to make whatever comments you wish or you may, if you want to discuss the matter in more detail, come down to the Redevelopment Agency office any time at your convenience. We would be glad to discuss it with you at great length. Thank you.

MR. LUONGO: All persons or agencies who desire to speak may now come forward, give their name and address, and address the public hearing.

VOICE: I am E. Harold Dick, representing the Willard Center Businessmen's Association.

E. HAROLD DICK: Mr. President and members of the Council, my name is Harold Dick and I represent the Willard Center Businessmen's Association who are a group of approximately 30 members who are presently in business in that particular section. They formed this association primarily because of this present redevelopment plan that came up and they have met a number of times and they met with Mr. Graham and other members of the Redevelopment Agency. They have asked me to come before the Council tonight and tell you that they are in favor of the plan and they have asked me to state some of the reasons that make them in favor of the plan.

We have discussed with Mr. Graham the plan for this parking area and for the business center that is to be set up there and we have gone into detail with him. The Redevelopment Agency has kindly provided for us the services of a prominent architect, Mr. Rakatansky, who attended a meeting with us and submitted certain plans for the shopping center.

Several things must be made clear and I want to take this opportunity to do it. One of them is that the general public of our -- the general public are of an erroneous impression that this shopping center is going to be built by the city or the agency. That is not so. The shopping center is going to be built by private funds. The land upon which the shopping center is to be built is to be purchased from the agency at a sum to be decided at a later time in negotiations between the agency and the group that is to purchase it. They also expressed certain fears that perhaps as the plan goes along this plan may look as a lucrative plan and they expressed the fear that perhaps some speculators might come in and purchase that particular piece of land so that they would not have the opportunity to purchase it for their interest.

I have discussed this with Mr. Graham. I have also discussed it with the councilmen from their district and all have assured me they will do all in their power to see that no such thing happens.

I think that this Council ought to know that these men are suffering a good deal of hardship. Some men from that district may speak here tonight. They do not speak for the association who represents, I would say, almost unanimously that district and their difficulty is simply this; that that they are not owners of property--they are tenants and they are faced with this dilemma, that under the present law if they have no lease and are only a tenant there isn't very much that the agency or whoever condemns that property can do for them. As a matter of fact, as I understand the law at the present time, these men that are only tenants, despite the fact that they may have installed fixtures, if they have no lease, will receive no compensation for the loss of their business. It is an undue hardship. What can be done for them I don't know at this stage. I know that if something can be done we certainly would like to assist them in having it done. The law, as it is written today, is pretty clear that it does not in our state, and there are other states where it does

provide for hardships of this type, in our state it does not.

I might inform the Council and the Agency that at a meeting held last Monday evening, and a group of approximately 17 men were present out of the about 30, and have already pledged a sum in excess of \$100,000 to show that they are interested and willing to go through with a project when and if it is agreed upon.

I think that the Council ought to know that we have received excellent cooperation from Councilman Quigley and Councilman Wexler. Mr. Graham and his committee have always been very helpful to us and have attended several of our meetings and answered many of our problems. We feel that this plan that they are presenting is an inevitable one. We feel that this idea of a shopping center in that area will be a good one. It will be good for the businessmen who are becoming more and more enthused with the idea as time goes on. Several little bugs have to be wrinkled out. Our present

problem is the plan of community ownership, some type of a joint venture where each businessman will own a particular part of the corporation that purchases the thing. The method and manner of working that out is presently being discussed with the group, but I think that the Council ought to know and I think the public ought to know that these businessmen are getting more and more enthused about the idea.

Mr. Graham has informed us that as his project progresses he will attempt to work with us and see to it that the property which backs up to us, the property in back of us--the houses will be removed first so that we will be able to continue to be in business during the condemnation proceedings and during the tearing down of the property and so that the new center will be built and we will still be in business and we can have an orderly moving when the time comes. Thank you very much.

VOICE: Mr. Chairman, members of the City Council. My name is John F. Mullaney, president of the Roger Williams Protective Association for the citizens of the 10th Ward.

I would like first to state that like all citizens I am 100 percent for the redevelopment proposition that is going to have the breath of life instilled into it tonight by ordinance. Now, I would like to call attention, first, Ladies and Gentlemen, that this redevelopment proposition involves many complicated bits of law, of rights that people have acquired through the years. When you start a new proposition like this which is absolutely without fault, without amendment, it comes to you a pure bill. It may sound impudent for me before this Honorable Body that contains so many able lawyers to express an opinion that what you are trying to do may have a bit of a flaw in it. Such is not my intention, Ladies and Gentlemen and members of the Council, but what I am primarily interested in is this; that \$2,000,000 have been allotted for this proposition.

May I repeat a paragraph here, Mr. Chairman? I would like to call attention, gentlemen, to Article 20, Miscellaneous Provisions, Section 88, of Chapter 2574. The voters of the City of Providence having authorized and approved

the issuance of bonds in the amount of \$2,000,000 under Section 46 of Chapter 1802 of the Public Laws of 1946, as amended, at the General Election held on November 2, 1948, bonds of said city may be issued in amount not exceeding \$2,000,000 for any of the purposes stated in Section 49 of this Act without any further approval of the voters of said city, notwithstanding the repeal of Chapter 1802 of the Public Laws of 1946, as amended, and notwithstanding the provisions of Section 135 of the Providence charter act of 1940, as amended, or any other general or special act.

If I may prevail on your patience for just a minute, I am going to call attention to what I have found out during the last three months in going about seeking justice for a property holder, a neighbor and a friend. You will be astonished, gentlemen, to know the reverence which the ordinary American citizen has for the Constitution and the laws of our country. It is not easy to have them change any law only after a great deal of exertion. Now, my prime object before you this evening is this, the money has

been allotted. It is practically due to pass.

From this here new organization there are going to be legal entanglements that will seep out into the other wards. Therefore, I think it behooves Mr. Chairman and the Honorable City Council that having already the biggest part of your proposition under control, might I suggest without impertinence--would it not be better before you go ahead to see how you are going to defend the new realm that you are creating, are you going to use the old archaic, the antique laws that were made for generations in days gone by, or are you going to recognize that we are a progressive manufacturing area supporting a big population by the intelligence of manufacturing leaders. Therefore, I say to you that while I approve, and I know my neighbors approve of this proposition for the very simple reason that we expect to have such developments in our wards, other wards, the 13th Ward, all of them. We do not want slum areas in the City of Providence. They are an insult to every intelligent man and they do not reflect the opinion of the American people. I, therefore, say, sir, Mr. Chairman, that on this

proposition that I will call upon the board to look to see if they can't produce better laws than I have found existing during the last six months when I tried to make a complaint before the certain designated body that is supposed to represent the law in the City of Providence. I find that there is a constant crossing of authority through the departments. There is wasted time. What should be a simple proposition of when a tax payer goes before a law organized body and makes a complaint he shouldn't be compelled to spend anywhere from \$100 to thousands of dollars which we have spent. Is this justice? I think that the Honorable City Council should, before they go through with this proposition, I think it is the duty of the Council that it owes to the people of the City of Providence to take what I am calling attention to as part of this new Willard project. I believe that the project will go down as a credit to all the members of the body assembled here tonight. Let us show that we are progressive. Let us show that--with due respect to that veneration which we hold for the spirit of our laws, that we can feel and act to create conditions for the quick and positive businesslike methods for the future.

COUNCILMAN POWERS: Are you a resident of the district involved?

MR. MULLANEY: I am speaking for my neighbor.

COUNCILMAN POWERS: Who do you represent?

MR. MULLANEY: I am representing the young lady over here.

COUNCILMAN POWERS: You represent her.

MR. MULLANEY: Yes, I represent her.

I would like to call attention, first, please, to the press and others that I represent not only friends and neighbors who live on Pilgrim Street, the Roger Williams Protective Association, my neighbors of the 10th Ward. As this project is both federal, state and city, gentlemen, a citizen can rightfully -- a citizen cannot rightfully be excluded from speaking at this meeting. I think the lawyers agree with me on that. Therefore, Mr. President and gentlemen of the Council, I have given you my thought on the subject because I think the biggest stumbling block to the Willard Avenue

project is the antiquated laws. They need revision and this is not strange because you have them in our national government. Therefore, it is no disgrace to say that we ought to change some of the archaic laws for the future. Thank you.

