

# Annual Report 1960



**PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

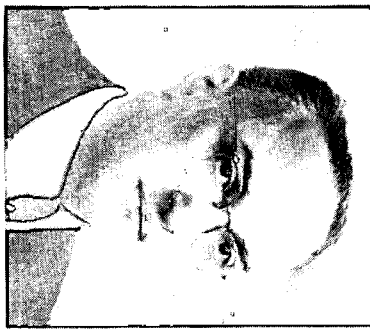
410 Howard Building, Providence 9, Rhode Island



Chester R. Martin, Chairman



Albert Harkness



Morris S. Waldman, Vice Chairman



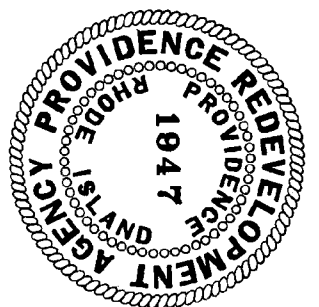
Edmund M. Mauro



Timothy A. Purcell, Secretary

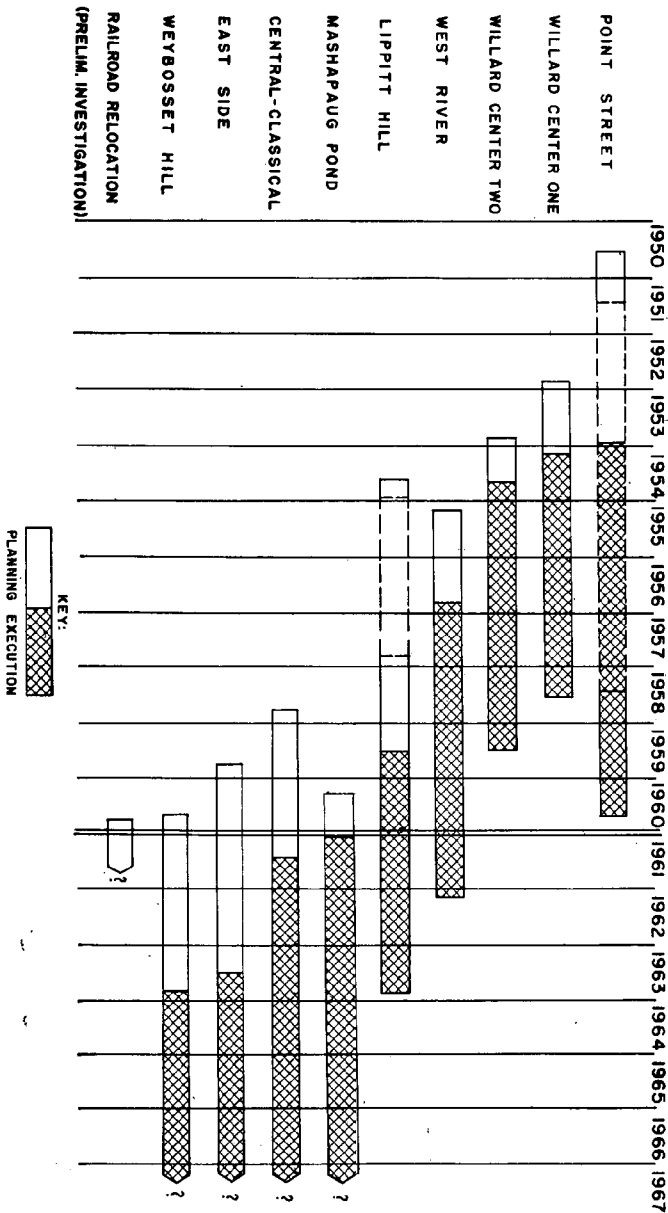


James F. Reynolds, Executive Director



# PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY PROGRAM

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1960



## PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

410 Howard Building, Providence 5, Rhode Island

The Honorable Walter H. Reynolds  
Mayor of Providence  
City Hall  
Providence, Rhode Island

Dear Mayor Reynolds:

The completion of the world's first automatic post office in the West River Industrial Park and rapid progress in the planning of the Huntington Expressway Industrial Park, the first redevelopment project the city is financing without federal help, were notable achievements of the Providence Redevelopment Agency during 1960.

We are pleased to report these and other accomplishments in this, the thirteenth annual report submitted by the Agency.

When its Point Street project is officially confirmed as complete by the federal government, Providence will be the second city in the country to have completed three urban renewal projects. Philadelphia has completed four.

We sincerely appreciate the cooperation you and the city administration have given us during the past year. It is an honor to work with you in rebuilding Providence.

Respectfully,

*Chester R. Martin*

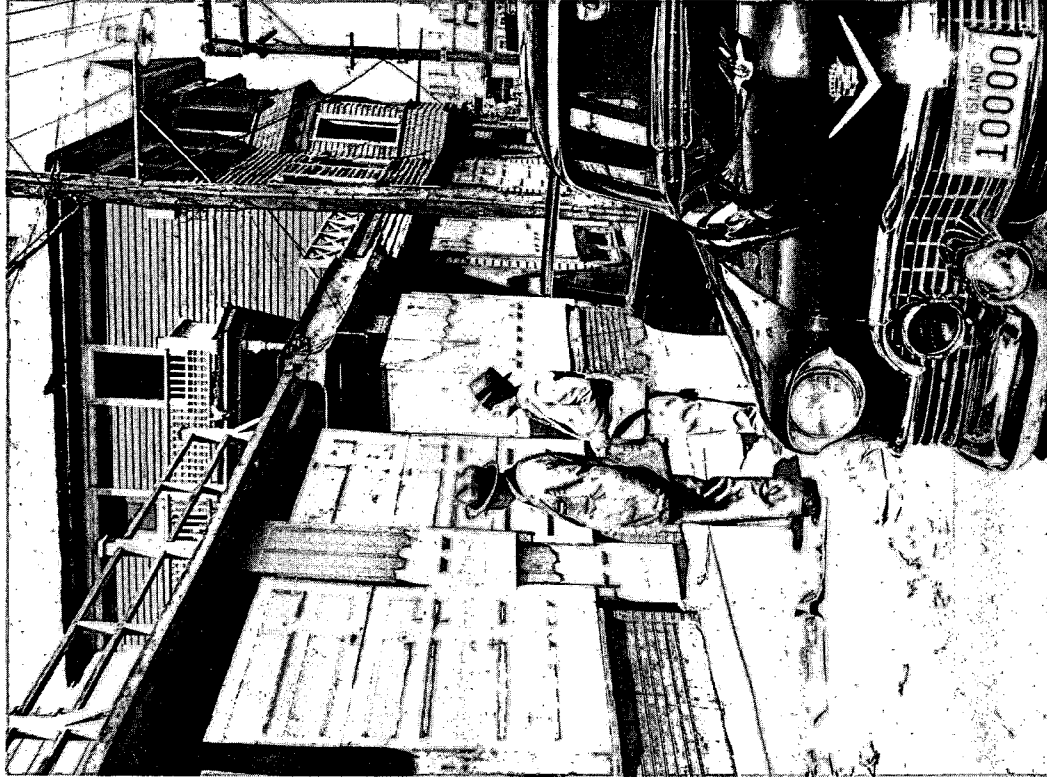
Chester R. Martin  
Chairman

IN CITY COUNCIL

MAY 18 1961

READ:  
WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT  
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.

*Wincent Vergha*  
ACTING CLERK



Mayor Reynolds (at left) tours a redevelopment project area with his administrative assistant, William L. Bagley.

## PREFACE

### For the people, by the people . . .

The program emphasis of the Providence Redevelopment Agency has changed substantially since the Agency's pioneer days, when it concentrated almost solely on land clearance. Now its stress is on the need for a broadening base of citizen participation in urban renewal.

This need was dramatized last November by the slim margin of approval given the fourth redevelopment bond issue authorization, for eleven million dollars.

The portion of voters supporting authorization in November was less than 55 per cent; support in 1958 for a similar authorization, although for a lesser amount, stood at 72 per cent.

The Agency's first annual report asserted the need for increasing the city's housing supply. This was in 1948, within a period of critical housing shortage.

Subsequent reports put forth an urgent request for legislative standards to maintain housing at a proper level of quality, and these standards were eventually established.

Still later the Agency pointed out the tremendous advantage of replacing worn out residences with new private construction of commercial, industrial and residential types.

So does the Agency now ask for citizen participation as the impact of urban renewal presses upon the community. The impact is both on those members of the community who are displaced from redevelopment areas and on those who are attracted to those areas.

It presses likewise upon those residents who become involved in the improvement of homes in areas where conservation is the best opportunity.

## **PREFACE**

Urban renewal processes and projects have changed and diversified over the years in Providence, one of the nation's most advanced cities in the urban renewal field.

Lessons learned in many cities and in the Agency's own pilot rehabilitation area within Lippitt Hill will be applied on a large scale in the East Side renewal area, where some 300 acres of residential properties will be included in a conservation project.

## **Providence: A National Leader in Urban Renewal**

Two proposed clearance projects, Central-Classical and Weybosset Hill, will result in a variety of new types of development, including residential, commercial and public facilities. The Weybosset Hill project, with the proposed Railroad Relocation Project, will be located in a redevelopment area that will embrace

Industrial redevelopment methods established at the West River project will be used in the Randall Square portion of the East Side renewal area, as well as in the Mashapaug Pond project.

In Mashapaug two procedures are being tried for the first time: the redevelopment of an "arrested area", that is, an area which was not slum or deteriorated but nevertheless retards the community's growth because its physical condition makes it too costly for private enterprise to develop; the complete financing by the city without federal aid or controls.

almost the entire central business district.

The marketing of cleared land within Lippitt Hill will represent a new venture by the Agency: the attraction of redevelopers to establish a combination of new residential properties and commercial facilities in what was a blighted central city area.

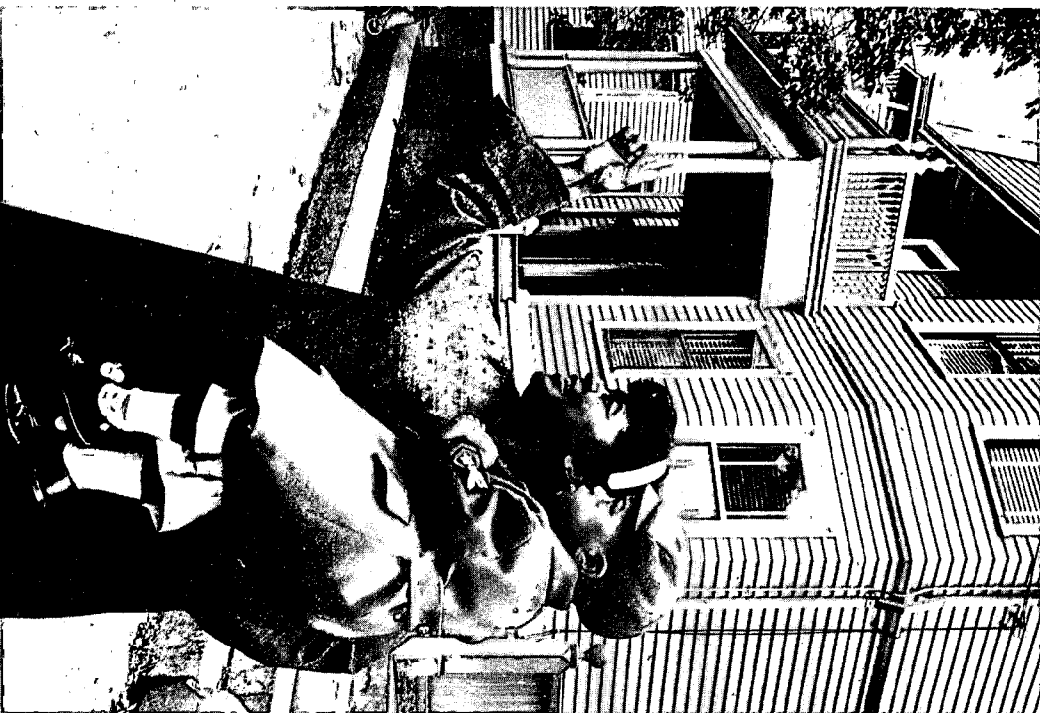
## PREFACE

As the city and the nation accumulate experience in this field each project brings unprecedented processes to Providence, which has frequently served as a laboratory for urban renewal techniques.

