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Community Development Hearing

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, met on Thursday, November 16, 1978, at 7:30 o'clock p. m., in the Board Room of the Education Center, for the purpose of continuing the Public Hearing on the Community Development Block Grant Application for the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh years. Presiding was Councilmember Harvey B. Gantt with the following Councilmembers being present: Don Carroll, Tom Cox, Jr., Charlie Dannelly, Laura Frech, Ron Leeper, George K. Selden, Jr., H. Milton Short, Jr., and Minette Trosch.

ABSENT: Mayor Kenneth R. Harris, Councilmembers Betty Chafin and Pat Locke.

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#### INTRODUCTION.

Councilmember Gantt explained that this the second of two public hearings to formally begin the Community Development Preliminary Plan and Application process for the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh years. During the past four years these hearings have been listening sessions for the Mayor and City Council. They want to allow interested citizens, agencies and groups to participate in the development of the preliminary plan and application.

Mr. Gantt stated that no decisions regarding the comments and requests made tonight or the Community Development program itself will be made tonight. That as the Community Development ads in the newspapers over the past few weeks say "Our ears are open, we're listening."

Mr. Vernon Sawyer, Director of Community Development, stated this year, in an effort to help the citizens of Charlotte better understand and be better informed about the Community Development program, they have begun the preparation of the annual application and plan approximately one month earlier. That last year they were in a time crunch because they started on the same schedule that had been adhered to in previous years.

He called attention to a handout sheet which participants had received at the door, explaining that it had appeared as an ad in The Charlotte Post on last Thursday and is being made available tonight so that the citizens will have something to keep with them during the whole planning process. The handout included the following information: (1) The amount of funds that the City expects to get in the next three years; (2) The purpose of the program; (3) How the funds can be used; (4) What opportunities are available for the citizens to participate; (5) What the other major program requirements are; (6) What is being done with Community Development funds now; and (7) Where additional information can be secured if needed. Also include is a clip-out giving the next steps that will be taken over the next four months.

Mr. Jerry Moore, Housing Assistance Administrator for the City of Charlotte, stated the Housing Assistance Plan is a required part of the annual application for Community Development Block Grant Funds. The Plan is used as a guide by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the City and developers who propose to provide assisted housing units in our city. The HAP is also the document which local government uses to inform citizens of adopted housing strategies and policies.

He provided a brief summary of housing activities that have been going on during this past year. Currently there is a total of 987 units of assisted housing, either approved or under construction, in the City. This total can be broken down as follows: There are 173 units of conventional public housing, 50 units under the Section 8 new construction program (these are family housing units), 240 under the Section 8 program (these are elderly or handicapped units), for a total of 473 units currently under construction in the City. The projects which have been approved, but not yet under construction, include 100 units of family housing under Section 8, 60 units of elderly housing under Section 8, and 364 family units - a total of 524 units in this category. He stated he has a map which shows the location of each of the projects.

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Under the Section 8 existing housing program, they currently have 390 families being assisted. They have received a total of 596 allocations since the Section 8 existing program began.

During this year a Housing Task Force was organized at the direction of City Council to find ways to increase the amount of housing available and affordable to low-income citizens, either by new construction or rehabilitation. The Task Force produced a total of seventeen recommendations which were submitted to City Council.

First steps have been taken to develop a Neighborhood Housing Services program in our City. This program is a neighborhood revitalization effort. It is really a partnership between citizens, local government and local lenders. A Lenders Luncheon was held on October 23; and the next milestone will be the first NHS workshop which will be a concentrated two-and-a-half day event, which is tentatively scheduled for the second week in January.

The staff is currently working on an application for a neighborhood strategy area designation for the Grier Heights Community Development Target Area. The NSA designation by HUD would guarantee a certain amount of set-aside funds in the chosen area for rehab under the Section 8 Substantial Rehabilitation program. The Grier Heights area has been recommended because they believe the NSA program, added to other revitalization efforts being carried out by both the City and private enterprise, could have a significant, positive effect on this community's housing stock.

Mr. Moore commented on the possible level of funding for the next fiscal year. He stated they really cannot expect to get official notification on this until January of 1979 and any comments that he could make at this time would be speculative, however, the HUD area office has told them that fair share factors have been developed for our area but the dollar amount is not certain. They are expecting to know any day (it is already overdue) the amount of dollars that North Carolina will get for assisted housing for the next year. The HUD area office has speculated that North Carolina's share for assisted housing might be \$24.7 million, of which \$1.5 million might be allocated to Charlotte. If this entire dollar amount was translated into new construction it would be about 400 units. However, the HUD area office has not decided just how those allocations will be made available. In other words, the \$1.5 million will have to cover all housing programs, including new construction, existing and conventional public housing.

Councilmember Cox inquired about the \$1.5 million for 400 units and Councilmember Gantt stated that is not capital cost. Mr. Moore stated it is the amount of rental assistance.

#### REQUESTS AND SUGGESTIONS FROM COMMUNITY AGENCIES AND GROUPS.

Mr. Phillip Berry, Chairman of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education, stated that on August 21, 1978 he appeared before City Council and stated that Section 8 housing, if placed in certain areas of the City, would adversely affect the Pupil Assignment Plan. He is still convinced of this, especially where new construction occurs in predominately black areas. He also stated at that time that the long-range effects of three proposed projects would be to intensify the problem of segregated housing in the city and the attendant problem of maintaining black ratios below 50 per cent in the schools.

He stated that to date he has not ascertained the final disposition concerning these projects. That in his previous statement he advised the effects these projects would have on three schools: Billingsville, Oakhurst and Thomasboro. He would appreciate being informed as to how many units, if any, were approved in each of these projects and approximately when they will be available for occupancy.

He stated the Board of Education and Staff are planning school needs for the next five years. Obviously, what decisions Council makes will affect this planning. Council can help them in their planning by keeping the

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Board and Staff informed as to their plans for the 1979-80 fiscal year and tentative plans, if any, for the Sixth and Seventh years of the CD program.

He stated he is aware that they cannot respond to these questions tonight; however, the Community Development Department might consider the following in formulating plans for the future:

1. How is eligibility for new construction in a given area established?
2. Are they still using 1970 census data?
3. Does HUD require, or is it by local option, that urban renewal and CD Target Areas are eligible for new construction?
4. If so, are there limitations concerning the number of new units which can be constructed in a defined area?
5. What criteria is used in determining who can rent units of new construction?

He stated he understands the problems which the City encounters in trying to provide adequate housing for the citizens of Charlotte; and appreciates the fact that Council is committed to do this; he appreciates being allowed the time to make his comments.

Mr. Berry stated he would be remiss if he did not thank the Council for the interest that one of the City's agencies has in a particular piece of property and the fine letters and other correspondence sent in helping the Board to resolve some of its problems. He thinks they have moved a long way towards working together and he looks forward to continuing that relationship.

Councilmember Gantt asked what has happened to the Section 8 proposals which Mr. Berry made reference to; has HUD made a final approval on those?

Mr. Michie replied that of the proposals that were submitted, HUD did not approve any new construction projects. They did receive approval for three projects to be rehabilitated, using Section 8 funds. Those three projects are the Red Carpet Inn (76 units that the Housing Authority purchased and plans to rehabilitate for the elderly); the old Diplomat Apartments (120 units), now called Bradford Hill and is on Lynn Street and are family units; and 168 family units in the Grier Heights CD Target Area.

Mr. Ted Fillette, representing the Housing Task Force, stated Mr. Dennis Rash, chairman of the Task Force, could not be present; that he will try to relate some of the parts of the Task Force report to relevant considerations for the Housing Assistance Plan and the CD Plan for the next three years.