MR. LUONGO: Is there any other person that wants to be heard? State your name and address.

VOICE: Jean Carbone, 896 Warwick Avenue, Warwick.

MR. LUONGO: Okay.

MR. CARBONE: Mr. Chairman, Honorable Council, neighbors, friends, businessmen: I am only going to ask the board a few questions. I have a piece of real estate which is adjacent to the stores. Now, I understood the gentleman to say that the stores will stand. Now, will this piece of real estate stand, my piece of real estate behind the stores which is not a store.

MR. LUONGO: Do you want to answer that question, Mr. Graham?

MR. CARBONE: I have a piece of property adjacent to these stores. Now, I understand

that the stores are going to stand. What are they going to do with this house?

MR. GRAHAM: Where is the property specifically?

MR. CARBONE: The property is 8 Packer Place.

MR. GRAHAM: Your property will be taken.

MR. CARBONE: It will be taken. Previous to moving the stores?

MR. GRAHAM: Probably.

MR. CARBONE: Well, the reason I bring up this question, if I have answered one question once I have answered it 500 times, when do we have to move and when are you going to fix this. Well, I am not going to fix too much if they are going to take that, naturally. So, I have two vacant -- I have two vacancies right now at this minute. Those hoodlums are breaking those windows and if I was there right now I would catch them. The same thing is going to happen to Packer Place, not only will we lose revenue by not collecting rents, but we also lose money when you people see fit to purchase it. I am 100 percent in approval of this

slum clearance, but sometimes it does hurt the pocketbook of a small man. That is all. Thank you.

MR. LUONGO: Do you want the answer?

MR. GRAHAM: In answering the question of when do you have to move, we cannot give you an exact answer, first of all, because the Redevelopment plan has to be prepared and approved yet. Secondly, we have to get federal money. Now, in Unit One we applied for those federal funds last June and we are still waiting for it. They operate pretty slow down there and as long as it is in their hands we can't predict how many -- we can't predict how much time it is actually going to take. We would say, though, that a man in your position would probably be expected to move the latter part of 1954.

MR. CARBONE: The latter part of '54. Can I tell my tenants the latter part of '54, in other words, we are good for two years?

MR. GRAHAM: One more year.

MR. CARBONE: One more year. Very well.

MR. LUONGO: Is there any other person who wants to be heard? Come forward, please.

VOICE: Abe Berdick. I represent Berdick Brothers. Mr. Chairman, President, and gentlemen of the Council, Ladies and Gentlemen:

MR. LUONGO: A little louder so they can all hear you.

MR. BERDICK: Mr. Dick, representing the Willard Association, stated his problem which is a little different than mine. My brother and myself operate a junk yard on Ash Street and, of course, we come under license and, of course, it has been stated by everywhere we have gone to try to get a yard, even though it was zoned properly, we have been opposed by abutting land owners as being undesirable. Of course, I understand the ordinance reads 50 percent protest and you automatically are out. Now, it seems that the burden is on us. We have to make a sacrifice. We are making a move not voluntarily. I don't know how we can depreciate the property of these abutting land owners because in their protest they have never been asked to give any reason, any valid reason, for the objections--simply that we are undesirable. Now, I don't know how undesirable we

would be because we'd have to put up a building which would be regulated with the building codes and if we wanted to go into some of these zones where we have applied without the license and use it simply as storage it would probably be just as big a nuisance, but for the reason that we have to be licensed we have to ask the favor. Now, what are we supposed to do? It seems to me that these people protesting don't want to make any sacrifice and we are asked to make all the sacrifices. We are asked to move against our own will to possibly an area where we may lose business and still we have to take that chance and still we are undesirable. Now, Mr. Graham, I think at a previous meeting you stated that those willing and able would be taken care of, but I think at that time you were referring to the shopping center. Now, what is to be done in our case?

MR. GRAHAM: Well, the answer to that question, which is about the toughest question that I can think of to try and answer, let me say a couple of things. First of all, we recognize that the junkyard operators have a very difficult

problem of finding a new place to go. Secondly, we recognize that the junkyard operation is a perfectly legitimate business; that Providence needs junkyards. I have also said earlier tonight that nobody will be expected to move from the area unless they are -- they have found a place to go on their own or unless the Relocation Service can offer them a reasonable place. As long as we cannot between us find a good place for you to relocate in the City of Providence, you can be expected to remain where you are.

MR. BERDICK: Thank you. I wanted to ask this, that in the event that you do have something to offer, would you take it up with us in advance?

MR. GRAHAM: Yes.

MR. BERDICK: Of course, it may be sections of the city where we couldn't do any business.

MR. GRAHAM: We realize as much as you do that most of the city, of course, is out of junkyards because it is not zoned for junkyards and even though it may be an M-1 zone, where you are theoretically permitted to go, enough of the property owners will object to your going there. We appreciate very much the position you are in and in

this case I am speaking for the Mayor as well as the Redevelopment Agency, any legitimate business being conducted in the City of Providence will be worked with as much as we possibly can.

MR. BERDICK: Thank you, sir.

MR. LUONGO: Any other person who would like to be heard? Come forward, please.

VOICE: Reuben Woolf. I operate a business at 244 Prairie Avenue at the corner of Willard. Mr. President and Members of the City Council: I wish it clearly understood that I speak only for myself and as a businessman in the South Providence neighborhood. I wouldn't want you to confuse my remarks with anything that was said by Mr. Dick on behalf of the association. I also fully realize that if the law is passed by this body that the citizens will get the top dollar and while I understand you can't stop progress, the reason I want to enter an objection tonight is because I am so directly concerned in being in business there. Now, I wish to enter objections to this Unit Two phase of the Willard Center program, first, because I feel that the proposed playfield is not quite as necessary as

the priority given. It seems to show that it is more important in other neighborhoods. On the ground of the needs to combat juvenile delinquency, I would like to point out the fact that the Fox Point area, which has the smallest number of children not served by recreational facilities, also ranks high in juvenile delinquency and, further, the Recreational Advisory Committee of the State Plan Commission stated that the greatest number of children without recreational facilities are in the Federal Hill area, not South Providence. Secondly, it is not important to this area for the following reasons: Directly east of the proposed playfield lies an industrial area which is gradually eating away the remaining housing, thus decreasing the need for such a large facility as the one proposed and it is also well to keep in mind that this new facility is mainly for the older children. We already have a large ball park at Richardson Field. Now, there might be some objection that isn't South Providence, but when the question of housing was brought in, I remember being told that the large housing project there is South Providence. So, I feel the ball park is also. Now, if children

can go all year to the school at Richardson Park, some of them from over a mile away, and in all kinds of weather, I don't see why a smaller number who will be the ones to use this facility for a couple of hours a day, a couple of months a year, cannot go and do the same thing. And from the project area to Bucklin Field which is an eight acre ball park is only 3500 feet. Now, there will be a new playground established in this area when the first phase is completed. That will be right at the school. There will be available three abandoned schools and their play yards for further development. There are two good recreation centers and an adjacent playground to one and a swimming pool to one. Very close by there is a tot park on lower Willard Avenue and there is another at Harriet Street and another playground on Crary Street. Now, to relieve the heavy burden of expense on the city, why wouldn't it be just as well to develop a less costly project such as the 9 3/4 acre Dexter Training Ground for the west end where it is sorely needed. Reports by qualified officials show several more acres scattered throughout

the city and city owned which could also be developed. Inside and outside recreation could be provided at a very moderate cost by use of the schools that are being abandoned because of the current building program in that department. Another reason for objecting is that we are being put out of business, as Mr. Dick stated, without any compensation. I do not hold a lease on my store. Since the Rhode Island law provides only for land owners and since 60 percent of the business in the area is tenancy from the Redevelopment Agency's own figures, we are in effect left without the security for which we have striven all our lives and are left with debts on our hands, new debts to be contracted and fear in our hearts for the future. It is not easy for a man of 46 who will be closer to 50 as this goes along, 48 perhaps, to start a second lifetime of work. And last but surely not the least consideration, a considerable amount of tax revenue is going to be lost to the city. About \$1,000,000 worth of property will have to be taken off the annual tax rolls. In addition, there will be added tax loss on the personal property to some extent. In the area study by the Advisory Committee,

seven sections were found to have housing which was in greater need of major repairs percentage wise than the South Providence area. It seems possible that a stricter application of zoning and building laws could rehabilitate the section without the need of leveling a large area at the expense of so many. At this time, gentlemen, I ask you to give any consideration you can to the special needs of us shopkeepers as those needs are ours. Thank you.

