DESIGN REVIEW IN URBAN RENEWAL

A Case Study of the Boston Redevelopment Authority

by

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The unique opportunities for control and process planning that exist in Urban Renewal have made possible the exploration of design techniques that have not been possible before. Boston in particular has been a laboratory for such exploration. Emerging from this experience is a more meaningful and helpful public policing of both public and private development as a part of a wide spectrum of city design activities. Through urban renewal and design review, the Boston Redevelopment Authority has become an important second client to architects and developers. As this second client it has effectively provided a two-way communication channel bridging the gap between the design plan and its implementation.

The process approach to design that has been developing from national and local experience is based on a clear distinction between development controls and police power controls. Development controls are based on rights obtained by the public agency comparable to those of a private landowner to impose conditions and restrictions in the disposition of property. Police power controls, on the other hand, are based on uniformity of application and withholding of development rights only where the public health, safety, or general welfare is threatened. This difference results in the potential choice between a very flexible open approach to design and control or a very tight one. Either may rely heavily on review of developer proposals.

The following pages examine the shaping of the elements in the design review process in Boston to effectuate its design goals in the various contexts of redevelopment. These elements include (1) design objectives and controls contained in the urban renewal plans and disposition documents, (2) liaison procedures including assistance in gaining approvals from other agencies, coordination, provision of information, and provision of design assistance, and (3) review by the Design Advisory Committee.

The contexts in which these are examined include public and private developers, predominance of design or other agency objectives, strong or weak market conditions, and renewal and non-renewal areas. Each of these pose different challenges to the design and review processes.

Finally, suggestions are made as to how the review process might be improved and extended into non-renewal areas. These include establishing a general design framework more consonant with traditional applications of the police power, as is suggested by investigations into perception theory, distinguishing various levels of significance to structure what projects and what aspects of their design should be reviewed, broadening the incentives for both voluntary and mandatory review, and strengthening the various elements in the review process.

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The ultimate responsibility for the organization and content of the thesis lie with the writer. However, many of the underlying concepts were generated through contacts with the faculty, staff, and fellow students of M.I.T.'s Department of City and Regional Planning. Of these, Kevin Lynch is to be thanked for suggesting the study area and making available his files on the Government Center and the Waterfront renewal projects; and Donald Appleyard for valuable criticisms and suggestions made in the course of the study.

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All development and rehabilitation proposals and architectural plans will be subject to design review, comment and approval by the Boston Redevelopment Authority prior to land disposition and prior to the commencement of construction.

In order to assure compliance with the specific controls and design objectives set forth in this Plan and as more specifically set forth in the disposition documents, the Boston Redevelopment Authority shall establish design review procedures and evaluate the quality and appropriateness of development and rehabilitation proposals with reference to the design objectives and requirements set forth in this Plan and in the disposition documents. The procedures will be instituted so as to provide for a continuing review in order to achieve the best in urban design for the city.

This and similar requirements can be found in each of the Boston renewal plans. The following pages will examine the function and procedure of design review as it has been developed in Boston. The study will emphasize the processes by which good design is achieved rather than the actual content of design. To do this it will examine the context within which design review operates and the ingredients of the review process as they are shaped to deal with the context.

The study is essentially a case study of the operations of the Boston Redevelopment Authority. The second chapter, however, reviews in general the development of what has been called the process approach to design in urban renewal and extracts from a wide range of sources on renewal the important factors constituting the context within which
renewal and design review must operate. The following chapters, then, examine the Boston renewal program and general design review procedures, examples of the various contextual factors, and the shaping of the review process to deal with these factors.

Because the Boston Redevelopment Authority is not only an action-oriented renewal agency but also the planning body for the whole city of Boston, design review in non-renewal areas will be a secondary theme of the study.

**DEFINITION AND FUNCTION**

The Urban Renewal Administration defines design review as "the scrutiny of a redeveloper's plans by a review panel to insure that the plans meet and carry out the project design objectives, and the panel's subsequent recommendation to the renewal agency for approval or disapproval." It will be seen, however, that design review as practiced by the BRA is a broader phenomenon than indicated here or in the statement of Section 603 above.

To make the discussion clearer, design shall be defined here as a process of "preparing possibilities of sets of actions shaping the sensuous environment to achieve certain purposes." The processes of purposing, informing, and preparing possibilities may each be changing with time. The purposes constitute the "design objectives." A prepared possible sets of actions constitute "a design." "Design review" is then considered to be "an examination and evaluation of one or more sets of actions proposed to shape the sensuous environment in terms of the design objectives."
The URA manual then goes on to point out that the scrutiny of plans is backed up by day-to-day coordination and advisory services. It states that where there is provision for design review and design objectives in the official documents relating to redevelopment, and when this review is based on expert professional evaluation coupled with advisory and coordinating efforts, it becomes the complete process of design review. It describes this process as taking place in five stages:

1. **Information services**: communicating project design objectives and conditions for approval of plans and proposals, provision of information through written statements, graphic materials, illustrative plans, and formal or informal discussions, provision of information and status of other projects in the area, and coordination with these.

2. **Technical evaluation of plans and proposals**: examination to determine conformance with the controls and conditions imposed by official documents, examination to establish that sufficient information is present as a basis for review.

3. **Review**: scrutiny by panel or staff.

4. **Follow up**: Surveillance to insure approved designs are carried out, liaison to assure project improvements coordinate with private development.

5. **Assistance with changes and modifications**: aid in working out necessary changes and improvements where projects have been disapproved.

These constitute the important manifest functions of design review and are accepted as such in the later discussions of the formal review procedures of the BRA and in the discussion of the workings of design objectives and controls, the Design Advisory Committee, and liaison. Of equal importance will be certain latent functions which review does or might serve. These include providing flexibility in the planning and development process, asserting of the importance of design criteria, redressing the balance between public and private design.
objectives, discouraging certain kinds of developers from participating in development, and educating the inarticulate client.

a. Providing Flexibility

Uncertainty is a major characteristic of the design process. The difficulties of predicting future market conditions, the range of possible developers and needs, communication problems between the multiplicity of persons involved, and the general complexity and changing nature of the factors involved in design argue for a mechanism that can incorporate changes in information, purpose, and design. The designs by redevelopers' architects, in this view, are very much a part of the basic planning process itself, and project planning is in a large measure a goal-searching operation verifying or altering the goals of the renewal program. Design review is a mechanism which makes this process possible.

b. Asserting the Importance of Design Objectives

In the process of urban development, the design of the sensuous environment competes with a number of other values. A study of the design atmosphere in Boston would show that Edward Logue is the most important force asserting design values. He and his program have in turn drawn heavily on the resources provided by the design professions in Boston and the universities, particularly M.I.T. and Harvard, for consultant services and staff. Beside backing these values through surveillance of redevelopment, design review makes these values effective by giving them credibility through the prestige of its staff and the Design Advisory Committee.
c. Redressing the Balance between Public and Private Design Objectives

The public and private interests are frequently at odds with each other. The conflict over public objectives and those of the private developer represent the major point of conflict and negotiation during the process of review. In Boston's renewal projects, the developer's architect is subject to review in all aspects of design, though the general framework within which he operates is generally open. The function of design review here is to assert the major design objectives over private objectives where the two are in conflict.

d. Improving Design Communication

For the uninitiated, architecture and design are difficult subjects in which to develop competence or confidence. Few clients who undertake construction experience more than a "one-shot" effort. Though a client may be receptive to good design, he cannot easily understand or evaluate the architects' presentation. Similarly, the public at large finds it difficult to understand or evaluate the design effects of public programs for which it is ultimately responsible. A large measure of the responsibility for bridging this communication gap is placed on the architectural profession both to stimulate an awareness and teach the principles of good design. Architecture, however, is an unusual profession -- extremely individualistic, ungenerous in its criticism of its fellows, and riddled by debate. Here design review functions to provide a central source of evaluation which serves in part to bridge this communication gap.
e. Discouraging Certain Kinds of Developers

One of the major claims that is made for design review is that more than anything else it discourages the developer who among other things is not design oriented from participating in renewal. In this view the most important means by which to achieve good project design is to bar the hack architect and the developer whose sole aims are to build quickly and cheaply for the maximum profit.

STRATEGY

The shaping of the review process to achieve its design objectives and fulfill the above functions within a variety of contexts constitutes the strategy of review. The discussion of strategy will examine the kinds of design objectives and controls that are employed, the character of design liaison, and the role of the Design Advisory Committee. The various contexts in which the effectiveness of the strategy of review will be examined include different types of developers and architects, conflicting agency objectives, various market conditions, and renewal and non-renewal areas. Among the particular kinds of strategy choices and factors that will be examined will be:

a. Strategy

1. Design objectives and controls. These may be tight or open; general or specific; fixed or flexible. They may be designed to be operational, consistent, and complete without impinging on the creative talents of the ultimate designers. They may attempt to provide a positive framework for design or they may be used to establish bargaining points with developers.
2. Liaison. Liaison may be formal or informal, continuous or intermittent. It may emphasize technical inputs and coordination or design values. It may be used to bring out implicit objectives or rely on explicit statements. It may be used to act as a supplement or replacement for design objectives and controls. It may assist developers in getting financing or other agency approvals or it may make these difficult.

3. Design Advisory Committee. The Design Advisory Committee may play a limited role and simply pass on the architectural quality of particular proposals made by developers, or it may play a broader role, reviewing and supporting agency plans and consultants, participating in policy decisions, arbitrating design disputes between architects, clients, and the agency. Their agenda may be crisis oriented or designed to provide a full and continuous participation in the review process.

b. Contexts

1. Different types of developers and architects. Developers may be public or private. Private developers may be investors or users. Any of these may be large or small, strong or weak in design capacity.