That one of the key recommendations relates to the change in the Housing Assistance Plan's ceiling on the number of units that could be included in a Section 8 project. He mentions this because it directly relates to changing the Housing Assistance Plan. The present plan has a ceiling of 50 units; the recommendation was to raise the ceiling to allow up to 100 units to be constructed in the project. They are not suggesting, in any way, that the racial impact of regulations be changed. All they are suggesting is that in the eligible areas a developer be allowed to create a project that would have up to 100 units in order to make it economically feasible.

One of the clear conclusions the Task Force did reach was that the greatest need is for family housing. Apparently, developers are willing to build elderly housing; and the Housing Authority is converting a lot of existing housing into elderly. Elderly housing is relatively easy to make; family housing is not. That is where the greatest need is, as is very evident from all indicators. The question is, do they really want Section 8 housing built by private developers. If they do, they have to look at the economic realities of it and enable them to get in the market at some combination of factors that they can live with. The increase in the unit size makes it economically feasible, according to what they learned in the Task Force.

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Another recommendation was to support the formation of a local mortgage finance agency, which again is perhaps a key to developing more housing. The reason this is critical for Council to deal with now is that they will have to get enabling legislation from the General Assembly. If they are going to put together a package for what they want with our delegation soon, they need something about what they want in this regard. He urged them to look at that as soon as possible. That they do not need to wait on the staff's report on the financing of the recommendations in order to consider what they might need in terms of enabling legislation.

His next point is the use of Section 8. All of them who attended the orientation by the Housing Authority at the Archdale site heard Mr. Wheeling's astonishing announcement that HUD intends to call back the Section 8 allocations that were made as a result of the Kannon-Harris settlement. According to the figures the Task Force was provided, on August 1, 1978 only thirteen of the 225 Section 8 allocations had been used for displacees.

He stated that today he went out to the Third Ward citizens center (what is known as the West Morehead area); that it has been a year since he has been asked to go out there and it just absolutely shocked him to see the situation is relatively unchanged from where we were at this time last year. There are people out there who want to be relocated that are in desperate need of it; they are people who are not going to have sufficient heat to survive the winter. There are two relocation workers assigned to that area right now. Formally the Third Ward Steering Committee asked him to represent them in this affair today. He really does not think that the City wants to "drop the ball" in this. It seems to him it would be a great tragedy to go through another winter in West Morehead. If someone out there freezes to death this year, or gets gangrene from frostbite, the City is going to be in a very desperate situation. He would hate to see that happen; that the use of the Section 8 allocations for displacees needs to be an item of utmost importance for the Council to take up and concentrate on. There are a lot of people from West Morehead present tonight who are not going to have time to give Council the details that they need to make an intelligent decision about what to do. He suggested that Council think about setting aside some time to deal with that.

Mr. Fillette stated that what Mr. Moore said about the allocation for Charlotte is a very low amount; he hopes Council will express its views about the HUD budget to President Carter because right now he is planning to cut back the total allocation for Section 8 public housing from 400,000 units this year to 290,000 units in fiscal 1980.

Ms. Lucille McNeel, West Boulevard Community Development Area, stated she recently had the opportunity to be in Washington, D. C. to attend a Community Development conference. Her concern is about transportation to the Amay James Center. Transportation was promised to them when they built the center; they definitely need it; they have no way to participate in anything that is going on at the Center. There is a peak hour city bus that goes through there, but the last one is in the morning at 9 o'clock. That would make them leave home at 8:30 and they would have to stay there all day and sit around for an 11 o'clock program.

They are asking, and they want, transportation to Amay James Center. She understands that the Neighborhood Center has vehicles, vans - all types - but no drivers. She knows for a fact they did have five drivers, then they had three, because she was asked to change her appointment so she could go the next day. She wants to know what is the need of spending money, buying vehicles, and no drivers? They are needed. If they are going to spend money and buy the vehicles, provide enough money in the program that they can have drivers. She is here tonight to say for West Boulevard that they want transportation to the Community Center.

Also, in their Summer Youth Program - there are many, many children in West Boulevard and they need a program there. They want a program there when school ends until it is open. They want money in the Grant for that. They know that they have a program that goes through the "Y". She had the

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opportunity to work in that program this summer for getting up children. She gathered up about 125 children to go to a camp for two weeks; then they turned that hundred children loose and went around and scratched up 50 more. She has had the opportunity to know what it is. She is here tonight asking for what they want, not what they need, because there is \$11.0 million to be spent for Community Development, and they want it.

She also wants to speak on behalf of their feeding program at Moore's Sanctuary. That a lot of their staff has been cut off because there is not enough money. That there is no way for that program to be a success without a staff. They want enough money placed into that feed program - it is a good program and the senior citizens need it. There is \$11.0 million to be spent - they want some of it spent in West Boulevard. They want Council to look at Little Rock. She read an article in the paper this summer where our Mayor said it was very embarrassing to come down West Boulevard. She wants to take that embarrassment off of our Mayor by putting some money in Little Rock. She stated she will be back to tell them of her concerns; that these are the things that West Boulevard needs and they want and they are going to keep pushing for them.

Mr. Samuel Adams, Southside-Brookhill Park Area, stated he is present to ask if there is any way that two red lights from South Tryon Street to West Boulevard. There is approximately a mile and a half of four-lane highway with no red lights. That on his way to work he made a personal survey. From North Tryon Street, to 27th Street, to 28th Street, they have sixteen lights in a one block area. He is sure that Council can see if they can put sixteen lights in one block, they could put two lights in a mile and a half, going through a residential area.

Ms. Mary Dantzler, Southside-Brookhill Park Area, wanted to mention a few things that need improving in the Southside Park.

1. The only tree within the play area has died and needs to be replaced.
2. The playground needs lights and picnic tables under shelter and throughout the park.
3. The water fountains do not work; they need to be replaced with a substantial foundation.
4. Trash cans need to be replaced with more suitable ones for the park. The ones that are there are made of strips of wood with plastic trash cans that are no longer there. The playground needs improvement as a whole.
5. All the playground equipment needs some type of substance under them to protect their children from the cement.
6. The creek at the bottom of the playground needs cleaning out.
7. The bleachers at the low end have deteriorated.
8. They would like a tennis court and a skating rink.

Ms. Dantzler asked the concerned parents and people of Southside-Brookhill who were present to stand and be recognized. She requested the Council to take this matter under consideration.

Ms. Doris Stradford, Southside-Brookhill Park Area, stated she is chairman of the Southside Residents Organization; that Southside-Brookhill would like to see new housing on the vacant lots on Baltimore, South Tryon and Remount and also flashing lights to indicate that there are school zones on Griffith Street and Bay Street - for Marie G. Davis Elementary School and Robert F. Kennedy School.

Dr. Wilbert Greenfield, Five Points Development Target Area, stated as President of Johnson C. Smith University, he appreciates the opportunity to appear on their behalf. That Mrs. McClurkin of the Community Committee would make a presentation on behalf of the University and the Committee. But, he wanted to reinforce what she would say about housing in the Five Points Area, especially in the vicinity of the University. That it is of critical importance that they look at that particular area and develop the type of housing in the area whereby the people living in the area will have decent housing to live in. He suggested that the Community Development plans

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of 1976 be reviewed by all concerned, for immediate implementation, especially east of Beatties Ford Road, as well as west of Beatties Ford Road. He strongly recommended that Council review with sincerity those plans if they are concerned about better housing in the Five Points community.

He stated that as a result of the 1976 plans, Johnson C. Smith University has gone ahead in providing an update of its master plan. He submitted a copy of this plan to Council for its information and for its records.

He added that within the next three or four weeks the University will be acquiring the Mecklenburg Iron property for that particular purpose.

In response to a question by Councilmember Frech, Dr. Greenfield affirmed that he favored the 1976 plan - that it would be very good if the community could review that again for possible immediate implementation. He is not saying whether they should make changes or not; the plan is a very good one.