MR. LUONGO: Is there any other person who would like to be heard? Is there any other person that would like to send in written communications?

MR. WEXLER, Councilman, Ward 11 : I am very happy that we have had this excellent turnout of citizens from the South Providence section of the city to show their interest in this project which concerns very many of them and most of them closely. I believe that Mr. Graham has very well answered any question that has been propounded to him. I know that most of the people are not wholly unaware of this program. Although this is phase two, following phase one, it has

been known for a long period of time that there is really one program to be divided into two phases and in order to comply with the suggestion of the federal government both phases of the program are being taken up at this time.

It is very heartening to realize that from those who have spoken, even though they may be few in numbers, most of them or a majority of them are in favor of the plan. We are well aware of the fact that the plan, if carried through, will work hardship upon individuals. Unfortunately, progress to be made by a city or state in improving the city or state facilities very often involves hardship upon individuals. As has been pointed out, the law as it now stands and as it has stood on our books for very many years does not grant any compensation to any others than to those who have interest in land either as owner or as lessee or any other interest or legal title of some kind in the land. However, the law is there. We have no authority to change it. It is a state law. The hardship that these individuals may suffer, although it is no consolation

to them, I realize that, is similar to that which has been suffered by countless other individuals in our community as municipal and state improvements have been made within the last few years. We have had a similar situation in Olneyville. Very shortly we will have a similar situation in regard to freeways which will be drawn through the City of Providence. We are aware that individuals will suffer hardship. We do not know how, under existing law, that hardship can be alleviated, but to the extent that it can in any way possible the Redevelopment Agency, and I know this Council, will work and cooperate with the people involved and we will do all we can to help them solve any problems that may develop as a result of this program.

I now move that the report be received.

VOICE: Second the motion.

MR. LUONGO: Mr. Quigley.

MR. QUIGLEY: Mr. President.

(Edward P. Quigley, Councilman, Ward 11) As a councilman from the district that is under discussion,

I first would like to congratulate my friends and neighbors from South Providence for the cooperative spirit that they have shown since this particular project was launched. I think that their approach to this situation is exceptionally fine, very progressive and I for one am deeply appreciative of their attitude. I realize that -- I realize the disadvantage they are going to be at in securing new quarters and in locating their business temporarily, if you please, until the new center is formed.

I want to assure each and every individual that is interested that I will do everything I possibly can to see to it that those who are affected by this project will be given preferential consideration in re-establishing there. I will do everything I can to prevent speculation taking over and doing an injustice to these men and I want to assure you that I will go along and cooperate with you as you have so magnificently cooperated with the city government and this plan committee.

MR. LUONGO: Is there anyone else present who desires to speak or to submit a communication in writing concerning the tentative plan for Willard Center Unit Two, Project Area D2-A2, otherwise the City Council will accept the tentative plan for Willard Center Unit Two, Project Area D2-A2. Received. This public hearing is declared closed.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of my shorthand notes.

Vincent A. Walsh,
Superior Court,
Providence, R. I.

TENTATIVE PLAN
O C T O B E R 1 9 5 3

WILLARD CENTER

UNIT TWO
PROJECT AREA D2-A2

PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY



PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

CITY HALL PROVIDENCE 3, RHODE ISLAND GASPEE 1-7740

October 8, 1953

The Honorable City Council
City of Providence
City Hall
Providence 3, Rhode Island

Gentlemen:

The Providence Redevelopment Agency submits herewith the Tentative Plan for Willard Center Unit Two, Project Area D2-A2. It is the second of two redevelopment projects designed to help stabilize residential values in the Willard Avenue section of South Providence and to improve that neighborhood as a place to live by replacing unsafe, insanitary dwelling units and other hazardous conditions by urgently needed community facilities.

The Redevelopment Agency has found in this Tentative Plan that the Project Area is a slum-blighted area, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 2574 of the Public Laws of Rhode Island, "The Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act" of 1950. The Project Area is a blighted area in which an intermixture of shops, salvage yards, and substandard housing constitutes an environment so deteriorated that it must be corrected.

This Tentative Plan describes existing conditions that are a menace to the public health, safety, and welfare and sets forth proposals for the redevelopment of the area. The Agency recommends that the City Council approve this Tentative Plan and direct the Agency to prepare a Redevelopment Plan for the Project Area.

IN CITY COUNCIL
NOV 2 - 1953

REFERRED TO NOV 19 1953

WITH ORDER OF NOTICE

H. Everett Whelan

CRM:amt

CLERK

Respectfully submitted,

Chester R. Martin

CHESTER R. MARTIN
CHAIRMAN
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

IN CITY COUNCIL
NOV 19 1953

RECORDED:

WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT
THE SAME BE RECORDED.

H. Everett Whelan

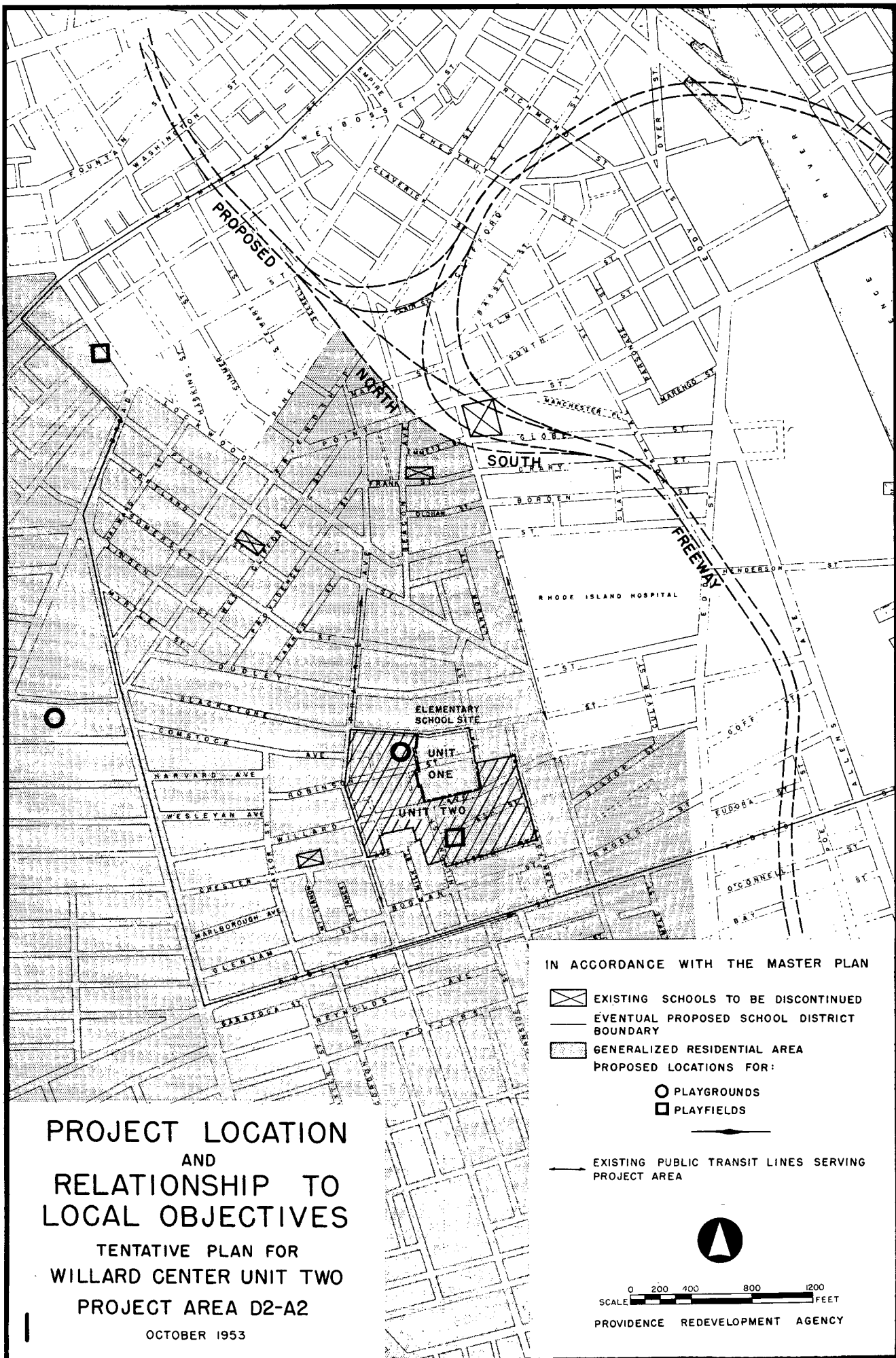
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MORRIS S. WALDMAN

