



### State Law-Makers

An effective campaign to remove the proposed freeway might encourage state law-makers in Madison to consider appropriate legislative action. A variety of legislative measures could expedite or even mandate demapping. The same public pressure could also encourage SWRPC to formally recommend the removal of the Park and East freeway from the regional transportation plan, although the Commission is not empowered to enforce its own advice. Whether it results in executive or legislative action, however, the most useful and least controversial strategy for the removal of the freeway will require broadly-based and well-documented support.

Although the Commission is a powerful advisory agency, its recommendations for the regional freeway system have, historically, generated great public debate. In the past, a concentrated network of business, labor, and private interest groups vociferously supported the closure of the downtown loop. These groups and the public officials who agreed with them comprised the greatest resistance to demapping. Today, the identity of these organizations and individuals, as well as their current influence, is somewhat subject to speculation. Despite any remaining preferences for the completion of the downtown loop, an increasing number of private interest groups, city, and state legislators would like to see the freeway erased once and for all. Legislators especially will be invaluable allies in a neighborhood-based effort to accelerate the demapping procedure.

The most effective method of expressing neighborhood opposition to the proposed freeway involves a combined campaign directed to all elected representatives and regulatory, legislative, advisory, and implementing agencies. These include:

- the Mayor
- the Milwaukee Common Council
- the County Board of Supervisors
- the County Executive
- the Milwaukee County Expressway and Transportation Commission
- the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
- the State legislature
- the Governor
- the State Department of Transportation
- the Federal Highway Administration (U. S. Department of Transportation)

The planning agency which will have the greatest influence on general disposition of the corridor land is SWRPC. The Commission has already expressed and acted upon public doubt about certain portions of the Milwaukee freeway system, including the Park East link. Still, some as yet unpublished stub-end solutions already depict an extension of the freeway into existing east-west neighborhood streets (specifically, E. Lyon and E. Ogden), a plan that would consume fully one-half of the corridor land. This type of alternative traffic engineering would damage the residential fabric of the area almost as dramatically as the proposed freeway, although at an admittedly smaller scale. The only alternative scenario that would support and improve the quality of neighborhood life on the Lower East Side is one which favors the return of the corridor land to appropriate agencies for urban redevelopment.



The Park West Redevelopment Task Force was convened in January, 1977, to study and prepare redevelopment proposals for the nearly 44 blocks of land cleared to accommodate the construction of the Park Freeway West. SWRPC demapped the proposed freeway later that year. In 1978, the state and county followed suit, freeing the Task Force to pursue the matter of the disposition of corridor land. By the end of 1978, the disposition plan developed by PWRTF received the approval of both the city and the county. The state then released the land for redevelopment.

The work of the Task Force has pioneered new strategies for the organization of a broad citizen-based planning, development, and design effort established to monitor the reconstruction of a tract of land nearly six times the size of the Park East Corridor. The experience of the Task Force provides an invaluable resource not only for the Park East neighborhoods, but for any city faced with similar redevelopment challenges.

The Neighborhood's Catalogue received permission to reprint the following material from the Park West Task Force's Information Memo 022 and its appendices. This memo accurately describes PWRTF's role in the probable legislative scenario and procedure for the early stages of land reallocation and analysis. Further information may be obtained from the Park West Task Force's office, 2342 West North Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53205 (414-342-2400)

## Background

The Park West Redevelopment Task Force is a private non-profit organization formed for the purpose of guiding the redevelopment of the lands cleared for the Park Freeway West. The Task Force was created by Congressman Henry S. Reuss in consultation with Milwaukee County Board Chairman Thomas Ament, Milwaukee Common Council President Ben Johnson, and State Assembly Majority Leader James Wahner, following the rejection of the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed freeway.

The Task Force was convened in late January 1977. It is composed of the local, county, and state elected officials of the Park West area, representatives from each of the area community organizations, and four at-large members. The Task Force retained a professional planning staff beginning in June of 1977 and has maintained both staff and offices since that time. The present Co-Chairmen are Anthony James Catanese, Dean of the UWM School of Architecture and Urban Planning, and Paul Henningsen, member of the Milwaukee County Board.

Funding for the work of the Task Force has come via staff-prepared proposals that have been accepted by various funding sources but, primarily, the Community Development Block Grant Program administered by the City of Milwaukee.

The monitoring agency for the Task Force is the Department of City Development, City of Milwaukee. The planning services provided under various funding and contracting arrangements serve the objective of guiding both the re-use of the Park West Corridor and influencing the policy making that is needed to accomplish that objective.