Ms. Maggie Freeman, Wilmore Area, read a statement for Mrs. Willie Mae Lewis representing the Wilmore neighborhood organization, Wilmore in Action. She stated that in the last two years they have been lucky to be included in the Community Development housing rehabilitation program. That three structures received loans totaling \$16,400, and eighteen structures received grants totaling \$84,036.

She stated the money set aside for them has run out although their needs have not. They feel that there are at least as many residents still in need of such help and requested that this opportunity be extended; that surely it is in the City's interest to help maintain the physical quality of inner-city neighborhoods. In view of the current low-to-moderate income housing shortage it seems more beneficial to keep up decent housing in a marginal area like Wilmore, than to wait until costly demolition and re-development is necessary. They think more loans and grants is a good opportunity for local government to provide incentive for homeowners to keep up their properties. We also feel the need for strict and consistent housing code enforcement, especially of rental properties. Tonight they are asking for an additional \$150,000 in loans and grants for Wilmore.

Councilmember Leeper asked the amount of money left in the Wilmore Target Area for loans and grants and the answer was zero.

Later in the meeting, Mr. Leeper asked if the fact that the Wilmore Area does not have any more funds for rehabilitation, means that they are not considered now as a target area? Mr. Sawyer replied that is correct; that Wilmore never was designated as a project area for all of the benefits, or for all the activities that could take place in a target area. That only the loan and grant money for Dilworth and Wilmore was approved. There was no money for capital improvements, there was no money for recreation or any of the other things.

Mr. Leeper asked if they have reviewed the West Morehead plan as it relates to their community, when they are talking about a buffer and this sort of thing? Mr. Sawyer replied they considered the fact that the Wilmore neighborhood was there, just south of that neighborhood, but there is a pretty definite land use change from industrial to residential at Summit Avenue and that portion south of Summit Avenue should be looked at with that in mind. Mr. Leeper added he thought they should do that.

Ms. Henrietta McDowell, Wilmore Area, stated she also speaks for Wilmore in Action; that she wishes to bring to Council two concerns. Primarily they are concerned about Wilmore as a residential area because of the growth of industry and business around them. They feel that the preservation of inner-city neighborhoods is of real advantage to Charlotte's development, in order to keep the downtown area alive. But they feel the value of their property is threatened already by traffic patterns and the surrounding commercialization. They want to call Council's attention to this because they want to make sure they have the City's help in fighting the deterioration that has already begun in our neighborhood.



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One request they want to make is that some portion of the West Morehead Area, which lies adjacent to their community, and was recently purchased by the City for commercial development, be set aside as a buffer zone to protect their neighborhood. This might also answer another problem of theirs - the lack of park space. The largest part of their neighborhood is cut off from any parks by extremely hazardous traffic routes. There is nowhere for their children to go. They used to play at the Wilmore School, but since the school was converted this year into a teachers' resource center, the playground has been paved over. They have a problem of land available for park space, but another suggestion they would make for this purpose is to purchase and demolish the terribly dilapidated apartment buildings in the 1700 block of Cliftwood Avenue.

To summarize, they are asking for Community Development money for a park on the North side of Wilmore; and they want provisions to be made for a buffer zone in the West Morehead area to protect them from the detrimental effects of commercial growth.

Mr. George Godwin, Chairman of the Board for MOTION, Inc., stated that MOTION currently has a \$135,000 contract with the City of Charlotte to perform certain rehabs. This is being done most economically for only \$100,000 this year only. They work to present the implementation of CD on the HAP and are currently under contract to process three Section 8 applications totalling 112 new family constructions, all of which were turned down. And, they are rehabing some 24 to 29 units in the Third Ward Area, and providing 7 new houses in this area.

He stated that on December 4th they will make a more comprehensive report to Council on MOTION's activities this year; and subsequently it will be reviewed and evaluated so that Council will get a more indepth look at what they have been doing. MOTION has existing projects of some 42 units in Orchard, 49 units in Greenhaven, 25 structures throughout the community, and 3 rehab houses in the Third Ward area, where they are currently doing an additional 24 units. MOTION will have performed all of the minimum requirements of the contract this year, and have exceeded all of those by at least 50 percent and maybe as much as 100 percent by the end of the contract year.

He stated MOTION has good rapport and a good working relationship with the Community Development Department. He would not want them to think that it is all roses, because as they know, when they entered this contract year MOTION was under a very heavy state of duress and this Council took action to add to the board members and he is one of Council's appointees. This adverse climate has carried through the year in the working relationship of MOTION and the people they report to in Community Development, but he believes it is beginning to work itself out.

That Community Development, at the highest level, has always been very receptive to the working relationship of MOTION; they have been accommodating and have been available for comments. There is, however, a fiduciary responsibility in administering public funds that creates a layer of bureaucracy which is necessary, but nevertheless cumbersome to work with for private enterprise companies, and they have been through these working relationship difficulties. He does not want Council to think that the picture has been nice and rosy; on the other hand, Community Development has been most helpful.

They have legacies going into this year; they have a firm commitment from HUD for 50 units at Woodstone which they are negotiating and they may have 50 units under construction in this contract year. In addition to that, MOTION has 36 units in the Grier Heights Area called Villa Courts in which they are back in an active management position in rehabing these units. They will be making a proposal requesting additional funds on that also.

In the future they anticipate being the implementation arm of CD in some of the concepts put forth by the Housing Task Force. They would like to have a little bit more flexibility. For example, they processed three Section 8 applications for new construction under an advertisement which almost surely is not going to be any new construction, and against this

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Council's approval when it indicated it would prefer rehab over new construction, under the Section 8 applications which they submitted in the summer. He would submit that is counter-productive - in MOTION's activities and in the City's activities. Perhaps they could have a little more flexibility in working that out in a short period of time.

In the new contract they would request that Council consider a longer term contract - two or more years - so that they might have some continuity in jobs and employment of people. This would be based upon performance reviews at systematic intervals, perhaps three to six months, and some sort of probation period should the performance not be acceptable to the City. They would also suggest that Council consider giving them twice as much work to do with hopefully twice as much money to do the work with.

Ms. Pauline McClurkin, representing the Five Points Area, stated that Charlotte, like many other cities has a large number of city problems - urban blight, poverty and lack of opportunity for the inner-city child. They, with an understanding of these problems, have attempted to establish an open line of communication with Community Development and to help with others to eliminate the problems altogether - those urban problems that affect the Five Points area. It has been a slow and tedious process, but they can point to the major improvements of their community because of the relationship with the Community Development Department and their own untiring efforts.

She stated a large portion of the population depends on Social Services for survival. It occurs to them that many of the residents do not want to receive welfare, but conditions contribute to certain lifestyles that attract this same plight. To avoid this from becoming the norm they have established incentives to help their residents to become the type of independent citizens they are capable of becoming. They have instituted the Gethsemane Enrichment Program which serves the Third Ward, West Morehead and the Grier Heights Communities. This program has turned around the lives of the children in each of these target areas. They have found that the same problems in the Five Points are common in predominantly black inner city neighborhoods. To combat some of these problems, they have found that talking and working with the citizens to help the problems has been most effective and rewarding.

She stated it takes every segment of the community working together to make things happen in a positive way. They have an excellent working relationship with all of the helping agencies in the City of Charlotte, including the school system.

The housing problem is the greatest problem in Five Points, because of many factors. The main factor is the general condition of the neighborhood which makes it almost impossible for those who want to bring their homes up to minimum standards to do so. No banks want to invest money in the area, which they so badly need. They have large families, older citizens, the majority of which are living on Social Security and Service Aid, with no extra income to make the needed improvements. It would seem that this area is a unique part that no bank at the present is interested in investing in, as has been done in other affluent areas.