DONALD M. GRAHAM
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CHARLES R. WOOD
SECRETARY

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PART I

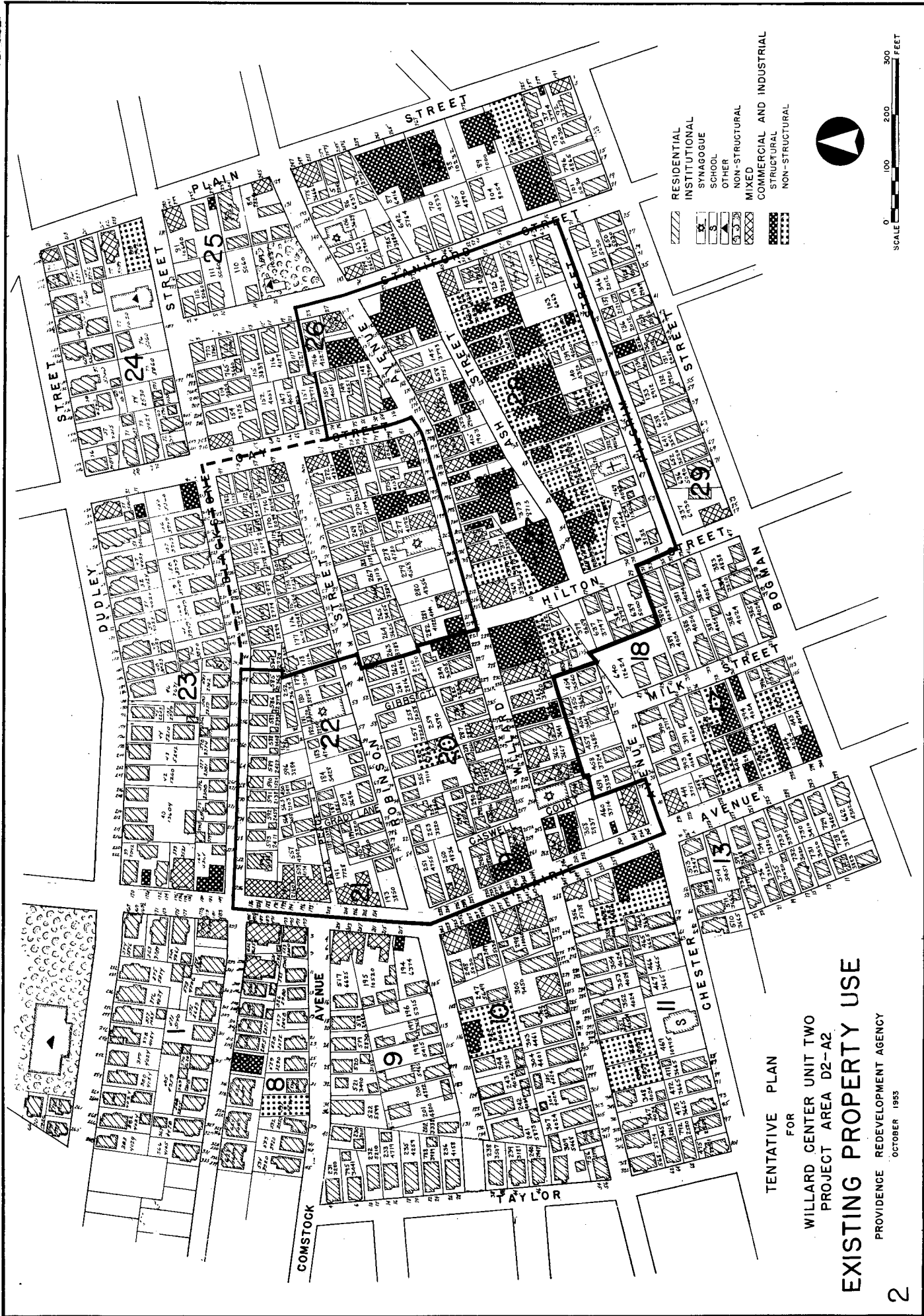
LOCATION OF PROJECT AREA
AND DESIGNATION AS A BLIGHTED AREA
Project Area D2-A2

The Willard Center Unit Two Project Area adjoins the Willard Center Unit One Project Area. It is located in Upper South Providence, on the east side of Prairie Avenue, between Blackstone Street and Chester Avenue. Map 1 shows the project area location.

This project includes 14.7 acres of land about evenly distributed on either side of Willard Avenue between Prairie Avenue and Staniford Street. All of the Willard Avenue stores between those two streets, except for those located in the Willard Center Unit One Project Area, and all of the Ash Street salvage yards are in this Unit Two Project Area.

The Willard Center Unit Two Project Area is within Redevelopment Area D2. In 1946 the City Plan Commission analyzed existing physical, social and economic conditions in the residential sections of the city. Seventeen areas in which blighting conditions predominated were defined as areas in need of redevelopment in The Master Plan for Redevelopment of Residential Areas (1946). On July 6, 1948, the City Council concurred in this finding of a preponderance of blight, officially designating these seventeen areas as Redevelopment Areas, including South Providence, D2, (Chapter 103 of the Ordinances of the City of Providence, 1948).

Analysis and surveys made by the Redevelopment Agency demonstrate that the Willard Center Unit Two Project Area comprises an area of crowded-substandard homes, deteriorating shops, and salvage yards. The conditions found to exist in the project area and its surroundings are described in the following section. It is a slum-blighted area within the meaning of "The Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act of 1950."



TENTATIVE PLAN
 FOR
 WILLARD CENTER UNIT TWO
 PROJECT AREA D2-A2
EXISTING PROPERTY USE
 PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
 OCTOBER 1953

PART II

CONDITIONS EXISTING IN THE PROJECT AREA Project Area D2-A2

Within the 14.7 acres of land which comprise the Willard Center Unit Two Project Area, approximately 310 families, or 1025 people, live in 298 dwelling units under housing conditions which are deteriorated, hazardous and overcrowded. Dwellings in the area are predominately substandard, crowded together on the land, and closely intermingled with commercial uses. They are blighted by insanitary conditions, the noise and danger of non-residential traffic, by inadequate open spaces and play areas, and the encroachment of industrial land uses.

EXISTING LAND USE

The Willard Center Unit Two Project Area is a predominately residential area, but the housing is intermixed with incompatible land uses. One-third of the residential buildings in the area are partially occupied by industrial or commercial concerns. See Map 2 - Existing Property Uses.

Both sides of Ash Street are occupied by salvage yards, the main concentration of these facilities in the State of Rhode Island. Retail outlets, located for the most part on the ground floors of deteriorated frame residential structures, are concentrated along both sides of Willard Avenue, as well as along Prairie Avenue.

There are 131 residential structures in the area. Business establishments in the area occupy space in 31 of these residential structures. The remaining non-residential concerns occupy 31 non-residential structures, on about one-fourth (25.7%) of the net land area, scattered among the project area's housing. 68 per cent of the net project area is occupied residentially based on predominant use, although land in wholly residential and supporting use occupies less than 40 per cent of the net project area. See Table I.

While non-residential uses in the project area contribute to poor living conditions there, it is equally true that the predominance of residential activity hampers the most efficient functioning of industrial and commercial concerns.

The project area ranges in elevation from slightly less than 60 feet above mean sea level at the corner of Willard and Staniford Streets to about 75 feet along its Prairie Avenue boundary, and there are no abrupt topographical changes.

STREETS AND TRAFFIC

The street pattern within and around the project area is presently inadequate for handling the traffic, parking, and loading demands generated by the project area's combination of housing, stores and junkyards. During the five-year period ending December 31, 1951, the personal-injury traffic accident rate per 1000 children under 18 years of age in and adjoining the project area was two and one-half times that of the city as a whole.