2. Conflicting agency objectives. A renewal agency may be concerned in general or in particular cases with objectives other than design. These may include getting a maximum dollar return from the sale of the land (not the case in Boston), provision of low rent housing (particularly for relocatees), political acceptance, and construction schedule.
3. Market conditions. The market for a particular kind of development in a particular location may be strong or weak. There may be many developers with good architects competing for a particular parcel, or bidders may have to be sought out. Financial resources may be ample or limited.

4. Renewal and non-renewal areas.

**SUMMARY**

Design review has been defined as an examination and evaluation of proposed sets of actions shaping the sensuous environment in terms of certain purposes. Its manifest function is to achieve effective design through information services, technical evaluation of plans and proposals, review, follow up, and assistance with changes and modifications. In addition, it may serve certain latent functions which include providing flexibility, asserting the importance of design objectives, discouraging certain kinds of developers, redressing the balance between public and private design objectives, and improving design communication.

Through an examination of the review strategy and its application in various contexts, the following chapters will attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of the BRA in fulfilling these functions, including the design objectives.
The understanding of the role of design review in urban renewal is in part predicated on concepts developed during the early 1960's. Case studies of early projects show a frequent failure to achieve well-designed results. Roger Montgomery, as design consultant to the URA, concluded in his study that "this disappointing performance results to a large extent from the inability of public agencies to bridge gaps in responsibility and to control design decision sequences. Several recent innovations based upon clearer notions of control opportunities in the urban renewal process promise to improve the design of renewal areas. The most sophisticated innovations embody a renewal project planning approach aimed at 'process comprehensiveness' rather than 'plan comprehensiveness.'\(^6\) The following section summarizes the process approach set forth by Montgomery designed to bridge gaps and control design decisions. This is followed by an examination of national experience with disposition, drawing out the important factors.

THE PROCESS APPROACH

Broadly speaking, urban renewal takes place in two stages. The first consists of setting the over-all community goals and planning the project. The second consists of a series of actions during which acquisition, clearance, relocation, disposition, rehabilitation, and redevelopment take place. Phase one results in an Urban Renewal Plan
which states a program to eliminate blight and deterioration, sets forth conditions to prevent the recurrence of blight and assure long-term stability, establishes community objectives for development and design in conformance with the community general plan, and provides legal notice to the residents.

The second series of actions -- acquisition, relocation, clearance, project improvements, rehabilitation, land disposition, and redevelopment -- contain the bases for the urban renewal design process. Within the limitations of market and administrative processes, the city can exercise considerable freedom in controlling the use, design of structures, placement on the land, and the location and design of public and private open space to achieve its design goals.

Montgomery points out that there are a number of powerful constraints to be lived with, each with the power to destroy the program beyond its stated aims, shatter design responsibility into bits and pieces, and separate plans from the process of their realization. Included in the list are: (1) the dichotomy between public and private control, (2) the tension between federal and municipal agencies, (3) the division of power among different federal agencies, and (4) the fragmentation of power at the local level.

These tend to cut and dismember the design process. Ideally design decisions flow in an uninterrupted stream from the earliest ones about programming and goals to final details of construction and use.

This fragmentation is built into urban renewal by the context within which it finds itself. Montgomery states that the context can best be understood in terms of a "gap" hypothesis. The implications are
that successful accomplishment in urban renewal design results from the building of bridges across public-private, federal-local, federal-interagency, and local-interagency splits.

The most important gap divides the design continuum into zones with public control on one side and private control on the other. The public side is expressed in such terms as the comprehensive plan, goals of "balanced community," economic development, and tax base increases. The private side is expressed by private initiative, profit, and status.

Montgomery concludes that a major source of failure in early renewal plans to bridge this gap and positively influence design was to a large extent the use of "comprehensive plan implementation tools." These essentially took the form of land use maps and sets of controls and restrictions patterned on zoning. The subsequent parceling of the land to many developers proved the inefficacy of these tools for implementing design.

In an effort to achieve better design, three general approaches took shape during the early 1960's. The first aimed at using the opportunities for tight controls implicit in the urban renewal plan. The second took advantage of renewal's possibilities for control through administrative process. The third effort, which Montgomery recommends, and which with some elaboration characterizes the approach in Boston, represents a combination of these two approaches.

Police power land use controls are founded on two principles: one, the withholding of development rights only where public health, safety, morals, or general welfare are threatened; and the second, that they should have uniformity of application. Land use controls in urban
renewal derive from the premises that the renewal agency has the rights of a private landowner and may impose in the sale contract whatever restrictions it chooses within the law. Disposition of land is at fair value for the uses in accordance with the urban renewal plan, taking into account the effects on land value derived from the controls imposed. No need for uniform application exists since each parcel may be controlled independently and its value determined accordingly.

The first approach, characterized by "tight plans," has employed a nearly complete and literal writing in of detailed design. Included in the urban renewal plan are setback lines, building lines, maximum and minimum height limits, functional layout, location of entrances, and even fenestration patterns. Questions are raised as to what would have happened had no developer been found or had someone come along with more creative architects working for the developer rather than the agency. Beside these problems, Montgomery lists a number of other problems faced by tight plans:

1. When specific building form and site layout are built into the urban renewal plan, it takes formal action by the local legislature, the plan commission, and the HHFA to make any significant changes. Even with the more generalized controls, these prove costly in time, energy, and money, and often generate pointless conflict.

2. It generally takes about seven years to move from legislative approval of the urban renewal plan to an advanced stage of redevelopment. Market research, which under these conditions is extremely shaky, and the inevitable factors which crop up during execution produce difficulties which argue for deferring detailed design decisions until a time much nearer actual redevelopment.
The second approach is based on open plans, where the design is left to the redeveloper and his site planners. The urban renewal plan sets forth a design process including (1) a procedure for the design of public space and other site improvements which insures that they will dovetail with the private redevelopment, and (2) a process of land disposition requiring formal collaboration between the public planner and private architect during design.

The urban renewal plan contains a formal statement of renewal and design objectives to support its open controls and carefully define the design process. This acts as a miniature constitution for design development. This approach contains a number of advantages.

1. In terms of the gap hypothesis, it introduces a zone of shared control in the design continuum representing good design better than a land use map.

2. Contrary to the tight plan, it accepts the primary role of the private entrepreneur in redevelopment investment decisions.

3. The seven-year interval between plan approval and active redevelopment cannot cripple open plans to the extent of tight plans.

4. It provides room for architectural and entrepreneurial inventiveness at points where tight plans shut it out.

5. It avoids the cumbersome quantities of too much detail and the difficulties of obtaining approval for changes in the renewal plan.

However, it runs into the problem that there is little American private experience with procedural or administrative land use control in place of statutory standards. There is also a tendency to circum-
scribe public initiative. In some cases it is held that functional complexity or market softness may be overcome by public leadership in preparing detailed over-all designs.

Another difficulty which occurred at Hartford, holding up disposition, was the inclusion of a height limit on the urban renewal plan which served no purpose either in terms of preventing the shading of adjoining property or the protection of the skyline. Montgomery states that this illustrates the need to distinguish between planning controls and design or development controls.

The more recent innovations in renewal planning attempt to draw upon both the previous streams of thought, extracting their advantages while avoiding the defects of each. In this lay the seeds for what Montgomery calls the "comprehensive process" approach, encompassing the advantages of the flexible open project plans yet retaining the opportunity for appropriate public leadership in design decisions. Montgomery condenses this process into three main components: 9

1. Preliminary Work and the Urban Renewal Plan. Studies are undertaken to explore design potentials and to establish a strategy for design actions. From these studies come the design objectives and controls set forth in the urban renewal plan and the actions and procedures devised to accomplish the objectives. The plan follows the open or flexible mode rather than building in tight design. (Note that this is just the beginning of project planning work, not the end. Conventional planning -- and urban design -- have ended in the survey and planning phase before renewal action gets underway.)

2. Design Plan. At the beginning of renewal operations, the public agency prepares design plans in incremental but continuous fashion. These plans may become detailed; they may include the actual design of the site improvements and other public construction, advisory material, and design for owners who are rehabilitating their properties, and design plans to serve as a basis for land disposition and redevelopment. The
degree of detail and refinement will vary from time to time during the years of project execution, and from place to place within the project, in order to meet real situations as they occur.

3. Design Action. Each renewal action -- site improvements, rehabilitation, land disposition, redevelopment -- either follows the design plans or the design plans are used as a yardstick against which alternatives are measured. Processes for reviewing redevelopment proposals, effecting design coordination, organizing land disposition, and so on, are detailed, enunciated, and put into operation.

To achieve flexibility and better design, it is clear that this method puts a heavy emphasis on administrative procedural controls rather than specific controls contained in the urban renewal plan. The thesis will later point out some limitations in the open, or flexible, plan as outlined.

DISPOSITION AND DESIGN CONTEXT

The developer selection and the following processes of plan execution are in many ways as important as the design objectives and controls in their effects on design quality. There are four basic methods by which developers may be selected: (1) sealed bids, public auction, and public auction with guaranteed bid; (2) predetermined price; (3) negotiated disposition under other than competitive conditions; and (4) negotiated disposition under open competitive conditions and fixed price bidding on other than price basis.10

Those agencies which are concerned, as a community goal, with obtaining maximum dollar return, have tended toward methods of price competition. Those concerned with controlling the redevelopment process and their ability to exercise discretion in the selection of the optimum plan have favored the other techniques. From national experience in
renewal, different situations and different overall objectives have been found to affect the relative importance and ease of achieving design goals. These may be summarized as follows:

a. The Public and Private Redeveloper

There are many categories of persons who will have an interest in the land. Included are lending agencies, public or governmental agencies, and other semi-public or private users. The latter may be (1) the user who acquires land for the conduct of its own activities, (2) the capitalist-investor who uses money to make money, and (3) the builders who buys land as a semi-processed good to combine with structural improvements for sale. Users may be divided into non-profit and profit. Each of these has different financial resources, different needs, and different modes of operation. The most significant differences are those between the public developer and the private developer.