To date the Task Force has been successful in accomplishing its objectives by being a forum where decisions concerning the re-use of Park West lands could be worked out between the community and the various public agencies with policy roles in the disposition process. This is expected to continue now that the activity is reaching the plan implementation stage.

#### The Park West Land Situation

Using a Disposition Plan drafted by the Park West Task Force as the basis for the decision, the Milwaukee Common Council and the Milwaukee County Board enacted identical disposition legislation specifying which segments of the cleared Park West Corridor would be retained or transferred for generalized re-use purposes.

The spirit of the resolution and subsequent working agreements are that the Task Force will prepare plans, redevelopment advisories, and strategies that will facilitate redevelopment. The Task Force will not be a developer per se, nor will the Task Force hold or sell land. As a single purpose entity it is responsible for attracting developers, assisting in the preparation of development proposals that take into account Task Force generated redevelopment plans, and advising on the appropriateness of various public and/or private actions that affect redevelopment prospects. In addition the Task Force is in a position to assist in the packaging of redevelopment proposals in order to assure that economically sound development occurs in a fashion that generates maximum positive benefits for the community.





## The Park West Redevelopment Task Force Role in Development Planning Analysis

The principal role of the Task Force is to facilitate development by serving in a technical assistance and advisory capacity. Technical assistance is available to those individuals and organizations that choose to bring their ideas to the Task Force for review. Not coming to the Task Force does not prevent a developer from going directly to the Redevelopment Authority. The findings of the Task Force are advisory and will be expressed via reports to appropriate decision-making entities as well as at hearings required before lands can be sold.

## The Steps Leading to Land Sale and Development

### Participants in the Process:

Once the land title has been transferred to the Redevelopment Authority, a series of steps are required before the land can be offered for sale. Participating in these steps will be the Redevelopment Authority itself, the Department of City Development (the planning agency for the Redevelopment Authority), the City of Milwaukee Plan Commission, the Park West Task Force, and ultimately, the Milwaukee Common Council.

### The Roles of Respective Actors

#### The Redevelopment Authority

This seven member official and citizen board was established in accord with state enabling law to acquire, plan, and market land for redevelopment purposes. It is an independent authority housed within the Department of City Development from which it purposes most of its administrative and planning services. The Commissioner of the Department of City Development serves as the Secretary of the Authority.

The Authority is required to take several carefully defined steps prior to offering land, which it holds, for public sale. The principal steps are:

- a. Preparation and adoption of redevelopment district boundaries
  - b. Preparation and adoption of redevelopment district plans
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Both Redevelopment Authority actions require the approval of the City Plan Commission and enactment by the Milwaukee Common Council. When these steps have been completed, the land may be offered for sale.

The rules governing the method of sale will be established for the Redevelopment Authority. The rules generally reflect the objective to be achieved through redevelopment. It is anticipated that the development objectives evolved by the Park West Task Force will be given consideration in the formation of rules governing the release of land to specific developers.

#### The Department of City Development

The Department is the usual source of the Redevelopment Authority's administrative and planning services. The Authority requests that funds be made available by the Common Council to be used to purchase redevelopment project planning and pay administrative costs. Occasionally consultants are retained by the Department of City Development to prepare redevelopment plans, conduct market and feasibility studies, and to advise redevelopment strategies when staff resources are inadequate.

All redevelopment proposals that come before the Redevelopment Authority are reviewed and analyzed by Department of City Development staff. As the planning and administrative arm for both the Plan Commission and Redevelopment Authority, the Department reviews proposals for compliance with adopted city ordinances and policies.

## STEPS NECESSARY FOR PARK WEST LAND TRANSFER

1. Milwaukee County Corporation Council conducts title search, prepares legal description, and prepares legal documents to transfer land to the City of Milwaukee. This is submitted to the Common Council. (About a year's time)
2. Economic and marketability study is completed by consulting firm. (Estimated time: seven months)
3. Land transfer resolution with fiscal note is introduced into Common Council. Hearings are held by the City Plan Commission, the Zoning & Development Committee, and the Finance & Personnel Committee. Common Council adopts land transfer resolution. (Three weeks minimum)
4. Urban renewal boundaries introduced into Common Council. RACM and Zoning & Development Committee hearings are held. Common Council approves urban renewal boundaries. (Three weeks minimum)
5. Assuming more than one set of boundaries and redevelopment plans, RACM begins holding public hearings on plans. Not all plans will be developed at once. Jacket is introduced into the Common Council. RACM and Zoning & Development Committee hold hearings on one or more plans. One or more plans are approved by the Common Council. (Five weeks minimum for each set of plans - including two week public notice)
6. When Common Council approves first plan, they also approve a contract between the City and RACM to fund the plans, a relocation plan, and a resolution transferring that land to RACM.
7. RACM certifies plans to Common Council and approves a relocation order. (Three weeks maximum)
8. RACM can now accept formal offers to purchase land, and hold hearings on land conveyance.
9. Steps four through seven are repeated for the remaining redevelopment plans.