She recommended the following:

1. That the Five Point plan as presented and approved have the necessary funds allocated to complete the project by the anticipated 1981 target date.
2. That the basic design ought to be established and followed for housing in the Five Points area.
3. That the community organization be helped in securing the federal and local funds to be used for improvement loans for persons of limited age and unable to obtain loans through regular channels.
4. That all houses that are found not be demolished, or if they are cited to be demolished, be moved to a vacant area.



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5. That all future designs take into consideration the handicapped and aged.
6. That the median income be evaluated for building new houses in the neighborhood so that they would not be houses that the low-income could not afford.
7. That an ordinance be adopted to insure that whoever collects the rent shall provide a dwelling fit for human habitation and it be enforced.
8. That Council direct all the service divisions under its leadership to maintain municipal services at the level that is not only reasonable but that will accomplish the goals and objectives that are set forth in the Community Development Act, and improve their neighborhood.
9. That eligible costs such as site assemblage, provisions for public improvement and certain housing construction costs be made available to lower income families to be used in the areas which has been designated for construction of new single family dwellings.
10. A continuation of hot meals, manpower training, economic development and the Gethsemane Enrichment Program.
11. That a beautification program within the Five Point Area be established, such as planting of flowers, grass, trees and supplies for yards to homeowners, etc.
12. That the City look over all other avenues of funding the civic development in order to improve the area.
13. It has been recognized that lighted areas help to reduce crime; if this is true, they have reason to believe that it is necessary to supply more street lights.

Mr. Max Webb, North Charlotte Action Association, called attention to the map which showed the North Charlotte Area to be the largest land area in the Community Development program, and stated that no doubt it has a greater majority of houses than most of the other target areas. He stated the boundaries of the North Charlotte Target Areas have been extended since the program was initiated. This, in turn, has brought in more houses. At this point in time, their loan and grant program is out of money; they are at a standstill.

He recommended that Council keep it moving; they feel that would be best. If there is any possibility of getting additional funds added to their community's program, they would recommend it very strongly. He stated it has been revealed that the program will not meet its goals if other funds are not coming. They have run out of money because of added houses and an enlarged program. This would be funds just to take up until June when the other money is allocated. They have \$200,000 in the initial budget and he would suggest that the greater portion, or all of that, be put into loans and grants for the upgrading of the houses in the community. There are still many houses in need of repair.

They would also like to recommend that Council continue to fund a hot lunch program. It is a good program and it would grow and get bigger if there was more money. It is a great asset to their community.

Councilmember Selden addressed a question to Mr. Sawyer, stating that when we were faced with the addition of land area to the North Charlotte area, was there any alteration in the loan/grant fund, or was the money they talked about transferring over just for basic physical improvements?

Mr. Sawyer replied that money was added to that add-on area only and it was for loans and grants.

Mr. Webb stated there is a little bit of money left over from prior years, and \$100,000 of that is budgeted for revitalization of the North Charlotte business community. They request that money be kept in the budget in that sense, until an effective plan can be drawn up.

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Mr. James K. Polk, Grier Heights Area, submitted a written request itemizing needs in terms of Human Services and Physical Improvements. He stated this is not final in any way; in terms of planning they could not look three years ahead and know all of the things they will need in that time. He hopes Council will take that into consideration. That means if, in some point in time, they come to Council again for additional things to meet new needs and responsibilities in the community, they will be open to that.

He stated that when he appeared before Council previously, he was asked about the shopping center; that he is happy to report that they have been approved for a shopping center - the money has been funded by Washington, through Atlanta, to build it and hopefully within the very near future, they will have that project going.

He asked how can they get some housing on that beautiful plot of land near the shopping center so as to help enhance and make it a viable shopping center?

One of the requests listed was that flooding in the vicinity of 3121 Marney Avenue be eliminated. Councilmember Short asked what the flooding problem is? Mr. Polk indicated that he is not familiar with that particular request except for the fact that he knows there is a small creek at the end of Marney; that there are a couple of places around there where there is flooding but they are in the process of getting some of that cleared up. There are other places that need to be taken care of.

Councilmember Trosch asked if the Section 8 which was approved for Grier Heights was for rehab? Mr. Sawyer replied yes, it is all rehab on existing units. Most of this is on Marvin Road.

Ms. Berma Smith, Third Ward Area, stated she resides at 245 South Cedar Street, on the west side of Cedar in a house owned by Swartz & Son. She understands there is a proposal to zone that as industrial. The reason she is here tonight is that at the last Council meeting she understands that a decision was made to defer a decision on purchasing these houses from Swartz & Son, and removing the houses and relocating the residents.

She wonders if the residents have been considered in this. That for approximately three years now they have been waiting for a final decision as to whether the City would purchase these houses. They have received two letters leading them to believe that a firm decision has been made on this. Now, they are being asked to wait again.

Part of the problem seems to be the junkyard which is located behind these houses, but this junkyard is also located in parts of growing downtown Charlotte, and if they are going to leave it there, in the middle of downtown, then do not let this be a factor in deciding whether or not these residents will be relocated.

Councilmember Trosch stated it was her understanding that when this came up before Council, the relocation would not be affected by the choice Council made if the houses are indeed found unfit for human habitation. She asked Mr. Sawyer if that is correct?

Mr. Sawyer replied he could not answer that. The houses are being inspected now by the Building Inspection Department. If they are found unfit for human habitation, it is his understanding that under the housing code the owner has the option of bringing those houses up to standard. Whether at that point the tenant is eligible for relocation benefits, if the tenant chooses to move - he is just not sure at this time.

Ms. Trosch stated if he chooses not to bring them up to standard, then are they eligible? Mr. Sawyer's reply was yes, he believes so, because in that event the house would have to be vacated.

In response to a question from Ms. Smith, she was advised that it is not necessary to have the owner's agreement for the inspection.

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Councilmember Cox stated Council action was deferred for further information; no final decision has been made on it.

Councilmember Gantt asked for clarification of the point Ms. Smith is making. That for three years there has been some certainty that she would have to be relocated? Now, she is saying that she has been put in a grey area, she does not know whether she will be relocated or not? Ms. Smith replied that is right, or how long it will be before they decide.

Dr. Mildred B. Davis, Third Ward Area, stated it is ironic that she should speak following the previous speaker. That she is here by choice. She lives in the Third Ward Area by choice. When she moved to that area it was a beautiful area - back in 1963. Zeb Vance School was there; the Board of Education had just moved out from the block above her. She now lives at 916 Westbrook Drive, which is also very beautiful; she is proud of it. She has invited the Mayor there and has had the City Councilmembers there from time to time. She has had the City Manager there. They feel that that block is very pretty. The people take great pride in it. But, they feel that they are embarrassed because where Zeb Vance School once stood, there is tall grass and weeds and junk there. When you turn off Cedar Street into Westbrook Drive, she has to close her eyes sometimes because of the blighted conditions there. She is embarrassed and she knows the others are.

She stated she is here tonight; that she sent a letter at the last meeting because she was in Atlanta attending a meeting such as this to learn more about what is happening throughout the country. She would like to recommend three things that are very heavy on the hearts of people in the Third Ward community.

The first one is to recommend that CD contracts be written in such a way that the area residents would be employed, because they have a large number of youth and young adults. The young adults are a group of people who are greatly left out and forgotten. They talk about the youth and they talk about the elderly, but when a young black reaches the age of 21 he is left out on the job market if he has not already found one. They have a large number of unemployed black youths as well as young adults. They are recommending that something be done by Council; they are asking for their help in helping to minimize this condition.