Public. Having comparable powers of eminent domain and being partners in government, public agencies need not subject themselves to design controls. This, as well as status aspirations, jealously guarded prerogatives, and differences in standards can make negotiation and cooperation difficult. Critical forces opting for cooperation include the ability of the renewal agency to write down the cost of clearance, the substitution of capital costs for part of the city's contribution to renewal project costs, political pressure, and common objectives. If an atmosphere of cooperation exists, design procedures may be established by mutual agreement.
Private. Private developers, lacking the power of eminent domain, must accept the controls imposed by the local agency on the project lands the developer needs or desires. Though land may be of unique value to a particular developer, such as a non-profit institution seeking to expand, and though it may expect preferred treatment, it has no direct power to avoid the controls. Profit users and investors will be seeking the most felicitous combination of productivity and price, with social objectives playing a minimal role in their design calculations. Private users and institutions are more likely to have design objectives compatible with the local agency.

b. **Design and Other Agency Objectives**

The local agency may seek a number of different and conflicting objectives, the balance of which will determine the most appropriate method of disposition and the sacrifices that will be made to achieve design aims. Among the most frequent objectives are maximum sale price, low rent housing and sale to relocatees, good design, and political acceptance.

**Maximum sale price.** The most favored method of disposition is one of the various forms of competitive bidding, though the actual method may depend on market factors or whether the redeveloper will be public or private. The controls used and the proposed reuse of the land will be reflected in the price paid for the land. Where capable developers are discouraged from bidding under competitive conditions, negotiation may be a better method for securing a higher price. In either case, money spent on land will be at the cost of money spent on design and structure. The BRA does not use this method, always fixing the price of the land.
Low rent housing and home ownership for relocatees.

Methods which eliminate persons through competitive means and emphasize investment in land rather than structure will put the reuse out of the reach of the desired beneficiaries. Where these are a large number of parcels, fixed price sales may be preferred. Where there are a limited number of sites or where housing is to be built by a developer who will rent units, negotiation or limited competition on non-price grounds may be preferred. Where there are a large number of sites to be used primarily for relocatees, design guidance and review become paramount.

Good design. To overcome various factors militating against good design, it is desirable among other things to have a sympathetic community and political atmosphere, competent developers, and competent designers working for the developers and the agency. Developer selection on design grounds will be an important criterion, along with financial backing and experience. Architectural competition, the selection of quality architects for public projects, close design liaison, and architectural review may all play an important role. Good design need not be forgotten where other objectives are important.

Political acceptance. The local agency may be working toward political acceptance of renewal and thus desire to get visible results quickly, favoring choice on the basis of construction schedule. In other situations it may be necessary to hire a local builder, architect, or sponsor. Good design may also be a critical point of acceptance.

c. Strong and Weak Market Conditions

In most cases the acceptable choice of disposition cannot be made until the market for the land has been explored sufficiently
to reveal the extent and nature of demand. Investment proposals must be attractive to developers. There are a number of reasons why developers may be discouraged from competing for a project, such as project location, size, purpose, complications of dealing with a government agency, changed market conditions, and the nature of reuse. If land is disposed of early, the market may be weaker than later when the nature of improvements and the future character of the area has been better established. A later selling time also avoids the problem of long waiting periods for the redeveloper under which market conditions may change.

Strong market. Where there is a strong market with experienced and well financed developer teams vying for the undertaking of a project, competitive methods may produce the best results. Where developers are competent, there is less need for tight plans with greater opportunity for control through administrative procedures than where there is an aura of speculation.

Weak market. Where the market is weak or where there is a relative absence of competent, experienced developers, or where the project is of a highly complex nature, there may be need of some promotion and negotiation. Such conditions may require considerable flexibility to make projects attractive to the developers with particular needs. This puts a greater responsibility on review to avoid both administrative red tape and to achieve its design objectives.

SUMMARY

The process approach to design is an attempt to bridge design gaps. It uses flexible development process controls rather than
controls based on the police power. It includes design objectives, continuous and incremental preparation of design plans, and review of developer proposals which may follow or elaborate on the design plans.

Experience in land disposition suggests that significant factors in determining the character and importance of disposition and design processes have been the kind of developer, the relative importance of various social and agency objectives, and market conditions.
CHAPTER III: BOSTON RENEWAL AND DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Boston has been called a laboratory for the demonstration of renewal techniques. The following sections summarize (1) the overall planning and development of the city's program and (2) the basic organization and procedures of the Boston Redevelopment Authority as they relate to review. Subsequent chapters examine in greater depth the shaping of the principal elements of the review process and its functioning in various contexts.

BOSTON RENEWAL PROGRAM

The 1959 city elections put into office a strong mayor, John F. Collins, and a strong renewal program. Previous essays in renewal by Boston had been political, social, and design disasters. However, Collins believed it to be an essential tool in attacking the city's problems. The hiring of Edward Logue, whose skills at administration and the attraction of federal dollars into the city had been proven in New Haven, and the reorganization of the redevelopment authority into a combined planning and executive function under him, represented important steps in what is now Boston's working program.

One of Mayor Collins' first major proclamations outlined ten areas to be studied. These included the Government Center proposal for Scolly Square, which had been planned during the previous Haynes administration but never got off paper, the business district, the waterfront,
and renovation of what were considered the most run-down residential neighborhoods. Within weeks the Eisenhower housing administrators had approved and agreed to finance these, raising Boston from seventeenth to fourth on the list of cities in terms of the size of federal commitment. A strong and explicit commitment to quality design is one of the program's major characteristics. This commitment can be found in the recently published general plan, the capital improvements program, the various renewal plans, disposition and review procedures, and the size and quality of design staff.

The Capital Improvements Program and the General Plan outline the broad strategy for design. They also contain a number of suggestions not yet implemented for future extensions of review.

a. Capital Improvements Program

The capital improvements program calls for the construction of twenty new buildings a year against an average of three during the twelve years prior to its undertaking. Heavy investments are scheduled for schools, police, fire, and public works. Because these various agencies have limited qualified staff to handle plan review, construction, and supervision, the program proposes that "the position of city architect be created as a centralized position" with responsibility for supervising design and construction of all building for the city except schools. It further suggests that to assure "creative design in municipal buildings" a board of five notably qualified persons be used to consult with the architect on design. This, it states, might be accomplished by expanding the role of the Design Advisory Committee presently working with the ERA. In addition, it is suggested that the
advice of the Boston Society of Architects be sought in creating new procedures for obtaining the services of qualified architects.

These proposals have not been fully implemented. Some investigation has been made by the BRA and the Boston Society of Architects of various methods of selections of architects for public works, including surveys of school building departments around the country and various methods of limited competitions. Selection, however, still remains the responsibility of the particular agency, with considerable room for politics and unimaginative, drab design. These problems exist not only for the city, but for the state and federal projects as well, as can be seen by investigations of the present governor's administration.

b. General Plan and "Capital Web" Concept

The general plan lays out a broad strategy for land use planning and physical design. Because of the limitations of Boston's financial resources and federally aided urban renewal, it states that creative use should be made of "(1) utilization, through effective design, of the growth-inducing potential of public land, open spaces, and buildings; (2) utilization, through effective design, of the many influences of streets and public ways on physical development and design; and (3) improved relation, through public encouragement, of private development to constructive elements of the natural environment."

In regard to the first idea, it suggests that it is possible to create beneficial effects on private development through control of the geographic distribution, site selection, and architectural and landscape treatment of municipal facilities. It views capital design as a
kind of "pump-priming" device, encouraging private investment and
unsubsidized building investment. To structure the location of public
investment, the plan develops the concept of the "Capital Web."\textsuperscript{15}

Throughout the City, important community facilities should
be connected by public open space and relatively important, easily patrolled local streets. Extended continuously between significant landmarks and centers of activity, this "Capital Web" of community facilities would provide a unifying "seam" of services for the common use of neighborhoods on either one of its sides and all along its length. Some small open spaces and elementary schools, within small, socially stable service areas, could be located outside the principal Capital Web system; but even these will require ties to the Capital Web through improved local streets and pedestrian ways.

The application of this concept will, of course, vary from neighborhood to neighborhood and from facility to facility. But, on the whole, it should have these advantages:

(a) Municipal efficiency, through greater efficiency of maintenance and public safety, the sharing of facilities by separate public agencies, and usefulness for public facilities despite changes in population and service area boundaries;

(b) Greater, more positive impact of public development on private investment, through the concentration of community facilities in the Capital Web, greater aesthetic and functional unification of every type of development, and consistently higher real estate values;

(c) Social vitality, through improved public safety, increased usefulness of public facilities to a broader range of social and age groups, and intensification of activities at all times of the day and in different seasons of the year.

In addition, it states that it would be desirable to include where possible "related private facilities, such as shops, churches, historic landmarks, multi-family, elderly, and otherwise special or unusually dense housing, local off-street parking, special features of the landscape, architecture, and street design, private community improvement ventures, and any other properties favorably affected by proximity to large, public facilities."