With the progress come problems. Most particularly the Agency is concerned with the human problems caused by the displacement of families from redevelopment areas.

Toward solving these and all problems on route to a better Providence for its people, present and future, we reiterate our need for the constructive support of all its citizens.

This woman helps her son get acquainted with the family's new neighborhood. The family had lived in the Lippitt Hill project area.



## POINT STREET

The Point Street Project area has been converted into land that adjoining industries use for off-street parking.

The Point Street project, which involved the clearance of an area in which fully 97 per cent of the homes were substandard, was completely developed by June, when site improvements were finished.

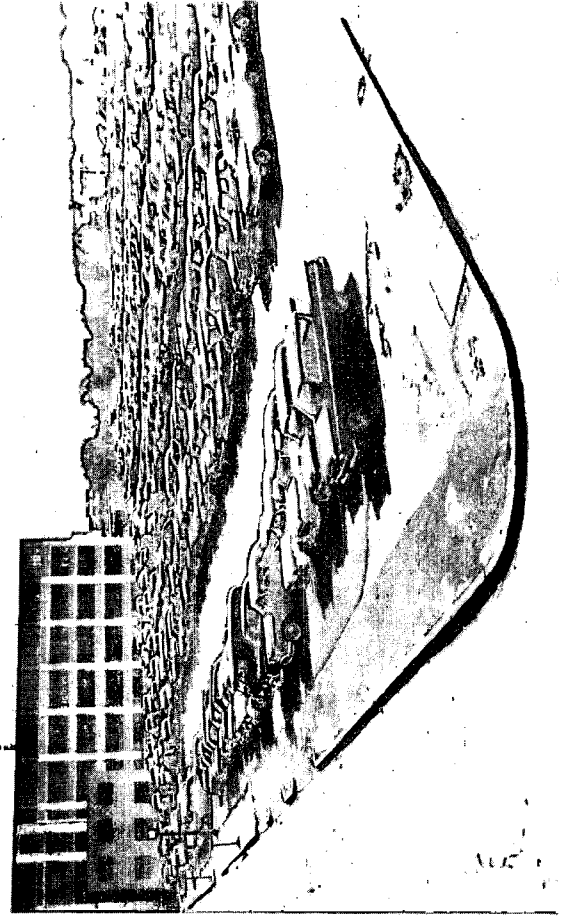
The final audit by the federal government on the ten-year-old project was closed August 31. All the Agency needs to be able to record the project as completed is certification to that effect by the Urban Renewal Administration.

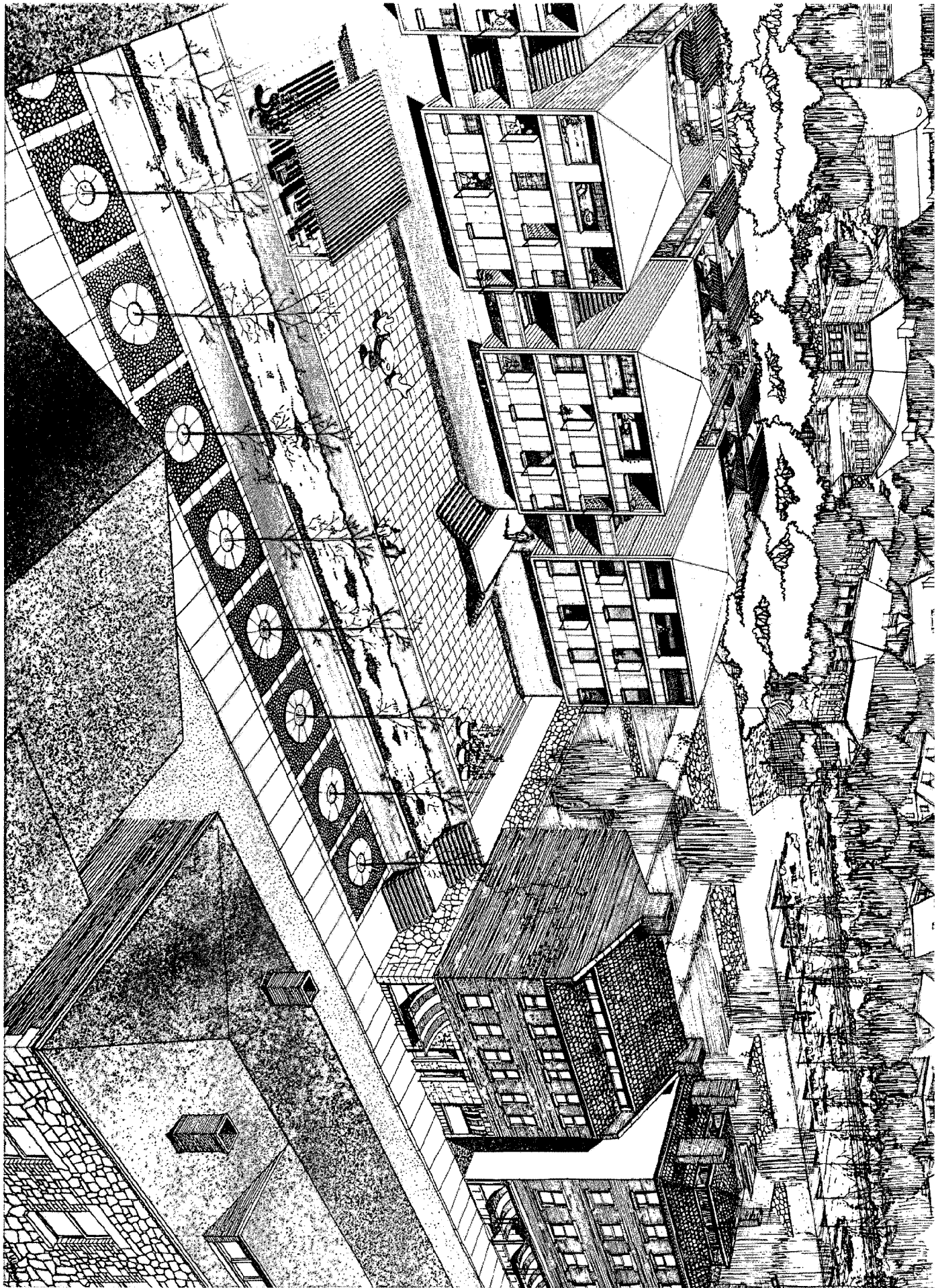
As matters stand now, this certification will make Providence the second city in the United States to have completed three separate redevelopment projects. The city of Philadelphia has completed four projects.

This parking lot, which serves Coro, Inc., jewelers, is a product of the Point Street redevelopment project.

State condemnation for the Freeway sharply cut into the area available for redevelopment, but the area still will return considerably more in taxes than it did previously.

The project area roughly borders on Imperial Place, Hoppin Street, South Street and what formerly was Elm Street.





The College Hill Study has envisioned garden apartments set into the hillside front on a wide terrace along South Main street. Restored old buildings might have apartments and offices over stores at street level.

## **EAST SIDE RENEWAL**

The East Side Renewal Project, the largest undertaken by the Agency so far and one of the most ambitious in the country, was recognized by the federal Housing and Home Finance Agency in mid-December as officially underway.

This recognition came in form of approval by the HHFA of a proposal by the Providence Redevelopment Agency that the project be allowed to proceed under the three-quarter capital grant basis.

### **"Breathtaking in Vision and Scope"**

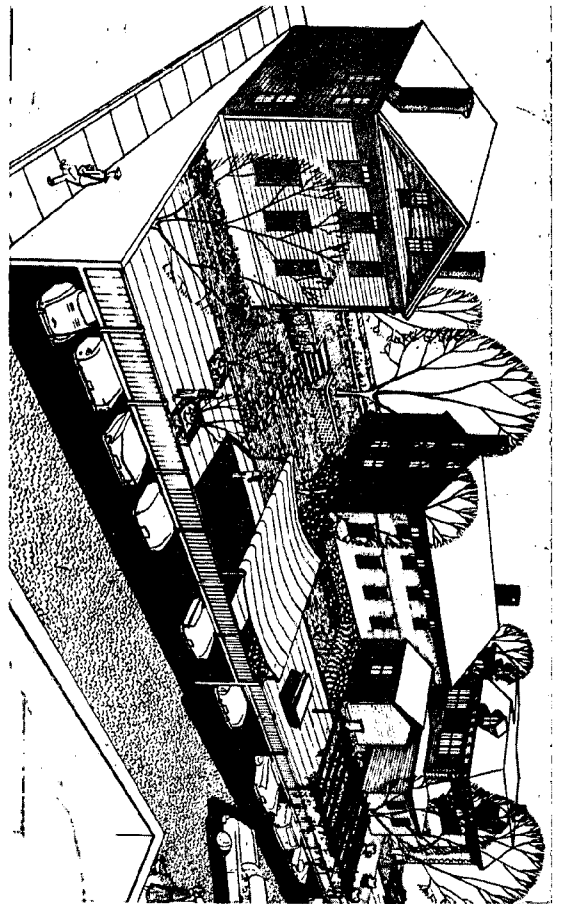
This application was based on the standard financing formula, which provides that the federal government pay two-thirds and the city one-third of net costs for planning and project work. The net cost is the gross cost minus the proceeds from sale or lease of the redeveloped land.

The PRA made the proposal formally on December 6 after a meeting in Providence with officials of the HHFA and the URA in an effort to revitalize the project, which had been foundering for months on federal financing complications. It had suggested the proposal informally some time prior to the meeting.

The PRA had applied January 14 for Survey and Planning funds and the application was rejected October 17 by the HHFA, which attributed the rejection to a shortage of funds.

Under the three-quarters capital grant basis, the city pays all administrative and overhead costs -- including survey and planning costs, while the federal government pays three-quarters of costs for:

