

City of Providence

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

CHAPTER 2000-6

No. 136 AN ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AND
ADOPTING THE OFFICIAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE WANSKUCK
REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

Approved March 23, 2000

Be it ordained by the City of Providence:

WHEREAS, the Providence Redevelopment Agency (PRA), pursuant to the provisions of the Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) Title 45, Chapter 32, as amended, has formulated a plan entitled "The Wanskuck Redevelopment Project," (Redevelopment Plan); and

WHEREAS, *Providence 2000, The Comprehensive Plan* has been prepared and adopted by the City Council and City Plan Commission pursuant to RIGL Section 45-22.2 et seq., and is recognized and used as a guide for the general development of the City Of Providence as a whole; and

WHEREAS, the State of Rhode Island has revised its enabling legislation affecting land use controls and requires compliance with the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the said Redevelopment Plan's Project Boundary encompasses an area which has been designated "Redevelopment Areas" by the City Code of Ordinances, Chapter 20, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the former American Tourister Inc. located at Houghton Street (Plat 78 Lot 373 and 393) has been vacant for more than ten years; and

WHEREAS, the American Tourister property has been neglected and presently meets the criteria and definition of a blighted structure and area in accordance with Rhode Island General Laws Section 45-31-8; and

WHEREAS, the American Tourister property has been delinquent in taxes to the City of Providence;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE

1. The Project is hereby designated as "The Wanskuck Redevelopment Project." The Project Area will be designated number thirty-six (36) in the Redevelopment Area number (1).
2. There is hereby adopted "The Wanskuck Redevelopment Project - 1999."
3. The Plan entitled "The Wanskuck Redevelopment Project - 1999" shall be adopted as part of the Ordinances of the City of Providence, in compliance with *Providence 2000 - The Comprehensive Plan*.
4. It is the intent of the City Council to use powers granted under RIGL 45-32-1 et seq., as amended, to acquire vacant an/or blighted properties, reduce density of housing, facilitate rehabilitation of deteriorated

No.

CHAPTER

AN ORDINANCE

THE COMMITTEE ON

URRP
Recommends

Barbara Poirier
Clerk
11/29/99 (P.H. Held)

THE COMMITTEE ON
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT
RENEWAL & PLANNING

Approves Passage of
The Within Ordinance

Claire Bestwick
Feb. 23, 2000 Clerk

structures, provide site improvements, and provide for the orderly redevelopment of the project area.

5. It is found and declared, pursuant to RIGL 45-32-20, that:
 - A. The Wanskuck Redevelopment Project is feasible, conforms to the Comprehensive Plan, and if carried out, will promote the public health, safety, moral and welfare of the City of Providence. The acquisition of the real property in accordance with the Wanskuck Redevelopment Plan is in the public interest.
 - B. The Redevelopment Plan shall provide for payments for property that may be acquire by the exercise of eminent domain.
 - C. The Redevelopment Plan contains provisions stating that the controls contained within the Redevelopment Plan shall follow the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Providence, as amended, with the exception that Use Code 37 – Adult Entertainment, shall not be permitted with in the Project Area.
6. This Ordinance shall take effect on its passage and shall be filed with the City Clerk who is hereby authorized and directed to forward a certified copy thereof to the Providence Redevelopment Agency.

IN CITY COUNCIL
MAR 3 2000
FIRST READING
READ AND PASSED

Michael R. Clement
CLERK

IN CITY COUNCIL
MAR 16 2000
FINAL READING
READ AND PASSED

Michael R. Clement
PRESIDENT
CLERK

APPROVED

MAR 23 2000
Vincent A. Cianci
MAYOR

THE WANSKUCK REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

That this document is justified and is implemented based on the following and shall be appended to the Wanskuck Redevelopment Project Plan:

Background

The proposed project is located within the Wanskuck Neighborhood, which is situated in the northwest edge of the City of Providence and is bounded on the north and west by the town of North Providence. Its eastern boundary is the Louisquisset Pike (Rt. 146) and on the south by Admiral and Longmont Streets. The earliest development in the Wanskuck Neighborhood was industrial. Mills located therein order to use the West River as a source of power. The area is now primarily residential, although industrial buildings still remain around the ponds.

The property located in the proposed project area was once the Steere Worsted Mill. It was founded as a part of the Wanskuck Mills under the direction of Henry J. Steere, who was also the co-founder of the Wanskuck Mills. The Steere Worsted Mill, built to manufacture worsted yarn, is a long three (3) story, brick, flat – roofed structure with a projecting central tower under a peaked roof. The most interesting feature of this mill is the short tower with brick pilasters and bulls-eye windows. The mill was closed in the 1950's, when the Wanskuck Company sold all of its textile mills. The property is listed in the National Register of Historical Places.

The American Tourister Company then occupied the property as its manufacture and sale operations. It remain there until the recession of the mid 1980s and were forced to shut down the facility and move its operations to Warren, Rhode Island.

The property has been sold at the City Tax Collector's 1990 tax sale, and has remained vacant since then. The property has also been tax delinquent since the tax sale.

Project Justification

In order to acquire the parcels the Providence Redevelopment Agency must make findings that the conditions in the proposed area is an arrested, blighted area, that there are obstacles to acquiring the sites other than through the PRA and that a declaration is made as to the methods to be used in redevelopment.