TABLE I - LAND USE AND OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS

LAND USE	AREA		STRUCTURES		ASSESSORS LOTS	
	Acres	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
NET PROJECT AREA	10.9	100.0	162	100.0	131	100.0
NET RESIDENTIAL AREA	7.5	68.8	131	80.9	97	74.0
Residential	4.3	39.3	70	43.2	57	43.5
Combined residential and non-residential	2.8	25.7	31	19.1	34	26.0
Auxiliary to residence	.1	.9	27	16.7	2	1.5
Supporting facilities	.3	2.7	3	1.9	4	3.0
NET NON-RESIDENTIAL AREA	2.8	25.7	31	19.1	26	19.8
Commercial	.6	5.5	12	7.4	7	5.3
Industrial	2.2	20.2	19	11.7	19	14.5
VACANT LAND	.6	5.5	-	-	8	6.2
Unimproved Residential	.4	3.7			4	3.1
Unimproved Commercial	.2	1.8			4	3.1
AREA IN STREETS	3.8					
TOTAL PROJECT AREA	14.7					

NON-RESIDENTIAL USE CHARACTERISTICS

The Ash Street vicinity of the project area has eight scrap yards, occupying 1.6 acres or nearly 60 per cent of the 2.8 acres of wholly non-residential land in the project area. These salvage yards are in good operating condition for the most part; however, their prosperity has been to the economic and physical disadvantage of this residential area. Rapid turnover of waste and scrap supplies increases truck traffic, while storage of these materials adds visibly to the burden of blight upon the neighborhood. About 60 per cent of the land covered by this industry is open land intensively used for the storage and handling of many types of salvage materials.

This area is considered one of the worst fire hazards in the City by the Providence Fire Department's Fire Prevention Bureau. A large portion of the junkyard area was destroyed by fire on October 1st and 2nd, 1947. A number of cinder-block buildings have since been constructed in the Ash Street area, but fire insurance companies have nevertheless found conditions such as to necessitate rating this area as one of high-risk.

The Willard Avenue and Prairie Avenue commercial frontages are especially congested, the spaces between the predominately wooden structures ranging from one or two feet to eight or ten feet in width. Less than one-half (40%) of the 63 structures in the project area containing non-residential uses are entirely of wood frame construction, 36% have frame construction in some portion of their exterior walls, and about one-fourth (24%) are entirely of masonry construction.

This deteriorating shopping area centering along Willard Avenue, about one-third (33%) of the project's net land area, is comprised of shops specializing in kosher products. There are 44 retail establishments in the project area including 25 selling food or liquor and 19 variety, dry goods, hardware and personal service shops.

At the time of survey, some 15 per cent of the stores in the area were vacant, some being located in the street-level basements of residential structures. Of the total floor area available for retail business uses, about 15 per cent is vacant. About 40 per cent of the operating business units were found to be owner-occupied. Of 63 structures containing non-residential uses, about one half (31) also contain dwelling units.

Most of the retail business units lack adequate off-street parking and delivery facilities while the resulting parking practices in the area hinder the circulation of pedestrians and vehicles desiring access to retail units.

RESIDENTIAL USE CHARACTERISTICS AND SUPPORTING FACILITIES

About 70 per cent of the dwelling units in the neighborhood were built before 1900, and all but 2 per cent of the remaining units were built between 1900 and 1920. No dwellings have been constructed in the area during the past twenty years. In many cases, these dwellings were not originally and have not since been provided with facilities now considered necessary for health and safety.

About one-half (45%) of the residential structures, containing approximately one-half (42%) of the project area's dwelling units, are of wooden construction over three stories in height. Almost one-third of the project area's residential structures containing one-third of the dwelling units also contain non-residential units, usually located on their street floors.

Supporting facilities in the area consist of two synagogues and a Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The synagogues serve small orthodox congregations and, together with the kosher markets, remain a focal point for the life of the declining Jewish community.

OVERCROWDING OF THE LAND

Almost all (93%) of the lots on which families live are below the city's 5,000 square foot minimum lot area standard for new construction. About 40% have less yard area around their buildings than the minimum standard required for new development in the interests of health and welfare by the city's zoning ordinance. About two-thirds (66%) of all the buildings the project area's families live in are closer to each other than 12 feet. 16% of all dwelling units surveyed were found to be in structures having considerable daylight obstruction because walls of adjacent structures blocked the venting of air and sunlight through their windows.

DWELLING CONDITIONS

The quality of the project area's 298 dwelling units was evaluated by a careful survey based upon the American Public Health Association's widely recognized method for measuring the quality of housing. Field inspections were made by housing inspectors of the Providence Health Department.

Almost all (92%) of the dwelling units in the project area are of the American Public Health Association's quality grade C or below. These units are INADEQUATE because of deteriorated and insanitary conditions and obsolescent dwelling equipment. Some two-thirds (66%) of the units are of quality grade D or below; they are so inadequate as to be SUBSTANDARD, being characterized by extreme deterioration and conditions especially hazardous to health. More than one-third (35%) of the project area's dwelling units, representing the worst SIUM housing, are of quality grade E, characterized by serious, widespread and multiple deficiencies in facilities and maintenance. See Table II.

The shared toilets, the lack of repair and the room crowding which have been of chief concern in the past are basic and necessary indices, but other deficiencies are also measures of substandard housing. Lack of piped hot water and wash basins impose a serious and constant obstacle to housekeeping and personal cleanliness; lack of central heating is a good index of obsolescent buildings; and the obstruction of windows by other buildings is good evidence of overcrowding of the land.

The following typical group of deficiencies would characterize a grade E dwelling: extreme deterioration in both the structure and the unit, the lack of adequate stairs and fire escapes, no bath available, no inside hot water, no wash basin, lack of dual egress from a third floor location, no central heating, lack of adequate living space and sleeping area, and hazardous space heaters or electric wiring.

A dwelling which is grade C has such a typical group of deficiencies as obstruction of sunlight and air, a shared toilet and bath located outside the dwelling unit, no wash basin, insufficient living space and sleeping area, and inadequate room sizes.

It is the combination of basically substandard conditions rather than individual deficiencies alone that violates the fundamentals of decent living. Less than 1 per cent of the project area's dwelling units are free of major deficiencies. More than one-half (51%) of the dwelling units have two or more, while one-fourth (25%) have three or more. In many cases there are conditions, such as inadequate room sizes and obstruction of daylight by adjacent structures, which are difficult or impossible to remedy without rebuilding; and such major physical defects as lack of available bath, lack of dual egress and serious deterioration cannot be cured except by structural changes so basic and costly as to be out of keeping with the worth of the structures.

CONDITIONS OF OCCUPANCY AND OVERCROWDING IN DWELLINGS

Less than one-tenth (7.8%) of those dwelling units in the project area reporting tenure are owner-occupied, as compared with about 30% for the City of Providence as a whole and 15% for all substandard units in the City as reported in the U. S. Census of Housing, 1950.

Some twenty-three per cent of the dwelling units were found to be occupied by non-white families at the time of the Housing Quality Survey. Doubling of basic families occurs in ten dwelling units.

More than one-fourth (26%) of the dwellings in the project area are seriously overcrowded. They house an excessive number of persons in relation to the number of total rooms and sleeping rooms available and are characterized by serious deficiencies in floor space in living areas and in space available in sleeping rooms.

TRENDS IN CONSTRUCTION, ASSESSED VALUATIONS AND DWELLING RENTALS

Land values in the project area decreased 11 per cent, while the value of land within the city generally held virtually even. By 1950, while building valuations increased 22 per cent throughout the city as a result of a general reassessment, building valuations in the project area increased only 18 per cent. The increase for total valuations in the city was 14 per cent, while in the project area, in spite of a fairly general, across-the-board increase of 10 per cent applied to most buildings in the city, the increase was only 9 per cent. This condition reflects, in part, the demolition of structures in the project area during that period - another indication of economic decline.

The preponderance of residential investment in the neighborhood area took place prior to 1900, according to the U. S. Census reports. Although the first junkyards appeared at the turn of the century, the bulk of such investment occurred after 1920 when residential construction had been virtually completed. Of the estimated \$70,000 worth of new construction evidenced by a detailed examination of assessment records between 1937 and 1952, about \$50,000 has been heavy commercial and industrial replacement of fire losses experienced in the junkyard conflagration of 1947. The remaining \$20,000 comprises a scattering of minor commercial investments through the area. The character of this latter activity has been such as to discourage any further residential investment for either new construction or remodeling.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The quality of the neighborhood environment was carefully evaluated by block frontages through the use of American Public Health Association methods. The neighborhood environmental ratings were determined by the crowding of buildings on the land, the lack of minimum unbuilt residential yard areas, the high incidence of non-residential uses along its block frontages, the existence of many non-residential sources of hazard and nuisance extremely inimical to residential occupancy, and lack of community facilities.