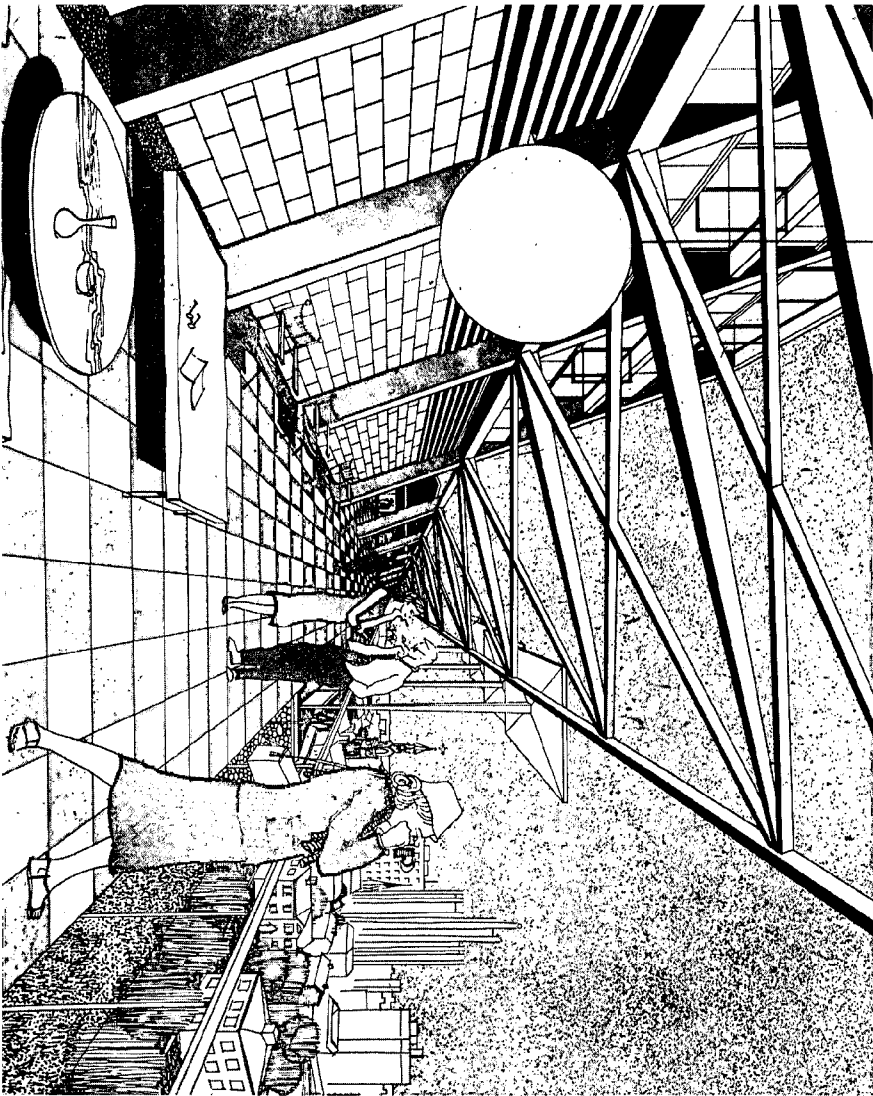
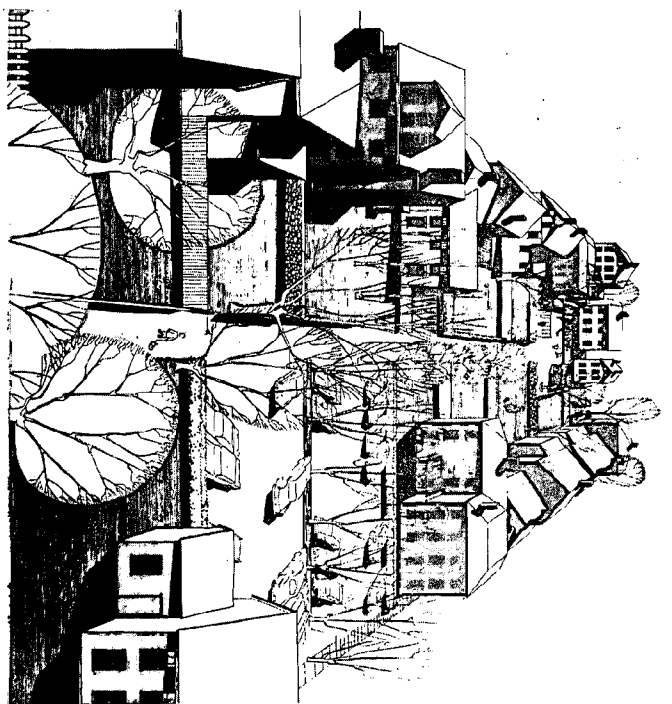
- (1) acquisition of property
- (2) demolition and removal of buildings and improvements
- (3) site preparation in view of disposing of acquired land



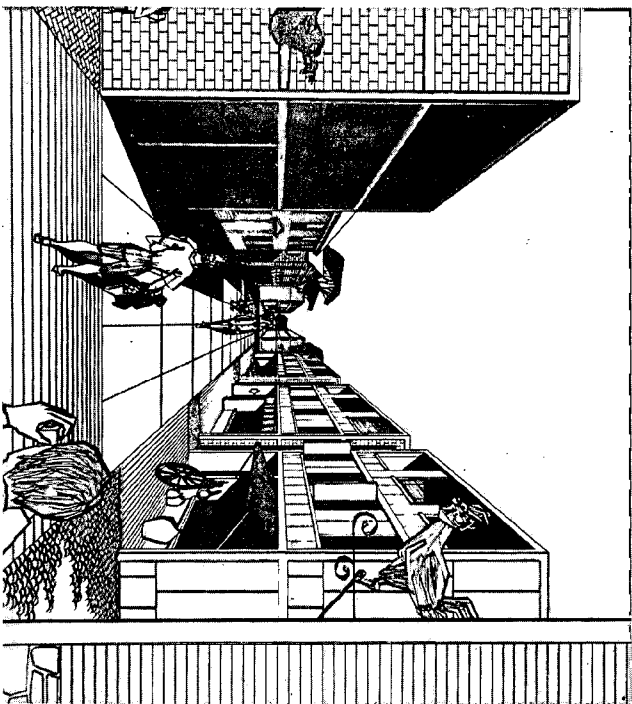
This Slope enables off-street parking under patio decks as shown here (top left) behind homes at Bennett and Bowen streets. This drawing, and others on the page, are from the College Hill Study.

The neighbors in the block (top right) have joined to purchase and raise two decrepit dwellings to solve their need for parking space. They have also connected their rear yards with a pleasant tree-shaded path. Plans like this require effective citizen organization.

Tomorrow in the heart of the past would be the Golden Ball Inn (below left). Built into the hillside, it would offer a sweeping view of the city.



Tourists browse through this center (below) for antique and arts and crafts shops proposed as part of a new river front development between South Main and South Water streets.



## **EAST SIDE RENEWAL**

It has been estimated that the cost of planning the project will come to \$526,000. The gross cost of the project is estimated at twenty million dollars.

The meeting between PRA and federal officials also turned on a strong recommendation by the HHFA to divide the project into three or four separate units and the feeling of the PRA that the project could more feasibly be handled as one, so as to avoid duplication of work and a general slowdown of operations. The meeting resulted in consent by the federal officials to the single unit project.

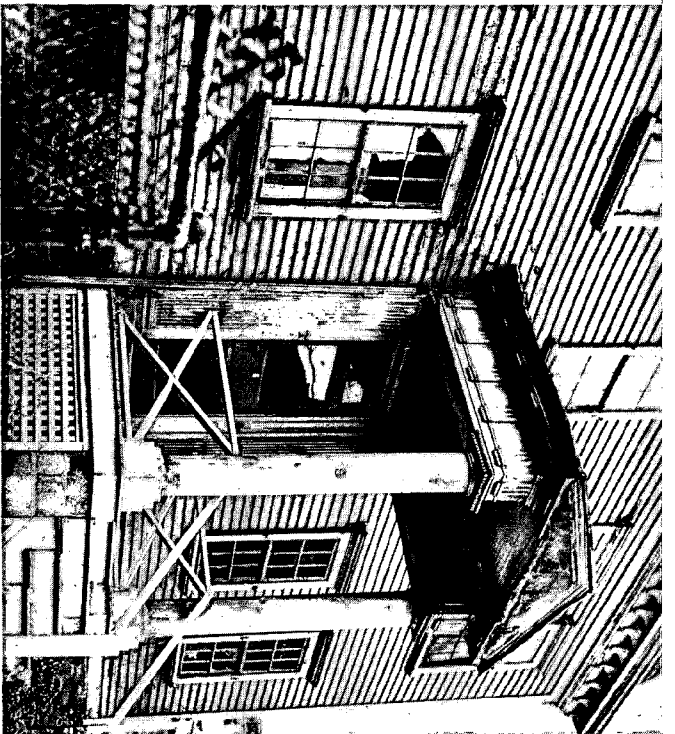
The 400-acre project is several times larger than any the PRA has so far undertaken. It calls for the clearance of 100 acres, with major clearance scheduled for 60 acres near Randall Square.

Development of the Square will provide sites for new industry and for plants displaced by freeway construction.

East Side renewal will involve the removal of some 1500 dwellings, plus conservation and rehabilitation of 2200 other dwelling units and their environment.

Sites for new commercial, private residential and institutional development are expected to result in widely distributed areas within the project area, which extends from Branch Avenue, north of the West River Industrial Park, all the way to India Point at the mouth of the Seekonk River. Its boundaries to the west would be the Providence River and the New Haven Railroad tracks below Chalkstone Avenue. Its eastern limits would be Governor Street and, on the south, the city's harbor area.

Spot clearance will be conducted in the College Hill and Tockwotten areas, where rehabilitation and conservation will be used to maintain their residential character. South Main Street is considered by planners ideal for multi-story luxury apartment houses, while a community shopping center is contemplated



Restoration of this weather-beaten doorway at 9 Church Street offered a challenge.

This challenge was accepted and the newly painted doorway now looks proudly on downtown Providence.

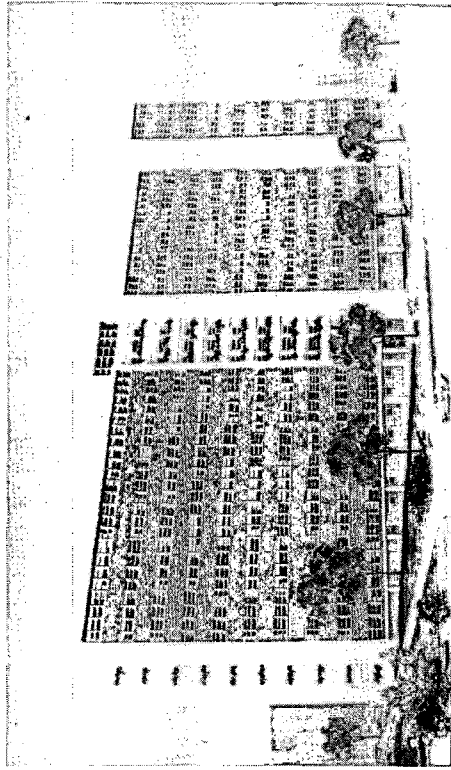


## EAST SIDE RENEWAL

for the north side of George M. Cohan Boulevard, near Wickenden Street. The area south of the boulevard is scheduled for industrial use.

The expected net effect of the East Side project, from the standpoint of investment and taxes, is roughly comparable to the combined impact of West River and Lippitt Hill. The East Side project, moreover, will introduce conservation and rehabilitation as its major activity.

This project is the union of six separate plans conceived during the past ten years. The Providence Evening Bulletin has editorialized about it as "breathing in its vision and scope . . . a program equal in purpose and imagination to such nationally known achievements as the Golden Triangle in Pittsburgh."



Dexter Manor, a project of the Providence Housing Authority, will house the elderly.

## WEYBOSSET HILL

The Agency was assured at its early December meeting with federal officials in Providence that federal planning funds for the Weybosset Hill project would be made available within the succeeding 30 days.

A measure prerequisite to this assurance was taken the night before the meeting, on December 1. That night the city council gave first passage to an ordinance that designated the 300-acre downtown section as a redevelopment area.

Without this designation, to legalize the boundaries of the Weybosset Hill project, the redevelopment agency could not take on the project. The Agency cannot legally operate except in defined redevelopment areas, according to state law.

Final passage of the ordinance, which occurred later in December, gave the federal authorities full freedom to act quickly on the PRA's request that \$326,687 in planning funds be allocated to the project.

The city council had authorized the PRA's application for funds on October 20.

Weybosset Hill is the first area scheduled for redevelopment under the Downtown Master Plan, presented to the public May 3.

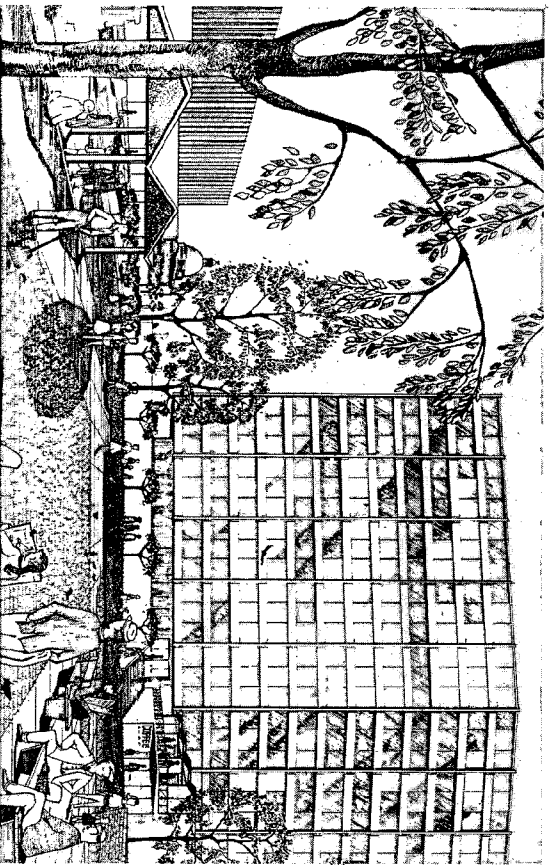
The Weybosset Hill project will provide for the elimination of blight and major renewal on the outskirts of the central business district. The Downtown Master Plan proposes the construction of garden apartments in a new downtown residential neighborhood.

