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## Summary of Planning Report

Ernest Bonner

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Statement before Council  
Jan. 31, 1974 before  
5-1 vote against Upshur corridor.

DRAFT

1/31/74

EB

#### SUMMARY OF BUREAU OF PLANNING REPORT

1. Alternative I (Upshur) will result in a substantially greater net loss of housing units that would be the case with Alternative IV.
2. The net result in terms of good housing units is:
  - 82 net loss with Alternative I.
  - 28 net gain with Alternative IV.
3. The cost of last resort housing will be greater in the event of Alternative I than with Alternative IV.
4. In either case the redevelopment stimulus to the Thurman-Vaughn Corridor provided by Federal resources through last resort housing will be slight - less than three acres of redevelopment under I and less than 3.5 acres of redevelopment under IV.
5. The crucial assumption in this conclusion is that few displaced households will accept last resort housing. The reasoning for that assumption lies partly with the kind of last resort housing that the State will build and partly with the time delays between now and the construction of such housing.
6. The State Highway Division proposal for last resort housing is two-fold: Insert 'A' 125 units at a density of approximately 60 units per acre and 35 single-family homes. I do not believe that 125 households (over 1/3 of all households in the corridor) will choose to live at the high densities proposed for the multi-family units - particularly when the existing density in that corridor is almost half that - 34 units per acre. I am also of the opinion that 35 single-family homes will not be built - not because 35 displaced families from the Upshur corridor will not want single-family homes,

## Insert 'A'

pictorial

(for multi-family dwellings)

The alternatives posed by the State Highway Division are at 130 units per acre, 120 units per acre, 44 units per acre and 17 units per acre. Their cost estimates for multi-family dwellings suggest construction at <sup>an average of</sup> 60 units per acre.  $\blacktriangle$

The average size of each unit is small — 600 ft<sup>2</sup>. The average cost per unit is assumed to be \$10,000 and average market rents would be \$117.00 per month. Leaving aside the good possibility ~~probability~~ that their cost estimates are low, it is clear that the State is proposing relatively small units at relatively high densities. It is, in my opinion, only hope that supports the notion that over 1/3 of all <sup>displaced</sup> households in the corridor (125 ~~families~~ households) will choose to live in such accommodations. I have assumed that less than 90 households will choose such accommodations. I feel that is even a little hopeful.

This can be compared to existing densities in the corridor of 34 units per acre.

but because I doubt that single-family homes can be built in that area for \$25,000 as assumed. In fact, if the State Highway Division's estimates are correct, the land alone for that single-family dwelling would cost over \$12,000. And I doubt that Federal guidelines on last resort housing will permit the expenditure that would be required for single-family homes in that area. In short, I cannot believe that substantial numbers of displaced households will choose to live in the kinds of last resort housing that the State can afford to build in that area.

7. Furthermore, and to add to the uncertainty about last resort housing among those who are to be displaced (as well as us), the timing of land acquisition, relocation and construction of last-resort housing will work against its success. With the exception of hardship and protective buying, the State cannot legally acquire property for last resort housing until at least January of 1976. Assuming six months for acquisition and 18 months for relocation as required, demolition and construction, it will be four years from now before households in the corridor may be relocated to the last resort housing built. Against this option, is that of accepting traditional relocation benefits which would be available some two years earlier, starting in January of 1976. Those who pass up these traditional relocation benefits to wait two more years while acquisition and maybe some clearance is going on all around them in order to move to last resort housing have truly qualified for last resort housing.
8. In summary, I do not expect - and I think the City would be ill-advised to expect - any significant redevelopment as a result of last resort housing construction, for less than a hundred last resort housing units will be built, only a few acres will be developed.

~~9. Related to this is the opportunity for assistance in residential and open space redevelopment promised by City expenditure of \$600,000 as proposed by Commissioner Anderson. I agree wholeheartedly with Commissioner Anderson's goal: to develop and stabilize in residential use the northern edge of the NW District. But my experience~~

9. It has been proposed that the State Highway Division's construction of a tunnel and financing of last-resort housing, together with \$600,000 of City funds could accomplish the redevelopment of 8 blocks on the northern edge of the NW District — between 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, Thurman and Vaughn. Let me pose an alternative development possibility in the event of alternative II, for comparison.

With the approval by Council of alternative III corridor, the State moves ahead immediately with plans for last-resort housing at an average density of 14 units per acre on sites the State presently owns. The State also engages in hardship and protective buying, if possible, on the large, vacant parcels of land located between 26<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>, Thurman and Upshur. Successful accomplishment of the required number of housing units in this way will stabilize 4 blocks of the B in question. ~~At the same time, several parcels in the 4 blocks with uncertain destiny are already now in parking use. Applying a parking zone. Additional parking could be developed along Vaughn to satisfy off-street parking~~

The remaining 4 blocks have an uncertain destiny at this time. But it is important to note that much of their present state can be attributed to public policy of the past. Public policy of the future can ~~contribute to stabilization of these areas~~ change this. It is also significant that the ~~the District has never~~ use of ~~the~~ land in these 4 blocks need not be entirely residential. Non-residential uses meeting certain performance standards ~~will not~~ will not disrupt ~~an~~ ~~essentially~~ an essentially residential area. ~~essentially~~

~~So the~~

I invite the Council's comparison of the two outcomes. In the final analysis, alternative I presents an opportunity for residential

redvelopment in ~~two~~<sup>four</sup> blocks where under alternative II the future of these ~~two~~<sup>four</sup> blocks is ~~uncertain~~ relatively uncertain. And when you consider the possibilities that the core may not be built, that last-mentioned housing will not be a significant stimulus to redevelopment and that limited city funds will not contribute significantly to this redevelopment stimulus, it appears to me that the uncertainty of ~~the~~ the complicated program required to ~~to~~ realize the opportunities of alternative I ~~is~~<sup>is</sup> maybe greater than the uncertainty of a lesser vision under alternative II.

10. In conclusion, ~~my judgment~~ the Bureau of Planning is at one with Commissioner Anderson's goal — to develop and stabilize <sup>in residential use</sup> the northern edge of the NW District. But it is my judgment that this goal is not ~~so~~ well-served by ~~the~~ <sup>corner</sup> selection of the Upsher corridor. ~~to match the~~