Further, the potential of streets and public ways forms an "especially important" part of the Capital Web concept. Among other
functions, it is pointed out that streets constitute "channels of visual communication, providing a sense of location and direction, views of pertinent and interesting landmarks, and visual comprehension of the functions of the street system itself."\textsuperscript{16}

Through its structuring of the future significant municipal facilities and its possible relation to various visually, historically, and socially significant elements, the Capital Web begins to provide a basis for determining what areas are most important for design consideration. The emphasis on municipal facilities, and the primacy of hoped-for investment efficiency, tends to obscure many important parts of the city. Examples include Back Bay and Beacon Hill.

The plan calls for an extension of review outside renewal areas and its use for more than a routine exercise of review of municipal facilities. At stake, it points out, is the impact of millions of dollars of public and private construction not only on the appearance of the city, but also on its efficiency and economy. It is hoped that the need for this will receive increasing understanding and recognition. The techniques suggested include either extension of the BRA's existing policy of review over buildings and site design, or voluntary cooperation of individual developers.\textsuperscript{17}

By the first means, official sanctions in support of the principles of Capital Design could be brought to bear on the design, location, and timing of new public facility construction, including public buildings, streets, and open spaces. Plans and specifications for new private building construction, outside as well as inside Renewal project areas, impossible under present law, would also be held to high standards of architectural design.\textsuperscript{18}

While it points out the impossibility of prescribing every aspect of the architectural design of buildings, the plan main-
tains that it would be desirable to establish general design standards which could be applied throughout the city yet leave room for variation and diversity in design. Schools, neighborhood indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, and streets and street furnishing are listed among those public facilities where standards should be applied. Such standards are under study by the ERA and its consultants. Though it has been stated that it would be desirable to extend review of private and public construction outside renewal areas, little progress has been made in this direction through either direct or voluntary cooperation.

**BASIC ORGANIZATION AND REVIEW PROCEDURES**

We are not mere purveyors of real estate. We are builders of cities. And we must bend every effort to make sure that what we build will become an esthetic as well as functional asset to our cities. There is one area where all of us can place greater emphasis. This is design -- by design I mean urban design, urban planning, and good architecture.

Each developer in an urban renewal area is required by the disposition documents and the urban renewal plan to submit to design review. This review is based largely on material developed by the planning and design staff.

The planning and design division in the ERA is one of four (planning and design, transportation and engineering, renewal, and operations) constituting central resources under the Development Administrator and the five-man Authority. Its functions range from graphics, model building, photography, to general planning design. The last has a staff of thirty headed by the Director of Design Review.

Boston has been divided up into ten General Neighborhood Renewal Plan areas ranging in size from sixty acres (Government Center) to over
Each project director has available the resources of the central staff. In addition, key persons are assigned from the central staff to each project. Thus each project has a chief designer as well as assigned planning, transportation, engineering, and legal resources.

During the execution phase, several resources, some of which have a bearing on design criteria, provide inputs to the plan. These include the general plan, a wide range of consultant studies, plans by other agencies, and a process of community participation — in Boston given the title of "planning with people." Here the BRA attempts to "bridge the gap between planner and citizen" by seeking the views and trying to win the support of locally responsible groups. In neighborhoods this has involved a large number of citizen groups. In the case of the Waterfront, a substantial contribution was made by the Chamber of Commerce. Frequently these groups express a concern for the site planning and architectural character of the projects in their areas.20

After official approval of projects by appropriate government agencies and the city council, and development of additional rough plans for the particular parcels, four processes are undertaken: acquisition, relocation, demolition, and site preparation. Concurrently, starting about one year before a site is to be ready, it will be advertised. Any developer may then submit a letter of interest and, with a $50 deposit, get a "developer kit" for the particular parcel or set of parcels in which he is interested. The advertisement may contain such
things as location, size, maximum height, floor area ratio, and price per square foot.

The developer kit is an assemblage of the various factors that will affect the development of the particular site. Among its contents are the policies of the BRA for disposition; guides to the development and design; guides to other approvals, codes and ordinances; and various maps and photographs. Of particular relevance to design and design review are the sections on design and the photographs and drawings.

The sections on design outline relevant excerpts from the Urban Renewal Plan, particular design objectives for the site, the design review process, and the general design policy in urban renewal. The design objectives for particular parcels and their subdivisions may be developed from further studies of the site by the staff after the passing of the urban renewal plan and as the projects progress. These are considered especially important for purposes of coordinating adjacent parcels as they are disposed. These studies are in turn a major portion of the basis for the review.

The Planning and Design Objectives for housing parcels contains sections on use objectives, site design, and building and unit design. Included are the relation to the surrounding area such as adjacent community facilities; recommended points of vehicular and pedestrian access; site amenity, such as existing physical features, open spaces, parking, on-site circulation, and landscaping; and standards for service functions. Building and unit design may mention such things as grouping and general type (elevator, walkup, row, duplex).
The maps and photographs include the basic site information needed for development, such as topography, services, etc.; and abstract diagrams, usually showing the hoped-for massing and circulation patterns. The latter are developed from design studies of building prototypes done by the BRA staff. Their own designs are not included because their concern is simply to explore possibilities and to have backup material to demonstrate the design feasibility of particular solutions. By using only diagrams, it is felt that greater flexibility and freedom is given the ultimate designer, avoiding undue influence over design.

The controls governing the Government Center are much more specific, showing maximum and minimum limits on height, and locations for pedestrian easements through buildings. (See drawing, p.98)

Where there is more than one developer for a particular parcel, they are screened on the basis of financial ability, experience, and architectural credentials. Making this explicit, for example, the Government Center Parcel 7 documents state:

(1) **Design** - The architectural work must be of a quality which meets the high standards of design excellence which have been established and maintained for Government Center.

(2) **Financial Strength** - Urban renewal projects have frequently suffered delays because of inadequate financial resources of developers. Prospective developers will, therefore, be required to make a showing that they have the financial resources necessary to carry out the proposal.

(3) **Experience** - The developer, contractor, and architect should have experience in the construction of buildings of comparable size and importance.

The developer must sign a letter saying that he will use the particular architect throughout the project unless permission to change architects is granted by the agency.
If several strong teams present themselves, the agency may conduct a limited competition. As in other cases, the cost of land is fixed. The jury is chaired by a member of the Design Advisory Committee. An expert in the particular building type, other architects, and prominent lay persons may be included in its membership.

Design review of proposals is then instituted for the following stated purposes: to assure they satisfy the criteria set for the particular parcel; to assure that further development of plans and working drawings is in substantial conformance with the design proposal; to assure that refinements, further improvements, and new details developed in the later design stages continue to conform to the objectives for the parcel; to assure coordination of the developer's proposal with the improvements scheduled on contiguous parcels or contiguous public rights-of-way; and to assist where possible the developer and his architect in gaining approvals of city agencies.

The submission requirements are in four stages, which follow the usual steps in the architectural development of a building. First, schematic plans are presented. These may be highly informal, such as sketches on yellow tracing paper and chip board block models. This is followed by a presentation of preliminary plans giving a more complete idea of the visual appearance of the project.

The third step or "final preliminary" is a complete presentation which forms the basis of the design staff's recommendation for or against disposition. The project is then submitted to the board through the Development Administrator. The submission requirements are generally given in detail including the scale of drawings, desired plans, elevations,
sections, typical horizontal and vertical wall sections, a perspective, and other drawings or models necessary to understand the proposal. It is required that these indicate proposed materials for the site, exterior of building, and public spaces. Also required is an outline specifications and preliminary schematics of art proposals.

The fourth submission consists of final working drawings, specifications, and samples of materials and colors. These are checked for conformance with the final preliminaries. The closing on the disposition does not take place until working drawings have been examined.

It is advised that any important changes in the approach of the redeveloper and his architect at any stage should be reviewed with the review staff before substantial expenditures of time and money are made. If the Authority does not approve the formal submissions, it notifies the developer and his architect in writing, setting forth in detail any grounds for disapproval.

In this process, the chief project designer becomes a kind of quasi-administrator-designer, getting all the political, legal, and engineering inputs; and, in his dialogue with others, providing the design inputs. To aid him in design studies and review, the rest of the staff may form temporary task forces.

Supplementing the design staff is the Design Advisory Committee consisting of the City's "most outstanding architects." Members of this committee now include Hugh Stubbins, FAIA, Vice-President of the American Institute of Architects, and Chairman of the Design Advisory Committee; Pietro Belluschi, FAIA, past Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at M.I.T.; Jose Luis Sert, Dean of the Graduate
School of Design at Harvard University; Lawrence Anderson, Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at M.I.T.; and Nelson Aldrich, principal of the firm of Campbell, Aldrich, and Nulty. It is intended that they provide independent and objective advice in making the design judgments involved in the design review process.

**SUMMARY**

Boston's renewal program covers large areas of the city. The basic design strategy emphasizes the concept of the "Capital Web" as an efficient way of directing capital investment. It is in part an attempt to structure the important elements of visual communication, but falls short of including many of the visually, historically, and socially significant parts of the city.

Present law does not provide for review of either public or private construction outside renewal areas. The plan suggests its extension through either direct control or voluntary cooperation. Schools, recreation, and street furniture are considered particularly important types of public construction where standards are needed.

The administration of the urban renewal areas is decentralized but draws on the resources of the central staff for design and other inputs. Those design inputs that are relevant to particular parcels are put together in a kit that is then made available to prospective re-developers. Design, along with financial strength and experience, is considered an important criterion in the selection of the developer team. Review is outlined as taking place in four submissions. It is advised that important changes in approach in plans be examined by the staff.
before substantial amounts of time and money are expended. Disposition is held off until plans are approved.

The approach basically fits that of Montgomery. This will be elaborated further in the following chapter.
The principle elements of the review process include the design objectives and controls, staff liaison, and the Design Advisory Committee. The following sections discuss how each of these has been structured to support the BRA design goals. This includes bringing out their mode of operation, the kinds of design criteria, and the problems of each.

