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Memo on District Plan Documents

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TO: District Planning
 FROM: G. Barnes
 SUBJECT: District Plan documents

Dec. 1974

We are approaching the adoption of the New District Plan by City Council. Corbett-Farwell-Higgin-Cain Bill and Mangano Bill are not far behind. O'Hara shall be on the way the first of ~~the~~ the year and I am hoping to have at least two of them ready for Council adoption by this time next year.

I think it is time that we establish some basis of understanding — among ourselves and others — as to what we expect to accomplish in this important effort of district planning and how we expect to accomplish it.

To that end, I would like to propose what the product of these efforts should be — the product defined narrowly as the document or material we produce.

There are several objectives to be pursued in the publication of a document (or the production of a video-tape, slide show, etc.):

1. It should state clearly what policies the Council has adopted to guide change and development in the area, and why those policies have been adopted. This is an important ingredient ~~in~~ in subsequent efforts ~~on~~ on the part of the Council, Planning Commission and Neighborhood Association to implement these policies. It ^{should} ^{be} also an important and obvious consideration in the decisions of private individuals, groups and firms. Thus, these policies should be documented in a form which ~~it~~ it

indicate their official status and this documentation must be relatively well-known if not widespread.

Finally, the policies must be adhered to over some length of time and so must continue to serve as guides to both public and private decision-makers.

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2. The document must be capable of change without undue cost and complication. Nothing will make the document obsolete faster than a format which can't be changed or a ~~format~~ format which can be changed but ^{which} individuals do not change.

3. The document should ~~to~~ include as much attention to people as the process or policies do. This is not just to put the document into some kind of metaphysical harmony with the process or the policies. It is also meant to give individuals in that neighborhood ~~but a small amount of~~ that credit they deserve — both as workers in the process ~~of~~ of planning and as important participants in the success of the policies. We can't afford, nor is it desirable, to make a high school yearbook out of it, but that format is not a bad one to think about. Certainly people relate more to their high school yearbook than to any plan I ever saw. And if the document is to serve its important purpose — to guide decisions over a long period of time — a lot of work will

respect and relate to it.

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2. The document must be capable of growth and change over time — growth in its pages to accommodate ~~the~~ a record of successes and failures in attempts to accomplish the plan in the future, and changes ~~in these~~ necessitated in these decisions and policies of the past. It must be a working document. As such, it must be ~~be~~ current and relevant. ~~It~~ It must be capable of growth and change without undue cost or complication.

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In ~~line~~ with the above, I therefore propose that in ~~the~~ each of the district plans, the following should be documented, in both ~~printed~~ print and visual modes:

1. The people involved in the process of planning from that area as well as the people who live in that area. Pictures should show what the demographic, ~~and~~ economic and social statistics show, as well as ^{what} the problems, assets and opportunities seem to be.
2. The process through which the plan went in coming to a decision by City Council. This should include ~~the~~ time, place and number of meetings; issues brought before those who were involved in the process; successes and failures in the process; etc.
3. The planning policies adopted by Council for application to the area. This should include brief statements of intent, and should be backed up by more technical and detailed document, not in this document.
4. A 1, 5 and 10-year program of measures to be taken to implement the plan. This would include responsible agency or individuals, costs, and realistic goals for time required to accomplish. This is also an expression of neighborhood priorities.
5. A section on performance, noting both successes and failures in attempts to accomplish programs or policies.

This format also indicates that the decision-making process is a continuing one and that the planning process must be consistent with that.

The document should not be long—30 pages should be sufficient. It should be loose-leaf—indicating the desirability and necessity for change as circumstances and experience dictate. This is particularly true of sections 3, 4 & 5. In fact, section 5 may not include anything in its initial publication. The Bureau will review, and modify as necessary, these documents for the Neighborhood Association every 3 years. Neighborhood Associations, themselves, may request modification at intervals ^{of} not ~~to~~ less than 1 year.

This document will be prepared after Council adoption of the planning policies for the area. Materials submitted to the Planning Commission and City Council ~~to~~ will follow the same format, but no attempt will be made—prior to adoption—to publish what might be thought a finished document.

It is my opinion that these documents should be standard at least in size and general format. I would also prefer that some common style run through the series though I can be talked out of that. It appears to me, though, that a certain common ~~and~~ elements for all district documents would help us in designing, ~~and~~ publishing and modifying the documents. And I am sure that each neighborhood's particular "style" can still be captured within this standard format.