Second - one of the dwellings on Victoria Avenue - they would like to use it for a mini-center. They need this center for health care, recreation, civic and political meetings. The only place that they can meet in that area is Mt. Moriah Primitive Baptist Church, and that is when they are not having a meeting and when it is convenient for them to let them use it. There is a two-story brick dwelling on Victoria Avenue and they would like to use that building; have the residents help renovate it; some to be employed and some to give free work in that. They would also like for Council to move with deliberation and expediency in upgrading and renovating the boarded up houses in the area; relocate the residents and make it possible for the unemployed, the unskilled and elderly to be in a house, not a shack, like was just mentioned on Cedar Street. Most of those - Swartz's property, are shacks, not houses. They would like to have sufficient heat so that these people will not be embarrassed and Council will not be embarrassed as citizens of the Queen City of the South when they read in the paper where one of our citizens has frozen to death because they did not have sufficient housing or sufficient heating.

Councilmember Leeper asked Dr. Davis if she ever had the opportunity to use the Third Ward Community Center for community programs? Dr. Davis stated she appreciated Mr. Leeper bringing that up; that Third Ward is a very large area. There are three sections of Third Ward - the very far southwest part, from West Morehead Street all the way over to Palmer and that area; then there is the middle of Third Ward, which is from West Trade Street over to Morehead; then there is another part of Third Ward which is from West Trade Street over to Cates Street. It is a very large area, and the people in the middle and on the far north of the area do not have use of those facilities because you would have to go in a mini-bus or a van or

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something of that sort to get there. The people in her immediate area go to Gethsemane Baptist Church and use the facilities there, but again they must go by van and must come out at 10:30 and sometimes wait until 11:00 in the cold and rain in order to go get a hot meal.

Mr. Kelly Alexander, Jr., Third Ward Area, stated he is present in two capacities - one as a business person in the Third Ward Area; the other as a representative of the NAACP. That those who were present last year remember that he stood in a similar position and he is afraid they are going to hear him say some of the same things. He stated he would like to "amen" the previous two speakers. That he did hear Mr. Sawyer and some of the other people say to them that the Swartz property was going to be taken, the houses removed and these folks relocated. That was a year ago; and they have been floating in limbo for quite some time.

Secondly, he would like to say that there is a desperate need in that area for some kind of center, whether it is on a temporary basis or the construction of some kind of permanent facility. That he also wants to zero in on the fact that that community - Third Ward - is divided into three areas, two residential areas and one center area that is designated to be essentially commercial and business development. That is about as far as it has gotten. A year ago he asked for details as to what planning had been made for that area, primarily because his business sits at one end of it, and he was told they had not gotten around to that yet. That periodically he has spoken to the CD office which is located a block and a half from his office to find out what is going on and is told they do not know yet.

He stated he would like to suggest something. That there is a section of the CD Act that enables the spending of money for business development in that area. That since the central series of blocks has already been designated as business and commercial development, it might be nice if something like a farmers' market be developed around an existing business, such as Bumgarner's, and that some of the other existing businesses in that area be utilized in making a comprehensive plan for the area. That that central core area has a number of viable existing businesses ranging from auto repair shops to funeral homes and food stores and what not. A comprehensive plan could be developed in that area utilizing existing business people to help put some of the facilities into the downtown area that at other times and other places before other forums you hear people saying need to go in there.

Also it could help with job creation downtown. The unemployment rate in this city now is running at about 3 percent; the Department of Labor says that if you look at an overall unemployment rate you can figure that the minority rate is about two or three times higher than that. So, job development close to where people live is needed and necessary. He understands that at least one private development firm - NCNB - is talking about attempting to get non-polluting industry into the downtown area in order to have manufacturing or whatever close to where people live. He supports that and will do whatever else he can do publicly to try to get Council and CD behind such efforts.

He stated he is in favor of positive action by this City Council on the request before them by the House of Prayer to develop housing, a church and some other facilities in the First Ward Area. He thinks it is very important that they support especially a church - a black church, primarily - that has the money and the wherewithal to come before Council and say "Look, we want to participate in the revitalization development downtown." He stated he is not a member of the House of Prayer so he is not grinding a particular denominational ax, but he thinks they have a good plan; that it should receive first rate consideration.

He stated he is very much concerned about crime in the Third Ward Area. He applauds some of the recent developments in cracking down on street crime; that needs to be continued and expanded. That they are kidding themselves if they are going to try to invest money in special lighting in Fourth Ward, beautiful condominium homes in Fourth Ward, a fantastic museum downtown in Fourth Ward, and allow Third Ward to become the crime

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capitol of the Carolinas. Very shortly the people in the crime capitol are going to discover Fourth Ward too and all of its glories. The difference between Fourth and Third Wards is imagination. If they do not believe that crime can cross streets, he would invite them to come down there some night with him. That the portion of Irvin Avenue where he is located has waged a successful fight to get some street lighting upgraded and he would like to thank the City departments and the people who worked with him on that project, but there are some other dark streets in Third Ward. That the police have assured him that lighting will help in that area; the Mayor's Crime Commission folks who he has spoken to also believe that it will help in that area; the members of the Chamber of Commerce who he has spoken to think it will help in that area. That because he spends sometimes 15 or 20 hours a day in that area, he knows it will help.

Mr. Malachi Green, Third Ward Area, stated he would like to echo the things which have been said by his fellow residents of Third Ward. That there are a lot of things he could talk about but probably one of the most important things to remember at this point is that they are talking about people and people's concerns, people's hopes and aspirations. The residents of Third Ward community have waited a long time to see some positive changes; they have seen their neighborhood transversed by another 45-mph freeway for a street; they have seen Trade Street become littered with trash, especially the two-legged variety; they have seen their children endangered because they have no recreational facilities; they have seen their old folks being bussed across town because there is no senior center; they have seen good houses languish into squalor because of bureaucratic inertia; they have seen raised aspirations of folks on Cedar Street dashed on the rocks of despair because of a fight between a powerful landlord and a City Council. He suggested that the in rem remedy be considered for use in that particular situation, to the extent that they used it with the Mecklenburg Hotel. That the property owners, some of whom legitimately can be termed "slum lords", have for too long dictated the development of land use plans, the use of rehabilitation programs and housing assistance plans. Once again, he would ask if this will be the case in their community?

He stated they have been planned for, studied and surveyed; high priced experts from out of town have been imported to scrutinize them; contracts which under-utilize manpower available in our community have been let; contracts to firms and agencies who discriminate have been let. They should be asking to administer their own money; but there is an emerging partnership between them and CD. They do not want to substitute their lay notions for the knowledge and skill of the CD professionals, but they do want them to understand the nature of the emerging partnership. Just to keep everybody honest, they ask that their community have input into the entire contract preparation process. They even ask sign-off rights on all contracts which affect the physical nature of their neighborhood as well as those which affect the service delivery process. Again, as last year, they ask where is the comprehensive housing plan? They in Third Ward are affected by this. They do not really have any comprehensive plan for Third Ward and this includes a housing plan. At this point what they have is a mish-mash of some numbers gathered from various places. Meanwhile a lot of poor people do not have decent housing in this lucky city of ours. The City Council can do something about this; meanwhile do not allow any more slum lords to use public lands and housing subsidies to continue to enrich their coffers.

Mr. Samuel Stevenson, Plaza Hills-Villa Heights, stated that approximately nine months after being included in the North Charlotte Target Area, his neighborhood was finally allocated \$200,000 by the Council for housing repairs, and the residents were grateful.

However, their problems are far from being solved. The neighborhood needs an additional \$200,000 for housing loans and grants. They need funds for sidewalks and drainage. They do not see the sense of improving part of the neighborhood and leaving the rest unattended to.

They sincerely hope that Council will see fit to allocate the remaining \$600,000 this year which they crucially need to complete the revitalization of the neighborhood.