## WEYBOSSET HILL

The project area, which contains many long-established institutions, extends from West Exchange, Sabin and Fountain Streets on the north; Pine, Foster and Broad Streets on the south; Empire and Chestnut Streets on the east; and the Freeway and Franklin Street on the west.

Among the institutions within the area, but not scheduled for acquisition, are the Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul, the public library, the YWCA, and the combined police and fire station headquarters.

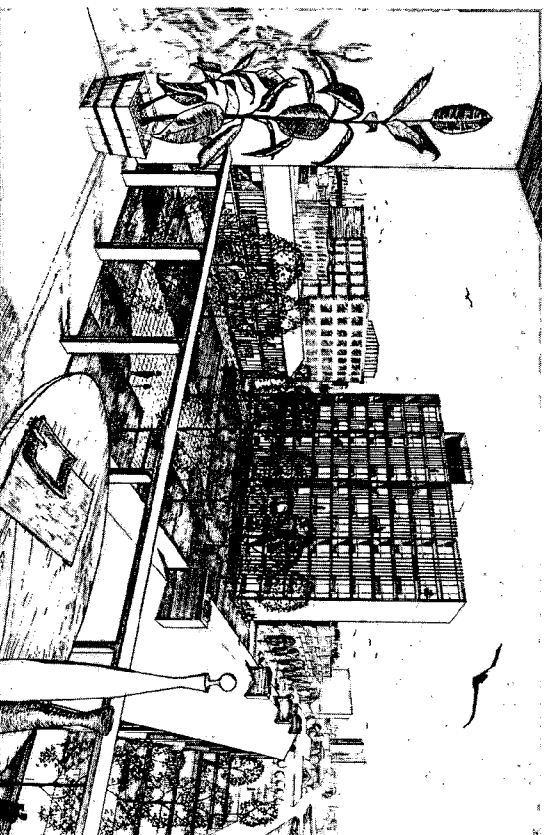
Empire Park, which will afford a downtown escape from the rush of the city is part of the Weybosset Hill Plan.



This area is dotted with rooming houses and it has a high proportion of elderly citizens. Planned to house some of these older citizens is the 200-unit Dexter Manor, which will be located near the Cathedral and will be ready for occupancy by late 1962.

It has been estimated that the project will take three years to complete. It is being financed with federal aid, with the federal government paying two-thirds of the net project costs, amounting to about ten million dollars of a total of about fifteen million dollars. The gross project cost is estimated at eighteen million dollars.

This is a balcony view of the Weybosset Hill of the future, as proposed by the Downtown Master Plan.



## CENTRAL CLASSICAL

The six million dollar Central-Classical project, which would clear a 67-acre blighted area around Central and Classical High Schools and provide expanded facilities for the schools, took a big step forward at the end of 1960.

This step came in mid-December when the New York office of the Urban Renewal Administration announced its approval of the city's loan and grant application for the project. The plans were then forwarded to URA headquarters in Washington, D. C., where final approval remains to be made.

Approval by the URA will result in a subsequent offer of a federal contract providing an allocation of federal funds to cover two-thirds of the net project cost.

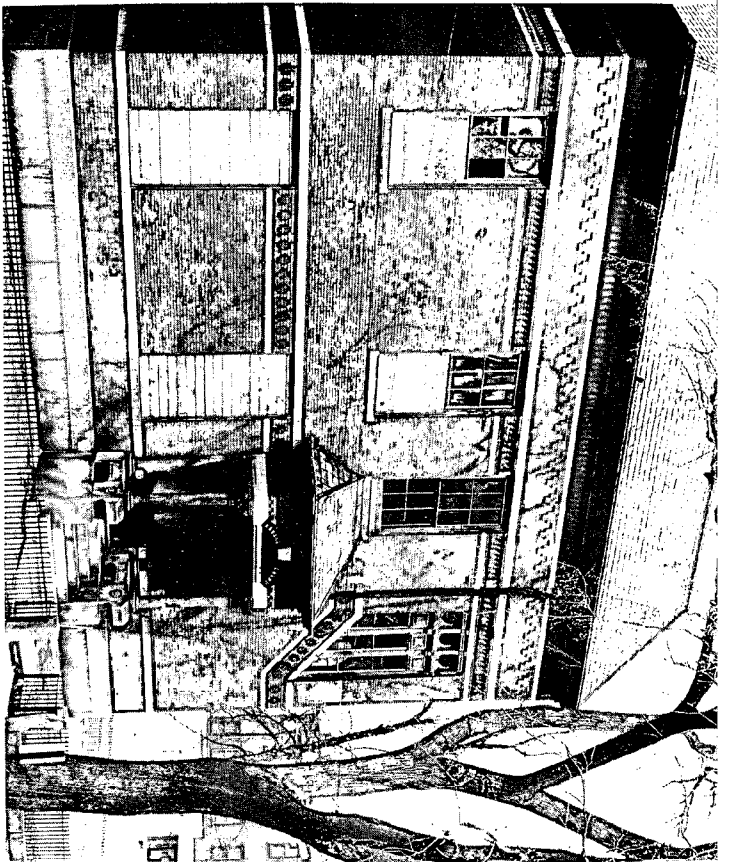
The Central-Classical area will serve many purposes, under its development plan. About a quarter of

the project area, 18.3 acres, are set aside for use by the two high schools, eight of these for a recreation field.

The plan also provides for a sector of new residential construction and, to a lesser extent, commercial construction.

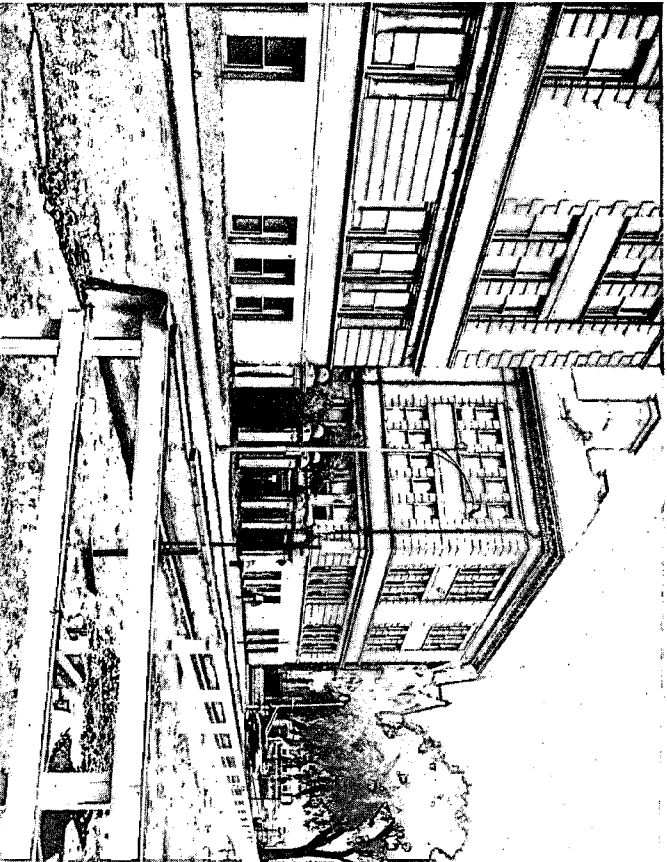
Submission of the loan and grant application to the URA was delayed by the Providence School Committee's deliberation about whether it should request that a new Classical High School be built and about how much of the cleared land it would require for educational reuse.

The PRA asked the School Committee in early February to decide on broad details of the redevelopment plan, which had been turned over to the Committee for review in Fall 1959. The Agency so requested because it was nearing its deadline for submission of the loan and grant application, March 31.



Annex B of Central High School is scheduled to be razed, along with Annex A of Central High and Classical High School.

This is Pond Street, with Classical High School in the foreground. Pond Street will border the proposed campus that will serve the two high schools.



## CENTRAL CLASSICAL

The School Committee reached its decision February 23, voting to acquire 13 acres of the land to be cleared for the Central-Classical project.

Soon afterwards the City Council gave its preliminary approval of the project, adopting a resolution that marked the city's intention to purchase 17.5 acres of redeveloped land for school use, including a new Classical High School Building.

Because these local decisions made it impossible to meet the original March 31 filing deadline, the redevelopment agency obtained a 30-day extension and submitted a preliminary draft of the proposed Central-Classical redevelopment plan April 29, a day ahead of its new deadline.

The city's one-third share of the net project cost, two million dollars, is to be allocated at the beginning of the 1961-62 fiscal year. The net cost is estimated at \$5,866,000.

## **CENTRAL CLASSICAL**

The Central-Classical project will replace 939 dwelling units, of which 664 or 71 per cent are substandard. The proposed clearance will provide 18 acres for new privately financed housing, four acres for commercial development and 23 acres for campus and recreational uses for the two high schools as well as other public uses.

Scheduled for clearance under the plan is a blighted area bounded roughly by Broad, Bridgham and

Westminster streets and the North-South Freeway extension.

It has been decided that total clearance of the project area would be economically unfeasible and eliminated from the project area have been a number of firms along Broad Street.

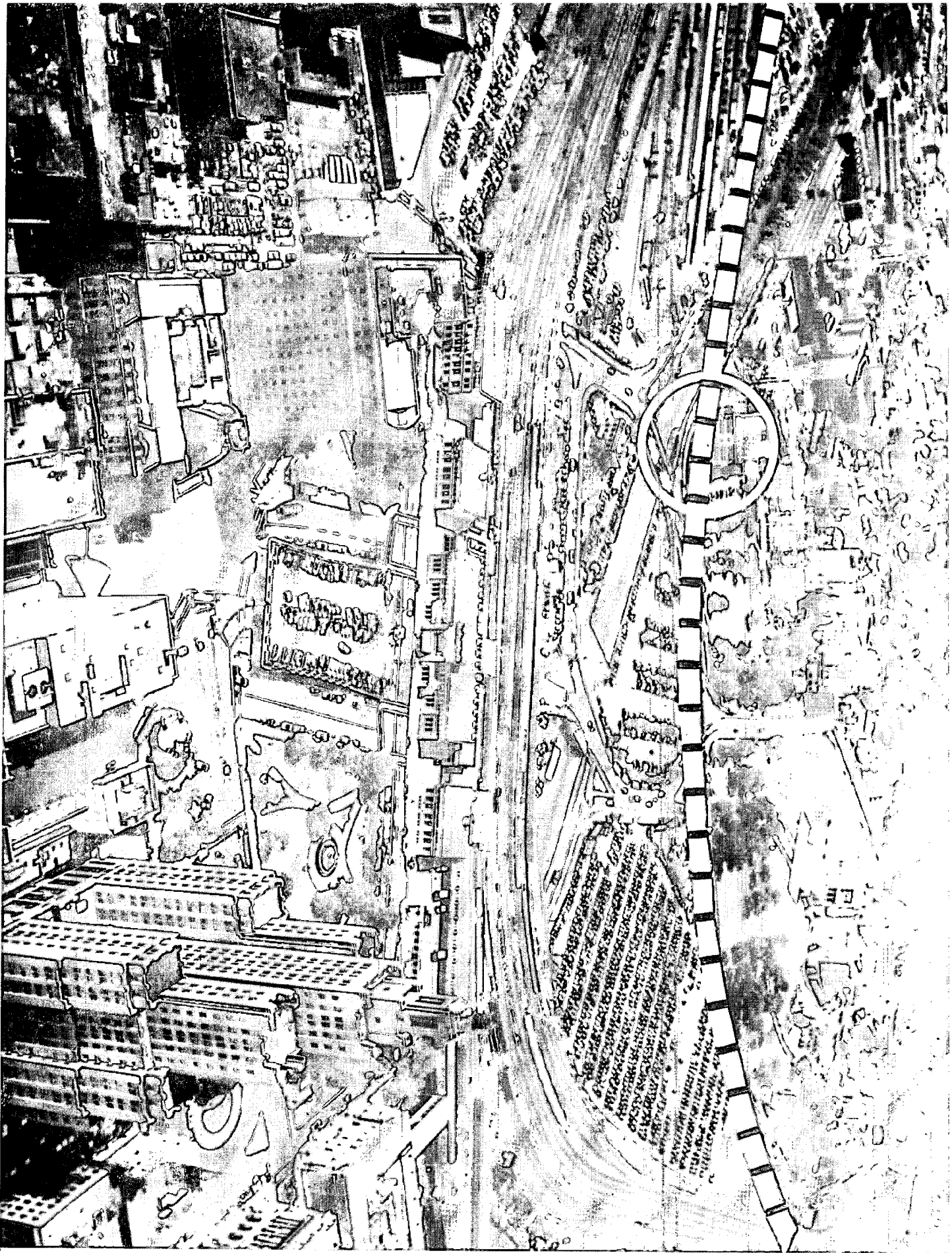
Certain churches in the area would be left untouched as would the Citizens Savings Bank main offices and commercial establishments in a proposed commercial zone along Westminster Street.