The introduction to Section 4 of the Neighborhood's Catalogue enunciates the need for a flexible zoning policy to ensure the supportive incremental redevelopment of the Park East freeway land. Key concepts and passages extracted from Section 16-11 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances ("Planned Development Districts") suggest that it is the ideal legal medium for the revitalization of the abandoned corridor:

--the ordinance recognizes the importance of "variety and flexibility in land development for all purposes..."

--the ordinance recognizes "the urgent need for the redevelopment of those congested and blighted areas abutting the central areas of the city..."

--the ordinance recognizes that "such necessary redevelopment cannot be expected to take place in strict accordance with those uniform regulations appropriate to the established areas of the city..."

--the ordinance recognizes the need to provide "increased flexibility in the laws governing the development of those large areas of the city which are now open land..."

--the ordinance recognizes that "uniform regulations appropriate to previously developed residential areas (should not) discourage efficient and imaginative development of...substantially open areas consistent with the reasonable enjoyment of neighboring properties..."

--the ordinance recognizes the need "to provide for stage sequences of construction and establish patterns and characteristics of future development which will result in desirable economic and social consequences..."

--the ordinance recognizes the need to provide for "mixed compatible uses..."

--most importantly, the ordinance recognizes the need "to provide for the multiple needs of society and maximize the opportunity for a wide range of choices in residential living areas and to serve the varying needs of persons in such areas..."

The ordinance allows land to be zoned and developed in single parcels or combinations of single parcels. It facilitates a much greater degree of control over design and planning and may be tailored to maximize the potential for neighborhood involvement in the incremental redevelopment process.

The ordinance specifies different types of development districts based on the minimum size of parcels to be developed. Type I relates to parcel sizes between five and twenty acres; Type II relates to parcels over twenty acres; and Type III relates to parcels under five acres. Each type or classification carries regulations and restrictions in keeping with the Master Plan of the City of Milwaukee. Residential density, transportation thoroughfares, community service facilities, parks, vehicle parking, utilities, and other matters pertaining to the specific requirements of land development are detailed in relation to each type. The type most favorable for the redevelopment of the Park East freeway land is the third, which deals with the smallest units of land and requires the least amount of setback (the number of feet from the property line to the edge of the building).

Planned Development Districts restrict the broad and often damaging construction of a single building type, like a high-rise apartment building, commonly witnessed in large residential areas that have been zoned for maximum allowable heights, among other considerations (see Section 4 of the Neighborhood's Catalogue). The ordinance can be employed to reduce the acceleration of development, enhance the possibility for building restrictions that ensure neighborhood compatibility in new construction, and guide the proposals of designs that support the special needs and characteristics of a specific area. Although each separate unit of land must be approved by the various regulatory agencies of City government, the time involved tends to guarantee ample opportunity to explore the impact of each new development. Planned Development Districts promote incremental growth over a long period of time.



Historic Lower East Side  
Neighborhood Association, Inc.

The Historic Lower East Side Neighborhood Association (HLES) began when concerned area residents came together to discuss the city's plans for temporary improvements of the Park East freeway corridor.

Informal meetings were held and telephone calls were made to elected officials. Residents expressed dissatisfaction with the city's plans and suggested alternatives. A public meeting was organized and conducted by 3rd and 4th ward aldermen in June 1980.

Following the June meeting, members of the ad hoc neighborhood association formed a steering committee to develop an alternative plan for temporary recreational use of the corridor land. After further work and discussion, a new proposal was drawn up, combining the neighborhood's alternative with the city's plan. Subsequently, four blocks of recreational improvements were approved for construction and work will begin in Fall of 1981.

Regular and formal meeting of the steering committee began during the Fall of 1980. The committee drafted and adopted by-laws in November. In December, a survey was conducted to determine the issues most important to residents of the Lower East Side. The Historic Lower East Side Neighborhood Association incorporated as a non-profit community service organization in February 1981.

The Historic Lower East Side Neighborhood Association has three basic purposes:

1. the preservation of the historic and residential character of the neighborhood, including the improvement of its physical appearance.
2. promotion of better community services and facilities.
3. promotion of a sense of community participation and pride through public education.

The organization holds meetings every third Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at All Saints Parish Hall, 818 E. Juneau Avenue. To contact the Historic Lower East Side Neighborhood Association, write to:

HLESNA  
P.O. Box 1926  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201