**DESIGN OBJECTIVES AND CONTROLS**

The design objectives and controls set forth in the plans and disposition documents constitute the explicit basis for design review. The design objectives were defined earlier as the purposes toward which sets of actions shaping the sensuous environment are directed. Ideally these objectives are reflected in the parcelization of the land, the land uses, the circulation system, and the other controls and restrictions on a particular site.

Controls are defined as specified limitations on design, such as specific heights, setbacks, densities, and uses of particular materials, which are mandatory. Different from objectives, they obscure the underlying purposes which they attempt to achieve.

The contents of the objectives and controls may follow an open, flexible mode. These might specify general design criteria such as buildings achieving a continuity of scale between themselves and historically significant buildings. Or they may be tight, specifying
that buildings should be compatible in scale and material with, say, the granite wharf building, shall have no setbacks, and shall not exceed certain maximum and minimum heights.

In renewal, the objectives and controls themselves may be subject to change. Those which are in the renewal plans are the most difficult to alter because of their legal nature and the number of agencies and public bodies required for approval. Those which are in the disposition documents may be highly fluid, requiring only the local agency's approval.

In thedesign process approach outlined by Montgomery, the Urban Renewal Plan sets forth the design objectives and controls. These are based on an exploration of design potentials and the strategy for design actions. The plan follows the open or flexible mode rather than building in tight design. In his discussion he gives examples of height limits and other zoning type restrictions in past projects which failed to distinguish between planning controls and design or development controls.22

In addition, the agency prepares design plans in an incremental but continuous fashion to serve as a basis for redevelopment. These may be tight or open. The combination of "design plan" and urban renewal plan serves as a miniature "constitution" or yardstick against which proposals are measured. The effect is to rely heavily on review.

The BRA does not adhere strictly to the open or flexible approach. This in part may be explained by the relative autonomy exercised by the staff assigned to each of the project areas and the level of sophistication reached at various points in the agency's history.
In some cases, however, the tightness is built into the plans and disposition documents for strategic reasons. The following are some examples of tight controls in the urban renewal plans.

The Waterfront and Washington Park plans have maximum height restrictions on all sites. Most of the parcels in the South End have these. The last, however, also has several which are subject to Authority approval for both height and even density.

The Government Center has been and continues to be the most restrictive. Here the plans contain strict limitations on maximum and minimum height, encourage a minimum setback from the street, and in places specify the size and location of arcades and pedestrian easements. These are usually further defined in the disposition documents.

Signs and lighting are tightly controlled in all project areas. Signs are limited to non-animated and non-flashing types, identifying only the establishment and the nature of its products. These are to be integrated architecturally with the structure they identify. None can project above the roof line. None shall project beyond the face of the building more than 24 inches. The size, location, and number are subject to the approval of the Authority as are any exceptions to the other restrictions. Lighting is limited to certain areas with no floodlighting of buildings or streets permitted.

Cases can be found where projects have exceeded the restrictions found in the plans. However, some general reasons have been suggested for the use of tight restrictions.

One is to avoid pressure from developers to exceed the restrictions. Related to this is the concern over the legal relationship
between design review and zoning, a point of debate within the staff. The most ardent supporters of the "Capital Web" concept, design plan, and design review would like to minimize the fixed zoning type controls, particularly in areas closely associated with the Capital Web. Others express concern over the legal problem of giving arbitrary administrative control to the BRA on renewal sites. This could be subject to attack by adjacent property owners. It also focuses great pressure on the design staff to give preferential treatment. As was clear from interviews, many projects exceeding zoning or design plan restrictions can be presented for the best of aesthetic reasons on the part of the developer and his architect.

One of the chief project designers suggested a second reason for the use of tight objectives and controls, difficult to substantiate: allow tradeoffs in the process of bargaining. In the plans that are being developed by Karl Koch for the Lewis Wharf area of the waterfront, differences have developed over the addition of floors, the roof form, and a cupola on the rehabilitated granite structure, and whether to allow the construction of a 221(d)3 tower on Atlantic Avenue. Koch would like to add two floors of apartments along the full length of the old building, parts of which are now six stories and others four. The cupola, which he claims could be found on historic drawings, would house the mechanical equipment for the elevators and air conditioning. The renewal plan and disposition documents call for lower structures on the avenue. In addition, the basic BRA philosophy for rehabilitation is to maintain the basic shell of old buildings. The original wharf building contained only four floors and no cupola. Thus the BRA would...
like to remove those parts of the building which are above four floors.

One compromise has been the development of a kind of Mansard roof.

Another suggested as perhaps an acceptable tradeoff would be to allow apartments created by an additional floor in the Wharf building to be part and reason for the tower on the avenue.

Most of the tight restrictions are based on design considerations rather than this kind of strategic maneuvering. Thus the restrictions being placed on Parcel 2 of the Government Center, which lies between the tower of the Federal Office Building and Rudolph's State Service Center, are the result of careful three-dimensional studies by the staff later reviewed by the Design Advisory Committee. Such restrictions provide a specific basis for review, allow for the participation of several developers, and avoid some of the problems of arbitrary preference.

One other reason for height restrictions can be found in Roxbury. The BRA had at one time proposed a series of towers along the newly-created boulevard. This proposal was rejected by the community in favor of lower structures. It was important to them that this expectation and desire be fixed in the plan.

In general the BRA attempts to state explicitly the important design considerations in a way that is operational and consistent without impinging on the creative talents of the ultimate designers. Each plan has a general section on design goals, either as part of planning and design objectives or separately stated. In addition, design objectives for each parcel may be found in later sections.
The whole set may be elaborated in a number of statements or in some cases covered by only one or two general statements. Usually they appear to include statements of two kinds. Most are directed toward the organization or form of perceptual elements. Less defined are the non-form objectives and implications of design expression which occasionally appear in the criticism of projects.

Of the first kind, the factors one might find emphasized include visibility, materials, scale, massing, plan form, and the structure of activity. In an apparent attempt to strengthen the visual structure, continuity, comfort, and diversity of the Waterfront, for example, one finds such form-statement objectives as:

To establish an orderly sequence and hierarchy of open spaces and views for both the pedestrian and the motorist.

To create an unobstructed visual channel from the Old State House and Washington and State Streets down to Long Wharf and the harbor beyond.

To maintain the finger-like outline of the wharves.

To establish at the foot of State Street a vehicular-free focal point of converging pedestrian ways and down-harbor views.

To establish a continuity of scale between the existing North End residential community and the new development.

To establish a relationship which provides maximum protection to the pedestrian during unfavorable weather conditions.

To establish an active urban character for the area by the intensive utilization of land and by the mixing of compatible land uses.

For the particular parcels, the goals almost always relate to form and performance qualities. In the case of Lewis Wharf, the Plan calls for a "diverse but compatible mixture of uses," and the development
of "rows of structures of a moderate height running parallel to the long-massive granite structures." The objectives for the Castle Square 221(d)3 housing in the South End state that the development "shall be compatible with existing row housing in the South End and the community of which it is a part," and more specifically, "a maximum number of larger sized dwelling units shall have access to private outdoor space either on the ground or on balconies." 

The Urban Renewal Manual states that "no satisfactory approach for specifying architectural quality exists." Various attempts have been made in the BRA renewal plans. The South End Plan simply states, for example, that one of the main objectives is to "obtain superior architectural and esthetic quality in the new public and private buildings and open spaces."

The Government Center Plan makes the most complete statement. "The individual developer's proposals," it says, "will be reviewed in terms of its contribution to the environment, its care for the assets and community values of historical Boston, and the permanence of renewal objectives in terms of aesthetic expression, utilitarian arrangement, and structural soundness." In addition, the Plan states the developer should consider the following principles, which again relate to form qualities:

a. The best modern architectural standards for natural and artificial lighting, acoustics, and mechanical plant should be utilized as well as sensitive external expression of these factors . . .

b. Experimentation in the arrangement of uses in a single architectural complex . . .

c. New and rehabilitated buildings . . . should harmonize, not only with others sharing the same streets or
open spaces, but with surrounding older parts of downtown Boston. Particular note should be taken of the use of curtain walling materials and architectural rhythm and detail of wall openings, relating to dominant local architectural traditions of masonry materials and complex and careful scales of wall openings.

d. All parapets and roof-top structures should be well organized so as to present an attractive appearance from all points of view, including the view from higher buildings.

Among the special and fundamental principles it states that the City Hall should be visually dominant and artistically unique in the setting provided by a dignified building enclosure of simple roof-line, similar or harmonious materials, and similar scale of facade treatment.

Even though the interpretation of any of the above objectives may at times be difficult, the BRA finds them useful in making explicit the broad responsibility it has undertaken in review. Though more abstract issues of architectural expression are occasionally brought out, the most effective and frequent criticisms usually relate to such form and performance goals as visibility, continuity scale, and functional efficiency. As will be seen in the examples of the following sections, the BRA and the Design Advisory Committee essentially review to all levels of any presentation, including both sensuous and functional design. Usually conflict will frequently be seen to focus on the validity of an objective in a particular case as much as its interpretation.

Summary

The design objectives and controls used by the BRA do not follow completely the open or flexible mode. The reasons suggested include avoiding arbitrary preferences, pressure from developers, tradeoffs,
the desire to fix expectations, and allowing participation by many developers within a unified framework.

In general an attempt is made to state explicitly all important design criteria in a way that is operational and consistent. In practice these are applied very broadly, though certain form and performance criteria are emphasized.