More than one-fourth (29%) of the neighborhood's blocks are characterized by extreme land crowding, well over one-third (39%) of its block frontages have an extreme incidence of non-residential land uses, and the residential premises in all (100%) of the blocks have a serious lack of minimum unbuilt yard area.

The influence of environmental deficiencies on the project area's households can be seen from the fact that all of the dwellings in the project area neighborhood are on frontages rating quality grade C or below. About 16 per cent of all neighborhood dwellings are located along block frontages which are rated as quality grade D or below. That is, that the dwellings in the project area are located in an environment which is inadequate for the needs of sound, wholesome neighborhoods.

The increasing inadequacy of environment has provided the area's home owners little encouragement to improve their properties or to resist the continual overcrowding of land and the physical deterioration which has ultimately placed their homes and their neighborhood beyond the point of economically feasible rehabilitation.

THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Evidence of social inadequacy in the neighborhood area is apparent from the records of health, welfare and law enforcement agencies. The measures of inadequacy used here have been reviewed by a committee of the Council of Community Services charged with appraisal of indices used to evaluate social breakdown in small areas of the city. Such measures show that in the study area bounded by Blackstone, Plain, Bogman Streets and Prairie Avenue, there were over recent periods of time proportionately 3.4 times as many cases of aid to dependent children in this area as in the city as a whole; 4.0 times as many training school admissions; 1.4 times as many old age assistance cases; 2.8 times as many general public assistance cases; 1.2 times as many venereal disease cases; 2.3 times as many tuberculosis cases; and 4.0 times as many illegitimate births reported. Several of these rates particularly reflect the severe social pressures placed upon children living in an area of poor housing. While no single index or group of indices will yield a complete and accurate picture of social conditions in the area, most of these indices reflect the end result of a particular type of social disorganization. The data for this area is indicative of advanced social disorganization.

The impact which the poor housing conditions of the area may have upon its social environment is indicated by the coincidence of these measures of social inadequacy with the degree to which the area's dwellings and neighborhood environment are substandard. These dwellings, it must be remembered, are characterized by inadequate room and sanitary facilities, lack of piped hot water and dual egress, by deterioration and daylight obstruction, while their neighborhood environment shows a gross lack of community facilities, open space and yard area, being characterized by a high incidence of non-residential uses and such attendant nuisances and hazards, as smoke, dust, noise and vibration, heavy street traffic and insanitary conditions.

PART III

REASONS FOR SELECTION OF WILLARD CENTER UNIT TWO AS A PROJECT AREA Project Area D2-A2

The Unit Two project area is designed to eliminate severe blight from the Willard Center Area by removing inadequate housing and non-residential activities which are detrimental to a neighborhood of homes. It would complete the process of providing community facilities which was started in Unit One of the Willard Center area. In those two units, a school and recreational and shopping facilities will be designed to contribute to the stability of residential values in the section of Upper South Providence surrounding the project.

THE REMOVAL OF BLIGHTED CONDITIONS

Selection of this area for redevelopment action is based primarily on the fact that it encompasses some of the most inadequate housing in Upper South Providence as well as non-residential uses whose hazards and nuisances contribute heavily to the deterioration of the Willard Center neighborhood.

THE IMPROVEMENT OF ADJACENT HOUSING AREAS

It is expected that the removal of substandard housing and blight-producing non-residential uses, and the subsequent provision of the school and recreation facilities to serve the school and the neighborhood, will stimulate a general improvement of housing conditions in areas adjacent to the project. In addition, redevelopment will provide an opportunity for the shopping facilities in the Willard Center area, now inadequate, to be replaced by modern facilities which should further encourage the improvement and maintenance of dwellings through the investment of private capital.

THE SCHEDULING OF OTHER PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

The Master Plan for Playgrounds and Playfields published in January of 1953 states "A playground of approximately 2.4 acres is proposed in the vicinity of Blackstone Street and Prairie Avenue to serve Upper South Providence. This playground should be acquired and built at the same time as the proposed Upper South Providence School." "A new playfield is needed to serve the densely populated South Providence neighborhood. The site should contain a minimum area of 6.6 acres and should be located adjacent to the proposed Upper South Providence Elementary School and Playground. The plan for development of all three facilities as a single integrated school and recreation center will afford opportunities for a most efficient layout."

The elementary school is scheduled for Willard Center Unit One Project Area. In conformity to the Master Plan, then, Willard Center Unit Two proposed a unified site for playground and playfield adjacent to the school site.

The Capital Improvement Program 1953-1959 published in May 1953 states "\$470,000 has been requested for 1953-1954 and \$1,130,000 for 1954-1955 for the (Upper South Providence Elementary School) recommended in the master plan." "This will coordinate (the school) with the Willard Avenue Redevelopment Project expected to begin in the fall of 1953." This publication further states that \$90,000 has been requested for 1958-1959 to construct a much needed playground and playfield in the Willard Avenue vicinity. Its recommendation is "that this project be scheduled for 1954-1955 and be financed with bond funds. This earlier date will be coordinated with the opening of the new elementary school."

Surveys and studies made by the Redevelopment Agency indicate that the Willard Center Unit One and Unit Two project areas are in the only location in South Providence where such severe blighted conditions can be eliminated and these proposed and much needed public improvements can be developed.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS
AND CONFORMITY TO MASTER PLAN
Project Area D2-A2

GENERAL STATEMENT OF REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The new land uses proposed for the project area are recreational and commercial.

A playground for elementary school age children is proposed to be located adjacent to the new school in the Unit One project area. A playfield to serve older youth and young adults is proposed to center in the area now occupied by the salvage yards and to extend north to the playground and school sites and south to the project area boundary along Pilgrim Street. A site for a convenience shopping center will be provided along the Prairie Avenue boundary of the project. It is proposed that commercial uses would occupy approximately one-fifth to one-third of the project area.

There will be no principal streets within the project area. Some of the project area boundary streets will be widened and/or improved.

If it is possible to permit any dwelling units within the project area to remain, the population density shall not exceed 10 families per net residential acre.

No less than one off-street automobile parking space will be required for each 500 square feet of gross floor area in the shopping center building or buildings. The height of said building or buildings shall not exceed 3 stories or 45 feet. Off-street loading facilities will also be required.

CONFORMITY TO MASTER PLAN

All the proposals conform to the Master Plan for the community.

The Master Plan for Land Use and Population Distribution (1946) calls for a reduction of densities in the higher density residential districts such as Upper South Providence; for a substantial increase of play facilities in residential neighborhoods; and for the removal of industrial uses, (such as the salvage yards in the congested Ash Street vicinity) from residential neighborhoods. This Plan further recommends a shopping center in the vicinity of Willard Avenue.

There is no conflict with the Master Plan for Therofares (1946).

The Master Plan for Playgrounds and Playfields (1953), as pointed out in Part III of this report, calls for a playground to serve the new elementary school in Upper South Providence proposed for Willard Center Unit One; and a playfield in this vicinity to serve adolescents and young adults of South Providence. These facilities would be provided under the proposed Redevelopment Plan.

THE FEASIBILITY OF REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS
Project Area D2-A2

The feasibility of redevelopment proposals is strengthened by the fact that the relocation of families and businesses, site clearance and project development can be accomplished on a stage basis over a period of years. The proposals conform to civil defense objectives, and are based upon a sound financial plan.

STAGE CLEARANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

The immediate redevelopment of the whole project area is not recommended, rather it is considered desirable to schedule the relocation of families and businesses and to finance site improvements over a period of years. The land use and re-use proposals made in this plan lend themselves well to stage development, because it is proposed that the site for the shopping center could be cleared and new stores built before most of the Willard Avenue shops would be required to relocate, the site for the playground may be cleared independently, in time for the school opening, and developed and landscaped gradually thereafter. Playfield development might occur in stages as the salvage yards on Ash Street and the shops along Willard Avenue are satisfactorily relocated.