Statement of Development Objectives and Proposed Treatment

- To provide development opportunities on specific parcels that are currently underutilized or certain structures that are substandard or whose uses are not compatible with the plan's overall objective.
- To provide site improvements to include traffic improvements at designated sites but not excluding any future improvements.

Findings as to Dangers from Substandard Areas

Pursuant to RIGL Sec. 45-31-3, it is hereby established that there are one- (1) parcels proposed to be acquired located within the Project Area. This structure is a boarded and abandoned building and is in substandard condition. The Agency intends to acquire, either through condemnation or a negotiated purchase, this property to a blighted and substandard condition, which has an adverse effect on the area.

Findings as to Obstacles to Private Redevelopment

Pursuant to RIGL Sec. 45-31-4, it is hereby found to be impossible for private enterprise alone to remedy the conditions in the project area. It is unrealistic to assume that the present property owners would take on the responsibility of initiating this plan on their own without outside assistance. Therefore, it would be necessary for the Agency to provide the initiative and the planning, as well as the powers granted to them for redevelopment projects.

Declaration as to Redevelopment Methods

The Providence Redevelopment Agency proposes to acquire all the lots described within the project boundaries (noted below). These may be by condemnation or purchase. If the Agency is unable to negotiate a price in the first two weeks after a proposal is offered, the Agency will exercise its powers of eminent domain. The Providence Redevelopment Agency shall review any development proposal. Approval of such proposals will be in accordance with the Official Redevelopment Plan.

Project Boundaries

The proposed project area is located with in the Wanskuck Neighborhood, situated on Assessor's Plat 78, and Lots 373 and 393. Contained with in Lot 393 is Whipple's Pond. The square footage of Lot 393 is 1,057,220 (including water) and Lot 373 is 10,130 square feet.

Project Area Description

A study conducted by the Department of Planning and Development reveals that the structure is an abandoned mill complex. It is in a neglected and deteriorated condition with many of its windows destroyed. The structure poses a fire hazard to the surrounding properties. The property immediately adjacent to the proposed project is the Goodwill Industries and across the street is Cox Cable. These properties are in satisfactory condition.

The proposed area is zoned M-1 Industrial District. This zone is intended for general industrial uses that accommodate a variety of manufacturing, assembly, storage of durable goods and related activities provided that they do not pose a toxic, explosive or

environmental hazard to the City. The area surrounding the proposed area is predominately residential.

Project Elements

1. Property Acquisition

The Agency intends to acquire, either through eminent domain or a negotiated purchase, the substandard property to eliminate blighted and substandard conditions, which has an adverse effect on the area. The Agency will negotiate the purchase of the property with the property owners. If the Agency is unable to negotiate a price in the first two weeks after the plan is approved and funded; the Agency will exercise its powers of eminent domain.

Once the property is owned a decision will be made as to whether the buildings can be rehabilitated. If the buildings can be saved we will seek developers. If the properties cannot be saved, they will be demolished and the area will then be developed as an industrial park.

2. Design Review

Any proposed development of the property will have to comply with the design objectives as set forth in the design review procedures of redevelopment proposals by the Providence Redevelopment Agency. Combined with the land use and building requirement controls established in the Official Redevelopment, these objectives will permit the Agency to evaluate the proposal to ensure that it is consistent with the objectives and controls in the Official Redevelopment Plan.

3. Site Development

The Redevelopment Agency, through the Department of Planning and Development, will make efforts to secure the site, and initiate strategies for appropriate reuse, and to market the site to a qualified developer. If no qualified developer is found and demolition is necessary, the Department will seek bids from qualified consultants to do photographic and written documentation of the site. This step is required by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission as mitigation of potential demolition of most or all historic structures on the site, which is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Other Provisions Necessary To Meet Local Objectives

1. Conformity to Comprehensive Plan

Proposed development in the Project Area is intended to implement local planning and development objectives and to be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan for the City.

The proposed Project Area is located within an area designated as Limited Manufacturing as determined by the *Providence 2000 – The Comprehensive Plan Comprehensive*.

The proposed development within the area is intended to implement local planning and development objectives.

2. Method of Relocation

There are no occupied structures within the Proposed Project Area. If in the future, acquisition is necessary, the Agency, through the Department of Planning and Development, will provide services to assist in the relocation of any and all of the individuals and businesses concerned. Relocation payments and costs will be in compliance with the State Uniform Relocation Guidelines.

3. Covenants and Restrictions

The developers will be required to conform to the standards and controls or other provisions of the Official Redevelopment Plan as contained in Section 3 entitled “Other Conditions, Covenants, Restrictions and Provisions Controlling the Development and the Use of Acquired Land and Improvements.” of Chapter G. entitled “Other Provisions Necessary to Meet Local Objectives” in the Official Redevelopment Plan.

4. Miscellaneous Provisions

Whenever the controls in this Plan restricting the use and development of areas acquired for redevelopment conflict with provisions of the Zoning Ordinance or any other City Ordinances the higher standards of this Plan, or of the Zoning Ordinance shall govern.

5. Estimated Cost of Redevelopment and Proposed Method of Financing

The estimated cost for the acquisition is \$1,601,000.00 Dollars. The estimated cost for the acquisition is based upon the assessed values for each of the lots involved in the purchase. Full appraisals will be conducted once the City Council authorizes the Agency to proceed with the acquisition. The Agency will seek authorization for this purchase through Council action by the adoption and approval of the Official Redevelopment Plan for the Wanskuck Redevelopment Project.