**LIAISON**

The functions of liaison outlined by the Urban Renewal Manual include providing information services, assistance with changes and modifications, and follow up. Viewed as part of the design process, liaison can be seen as a key element, linking and providing interchange and feedback between the design plan and the developer. It is here that the most frequent and intensive contact exists between the BRA on the one hand and the developers and their architects on the other. The importance attached to it can be observed easily by the proportion of staff designer time it receives.

The strategy is essentially designed to accelerate the pace of project development by avoiding bottlenecks over design or other issues and assuring the implementation of design objectives. This generally involves frequent and informal contact and considerable flexibility in meeting and accepting new conditions as they are presented.

The process of breaking down bottlenecks can be viewed as the kind of gap-bridging device described by Montgomery. In the few cases where liaison has partially or wholly broken down, it has resulted in considerable costs in developer design time, construction schedule, and emotional investment. The case of the public housing authority (see p.
illustrates the only case discovered of a total breakdown. A smaller but more frequent type of breakdown occurs where architects delay in showing concepts which they are developing or continue to modify those which have been developed but which essentially have been rejected, in the hope that they will eventually be more acceptable at a later stage of development. Here much depends on an assessment by the architect of the staff's commitment to particular objectives. However, the attempt to persuade with a *fait accompli* appears to be riskier than the process of bartering, and it is questionable whether it has been successful under any circumstances. Tufts New England Medical Center represents one project where the architect has been struggling with this issue.

The process of resolving bottlenecks over design and other issues results, according to one point of view, in a description of staff liaison as a trouble shooting operation. The staff has a number of services to offer which strengthen its position in implementing the design objectives. These are further backed up by the Design Advisory Committee and the power to hold up disposition until the staff is satisfied with a given proposal. Among its services are providing assistance in getting approvals and cooperation from other agencies, providing assistance with design modification and decisions, making available large resources of information, and providing support before the Design Advisory Committee as outlined in the following section.

Support in getting financing, particularly in getting FHA approval, is frequently a critical factor in the viability of a project. Much staff time in residential areas is spent gaining design approval from the FHA. This can be used as one technique to discourage unwanted
development, particularly outside renewal areas. Thus Logue, according to the Boston Globe, registered his disapproval with the FHA for the 221(d)3 project he opposed for Pier 2 on the Waterfront.

Assistance is frequently needed in getting approval from other city agencies, particularly the Public Works Commission. One example is the realignment of Circuit Street in Washington Park to work better for a particular proposal made by the architect for a 221(d)3 housing project. If the BRA feels that the particular design solution is questionable and considerable energy and political effort would be involved, the architect may find himself in a difficult position. Thus, in the case of the Tufts New England Medical Center, the BRA, according to the architect, has expressed reluctance over supporting the approvals that would be required to allow for a substantial air rights development over Washington Street.

The importance of a command of information can be illustrated again by the Waterfront Development Corporation's proposal for a tower on Atlantic Avenue. In the process of discussions at the architect's office, the point came out that studies are or will be made of the adjacent area in the North End. If these show a very high development potential and a likelihood that high structures will be going up in this area, then the proposal for the tower might be shown to be more in harmony with the adjacent area than the renewal plan assumptions and associated objectives indicate.

As will be pointed out in later sections, the staff frequently provides assistance with changes and modifications to meet design standards. This may involve directly doing the redesign themselves of
critical elements where the architect is weak or making general recommendations on what kinds of things need further study. An effort is made to be positive in finding the proper direction rather than to be purely critical of what has been done.

The flexibility that is provided by the plan at times allows tradeoffs which do not seriously affect the major design objectives. A simple example is the permission being given to the Washington Park shopping center to construct a prominent pylon sign on the corner because of the severe sign restrictions elsewhere and the obscure location of some of the shops to meet certain design objectives.

Though the criteria used generally reflect the plan, the flexibility that exists in the liaison and review process and the feedback from project to plan objectives can also be brought out by the Waterfront project. Though the tower solution is in conflict with the plan, and the mutual discussion over the possibility that the assumptions made by the plan were wrong may well lead to acceptance of the project. Some of the problems in providing this kind of flexibility have already been noted; for example, the fact that developers then put considerable pressure on the BRA for increasing densities and the legal problems relating to zoning. From the architect's standpoint one of the problems has been maintaining continuity because of changes in personnel. The danger is that where agreement with the responsible staff person may have been reached at one point in time, a new person may present a new viewpoint on decisions that have already been reached. Most of the project designers are young, have low salaries, and do not appear to stay with the BRA for long periods of time. Though those architects interviewed
expressed general satisfaction with the quality of the personnel, they
did show concern about changes from one person to the next and about
the long-run quality of the staff should Logue and Collins depart.

Through observations and discussions with the staff, it appears
that form and performance criteria are those emphasized. Thus, in
Washington Park the objective of creating community "seams" out of the
major boulevards, with visual and activity focal points, is found to be
implemented by the staff in encouraging site planners to create these
effects. In the conversations observed over the Waterfront project,
the need to study the scale and materials of the new project in relation
to the street and adjacent historical buildings was brought out.

Only one case of a major post-construction follow-up effort
exists. The lack of cases appears to be more the result of the need
or state of completion of the various projects than the lack of dili-
gence. The case that has occurred was a rather thorough review of the
Academy Homes project, including plans and photographs of various
conditions considered objectionable. These were sent to the developer,
who has agreed to make improvements at considerable expense to himself.

Summary

Staff liaison can be seen as a key element linking and providing
interchange between the design plan and the developer. Its major
functions are to speed project development and, more importantly,
 impose design objectives. The design objectives used generally reflect
those of the renewal plans.

The staff has a number of services to offer which help the
developer and ease the process of implementing design objectives.
These include providing assistance in getting approvals and cooperation from other agencies, providing assistance with design modification and decisions, making available large resources of information, and providing support before the Design Advisory Committee. They are further backed up by the DAC and the power of the BRA to withhold disposition.

Liaison is most effective where contact is continuous and informal. The major difficulties have occurred where liaison with developers and architects has broken down. A present and future difficulty in the system is providing staff continuity.

DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

According to the Urban Renewal Manual on design review, the manifest function of the Design Advisory Committee (DAC) is to pass on the architectural merits of developer proposals. However, from the historical conditions of its inception and throughout its development it has tended to play a much broader role in Boston.

The DAC grew out of the Architectural Advisory Committee appointed by the Boston Planning Board from nominees of the Boston Society of Architects and the Massachusetts Association of Architects in 1953 to oversee the development of the Government Center. The AAC was created, according to one source, because the members of the planning board had conservative views on architecture and were thus "suspicious of the modernist tendencies of the consultants."32 (These included Adams, Howard & Greeley, Consultants, in association with Anderson, Beckwith and Haible; Sasaki, Walker & Associates; Kevin Lynch; John R. Myer; and Paul D. Spreiregen.) The major political controversy that developed during the planning stages of the project involved the location of the City Hall or another location not within the Government Center.
The DAC and others then took public stands in favor of the present Federal Office Building location. The federal bureaucrats then acquiesced. After the arrivals of Logue and I. M. Pei, who was commissioned to restudy the Government Center Plan created by the earlier consultants, the DAC continued to consult informally with the ERA as this project developed. 33

As other projects began to reach the execution phase, a need was seen to expand the role of the DAC. The following functions were suggested by David Crane for defining its future: 34

   A. Advice and guidance on the coordination of staff, design consultant, and private cooperating agencies' arrangements relative to architectural and design matters. This would involve ... help in formulating objectives and procedures, recommending the architect or consultants, and participating in design review as contracts progressed. (Examples include schools, street furnishing, and recreation.)

   B. Review and criticism of paramount elements of civic architecture, in which the question is less an adjudication between competing developers than the rendering of civic service in the public interest. (Examples: City Hall, English High School campus, rehabilitation of Copley Square.)

   C. Advising the staff on the development of standards and procedures for the design aspects of land disposition, and the surveillance of design execution. Due to the varying nature of competitive submissions, several methods of design judgment may be used as appropriate.

   1. Staff review.
   2. Design Advisory Committee and staff review.
   3. Paid jury chaired by a committee member, with staff review.

   D. Sponsoring of better communications and educational programs to foster understanding of the renewal process. Beyond the functions of the Committee, ... good offices are needed to establish two other types of groups.

   1. A committee of Greater Boston area professional designers able to volunteer services in rehabilitation and other community relations.
   2. A city-wide citizens leadership group able to take public positions on design where it is needed.
In a meeting discussing these functions, the DAC expressed the desire that the committee should perform as a "neutral tempering body" to which the BRA and cooperating agencies might refer for design opinion and decisions. The committee was to be and has been self-perpetuating, with reappointments or replacements being recommended to the local AIA chapter for confirmation. No defined terms of office have been established.

Sections A, B, and C were accepted with minor revisions by the committee. Section D was considered "beyond the scope of the committee" at that time. This function in part has been taken on by the Boston College Seminars and the Boston Society of Architects Civic Design Committee. From a broader perspective, however, communication and education as well as the taking of public positions on design issues have been among the major roles played by the committee.

Interviews with Dean Anderson and Pietro Belluschi brought out two kinds of activity in which the DAC participates and over which there is some concern. The first essentially embodies Sections A, B, and C, characterized by the rendering of expert opinion on design issues. The second concept, brought out by D, shows the DAC as a political pressure group not only in relation to the public and the developers, but also within the BRA and its staff. Involved are such things as the taking of public stands, using the committee to influence Logue or other staff personnel who may be concerned more about economy and expediency, and various forms of the kind of adjudication they once expressed a desire to avoid.

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a. Rendering Expert Opinion

The DAC has participated extensively in the making of various policy decisions, in the formulating and continued review of competitions and important civic structures, and in the routine scrutinizing of developer proposals.