RELOCATION OF FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES

Redevelopment of the project area will require the relocation of families living in 298 dwelling units, and about 64 businesses and industries. For aid in rehousing these families and businesses, the Agency will re-establish the Family Relocation Service and Business Relocation Bureau. The rehousing task will be eased to a large extent by the volume of low-rent public housing units now in operation and the nearly 1100 new low-rent public housing units currently being completed. Added indications of the feasibility of re-housing are the continuing private housing construction, the expanding vacancy ratios for certain types of standard housing, and the possible use of some of the city-owned Valley View veterans housing development units for qualified project families.

All of these facts and factors indicate that the families in the project area will be relocated without undue hardship, and that the special needs of the shopkeepers and salvage yard operators will be considered and their relocation will be timed according to a reasonable schedule designed to avoid undue hardship.

CIVIL DEFENSE CONSIDERATIONS

The overall reduction in housing density which will result from the redevelopment of the Project Area for playground, playfield, and commercial uses is in agreement with civil defense policy. The removal of congested frame housing and high-risk junkyards from this section of South Providence

will result in a reduction in fire hazards for the surrounding neighborhood. The replacement of the dilapidated commercial buildings will further reduce the vulnerability of this area to conflagration. The sizeable open land space that would be provided for recreation purposes would also serve the civil defense function of a firebreak and could be utilized as an assembly point for civil defense workers.

COST OF REDEVELOPMENT

Preliminary studies of the problems of land acquisition and re-use, marketability and such clearance and development activities as planning, relocation, management, demolition, site improvement and administrative overhead indicate that the gross cost of making the land in the project area available for the new users will be approximately \$2,000,000. Estimating that the return to the Agency for sale of the land will be approximately \$300,000, the net redevelopment cost is estimated at \$1,700,000.

This project appears to be eligible for Federal financial assistance under provisions of the Housing Act of 1949 and therefore two-thirds of the cost of redevelopment, approximately \$1,133,000 might be paid with Federal funds. The one-third cost of redevelopment which the City of Providence may be required to pay therefore would be approximately \$567,000, which could be financed from the \$2,000,000 bond issue for redevelopment purposes authorized by the voters in 1948.

The cost of carrying out this project will be precised in the Redevelopment Plan. Preliminary financial analysis however demonstrates that the project is financially feasible.

PART VI

ACCOMPLISHMENT OF REDEVELOPMENT PURPOSES
Project Area D2-A2

The purposes of the "Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act" of 1950 will be furthered by the redevelopment of the project area. Article 2 Section 4 of the "Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act" of 1950 declares that ". . . the purposes of this act are . to eliminate and redevelop slum blighted areas . . . in the manner and by the means provided in this act, thereby to carry out the policy of this state, . . . to protect and promote the health, safety and welfare of the people of the state and particularly of the people of the communities of the state in which slum blighted areas . . . are found to exist."

Article 3 Section 7A declared that "'Slum blighted area' means any area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, either used or intended to be used for living, commercial, industrial or other purposes, or any combination of such uses, which by reason of (1) dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence, (2) inadequate provision for ventilation, light, sanitation, open spaces and recreation facilities, (3) high density of population and overcrowding, (4) defective design or insanitary or unsafe character or condition of physical construction, (5) defective or inadequate street or lot layout, (6) mixed character or shifting of uses to which they are put, or any combination of such factors and characteristics, are conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency and crime, injuriously affect the entire area and constitute a menace to the public health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the community and of the state generally."

Conditions within this area, described in this report, demonstrate that the Willard Center Unit Two Project Area is a slum blighted area within the meaning of the "Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act" of 1950. To eliminate and redevelop this slum blighted area, it will be necessary for the City to take action under the provisions of that Act. The Redevelopment Agency recommends that the City Council approve this Tentative Plan and direct the Agency to prepare a Redevelopment Plan for this Project Area.

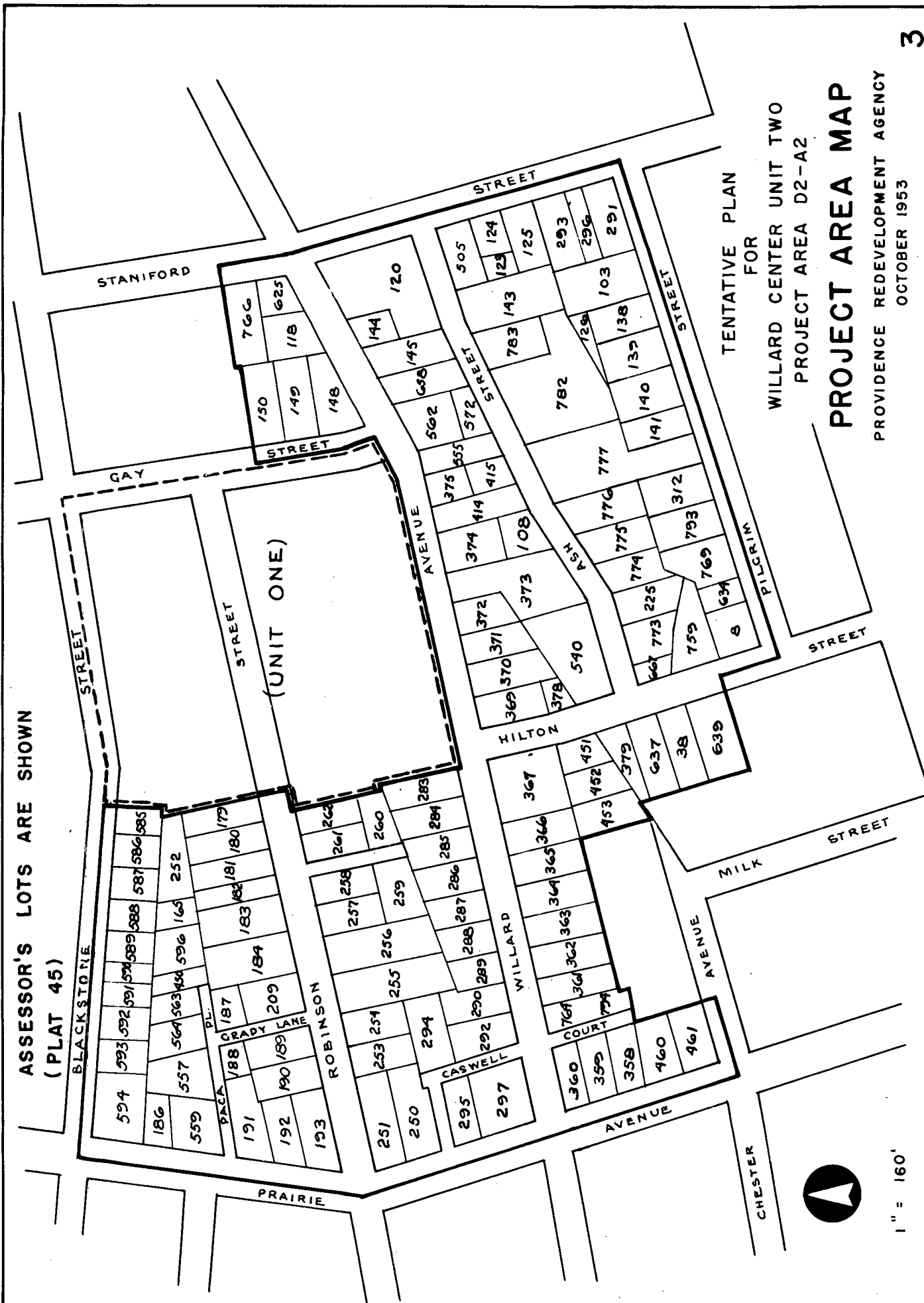
PART VII

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT BOUNDARIES
Project Area D2-A2

The Willard Center Unit Two, Project Area D2-A2, as shown on Map 3 - Project Area Map, is generally bounded as follows:

By the center-line of Blackstone Street; the property line between Assessor's lots 585 and 584, extended; the property line between lots 585 and 162; the property line between lots 252 and 162; the property line between lots 179 and 178, extended; the southerly line of Robinson Street; the property line between lots 262 and 260, and lot 263; the property line between lots 283 and 263; the property line between lots 283 and 282; the northerly property line of Willard Avenue; the center-line of Gay Street; the property line between lots 150 and 151, extended; the property line between lots 151 and 766; the property line between lots 766 and 117, extended; the center-line of Staniford Street; the center-line of Pilgrim Street; the center-line of Hilton Street; the property line between lots 639 and 380, extended; the property line between lots 639, 38, 637 and 379, and lot 640; the property line between lots 453 and 640; the property line between lots 453 and 454; the southerly property line of lots 365, 364, 363, 362, and 361; the property lines between lot 794 and lot 458; the property line between lot 794 and 459; the property line across the end of Caswell Court; the property line between lots 460, 461 and lot 459, extended; the center-line of Chester Avenue; and the center-line of Prairie Avenue.