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Ms. Carrie Graves, West Boulevard, referred to a report submitted by the West Boulevard Coalition submitted last month while she was in Washington, and said she wished to enhance it by mentioning a few serious problems in the West Boulevard area. Ms. McNeil has addressed some of those problems. Ms. Graves said that they appreciated the work that has been done in the area, but the real problems have not begun to be addressed. There is a large population of unemployed and unemployable. They need to get on with rehabilitating people. West Boulevard is a very large area and needs to be treated with great attention and a positive approach for enhancing the lives of the people that live there.

The City needs to pay close attention to the deterioration of the housing in the area. The Housing Task Force stresses the need for housing in this City. The situation will worsen if it does not start attacking the problem before housing has to be torn down. The West Boulevard Coalition is requesting an inventory of the housing in the area. They need the available resources to help them accomplish this. They ask that Community Development get together with the Steering Committee immediately to begin plans for this task. At this point, they have no firm figure, but ask that at least \$300,000 be set aside for the work.

The residents would like to stress the use of minority businesses in the area. They feel they have the kind of businesses in the area that can offer job training and job placement for the area residents. Some type of program such as that of Central Piedmont Community College could also be set up through minority businesses in the area. Ms. Graves mentioned two such businesses. The first was Magnums Barber Shop and Health Salon which has helped in health and nutrition maintenance in the area. Mr. Magnum could offer courses through his business. She felt they should be thinking of economic development in the target areas. It's fine to have all these services, but there are so many people within the area who need jobs if they are to provide for their families. The second business was Tommy's Restaurant - Tommy Davis has catering classes, restaurant management and bartending. With the passage of liquor by the drink, the City of Charlotte has great plans, and they want to be a part of those plans. Bartenders can make good money, and the residents want to own some of the bars and be the bartenders behind the bars. Economic development has got to be a greater part of the Community Development Plan. The residents need lots of this, and they've heard a lot of this from other people at the present meeting.

Ms. Graves stated that there were several vacant houses in the area, and she asked CD to purchase and rehab them for shelters for battered women and centers for senior citizens. The City has not taken a real active role in the need and care of women, and she felt it was time to become involved with the Commission on the Status of Women. Surveys in these areas have already been made. It wastes a lot of time to make surveys when the resources are already available. She asked CD personnel to make an appointment with the Steering Committee so the Committee can point out the houses to them; they do not want to make any type of pledge public.

Ms. Graves emphasized the McCrorey Branch YMCA program for the West Boulevard area. This program is very important to the youth of the community, but the residents are disturbed about the cooperation from available resources such as space to accommodate their children. They need the full use of the school and more use of the gym. They also want to see the gym kept open between the hours of 12 and 2 in the summer. This is a very crucial time when they have their day camp out there - the children need to use the rest-room, they need to make use of all the resources. The City should hire the extra personnel they promised two years ago for the Parks and Recreation Department. She suggested they hire someone from the West Boulevard area, not bring in any strangers. They have enough people out there without jobs; they can do it themselves.

As a member of the National Community Development Task Force, she will be working in this area to help monitor the City program to make sure that some of these things start happening, especially those that center on economic development, housing, and paying more attention to the women in the community.



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Ms. Barbara Ann Neeley, Third Ward Steering Committee, asked for Community Development support and answers to some questions.

What is happening to the money CD is getting from the land they are selling? She feels the money could be used to buy more houses so the people can be relocated. Why is Section 8 slow in the process of relocating these people? What will happen to the people when the leases run out under Section 8?

What is the problem with relocation - is the problem with CD, that they do not have enough people on the staff to handle the problem? The Third Ward Steering Committee would like to have an answer. There are people in the neighborhood that do not have light or water. These people need to get out of there as soon as CD can get them out. It is a shame to see these people go through this year like last year and the year before. The residents want CD to do something and soon.

In response to a question from Councilmember Leeper, Mr. Vernon Sawyer reported that all the funds allocated to the West Boulevard Community Development target area have been expended and that the major purpose of the target area plan was to construct a recreational facility and park and a neighborhood center. Those things have been constructed and there is a minor amount of money left. It has not yet been decided where that money should go.

Councilmember Leeper asked about code enforcement. Mr. Sawyer replied that if there was money allocated for loans and grants to follow up on the inspections and to help the owners of the property, there can be a concentrated code enforcement area there. Mr. Leeper asked where the money was going that they received from the sale of land, for instance on West Morehead where people are not going to be in residences. Mr. Sawyer said that to his knowledge they have not resold any property there. They exchanged a little with A & A Brass Co. When they do sell the land, the money goes back to the CD fund, not necessarily earmarked for the same particular target area.

Mr. Hoyle Martin, Relocation and Economic Development Division, CD, was asked by Councilmember Leeper about the slowness of the relocation project. He replied that they have certain relocation priorities that they were working on. First of all, they are concentrating on the First Ward target area. The first thing to do there is with regard to the First Ward lawsuit. There are certain responsibilities with the MOTION contract. The next basic area they'll be working on is the West Morehead target area.

Relocation is a relatively slow process primarily because of the very tight housing market, particularly for low income housing. This is the basic problem of relocating in the West Morehead target area. This year in particular the housing market for low income people is very tight; every resource CD has been able to find tells them that the vacancy rate for people in this income bracket is somewhere between 2 and 4% at any given time during this year.

He reminded Council that those being relocated have the opportunity to refuse the housing until they get the kind they want. Normally in the past potential relocatees have been shown an average of three units; now it's up to six or seven or eight units per individual. This slows down the process - it means that if they are showing the resident or family six or seven or eight units and he or she decides not to take the units, that's time well spent, but it doesn't mean that these persons are relocated.

Regarding a comment made by Jerry Moore that there had been many allocations of Section 8 housing units and yet something fewer than 20 had been used, Councilmember Gantt asked whether that meant that not enough units were being found in the city where private developers were willing to use their units as a designated Section 8.

Mr. Martin responded that the 225 Section 8 units that were allotted to Community Development under that lawsuit for this year unfortunately presupposed that all of the relocation for the year would be Section 8. In a normal year they relocated somewhere between 225 and 240 families and individuals. Yet the allocation of Section 8 units given to Community Development for that purpose are to be used within a year. In addition to

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Section 8, the Community Development Department has its own rental assistance program, and it is required to give persons that are relocated whatever options there are and let them make a choice. For example, of those 225 units, right now there are 25 people in contracted housing. There have been an additional 19 people who for various reasons have decided not to take this kind of housing. Some decided they wanted to go to public housing, a few people said they wanted to take the rental assistance. When someone chooses to use the CD rental assistance program, that means he gets cash in his hand. Under the Section 8 program he does not get cash in his hand. Consequently, many people preferred to take the rental assistance program.

Councilmember Gantt inquired whether they were able to take the money and then go find their own units somewhere else. Mr. Martin said that they are still assisted in finding housing - CD still provides the service of actually helping to get them moved. But they would rather take a relocation move under the rental assistance program and get cash as opposed to taking Section 8 housing. Another fact is that the Housing Authority, when it uses Section 8 units, has considerably more options in how it may use that Section 8 than Community Development has. For example, they may use in Section 8 what is called on-site Section 8 assistance where a family will qualify if it lives in a house which is brought up to standards by the landlord; the family doesn't actually move into new housing. In the case of CD, Section 8 can be applied only to actually relocating individuals or families.

Mr. Martin pointed out another difference in the applicability of Section 8 between CD and the Housing Authority. Public housing deals with low income people, but generally at the upper end of the low income level. CD serves those at the other end. It deals with people who are forced to be relocated by governmental action, who in many cases don't want to relocate. In addition to that, CD is required to provide transportation and other kinds of assistance to help these persons. When public housing uses Section 8, it's in part due to the initiative of an individual himself who wants to get Section 8 housing assistance. That makes a world of difference in the time it takes to get people relocated.