## **A new Classical, A Brighter Area**

As the Agency has reported, it will be less than two years before land in the Central-Classical area will be available for reuse.

It has been noted that the acquisition of neighbor-

ing land for just an athletic field for Central High School without redevelopment aid would cost \$2,982,000. This is almost a million dollars more than the city's share for the whole Central-Classical project.



According to the accepted proposals for railroad relocation, the tracks would follow the course indicated by the dotted line and the train station would occupy the site encircled here. It can be seen that relocation would greatly reduce the curve present in the track route now used.

## RAILROAD RELOCATION

The long cherished hopes for the relocation of the New Haven Railroad's station and trackage in downtown Providence appeared substantially closer to fulfillment at the end of 1960, in the glow of the railroad's explicit promise of "full and complete cooperation" in downtown renewal.

The promise, made December 19, was the first written notice of the railroad's readiness to join forces with the proponents of the Downtown Master Plan.

The Plan was developed by the City Plan Commission and several Citizen Task Forces during the period from 1957 to 1960.

The Downtown Master Plan is intimately bound up with the relocation of railroad property. When the New Haven's Union Station is moved to its proposed relocation site at the base of Smith Hill, where the former Henry Barnard School is now situated, the site of the present station will be used for

the construction of a twenty-eight million dollar civic center, in accordance with the Downtown Master Plan.

The purpose of the civic center is to concentrate city, state and federal governmental agencies in one spot. They are now scattered around the city.

The cost of relocating Union Station is estimated at four million dollars. It has been estimated, however, that enough to offset this cost can be raised through the sale of land on which the station now rests and the sale of land occupied by surrounding tracks.

The Providence Journal, on the basis of the railroad's pledge, editorialized that "railroad relocation -- once almost a pipe dream -- draws closer to realization."

Railroad officials repeatedly during 1959 and 1960 offered oral assurance that the railroad will be willing to relocate once the Fox Point Hurricane Barrier is built, on the condition that the move can be accomplished without any expense to the New Haven. The railroad still held this position at the end of 1960.

## RAILROAD RELOCATION

The railroad's concern with the construction of the barrier stems from the fact that hurricane flooding in the downtown area has extended a considerable distance up the Woonasquetucket River Valley behind the present station. And this is the region through which new tracks will be laid in a relocation program.

Clearance was given the Redevelopment Agency to undertake plans for the railroad's relocation as a redevelopment project when the city council designated all of downtown an official redevelopment area in mid-December.

Prior to this, in November, the possibility of using condemnation powers to speed up relocation was under study by city and state governments.

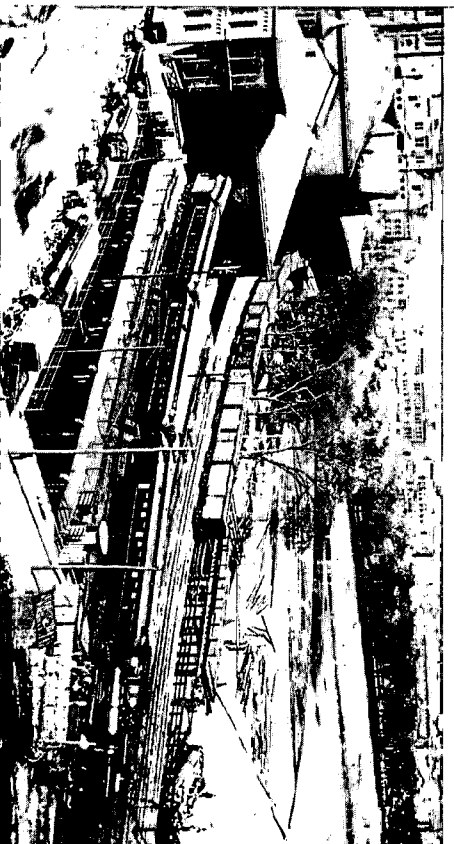
In early November the executive director of the Agency reported that the PRA had begun a study to ascertain if the relocation project could qualify for federal aid separately or by incorporation in the Weybosset Hill project. This study was

Here is the original Union Station, built in 1848 on a platform bridge over the cove that covered much of downtown Providence.

suggested by officials of IMPACT, Inc., an organization of community leaders interested in the execution of the Downtown Master Plan.

The relocation of the railroad station has been an issue for some 80 years. In fact, the current relocation plan itself is similar in some important respects to a relocation plan offered in 1888, just 40 years after the original Union Station was built.

The construction of Union Station at its present site was begun, in the wake of many objections, in 1891. Various other proposals to relocate the station preceded the Downtown Master Plan proposals, which were agreed upon by railroad representatives and city officials in May.



## **WEST RIVER**

The last three of the 511 substandard buildings in the West River project area were demolished by October and site improvements for the area were near completion by the end of the year.

By the end of the construction season 92 per cent of the improvements were completed and it is expected that the rest will be completed by July 1961.

In a revised estimate in mid-1960, development costs of the West River Industrial Park appeared to be 1.4 million dollars less than had been estimated when the project was undertaken in 1956.

Partly due to the fact that the Agency has made a profit of more than \$100,000 by temporarily investing project funds whenever possible, the PRA expects to be able to return unspent \$460,000 of what the city had contributed for the project, once the project is completed.

## **A 60-Acre Cinderella Story**

West River is a cinderella story.

Before the 60-acre site was taken over for clearance in mid-December 1956, it contained 787 dwelling units. Seventy per cent of these, or 550, were substandard.

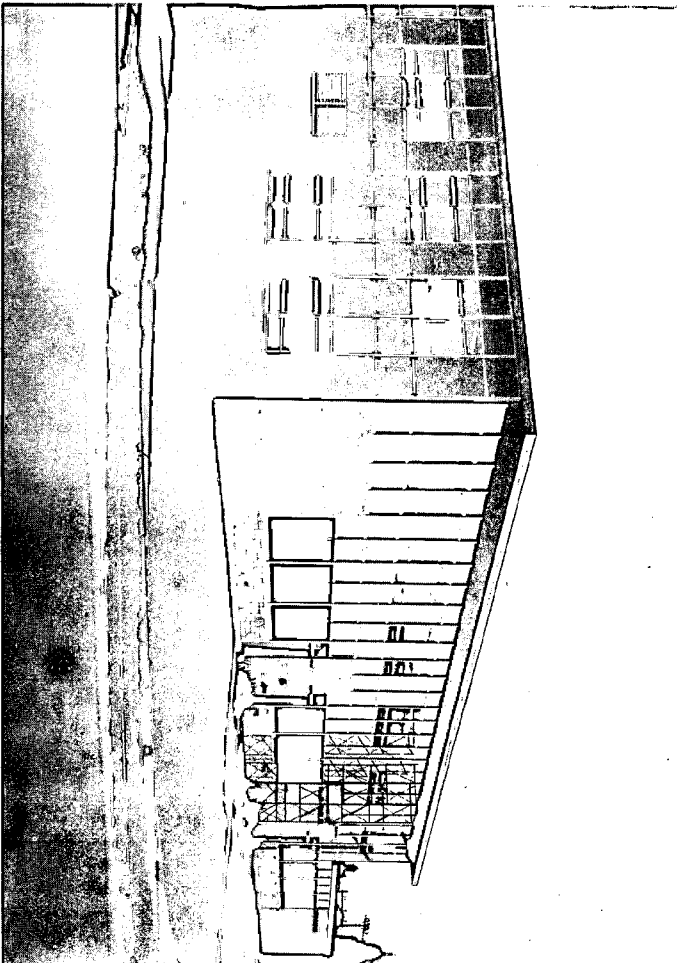
Just a few small industrial operations occupied the area, which was producing only \$29,000 a year in city taxes.

The nation's first automated post office, dedicated in October at the West River Industrial Park, will return an estimated \$125,000 a year in tax income to the city because it is privately owned and leased to the government.

Other new buildings already being used at West River raise the \$125,000 figure to \$205,000, or seven times what was collected annually before redevelopment.



This is a view (above) of West River street before the redevelopment project. This street now is a boundary of the site used by the world's first automated post office, shown in the picture below.



**This is the Franklin Corporation building in West River Park. It houses three firms that employ 100 persons.**



## WEST RIVER

The industrial park is not fully occupied as yet.

When it is, the city expects to obtain from it about

\$280,000 a year in tax revenues, almost ten times the yield before redevelopment.

Moreover, when this park is fully occupied, it is expected to offer employment to 2000 persons.

The net cost of the West River development to the city has been estimated at one million dollars. This figure does not include some \$300,000 spent on road construction outside the area.

The Agency expects the full amount of this local investment will be offset by tax income within six years. The area should represent clear profit for the city from that time on.

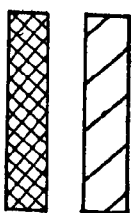
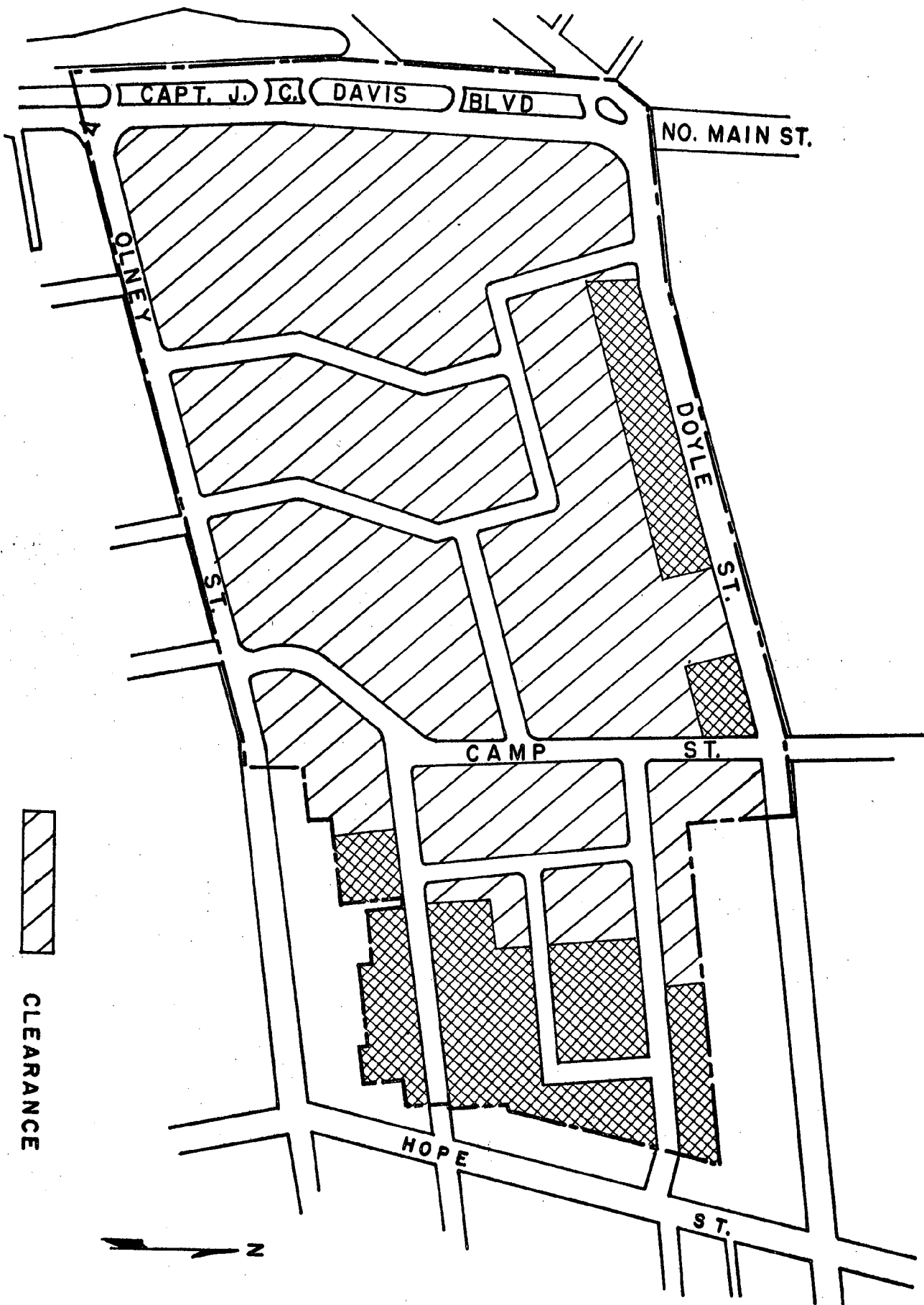
The gross cost of the project has been estimated at 5.7 million dollars. The federal government is to pay two-