ASSESSOR'S LOTS ARE SHOWN
(PLAT 45)



TENTATIVE PLAN
FOR
WILLARD CENTER UNIT TWO
PROJECT AREA D2-A2

PROJECT AREA MAP

PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
OCTOBER 1953



1" = 160'



CITY OF PROVIDENCE • RHODE ISLAND • Walter H. Reynolds • Mayor

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

D. Everett Whelan
City Clerk

CITY HALL

Vincent Vespia
First Deputy
William E. McWilliams
Second Deputy

November 24, 1953

Mr. Donald M. Graham
Executive Director
Redevelopment Agency
City Hall
Providence, Rhode Island

Dear Mr. Grahams

In accordance with the provisions of Sec. 8 of City Council Resolution 720, approved November 20, 1953, I sent under date of November 24, 1953 copies of said resolution to Redevelopment Agency and Inspector of Buildings.

Very truly yours,

D. Everett Whelan
City Clerk

DEW:smt



CITY OF PROVIDENCE • RHODE ISLAND • Walter H. Reynolds • Mayor

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

D. Everett Whelan
City Clerk

CITY HALL

Vincent Vespia
First Deputy
William E. McWilliams
Second Deputy

November 23, 1953

Mr. Edward H. Flanagan, Recorder
Recorder of Deeds Department
City Hall
Providence, Rhode Island

Dear Mr. Flanagan:

In compliance with Paragraph 9, City Council Resolution No. 720 approved November 20, 1953, and entitled "Resolution of the City Council Approving the Tentative Plan for Willard Center Unit Two Project Area D2-A2" and in compliance with Section 36, Chapter 2574 of the Public Laws of 1950 of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations entitled the "Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act," public notice is hereby given that proceedings for the redevelopment of the Willard Center Unit Two Project Area D2-A2 have been instituted under the Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act.

In further compliance with the provisions of law cited above, I submit herewith a certified true copy of said Resolution, Paragraph 2 of which contains a description of land lying within the Willard Center Unit Two Project Area D2-A2.

Also attached herewith is a map entitled "Project Area Map, Tentative Plan for Willard Center Unit Two Project Area D2-A2, Providence Redevelopment Agency, October 1953" which shows the Assessor's lots (Plat No. 45) and the boundary of the approved Willard Center Unit Two Project Area D2-A2.

Yours very truly,

D. Everett Whelan
D. EVERETT WHELAN
CITY CLERK

DEW:ant

Enclosures

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. D. Everett Whelan, City Clerk

From: Mr. Donald M. Graham, Executive Director
Providence Redevelopment Agency

Date: October 22, 1953

Subject: RECOMMENDED SCHEDULE OF ACTIONS TOWARD APPROVAL BY CITY COUNCIL OF
"TENTATIVE PLAN FOR WILLARD CENTER UNIT TWO, PROJECT AREA D2-A2"

November 2, 1953 Tentative Plan report from Redevelopment Agency referred by City Council to Thursday, November 19, 1953, at 8:00 o'clock P.M. (EST) for Public Hearing, with notice required by Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act of 1950.

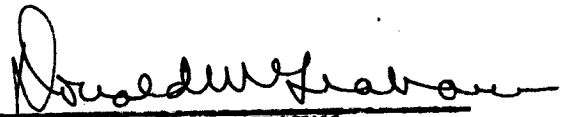
City Clerk places Notice of Public Hearing in Journal and Bulletin on two successive Mondays, November 9, November 16. (To be paid for by Agency.)

November 19, 1953 Public Hearing by full City Council. Consider report of City Plan Commission.
Consider recommendations of Redevelopment Agency.
Take such other evidence and testimony as shall be presented.

Council approves Tentative Plan by Resolution Approving the Tentative Plan for Willard Center Unit Two, Project Area D2-A2. Agency will submit Resolution to Council at this meeting.

The City Clerk will then transmit copies of the approved Resolution to the Redevelopment Agency and the Building Inspector.

The City Clerk will file in the Recorder of Deeds a description of the land within the project area and a statement that proceedings for the redevelopment of said project area have been instituted under the Redevelopment Act. (Description and statement will be furnished by the Agency.)


DONALD M. GRAHAM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

October 21, 1953

Mr. George Hurley, Chairman
City Plan Commission
City Hall, Room 103
Providence 3, Rhode Island

Dear Mr. Hurley:

The Providence Redevelopment Agency transmits herewith ten (10) copies of the "Tentative Plan for Willard Center Unit Two, Project Area D2-A2." These are submitted in compliance with Section 29 of Chapter 257h, Public Laws of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations entitled "Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act."

This Tentative Plan has been prepared and approved by the Providence Redevelopment Agency and will be submitted to the City Council on Monday, November 2, 1953.

Sincerely yours,

Chester R. Martin
CHESTER R. MARTIN
CHAIRMAN
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

CRM:amt

Enclosures

cc: D. Everett Whelan, City Clerk

ASSESSOR'S LOTS ARE SHOWN
(PLAT 45)



TENTATIVE PLAN
FOR
WILLARD CENTER UNIT TWO
PROJECT AREA D2-A2

PROJECT AREA MAP

PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
OCTOBER 1953



1" = 160'

CITY OF PROVIDENCE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

City Clerk's Office,
November 9, 1953

Pursuant to the requirements of Sections 26 and 31 of Chapter 2574 of the Public Laws of 1950, entitled the "Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Act," the City Council of the City of Providence will conduct a Public Hearing in the City Council Chamber, City Hall, Providence, Rhode Island, on THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1953 at 8:00 o'clock P.M. (E.S.T.). This hearing will be concerned with TENTATIVE PLAN FOR WILLARD CENTER UNIT TWO PROJECT AREA D2-A2 as proposed by the Providence Redevelopment Agency in a report dated October 8, 1953.

The Project Area is that tract of land in South Providence designated as the Willard Center Unit Two Project Area D2-A2, and bounded by the center-line of Blackstone Street; the property line between Assessor's lots 585 and 584, extended; the property line between lots 585 and 162; the property line between lots 252 and 162; the property line between lots 179 and 178, extended; the southerly line of Robinson Street; the property line between lots 262 and 260, and lot 263; the property line between lots 283 and 263; the property line between lots 283 and 282; the northerly property line of Willard Avenue; the center-line of Gay Street; the property line between lots 150 and 151, extended; the property line between lots 151 and 766; the property line between lots 766 and 117, extended; the center-line of Staniford Street; the center-line of Pilgrim Street; the center-line of Hilton Street; the property line between lots 639 and 380, extended; the property line between lots 639, 38, 637 and 379, and lot 640; the property line between lots 453 and 640; the property line between lots 453 and 454; the southerly property line of lots 365, 364, 363, 362, and 361; the property lines between lot 794 and lot 458; the property line between lot 794 and 459; the property line across the end of Caswell Court; the property line between lots 460, 461 and lot 459, extended; the center-line of Chester Avenue; and the center-line of Prairie Avenue.

The purpose of this Hearing is to consider a proposal for the undertaking of a project under State and local law, with Federal financial assistance under Title I of the Housing Act of 1949 (Public Law 171 - 81st Congress): to acquire the land in the project area; to demolish and remove buildings and improvements; and to make the land available for redevelopment by private enterprise or public agencies as authorized by law.

All persons or agencies interested in the above listed project area will have an opportunity to be heard and to submit communications in writing. The report of the Providence Redevelopment Agency may be seen and information obtained at the Providence Redevelopment Agency, Room 104, City Hall, Providence, Rhode Island.

THOMAS S. LJONGO,
President
Providence City Council

D. EVERETT WHELAN,
City Clerk

To be published in the Journal and Bulletin on November 9, 1953 and on November 16, 1953.