Mr. Martin added that when a person goes through Section 8 under public housing, he is certified for 60 days. Normally under CD relocation it takes anywhere between 120 to 240 days to get an individual relocated. Sixty percent of the relocations are done in 120 days, 40% are done in 240 days. They cannot and do not railroad people; they have to give them the option of deciding what housing they want and when they want to take it. Mr. Leeper has talked with him and has expressed a great deal of concern about a man who was referred to during the public hearing on the 19th, Mr. John Johnson of West Morehead, just to give an example. This man was referred to 19 housing units - he was actually taken to three. At the last one he actually paid a deposit on the unit, then he turned it down. Mr. Martin said that if he had time he could give the hours and energy the staff used to work with this one gentleman - and Mr. Leeper is very familiar with this because he and Mr. Martin talked almost daily about it - but this is just an example, this is not to say that everybody takes that long.

Councilmember Gantt asked how many people have been relocated out of the West Morehead area since last year, and Mr. Martin referred him to some printed information previously provided.

Councilmember Leeper, speaking in behalf of the West Morehead residents, asked for some additional time because many of those people had some comments that they felt they were not going to have time for. He wondered whether they could set up during the next Council meeting a public hearing to allow them an opportunity to come in and continue this discussion, to express some additional concerns.

Councilmember Gantt affirmed that anybody could do that at any Council meeting, if they wanted to be put on the agenda.

Councilmember Cox wanted to express a good bit of frustration and empathy with those folks who didn't understand the relocation ball game. He said that they get just a piece of the relocation story about every other week,

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and it continues to frustrate him that he understands it a little bit better than he did last year, but still doesn't feel very comfortable with it. He suggested that, as a part of a regular meeting or part of some kind of meeting prior to the completion of these hearings, they sit down for an hour or two and try to understand relocation from A to Z. It would certainly help him out and some of the rest of the Councilmembers if they felt similar frustrations.

Councilmember Trosch wanted to ask briefly whether it was true that HUD has ruled that these will revert back to the Housing Authority in January.

Mr. Vernon Sawyer replied that he believed that that was the case because of the system for allocating Section 8 existing housing units. They are allocated on a yearly basis, and in the past Charlotte has received an additional allocation near the end of the year because of other communities that had the allocation originally and did not use it or were not able to use it, so HUD accumulated them and gave them to other communities including Charlotte that could use them. He felt that if these units were not used by the end of the year, they might be taken and given to some other community, or CD might apply and have them stay here for a longer period of time. Henry Underhill, City Attorney, and he discussed it earlier and drew no conclusion because they were originally allocated to assist the City in connection with the lawsuit.

Councilmember Trosch said that Mr. Sawyer and Mr. Martin referred to the fact that these are people living in the worst living conditions that Charlotte has, and there is the problem that many do not want to leave. However, this type of assistance, if it reverted back to the Housing Authority, is the kind they would grab up. People with much better housing in comparison with the CD residents - what options do they have left if this housing does revert back - is it just the rental assistance? And is there enough rental assistance to meet the need?

Councilmember Trosch was informed that there was not enough rental assistance, and she added that she then felt under pressure to relocate these people with all due speed.

Mr. Martin confirmed that they were trying to do that. He repeated that one of the basic problems is that there simply is not enough housing to go around. The market can't even stand the pressure that they can apply to handle more than 10 or 20 people per month with the kind of housing they are talking about. This is the reason they have not been able to use any more of the Section 8 units.

Councilmember Trosch asked if they went to the Housing Authority would there be housing available for the ones that are in the better housing - are you saying for them to use them? Mr. Martin replied that he couldn't totally answer the question, except to say that some of the better housing she referred to might be some of the on-site Section 8 units. They have a list of individuals who need housing outside of the Community Development persons that he was trying to relocate.

Mr. Sawyer added that if they reverted to the Housing Authority, he felt that it would use them for those on its waiting list city-wide. The Housing Authority has been very cooperative - before CD got these units, as a matter of fact - in giving some priority to relocatees. He wanted to clarify one other statement - there was a question as to whether there was enough rental assistance to do the job, to which Mr. Martin said "no" - if he meant enough rental assistance in the CD program to take care of paying for all relocation assistance, yes.

Councilmember Carroll said that he felt they recognized the gravity of the problem. It was perhaps the number one problem that Council wrestles with in human terms in the CD program. He was also very concerned that they might lose some of their Section 8 option by the end of the year, or February. He wondered whether the other Councilmembers would be agreeable to discussing this at another meeting at which they could hear options from the staff. He would like to pursue the possibility of shifting 30 or 40 employees over into

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relocation for the next month or two to see if they couldn't get the job done and catch up to a position where some of the worst of the West Morehead problems might be solved. It would be a considerable burden on Mr. Martin to regear his staff, but he felt they should consider doing something different from what is being done now.

Mr. Martin stated that he wished he could share Mr. Carroll's optimism, but it wasn't simply a matter of additional people. He had some statistics prepared - 1976 data, but nevertheless the best information they had been able to get as to what's going on in the housing market today. In 1976 there were 111,505 units of housing in the City of Charlotte. There was a vacancy rate of about 4.5% or approximately 5,017 units; 1.8% of the total was for moderate to high income persons. That left the remaining 2.7% of the housing for low income persons. In terms of numbers that's about 3,010 units. Of the total amount only 1.7% of the housing is actually standard. According to the best information they've been able to get today, the housing situation is pretty much the same in Charlotte in 1978, and it's been pretty constant all this year. It boils down to the simple fact that of those 111,505 units only somewhere between 892 and 1,150 are actually available standard units for low income persons. Even if they had additional personnel to do the job, the housing just isn't out there.

Even with additional personnel it's physically impossible for the staff to identify every one of these houses. With the process that CD has to go through to get people relocated, it often loses some units. One of the things they're trying to get under the court suit is the rent option program whereby they would pay rent 60 days on a unit to get the landlord to hold that unit until they can get somebody in it. That might seem very appealing, but the response that they're getting from 99% of the realty people is, why should they give CD a 60 day option program when they can put somebody in the unit tomorrow? That illustrates the point he's making of the difficulty he has finding sufficient housing to meet the need. It isn't just a matter of having more staff to get out there and get more units.

Councilmember Gantt stated that he understood that relocation is a problem when there is a vacancy rate of 2 to 4% in low income housing in this community - it's like having poor people standing in the street waiting for housing. The fact is that they need to build more; the supply is too small.

Mr. Burkhalter, City Manager, said that he has asked the Community Development staff to prepare for Council a thorough and complete briefing from the day that an individual signs the dotted line on what he wants and what the need is until CD finds that individual a house. He has asked to have every single person involved in relocation present for this so that they could query them, talk to them and understand. He sensed that the Council does not understand many of the problems involved in this, and they are preparing this for Council now so that every single person involved in this will be sitting in front of Council and will spend as much time as Council wants.

Councilmember Gantt felt that this discussion was very useful in retrospect because a lot of the Councilmembers and members of the community have some problems with the credibility of the relocation process. He recalled a certain court suit they were fighting a couple of years ago in the First Ward where they said they would have enough units available for relocation, and it looks like they are straining to make them available.

Councilmember Carroll asked Mr. Burkhalter whether some further thought could be put into ways to expedite the matter. He added that he understood that it would be difficult, but the people they are trying to serve deserve to have Council try to do whatever it can to move forward. He wanted that question to be among those dealt with during the future meeting with the relocation staff.