thirds of the net cost, estimated to be three and a half million dollars.

By June 6 the PRA was able to report that the sale of eleven parcels of land up to that time had brought about \$740,000.

On September 2 the PRA reported that 70 per cent of the redeveloped land had been sold, including the post office site. At that time it was noted that firms displaced by public projects and other firms needing room for expansion were being kept in Providence. It was noted, too, that they were employing more people at their new locations at West River.

Also significant are reports that the capital investment made by the relocated and expanded Providence industrial firms insures the continued employment prospects of their workers and evidences their faith and confidence in Providence's economic renaissance.



CLEARANCE

REHABILITATION

LIPPITT HILL

## LIPPITT HILL

Actual clearance of the Lippitt Hill project area did not begin until June, but by the end of the year 231, or almost 60 per cent, of the 396 structures in the area had been cleared.

The demolished buildings contained 383 of the area's 662 dwelling units, of which about 70 per cent were substandard. Only 38 structures remained occupied by the end of 1960.

### Rehabilitation used to Turn the Tide

A rehabilitation program in the adjoining neighborhood is designed to halt its further deterioration and prevent the value loss and tax loss that would have been inescapable without public action. Further, it is designed to promote a substantial improvement of the area.

By mid-February property settlements had been reached for 156 out of the 226 parcels condemned in

The Lippitt Hill project proposes to replace the cleared structures with a 28-acre site for new apartment housing, two shopping centers, an enlarged neighborhood playground and a church site. It also provides for substantial improvement to 186 nearby dwelling units.

An investment of six million dollars in private funds in this cleared area would return three and one-half times as much as in tax income as had been paid on the properties that were acquired and cleared.

November 1959. By the middle of November 1960 settlements had been made on 214 parcels, with substantial agreement reached on the others.

By the end of January about one-third of the families displaced by the project had already been relocated, most of them between Lippitt Hill and Cypress street.

By mid-April half the Lippitt Hill families were

## LIPPITT HILL

relocated, and the PRA was able to report that clearance could begin shortly. During March, 32 families were relocated, all of them white, and as of the middle of April, 164 non-white and 11 white families still resided on Lippitt Hill.

During June, 33 more residents left Lippitt Hill, leaving only 115 on the site. Of these, 13 remained in the area east of Camp Street, where demolition had already begun.

By early August, 41 of the original 60 businesses in the area had relocated and only 19 remained in the proposed commercial strip along North Main Street where demolition was scheduled to start in January 1961.

The demolition plans for the project called for starting near Camp Street, with a gradual move toward North Main Street. Residents of the Camp Street area, accordingly, were notified that they should attempt to

complete their relocation by July 1.

By early June demolition work had begun, confined to an area east of Camp Street and along both sides of Mallett Street.

By the middle of June, 248 structures were vacant, although only about 90 of these had been scheduled for early demolition.

By mid-September 30 per cent of the dwellings on Lippitt Hill that were to be razed had been demolished. A month later the figure was above 37 per cent, and by the end of October the figure was better than 43 per cent.

An important experiment was begun in connection with the Lippitt Hill project when, on May 5, the PRA contracted with the Urban League of Rhode Island for professional and technical assistance in the rehabilitation phase of the project.

## LIPPITT HILL

The contract provides that the Urban League will aid the Agency in establishing and bringing to neighborhood standards property in the rehabilitation areas adjoining the clearance area. It provides that the Urban League, without relinquishing any of its loyalties to the community, encourage neighborhood people to voluntarily set up standards for property being improved.

If successful, this experiment should offer many techniques to be applied to major rehabilitation efforts in the proposed East Side project.

Owners and occupants of some 186 units in 83 structures that were listed in the redevelopment plan for upgrading rather than demolition are thus being aided by the Urban League in bringing the properties to levels above those of the city's minimum housing standards code.

Lippitt Hill demolition was scheduled to follow a pattern that would create fire breaks between buildings to be razed and those to be retained and rehabilitated. Other fire breaks were effected by clearing structures from a path across the middle of the total clearance area.

Providence firemen were troubled by a rash of set fires in the redevelopment area after its condemnation. One night in July, firemen were called upon to extinguish fires in three separate buildings on Lippitt Hill. This, and other such incidents, caused considerable drain on the manpower of the fire department.

As another precaution, to guard against vandalism at the project site, the Agency contracted with the Providence police for the service of six off-duty men to supplement regular police protection in the area.



## LIPPIE HILL

Residents of the Mount Hope area bordering the project area were told May 24 by the Executive Director of the Agency and by the Relocation Administrator of the City of Providence that the project should improve property values and generally enhance the neighborhood.

It was pointed out to the residents that the investment of some eight million dollars in private and public funds in developing the cleared area is bound to boost property values in the adjoining areas.

On August 9 the Agency applied for an initial progress payment by the federal government of \$1, 067, 803 of the 3. 1 million dollar federal capital grant. Up to that time a total of \$2, 309, 000 had been spent on the project, or 44 per cent of the estimated gross cost of \$5, 205, 282. The estimated net cost is \$4, 642, 000. The initial progress payment was received by the Agency September 6.

# MASHAPAUG POND

A project described as a "milestone" in Providence's redevelopment program got underway May 5 when the city council approved the undertaking of planning for the creation of a 117-acre Mashapaug Pond industrial park through redevelopment processes.

The project, designed to establish new sites for

## A "Milestone" of Self-sufficiency

The Mashapaug site was recognized as far back as 1957 as being arrested in its growth, due to faulty street layout, inadequate utilities, a high ratio of unpaved streets, and many other deficiencies.

A report by the City Plan Commission has lined up a number of reasons why this area was chosen. The commission reported that 37.5 per cent of the dwellings in the project area, most of them 40 to 60 years old, were

heavy industry, was so described because it is to be financed exclusively with city funds. It is the first urban renewal effort in Providence attempted without financial aid from the federal government.

Without federal aid, and the accompanying red tape, it is predicted that the project's completion will be hastened by two or three years.

substandard and that 46 per cent of them lacked central heating. Overall, it was reported, 60 per cent had serious defects.

Low tax revenues and a high rate of tax delinquencies in the area were other contributing elements in the decision to redevelop this formerly residential area for industrial reuse.

Other reasons include the construction of the Hunt-



The Mashapaug Pond Industrial Park will include most of the land on the far side of the pond. The Huntington Expressway (top of picture) and Reservoir Avenue (bottom) offer accessible transportation routes to occupants of the new part.

## MASHAPAUG POND

ington Expressway adjacent to the area, the presence of an industrial strip bordering the Mashapaug project although located in Cranston, and the existence of main line tracks of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad passing through the project area.

The net cost of the project has been estimated by the redevelopment agency at \$5,518,500. The gross cost is estimated at \$6,618,500.

The eleven million dollar redevelopment bond issue approved by Providence voters in November provided six and a half million dollars toward payment of this project.

The Agency has predicted that the cost of the project can be recovered within 20 years by an almost tenfold increase in tax revenues from the area, which had been producing less than \$38,000 a year in taxes.

It is estimated that the industrial park will return \$350,000 a year in real estate taxes.

Another bright aspect of the Mashapaug project is its development cost. It is estimated that the cost of development for Mashapaug will be \$1.30 a square foot, considerably less than the cost for West River, for instance.

Soon after the council's May 5 approval of the project, the Redevelopment Agency announced that it expected to be able to present a redevelopment plan for the Mashapaug site for council adoption within nine months. The Agency at that time estimated that clearance might start by the end of 1961.

The day it approved the project, May 5, the council also voted to make available \$135,000 for a study of the workability of the plan, which proposed to reclaim some 12 acres of the pond area by filling it in along the western shore.

Two expenses the \$135,000 covered were the estimated \$70,000 cost of a consultant's survey report

## MASHAPAUG POND

on the marketability of the redeveloped land and the cost of appraisals to fix the acquisition price of the 804 separate parcels of real estate, under 415 different ownerships.

The title work at Mashapaug was unusually complicated by a high rate of tax delinquencies and of property with clouded title.

A preliminary engineering report indicated in late May that the project land is capable of supporting modern industrial construction without need of costly piles or other adaption.

Three months after its approval of the project, on August 4, the city council members were given copies of the official Mashapaug Pond redevelopment plan for study.

The city council on November 17 gave first passage to an ordinance calling for clearance of the Mashapaug Pond tract to create the Huntington Expressway Industrial Park.

This ordinance was given final passage December 1, thus opening the way for condemnation of the area by early January, 1961.

The redevelopment plan calls for the demolition of some 567 structures that have housed 506 families and about 1,550 persons.

On December 4 the Agency set a January 4 condemnation date for the project area. The city was to take title to the entire area on that date, except for six parcels of state-owned land.

The city council gave its consent December 15 to the condemnation of 44 city owned lots in the project area.

The state owned parcels cannot be taken over until permission is obtained from the legislature.

A bill of complaint to block the Redevelopment Agency from condemning project property was filed in Superior Court December 29. The complaint was filed by five property owners in the area.

## **MASHAPANG POND**

On August 4 the Agency submitted proposed legislation to the city council that would authorize the city to pay relocation costs to families and businesses displaced by the project. The city council voted to bring the matter to the attention of the General Assembly at the opening of the Assembly session in January.

The Agency gave early assurance to Mashapang residents that at least two months before condemnation a field office of the Family and Business Relocation Service would be set up in the area.

Accordingly the Mashapang Pond field office opened November 11 and social workers from the relocation service began a house to house survey to determine the rehousing needs of all families and individuals to be displaced.

The number of persons displaced by the Mashapang

project, about 1,550, is slightly less than the number involved in the Lippitt Hill project and substantially more than in the West River project. Negro residents make up 150 of the 506 families to be displaced.

Clearance of the area has been planned to begin at its extreme southern point, at Swanton Street.

## **Informational meetings**

In cooperation with the Catholic Interracial Council, the Urban League of Rhode Island and the John Hope Settlement House, the Agency scheduled a series of nine meetings to acquaint area property owners and tenants with details of the project. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss the problems of these residents, to alleviate their fears and to dispel baseless rumors. The meetings were scheduled in August and the first was held September 7. All nine meetings were held prior to the public hearing for the project on September 19. About 190 representatives of the 506 families attended the meetings.