Methods of architect selection, disposition policies, and design controls are some of the policy issues that have been frequently on the agenda. The discussions of architect selection, particularly for public buildings, reviewed the various methods proposed by James Lawrence, a member of the Boston Society of Architects Civic Design Committee. These particularly examined various forms of competition such as those used in California.35

Examples of discussions concerning disposition policies include the examination of alternatives for Washington Park projects in the vicinity of the shopping center. According to the meeting minutes, the committee "expressed concern about the design implications of separating these projects under four different developer architect teams." The committee then made two suggestions. One, that the BRA staff "work up an overall scheme for the entire area, and have the individual developers bid on the BRA scheme;" the other, that "one architect be commissioned to design the entire area, under contract either to the Authority or to the combination of separate developers."36 Both these suggestions were made on the assumption that visual continuity, unity of design, and functional integration were prime considerations for the closely related parcels. The committee then went on to say:
If the policy of separation of sites must be maintained, the committee feels that the only way to be reasonably certain of unity of design is to set forth rigid controls within the disposition agreements insofar as height, building materials, roof shapes, and relation to the street is concerned. 37

The controls that were used were diagrammatic and not rigid. Instead, the architects were brought together in meetings to coordinate their proposals.

In the Government Center other examples can be found of the committee's review of various staff and consultant proposals. Kallman and McKinnell's studies for the landscaping of Cambridge Street and the Government Center plaza have been brought up for frequent discussion and advice from the committee. The staff has also brought up such things as staff proposals for the proportions of the mall between the Federal Office Building and the State Service Center, and design objectives for Parcel 7. In the latter case, for example, the minutes state:38

On the matter of scale, they felt the building should develop a character more appropriate for the Government Center Plaza, and express this character on both faces of the building with no specific attempt to seek compatibility with the buildings on the Blackstone Block. However, they did endorse visual penetration at the ground floor. . . . The Committee favored statements that would influence the architect to use masonry materials instead of metal curtain walls.

In interviews, some concern was expressed over the lack of DAC involvement in policy decisions. The above examples show that they are involved to some extent. However, their feeling was that they should be involved in broader issues in the early planning stages of the renewal plans where major design decisions are also made.

In the review of developer proposals, committee time is limited so that it is impossible to review every project in detail.
Perhaps because of its limited time, the agenda is generally left open as long as possible. Review appears to have been instituted generally at times of crisis, or where major design issues have been raised, or in the development of what are considered significant projects.

Although all projects have gone through staff review, some have not gone through review by the DAC. The Development Corporation of America, for example, states that none of its projects have been before the committee. It rather characterizes its relationship with the BRA as a continuous effort in cooperation with the staff. Many of those which do come up appear to do so repeatedly. Examples include the Waterfront Development Corporation proposal for Lewis Wharf which is challenging the urban renewal design objectives, the public housing proposal for Walnut Square which had reached a design impasse, and the Castle Square 821(d)3 housing development.

The Castle Square project came before the Committee a number of times apparently because it represented a difficult design situation and is considered an important project. In the summer of 1963 the architect's plans were criticized severely. The minutes state, "Its scale was inhuman, its general feeling cold and reminiscent of the worst in housing projects." The project was presented again at a later stage of development in the fall. Then the criticism ranged from the site planning, particularly the enclosure of two- and four-story buildings by a peripheral group of higher buildings, to the density, which put too many people and too many cars on the site. By the following January the site planning and design were considered greatly improved.
It is the intent of the design staff that most or even all projects go before the committee in both the early and later stages of their development. With meetings held to one two-hour session per month and an average of perhaps three presentations per meeting, this will be nearly impossible. In addition, it aggravates the problem of presenting projects and supporting information adequately for the making of what may frequently be important decisions.

b. Applying Political Pressure

The line between the rendering of professional opinion and playing an advocate role between competing values is fine but important. Though wealthy in talent and well respected, the design staff of the BRA would find their job much more difficult without the prestige of the DAC. This prestige is available not only to the staff but to architects who may have design objectives they would like recognized by their own clients or accepted by the BRA staff, or even to developers who question the design judgment of their architects.

Perhaps the most important yet most difficult-to-measure effect of this prestige is to make possible general acceptance by the public and by architects of the broad design controls and procedures that have been established. At the individual project scale, the lending of prestige to a point of view is much more apparent. The following examples show a case where the DAC was used to influence another staff section, one where it was used to influence another public agency, one where it was used by an architect to influence his client, and one where it was used by an architect to influence the BRA design staff.
In October of 1965 the Transportation Division of the BRA made proposals for a road connection between Congress Street and Commercial Street, passing through what had been intended to be a pedestrian plaza in front of Faneuil Hall. This was to handle a projected heavy traffic load in the area, and may in fact, according to some, be unavoidable at some future date. The DAC examined this proposal and, according to the minutes, "were vehement in their opposition to it. They felt it essential that the area in front of Faneuil Hall be developed as a pedestrian space if the proper relationship between Faneuil Hall, the City Hall, and the Market buildings is to be maintained." For the present the proposal has been tabled.

In October of 1964 the DAC was asked to review two alternative proposals for the design of Copley Square. One consisted of a plan prepared essentially by the Back Bay Association and the BRA, and the other was a proposal by the Commissioner of Public Works. The comments from this meeting were to be used in a meeting with the Mayor in order to reach an agreement with the BRA, the Back Bay Association, and the Commissioner. Both schemes showed the removal of the Huntington Avenue diagonal through the square. The Commissioner's scheme, however, proposed a narrow through street in front of the church and various other road widenings. The long letter that resulted commented on the historic importance of the site, commended the elimination of Huntington Avenue, pointed out some traffic problems, and supported the concept of a single church and plaza.

In September of 1963 Paul Rudolph, as architect for the State Service Center building, requested committee support for his
proposed treatment of the exterior concrete. The meeting minutes state that "after a brief discussion the Committee felt that it was not within their province, nor was it their desire to comment upon the proposed technique." However, in a letter which followed, it was pointed out that the materials and finishes for a building are naturally an integral part of the building concept, and "the designing architects have the best answer to this question."

In February of 1965, Kallman and McKinnel presented their proposal for the major parking structure in the Government Center. Their proposal resulted in the creation of a triangular space on New Chardon Street. One side of the triangle consists of a spiral ramp or drum connecting the street and the street facade of the building. David Crane and the chief project designer for the Government Center favored no setback along the street because of the redundancy of this space and the other major spaces in the area. In the meeting that followed, one of the members agreed with Crane and another supported the idea that the enclosed drum and building setback created more interest in terms of scale and variety. This space still exists in the plans.

Because the committee is advisory to the BRA, it usually takes no formal action on a particular project. However, it usually does appear to reach a consensus. Its criticisms then are expressed where appropriate in letters prepared by the staff to the architect-developer team.

Competitions, which according to the disposition officer are in disfavor as a method of selecting private developers, appear to have been used as a device to lend prestige to a particular design and
avoid public criticism of the BRA. As was pointed out in Chapter III, these are chaired by a member of the committee and usually include an expert in the particular building type, other architects, and one or more lay members. The most recent case is the selection of Cabot Cabot & Forbes to build a tower in the Government Center through a competition, after their original selection had been criticized for favoritism.

In the carrying out of both its technical and political roles, the DAC exercises a very broad range of criteria. According to Dean Anderson, no concrete attempt has been made to define their scope. Although he feels that they frequently get involved in very picayune matters, planning and development are such fluid processes that it is dangerous to draw a definite line. Thus in one case it is possible to find them discussing the flashing for a housing project, in another the relative merits of a swastika or single tower volume, and in another the "eloquent expression of the human use of this wonderful site." Most criticisms deal with the kinds of form ideas contained in the urban renewal plans. But, as in the last example, the committee occasionally goes beyond these in search of some higher principles.

Beside the limitations on its time, the committee is faced with problems of conflict of interest and what eventually becomes a rather tedious kind of gratuitous service. It will be seen in the following chapter that there is a tendency on the part of some developers to hire a few committee members in cases where zoning and design controls on density and height are exceeded. The line that is drawn appears to be at participation in public jobs. This particular problem is partly offset by the vesting of final authority in the staff and the purely advisory position of the committee.
The threat of tedium and boredom might be overcome through more frequent rotation of members, including the enlistment of other local designers and drawing on the national pool. The frequency of replacements and the proportion of non-locals could be balanced to provide continuity, a full measure of prestigious members, and continued interest.

Summary

The Design Advisory Committee plays a broad role in the Boston program. It fulfills two important functions: one, the rendering of expert opinion, and two, the lending of its prestige and political support on design issues. Though it has participated in a number of fine-scale and intermediate-level policy decisions, these have usually been limited to particular parcels and proposals. It has not been fully used for decisions over large-scale planning and design concepts.

Because of the limitations on its time, projects which are considered significant, raise important design issues, or pose crisis situations have been and probably will continue to be its major subjects for review. Other problems include conflict of interest and the tediousness of continuous participation.

The design objectives and criteria it employs usually concentrate on form ideas reflecting the objectives of the plan. Occasionally they bring up higher principles as to what constitutes higher levels of architectural expression.
It was suggested earlier that different contexts would lead to different modes of operation. It is suggested that these may be important factors in determining the degree of specificity and flexibility of objectives and controls in a given project, and will affect the agency's ability or desire to emphasize certain criteria, its ability or desire to make concessions, and the kinds of strain put on the system. The contexts include contrasts between public and private developers, design and other agency objectives, and strong and weak market conditions.