Mr. Nathan Davis, West Morehead Area, stated that he felt that the job being done by the Community Development Department was not acceptable. He knew of a situation personally where the City was asked to supply trash cans for the community six months ago and they were still waiting. He knew of a

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woman who had been staying at 1512 South Church Street; she found a home that she liked. The only thing the relocation officer had to do was get in touch with the realtor, take whatever steps were necessary, and she would have had a home. The officer did not get in touch with the realtor, and now the woman is staying with her brother. She cannot stay at 1512 South Church Street because someone broke in through her back door. She had to nail her door back up with two-by-fours. Someone from the City came to inspect her house and tell her she had to take the two-by-fours down. The woman is too poor to buy a lock for her home. Her lights are off. She has no water. Some of the people in our community pay rent on these shacks. The people in the community pay taxes to watch something like this happen. The situation is intolerable - they've been getting a run-around for a whole year. Now CD prepares for the next three fiscal years, and they haven't successfully completed the last three years.

Mr. Tom Martin, Elizabeth Community Association, read a statement concerning the Fireman's Hall on Seventh Street:

"The Elizabeth Community Association would like the City and Community Development Committee to know that we are interested in the use of the Fireman's Hall on Seventh Street for community meetings and gatherings. We look forward to the opportunity of working with you on this matter."

Councilmember Gantt questioned Mr. Burkhalter on the policy with regard to the Fireman's Hall. Mr. Burkhalter said that it was supposed to be turned over to Parks and Recreation after a certain number of years.

Ms. Marguerite Dowelle, 3639 Barringer Drive, wished to speak about the traffic light that is needed at Clanton Road and Barringer Drive. There have been very many accidents there. She had read in the papers that they were supposed to get one, but it hasn't happened yet. One was installed a couple of weeks ago at I-77 and Clanton Road, which she thought might have been the one meant for Barringer and Clanton. There have been so many accidents there - as a matter of fact there was one there the previous night, a serious one just this morning and another one this evening. She could not begin to tell those present how many times she had witnessed accidents at that intersection.

Councilmember Gantt said he thought the Council had already approved the installation of a light at that corner, that it had been approved in March.

Councilmember Leeper stated that the light at I-77 and Clanton is not the light the Council had approved. That light was placed there by the State. He had spoken to Bernie Corbett, Traffic Engineering Director, who told him that there had to be some preliminary things done for the intersection prior to the installation of the light. He would like to know how far along in the process they are, since he thought all the necessary improvements had now been made. Ms. Dowelle said that Clanton Road had been widened just a couple of weeks ago, and Mr. Leeper responded that that was what had to be done prior to the traffic light installation.

Mr. Burkhalter reported that Wylie Williams, Assistant City Manager, had said that it was ordered but it had not yet come, but that they would put up a temporary light, one that they would borrow from another section. The light they had been using would not work at Clanton and Barringer and would be replaced by another temporary one until the permanent traffic light was available.

Ms. McNeil, West Boulevard area, wanted to bring to the Council's attention an area that had been neglected for a long time - the area around Seymour Drive and Capitol Drive. There's nothing over in that area. It's been overlooked so many times and the residents want the Council to take that into consideration in the West Boulevard area, across the tracks. It's a large area, with a lot of houses, and it ought to be upgraded. Nobody says anything about it. The people over there are taxpayers. There is no adequate bus service at any time, not even peak hours. They want a full summer program on West Boulevard this summer.

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Ms. Vivian Hicks, 539 Brookhill Road, said she had four requests.

There is only one way out once you enter Newell Street, and this is of course the same way you came in. They are requesting a through street for the residents on Newell Street.

In addition, they request driveways since there is nowhere to turn around except in the middle of the street, and no place to park cars. With cars parked along the sides of the street and only one exit, she envisions a very bad situation if there should happen to be a fire in the area.

In referring to the Southside Park target area, she requested that in the future it be referred to as the Brookhill-Southside Park Community.

She stated the residents are very unhappy with the present force of commercial development along South Tryon Street and Remount Road. They do not know what kind of zoning has been set up, but hope that it is compatible with their community. At some time they would like to see the plans that Community Development has. They would also like to see a buffer provided so that they will not have commercial encroachment.

They would like to request the Council's assistance in securing a laundromat in the Brookhill-Southside Park Community since the residents have to go to West Boulevard for the nearest one.

Councilmember Leeper stated he would respond to Ms. McNeil's statement. He referred to Mr. Martin's mention of the need for additional housing and Mayor Harris's mention of the boarded up houses in Little Rock, stating this might be something the Council would want to look at in terms of rehabilitation. There are a number of houses in this community that are boarded up, and he felt the Council should take some initiative. The City is going to have to bite the bullet and start providing some houses for the people if there are no houses available.

Mr. Martin stated that in FY-78 CD has relocated 47 families and individuals. So far this fiscal year they have relocated three, which gives a total of 50 since July 1, 1977.

Councilmember Leeper asked if the number of relocation officers for West Morehead was the same for other target areas? He was informed that right now they are one short - one staff member left and went back to school. Normally they would have two relocation officers in the West Morehead-Third Ward- Five Points district - Harvey Pettis and Michael Ballard. At the present time it is just Mike Ballard as Harvey Pettis has been promoted. They have a Human Service aid who is also attached to the office.

Mr. Leeper asked how many persons can one relocation officer work with - realistically - and be somewhat effective? Mr. Martin replied that normally he would have five active cases but right now this is just about doubled. One of the other staff members stated it is not that there are no housing units; there are adequate housing units just as long as they do not frustrate the market with too many people at one time, in one income category. When you place one hundred persons in the same income category looking for vacancies at the same time, you frustrate the housing market. If you control the number by bedroom sizes and by income categories and by the type of housing you are looking for, within the market, then you do not frustrate the market and there are adequate housing units available. She stated they are required to have housing units available at the time of displacement.

Dr. Mildred Davis, speaking from the audience, stated this is the type of thing she was talking about for young adults - part time jobs. There are students at Central Piedmont who are intelligent enough to work in such areas as this; this is what she was talking about, where they can hire the residents of these areas and they are intelligent enough to ask questions and read a piece of paper and write down answers. If they cannot find them, then she can help them find some. She has called some of these offices about residents of Third Ward; they have gone down to CETA and other places and have been sent for an interview and they come back.



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She has talked with the area neighborhood development persons and they have told her the same thing - send them to so-and-so, send them to this place. These people come back and do you know what they do? They go out on Trade Street and hold up somebody. And they are intelligent people; they graduated with B averages - she can get some out of Third Ward, part time, who are now at Central Piedmont or Johnson C. Smith. They do need jobs and they are people who can do it and she would like to see some of this done. She is tired of them bringing people from outside and from other areas and giving them jobs, and people who live in the areas who are cold, hungry are not considered. They have to work with these people.

She stated she has been on the Community Relations Committee and they are truly committed workers on this unemployment thing. There is no point in having these beautiful buildings and fine stores because they will burn them up. Give them some jobs and they will not do that.

There were other comments from Ms. McNeil and others in the audience.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT.

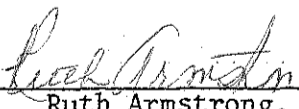
Councilmember Gantt expressed appreciation to the citizens for their contributions to the hearing. He stated that sometimes it may appear to them that Council is not listening clearly enough, but he assured them they would try to do their best.

Councilmember Trosch stated that when Council had the Housing Task Force report it asked that a committee be appointed rather quickly because of the need for enabling legislation. That Council is waiting for a staff report on that; she does not know where they are in this matter.

After conferring with Mr. Williams, Mr. Burkhalter replied that portions of the draft are completed. He stated that the part which might require legislation for any program they might be able to give Council before the other is ready, if they are concerned about that. At this point, he does not see any reason why this could not be done.

Ms. Trosch stated that at their retreat housing was determined as their number one priority, and now a year later down the road she is very frustrated with where they are with their number one priority.

Councilmember Dannelly stated he would like to bring one thing to the Councilmembers' attention. If they will recall, when the Municipal Service District was set up, there was concern about someone who lived downtown going on that committee, and whether the people's needs would be addressed. That Dr. Mildred Davis was the person appointed.

  
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Ruth Armstrong, City Clerk