## CIVIC COOPERATION

The Providence Redevelopment Agency has sincerely appreciated the generous support and constructive criticism offered it by individuals and organizations, in our city and state and across the land.

The national urban renewal movement, which has brought together neighborhoods throughout the nation, has linked the Agency to private, governmental and academic institutions from Maine to Texas. They have shared their experience in renewal with us, and we have shared ours.

### **A city's vitality is in its people**

The progress of Providence's renewal depends on whether its people, separately and together, express their hopes and interests and join in action.

Public apathy would produce only a mediocre city development, in which the citizen of today and tomorrow would feel no sense of belonging or control, and therefore no bond of ownership.

## RELOCATION

The Family and Business Relocation Service is an arm of the Department of Public Works. Though it is not formally connected to the Redevelopment Agency, it is tied to the Agency through the nature of its work.

The Lippitt Hill project was the only urban renewal activity the Relocation Service had during 1960, which saw the Service involved in seven non-urban renewal projects.

An indication of the Relocation Service's progress at Lippitt Hill during the past year is this: 360 of the 381 families and individual householders who lived in the project on January 1, 1960, were relocated by December 31, 1960.

Of the total of 381, there were 293 families and 88 individual householders. There were no individuals remaining on the site December 31, and just 21 families.

Some 1491 contacts with Lippitt Hill residents were made by Relocation Service workers during 1960, by the estimate

## RELOCATION

of David Joyce, Relocation Service administrator.

Another measure of progress is the fact that 32 of the 44 commercial establishments that were in the project January 1, 1960, were relocated by the end of the year. Some 204 contacts with business establishments were made during 1960.

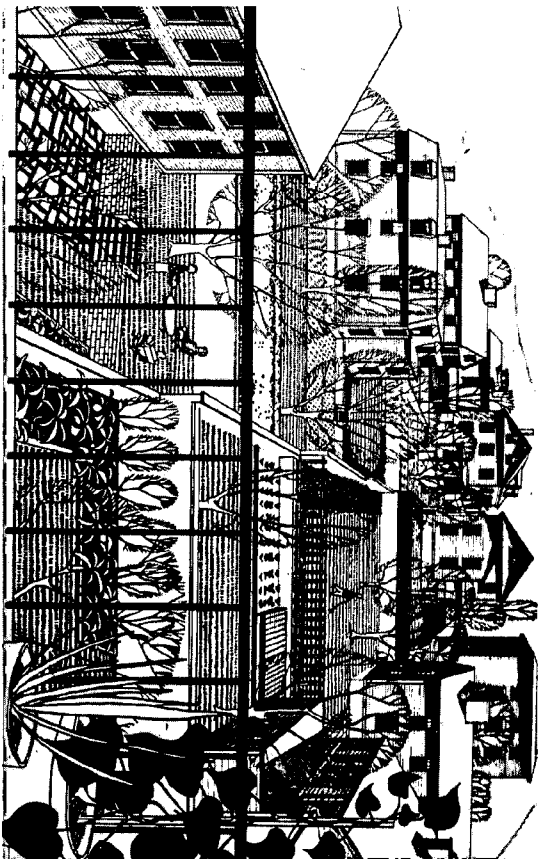
David Joyce, Providence Family and Business Relocation Service Director, (at left) conducts an interview with social case workers Mrs. Dolores McCarthy and Mrs. Henri Lopes.



In doing its job of finding homes for persons who are displaced the Relocation Service has worked with many private and public welfare organizations, church groups, civic clubs and news media. The Service feels the success it has had is attributable to the cooperation it has received from these and other citizens within the community.

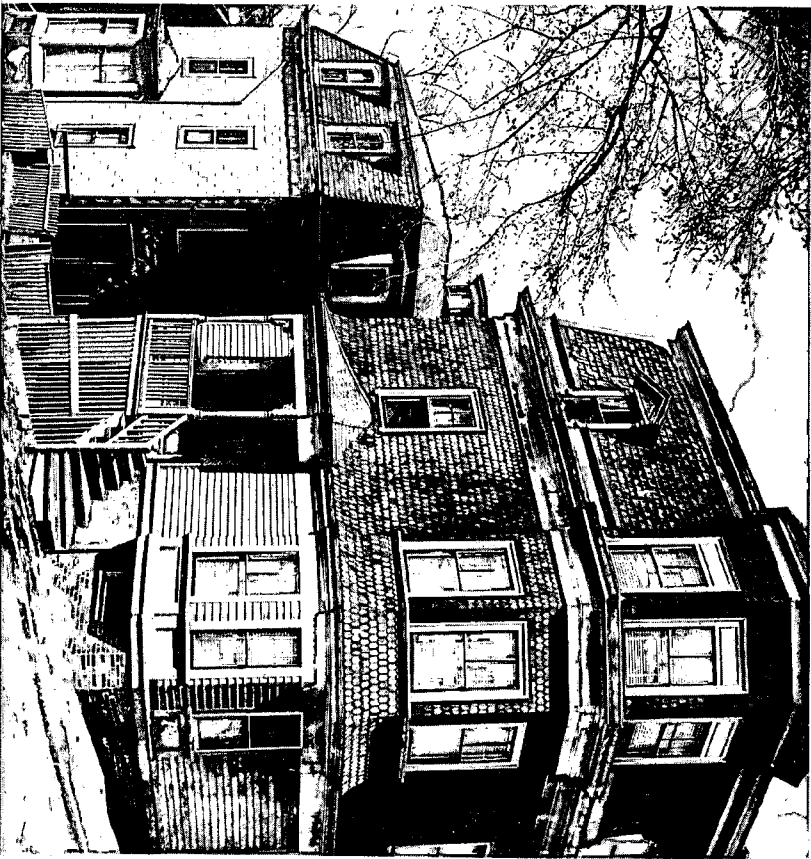
In his office Mr. Joyce meets with families displaced by the West River Project.





Backyard landscaping by owners is seen by planners as a way to complement restored buildings in the East Side renewal area.

Middle-aged neighborhoods can be rehabilitated by selective clearance, public improvements and attraction of private investment.



## RENEWAL SERVICES

Home improvement activities in the rehabilitation sections of the Lippitt Hill project area again made up most of the workload of the Renewal Services Division, although much effort was also devoted to other Agency business.

Property owners and tenants have been responding to the Agency's reassurances and encouragement concerning the future of their neighborhood by improving their homes.

Some have responded better to date than others. But the total level of compliance with housing code standards -- in terms of correction of violations -- rose during the year from 63 to 80 per cent, compared with a 49 to 63 per cent rise in the compliance level in an adjoining "control area."

This control area had similar housing quality, location and occupancy, but was outside the designated rehab-

## RENEWAL SERVICES

itation project area and was, therefore, not subjected to the same promotional activities.

Although a comparison has not been measured, it is felt that the amount of additional improvement work done, beyond code levels, within the active rehabilitation area was likewise substantially greater than in the control area.

One sample structure previously inspected in detail by the Federal Housing Administration was transformed from a long-abandoned eyesore into a well-kept residence by a total investment of \$6,000. Since rehabilitating it, the new owner has refused an uninvited offer of \$7,500 because he considers this property a long-term investment worth much more. Furthermore, a high degree of owner-tenant cooperation has been very profitable for both, in this instance.

Other opportunities for substantial rehabilitation at a profit lie open to present owners or prospective purchasers in this area and in many other sections of Providence where

neighborhood conservation programs should be undertaken.

While approval of the Agency's budget for rehabilitation project activities was given by the Housing and Home Finance Agency in mid-November, the contract with the Urban League of Rhode Island for community organization advisory services had been signed in May. The contract was designed to support the promotion of housing improvement work in the project. By the close of the year the League had held a series of meetings with owners and tenants and had interviewed most of the owners to ascertain their willingness and financial capacity to increase their property investment in this program.

Other Agency activities in the Lippitt Hill rehabilitation program during the year include: personal correspondence on individual cases; reminders about uncorrected code violation; publication of a Home Improvement Check-list in cooperation with the Better Business Bureau for distribution to Lippitt Hill families directly and to all owners of properties

## RENEWAL SERVICES

having code violations throughout the City, a series of informational memoranda on home improvement financing and neighborhood improvements being done and planned by public agencies; inspections of yard areas and refuse handling problems; and preliminary arrangements for technical advisory services to be offered to individual families on property improvements, environmental planning and financing methods.

Renewal Services on many other Agency matters were performed by this Division throughout the year. Continued cooperation was extended to several neighborhood improvement groups, including newly organized ones. The second Progress Report on the city's Workable Program for Urban Renewal was assembled and edited for the Urban Renewal Coordinator and the Mayor of Providence. A rehabilitation kit was reviewed in detail for the Rehabilitation and Conservation Branch of the Housing and Home Finance Agency.

The proposed Central-Classical Project Area was inspected in an unsuccessful attempt to find any substantial

section where rehabilitation would be a feasible alternative to complete clearance and redevelopment. Participation was given in a special staff study of Central-Classical project proposals and in other project plan review conferences.

Speeches were made at the request of the Rhode Island State Council of Churches, the Oxford-Thurbers P.T.A., the South Providence Neighborhood Improvement Association, the Mount Hope Improvement Association, the Washington Park Methodist Church and the University of Rhode Island's Workshop on Human Relations.

A study was made of the comparative costs of various financing methods available for home improvements and other domestic borrowing purposes. Information on the Providence urban renewal program was supplied for a special study of urban renewal in American cities being made by a consultant for the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. And a review history of the Agency's accomplishments, 1947-1960, was compiled for the press in connection with the bond issue referendum in November.

## SPECIAL SERVICES

Whenever the Agency needs to engage the services of

specialists having qualifications, experience and equipment not possessed by the regular staff, or whenever an unusual workload requires additional personnel to meet a deadline date, these services are purchased and controlled under contract in the interest of efficiency. Payments on these contracts during 1960 amounted to \$215,593.38, as compared with internal payments totalling \$164,187.89 for staff salaries and office overhead, indicating that about 54.1 per cent of the Agency's workload is contracted for with private industry. Another 4.7 per cent is provided by governmental assistance in the form of relocation services. This work was divided among the following classifications:

Demolition, two contractors	\$ 56,365.10	
Appraisals, Real Estate, nine contractors	53,130.00	
Engineering, three contractors	32,543.00	
Negotiation, four contractors	27,860.72	
Site Improvement, one contractor	22,924.27	
Title Insurance, two contractors	9,792.61	
Planning, one contractor	3,477.36	
Community Organization Advi- sory, one contractor	2,504.11	
Engineering Appraisal, two contractors	2,360.15	
Dust Control, one contractor	1,620.00	
Bond Counseling, one contractor	1,116.06	
Housing Moving Study, one contractor	1,000.00	
Rodent Control, one contractor	900.00	
Total, 29 private contractors	\$215,593.38	54.1%
Relocation Services by City of Providence	18,515.14	4.7%
Redevelopment Agency Salaries and Overhead	164,187.89	41.2%
Total workload	\$398,296.41	100.0%

# INDUSTRIAL

## DEVELOPMENT

The most significant development in the city's program for industrial revitalization occurred in 1960 when Providence undertook its Mashapaug Pond redevelopment project.

Sanctioned by the Mayor and the City Council and approved by the citizens through referendum, the project will produce the largest and most modern industrial area in Providence.

The project is geared to satisfy the needs of Rhode Island as well as out-of-state industrialists who seek sites of five acres or more.

Development of the Mashapaug Pond area has special importance because it prepares modern suitable sites for industries that wish to expand.

The project gives Providence an in-city frontier; it gives the city an opportunity to compete with suburban and outlying sectors, which

have become increasingly attractive to business and industry because these sectors have abundant land to offer.

The Mashapaug development will assist the city in maintaining, and improving, its position as the industrial capital of Rhode Island. It is recognized that only by energetic application, can any city keep pace with the rapid growth and concomitant needs of industry.

## WEST RIVER

The industrial promotion program in Providence's downtown West River Industrial Park moved into high gear during 1960. Approximately 85 per cent of all land sites in the park were sold, with building improvements on them either completed or nearing completion.

By the end of the year just three sites, covering about 13 acres remained to be sold and the Agency's Industrial Division was engaged in negotiations for the sale of these three.

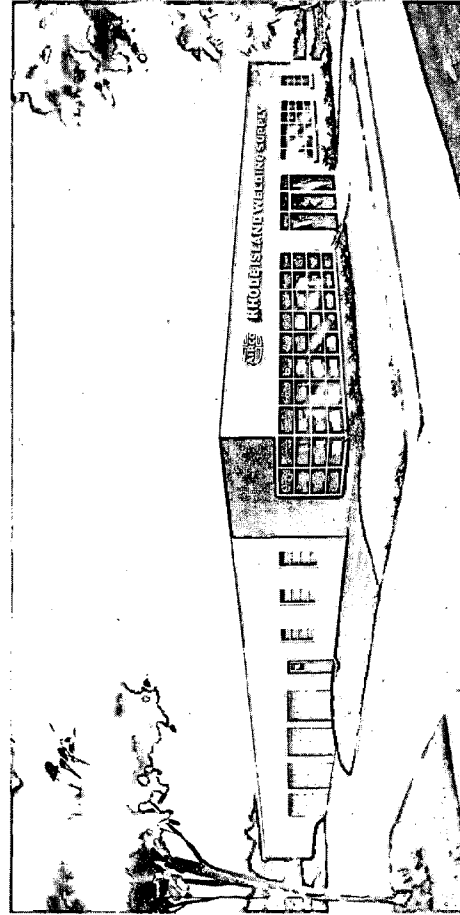
## INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The year got off to a good start with the announcement in January that Cornell-Dubilier Electric Company, a subsidiary of the Federal Pacific Electric Corporation, had taken option on a seven-acre site.

On August 12 the company broke ground for a 88,500 square-foot plant which has an employment potential estimated at 1,200.

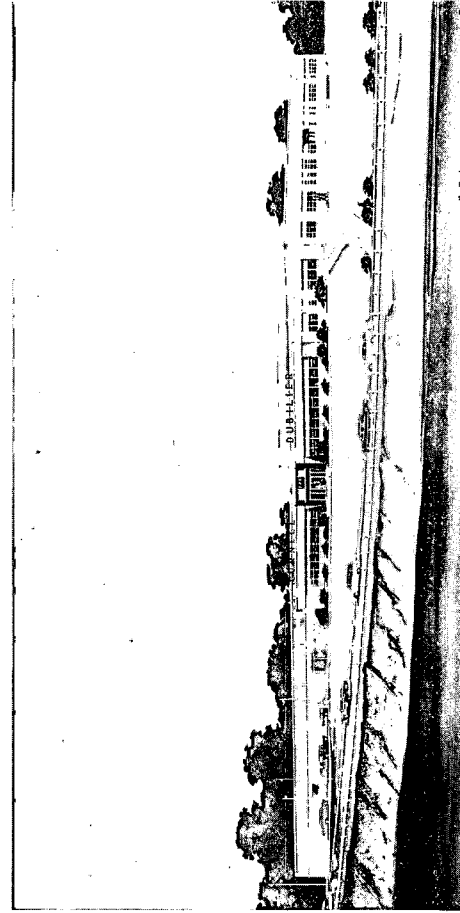
Another national company, the Westinghouse Electric Company, filed its intentions during 1960 for the construction of a new modern warehouse and distribution facility at the corner of Charles and Corliss Streets, opposite the automated post office.

In November the Rhode Island Welding Supply Company, an affiliate of AIRCO of New York, broke ground for a 10,000 square-foot building on a site of 34,000 square feet.



In other park activity during 1960, Clifford Metal Sales Company began operations in its new 38,000 square foot plant. Also starting operations was Rivocor, Inc., a subsidiary of Coro, Inc., the world's largest jewelry manufacturer. Rivocor operates a 17,000 square foot aluminum anodizing plant on a two-acre site.

Three other companies completed projects and opened their new facilities in West River during the past year. They are: (1) Franklin Corporation, which houses three firms and employees 100 people. The three firms are Buckley and Scott, Inc., manufacturers of storm windows; Smith-Holden, Inc., manufacturers of dental equipment; and Maynard & Company, distributor of heating equipment. (2) Mack Trucks, Inc., which operates its service, maintenance and sales headquarters in a \$200,000 plant. (3) Otis Elevator Company, which chose West River as the site for its new sales, service and maintenance division.



# FINANCING . . . . .

## CITY OF PROVIDENCE - PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

### FINANCIAL STATEMENT

FISCAL YEAR 1959 - 1960

	APPROPRIATION	EXPENDITURES	SURPLUS RETURNED TO GENERAL FUND
Salaries	\$40,910.68	\$34,901.02	\$ 6,009.66
Contract Services	11,140.00	7,209.43	3,930.57
Materials and Supplies	700.00	414.22	285.78
Furniture and Equipment	1,388.09	1,387.45	.64
	<u>\$54,138.77</u>	<u>\$43,912.12</u>	<u>\$10,226.65</u>

Providence Redevelopment Agency  
Point Street Project No. UR R. I. 1-1  
Balance Sheet  
September 30, 1960

ASSETS

Current Assets		
Cash in Bank		\$ 12,376.80
Accounts Receivable		
Federal Relocation Grants	\$ 9,332.19	
Accounts Receivable Due from		
Federal Government (Inspection Fee)	1,259.00	
Total Accounts Receivable		\$ 10,591.19
Total Current Assets		\$ 22,967.99
Project Costs		
Total Project Costs to Date		552,893.94
Less: Sales Price of Land Sold	390,406.93	
Other Income - Schedule A	7,991.84	
Net Project Costs to Date		398,398.77
Relocation Payments		
Donated Land		154,495.17
Cost Exception		9,332.19
Total Assets and Project Costs		2,600.00
		1,181.23
		<u>\$190,576.58</u>

LIABILITIES  
AND CAPITAL

Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable - City of Providence		\$ 1,443.39
Capital		
Local Grants-in-Aid		
Cash Grant-in-Aid		
Non-Cash Grant-in-Aid	\$ 75,000.00	
Federal Capital Grants	2,600.00	
Project Capital Grants		\$ 77,600.00
Relocation Grants	92,869.00	
Total Capital	18,664.19	
Total Liabilities and Capital		111,533.19
		189,133.19
		<u>\$190,576.58</u>

Providence Redevelopment Agency  
Lippitt Hill Project No. R. I. R-3  
Balance Sheet  
September 30, 1960

<u>ASSETS</u>			
Current Assets			
Cash in Bank		\$ 20,404.79	
Accounts Receivable			
Revolving Fund	\$ 1,194.00		
Federal Relocation Grants	15,690.72		
Rent Due from Tenants	12,117.92		
Superior Court of R. I.	825,170.00		
Total Current Assets		854,172.64	\$ 874,577.43
Investments Held - Schedule A			
Project Costs			
Total Project Costs to Date	2,566,327.26		1,315,780.38
Less Other Income - Schedule B	11,661.75		
Net Project Costs to Date			2,554,665.51
Relocation Payments			79,258.72
Total Assets and Project Costs			<u>\$4,824,282.04</u>
<u>LIABILITIES</u>			
Current Liabilities			
Loans Payable - Schedule C	\$2,213,000.00		
Accrued Interest on Loans	67,905.92		
Total Current Liabilities			\$2,280,905.92
Capital			
Local Cash Grants-in-Aid		1,396,314.40	
Federal Capital Grants			
Project Capital Grant	\$1,067,803.00		
Relocation Grant	79,258.72		
Total Capital		1,147,061.72	2,543,376.12
Total Liabilities and Capital			<u>\$4,824,282.04</u>

Providence Redevelopment Agency  
Mashapaug Pond Project  
Balance Sheet  
September 30, 1960

<u>ASSETS</u>	
Current Assets	
Cash in Bank	\$ 3,925.41
Prepaid Expenses	
Prepaid Interest	1,384.98
Survey and Planning Costs	52,829.61
Total Assets	<u>\$58,140.00</u>
<u>LIABILITIES</u>	
Vouchers Payable	
Advance from City of Providence	<u>\$58,140.00</u>

Providence Redevelopment Agency  
Central-Classical Project No. R. I. R-2  
Balance Sheet  
September 30, 1960

<u>ASSETS</u>	
Current Assets	
Cash in Bank	\$28,169.79
Accounts Receivable - Revolving Fund	21.00
Total Current Assets	<u>\$28,190.79</u>
Survey and Planning Costs	67,454.26
Total Assets and Planning Costs	<u>\$95,645.05</u>
<u>LIABILITIES</u>	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable - City of Providence	\$ 3,046.28
Preliminary Advance Payable	90,254.00
Accrued Interest on Preliminary Advance	2,344.77
Total Liabilities and Capital	<u>\$95,645.05</u>

Providence Redevelopment Agency  
West River Project No. UR R. I. 1-6  
Balance Sheet  
September 30, 1960

ASSETS

Current Assets			
Cash in Bank		\$ 16,617.09	
Accounts Receivable			
Revolving Fund	\$ 1,626.00		
Federal Relocation Grants	.58		
Accounts Receivable - Tenants	858.55		
Superior Court of R. I.	38,553.46		
Total Current Assets	41,038.59		
Investments Held - Schedule A			\$ 57,655.68
Project Costs			269,204.00
Total Project Costs to Date		5,283,324.84	
Less: Other Income - Schedule B	127,604.48		
Sales Price of Land Sold	766,393.04		
Net Project Costs to Date		893,997.52	4,389,327.32
Project Cost Exception			48,317.90
Relocation Payments			47,495.58
Donated Land			108,300.00
Total Assets and Project Costs			<u>\$4,920,300.48</u>

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

Current Liabilities			
Loans Payable - Schedule C		\$1,600,000.00	
Interest on Loans Payable		10,177.77	
Accounts Payable - City of Providence		2,092.13	
Total Current Liabilities			\$1,612,269.90
Capital			
Local Grants-In-Aid			
Cash Grants	\$1,324,495.00		
Non-Cash Grants	108,300.00		
Federal Capital Grants		1,432,795.00	
Project Capital Grants	1,827,740.00		
Relocation Grants	47,495.58		
Total Capital		1,875,235.58	
Total Liabilities and Capital			<u>\$4,920,300.48</u>

THE HONORABLE WALTER H. REYNOLDS  
Mayor, City of Providence

THE PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Chester R. Martin, Chairman      Morris S. Waldman, Vice-Chairman  
Albert Harkness      Timothy A. Purcell, Secretary      Edmund M. Mauro

James F. Reynolds, Executive Director

Robert C. Smith, Deputy Director  
Stanley Bernstein, Project Director  
Ann A. Fera, Clerk-Stenographer III

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Henry Fernandes, Jr., Accountant I  
Maria A. Schiano, Clerk-Stenographer I

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Melvin St. J. Susi, Management Agent  
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\* Vincent J. Baccari, Attorney I  
Ann A. Clanton, Clerk-Stenographer III

\* Part-time

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Richard R. Torchia, Senior Redevelopment Project Planner  
\* Melvin L. Feldman, Associate Redevelopment Project Planner  
Naninni G. Martucci, Associate Redevelopment Project Planner

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Kenneth H. Salk, Assistant Real Estate Officer  
Jacqueline Checca, Clerk-Stenographer II

RENEWAL SERVICES DIVISION

John R. Kellam, Chief of Renewal Services

INDUSTRIAL DIVISION

Edwin P. Palumbo, Chief Industrial Representative  
Rae Budnick, Clerk-Stenographer II

December 31, 1960

### *Acknowledgments*

We wish to thank the Providence Journal Company for its generosity in permitting the Agency to use the photographs that appear throughout this book. We also thank the Providence City Plan Commission for its cooperation and, in particular, Jeremiah H. Cannon, whose aerial photograph of downtown Providence illustrates the Railroad Relocation section of the report.

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