One conclusion that comes out of this examination is the priority position given design by the BRA. This is most important in the disposition phase where it is usually reflected in the choice of a developer-architect team that is strong in design. If they are not, it has usually meant delay until a suitable design solution has been achieved. Other conclusions follow.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DEVELOPERS

a. Public Developers

Other public agencies have several characteristics which can lead to difficulties in the design review process. These include the superior power of eminent domain and the refusal to cooperate, and differences in standards and objectives. In addition, public developers
cannot be chosen on the basis of their architect and design experience. This can pose problems even where good design is a stated common goal. The following illustrates these points, drawing particularly on experiences with the Federal Office Building and the Boston Housing Authority.

Superior Power of Eminent Domain. The Federal Office Building, built by the General Services Administration, refused to be subjected to review. However, because of the timing of the project and the personal ties that existed between Walter Gropius, its architect, and I. M. Pei, who had been called to plan the total project, it was possible to incorporate the massing that had been developed by Gropius into the plan. Beyond this, the only contact between the BRA and the architect has been to coordinate landscape development. This involved several meetings negotiating the location of trees and lighting, proposed by consultants, in order not to hide the entrance to the building. Other meetings took place in reference to such items as curb gradings, drainage locations, paving, and connections to the plaza.

The expressways and state government buildings are also exempt from review. Through excess condemnation, access right of ways, and air rights development, expressways may pose difficult future problems in the design of land use and structure. The State Office Building lies across the street from the Federal Office Building, but is not part of the renewal area. For reasons undetermined, but probably due to pressure from the BRA, it was subjected voluntarily to review. The result was to add a center mullion to the windows, braking down the scale of the fenestration to a pattern more in consonance with the buildings of the Government Center.
Some political pressure by the BRA and the city on the state to coordinate the architects for what were to be three separate buildings set the stage for Paul Rudolph to replace their designs with his single "stake and tail" scheme. Though acting only as consultant to one of the architects, he was able to present in two coordination meetings schemes which by their overpowering graphics and concepts made any other approach insignificant and untenable.

Differences in Standards and Objectives. In the undertaking of the various projects, cooperation agreements are made with the other city agencies and departments involved. Among the cooperation agreements that have been made is one between the BRA and the Public Works Commission to develop standards for street and street furniture design and one for the development of standards for recreation facilities. Contracts to study street furniture have been made with separate consultants, one for the Government Center and the other for residential areas. Their efforts have in part been characterized by compromises between the design standards of the BRA and the efficiency and maintenance standards of the engineers. The BRA, for example, would have liked to use incandescent and hidden source can lights in certain areas, but the light efficiency of these is too low to be considered by the Public Works Commission. Similarly, in street design the PWC would like to have all through residential streets and a fixed minimum standard of six cars per street-side parking bay, whereas the BRA would prefer some cul de sacs and no minimum standard to allow for keeping trees.

Most of the proposed construction of city facilities has not been through the review because of the inability of the city to get
its programs under way. In an attempt to speed up the process of con-
struction of schools and public buildings, Mayor Collins is in the
process of attempting to establish a "Public Facilities Department"
which would take over responsibilities for site selection and construc-
tion. This would deprive the City Council of a voice in the approval
of the sale or leasing of all city-owned property except park lands, and
particularly remove site selection authority from the superintendent
of schools and the School Building Commission where it is now centered.
This new agency would be exempt from the civil service as is the BRA,
but what the relationship between them would be is not clear.

Common Design Goals. Some of the other city buildings
such as the City Hall, police, and fire stations, which are in the
design stages or have already begun construction, have cooperated fully
with the design staff. Described as atypical of the relations with
other agencies, the difficulties that have been encountered with the
Boston Housing Authority represent the hazards that exist even where
explicit goals are the same.

Low and moderate income housing have been singled out by
the BRA as being cases in which design quality is especially important.
The Walnut Square housing project, being held up because of the archi-
tecture and site planning, illustrates (1) the importance of liaison
throughout the project development and what happens when the developer
interferes with this process, (2) the difficulties that ensue from the
failure of the architect to meet the form and performance standards of
the BRA, (3) the kinds of issues that are brought up in review, and
(4) the use of the DAC to arbitrate an issue.
The site is located adjacent to Egleston Square, which in the General Plan lies on the Capital Web and constitutes a node of second level importance. It is intended that the square eventually become a small activity center with shopping and access to the MBTA. A major design objective contained in the BRA disposition kit was to place any higher structures on the corner of the lot near the square in order to mark it physically and intensify the activity there. (See figures 1 and 7.) Performance standards included providing a high proportion of large family units, private yards, and access to the outdoors.

Experiencing some difficulty in gathering information for the site, the architect contacted the BRA. He then picked up their kit and in the process discussed the project with their design specialist in housing. When this contact was discovered by the housing authority, it objected and stipulated that future meetings should be conducted through the housing authority. From this point, direct and informal contact between the architect and the BRA ceased.

During the summer the architect developed in what he felt to be a logical manner a scheme that included a 20-story circular tower located at the higher end of the site. This violated the BRA site diagram in both height and location of the mass. After the housing authority had accepted this solution, a meeting was arranged in early February to present the project to the BRA staff. Though review procedure rather than the project was discussed at the meeting, a letter was sent to the housing authority from the BRA stating that the project did not satisfy the renewal objectives and controls contained in the
plan and disposition documents, and that it contained in addition internal problems which made it unacceptable to Design Review. The outline of criticisms then included sections on renewal plan objectives, site plan, space and scale relationships, housing, the circular tower, the low rise structures, and recommendations. The following are highlights from these sections.  

A high rise tower for the elderly should logically be placed close to the META station and commercial facilities... for convenience of the elderly. Lower height structures with family units should be placed on the eastern portion of the site to blend in with the scale and character of the existing housing.  

One parking area of 13 cars (. . . in conflict with the zoning requirements) and a driveway separates the proposed housing for the elderly on the eastern part of the site from the family housing on the western portion.  

Wrapping the two- and three-story structures around the 20-story tower creates problems of scale, access, light and air and on the whole unsatisfactory spaces. The placement of the three rectangular family units on the western portion of the site bears little visual relatedness to the elderly housing to the east and results in a lack of cohesion in the Columbus Avenue facade.  

A mix of certain apartment sizes within any one structure may be more socially desirable than strict separation.  

(The architects) have attempted to solve the cross ventilation problem of their cylinder by cutting four deep wedges... to provide a balcony and a kitchen window... These balconies will be in deep shade and have very limited views.  

Furthermore, the visual circularity of the scheme is actually destroyed by the wedges... The advantages of the cylinder (minimum exterior wall per square foot of floor area) is almost entirely negated... yet, the advantages of an X scheme (maximizing exposures, light and air and the use of rectilinear space) are not incorporated into the design.  

The provision of more units for family use is especially desirable.  

No private outdoor space is shown.
Each of three six-4 bedroom unit blocks is identical with no attempt here to give desirable visual expression to the individual dwelling unit.

In addition, the plan indicates an awkward "L" shaped kitchen. . . .

(The recommendations pick up these various criticisms.)

Following this review, some redesign took place but still without consultation with the BRA. The architect, however, felt there were strong arguments for the form and location of the tower and was advised by the housing authority to stick with his preferred solution. The preference for the tower location in particular was based on access for the elderly to an adjacent library, the desire to isolate them from the noisy MBTA station on the corner, higher ground allowing for increased elevation and view, and greater space available at the other end of the site for the planning of recreation areas for the family units.

To resolve these issues and reach an agreement, the project was brought before the Design Advisory Committee in early April. At this meeting, the director of the housing authority clearly made the point that an impasse had been reached between the two agencies and that the project was in the hands of the committee for a decision on the proposed location of the tower. In addition to the above points, the BRA pointed out the more negative effects of the tower shadow on back yards and the nearby Hillson Park when placed in the location proposed by the architect. (See figure 8.) The committee asked a number of questions attempting to draw out the functional reasons for the housing authority preference, apparently attempting to weight the balance be-
tween the "public" objectives of the ERA and the "private" ones of the 
EHA. It supported the position of the staff, pointing out that it did 
not feel that any great burden had been placed on the architect by the 
particular site objectives.

This problem appears to be primarily the result of poor 
communication brought about by the feeling on the part of the housing 
authority that it should be responsible only to itself and the Washing-
ton Office and an architect who perhaps too willingly accepted a rigid 
"chain of command." The presence of the DAC made it possible to re-
solve one issue, but it appears other problems will continue unless more 
frequent and informal liaison is established.

b. **Private Developers**

Most construction coming under the surveillance of design 
review is carried out by private developers of various types. Within 
renewal areas these have posed difficulties of a lesser order than those 
involving other public bodies. Two general types may be distinguished. 
One is the investor builder, interested in real estate and its develop-
ment for its fiscal productivity. This productivity may be strongly 
affected by the willingness of the authority to support zoning variances 
increasing the land value, or giving aid in the seeking of attractive 
FHA mortgages allowing construction with a very small equity. The 
second important type builds for his own use. These may be businesses, 
or institutional or individual home builders. Usually involved are 
individual buildings requiring much less assistance with other public 
agencies and focusing attention on design matters. Several examples of 
these follow.
The Seeking of Profit. The speculative developer tends to exert strong pressure to achieve the highest density development possible for any given site. This pressure frequently is directed toward the review staff, asking them to loosen site controls. Most of the private developments in the Government Center have produced this type of pressure. First Realty Corporation and Cabot Cabot & Forbes have taken this tack outside renewal areas, and the Waterfront Development Corporation is following suit in the development of Lewis Wharf. About a year old, the Waterfront Development Corporation is scheduled to build the redevelopment associated with Lewis Wharf. The urban renewal plan, as pointed out earlier, calls for a diverse but compatible mixture of uses. Residential development, it states, can be of a very unique character, intimately related to the water and to the old brick and granite buildings which should be retained and rehabilitated for residential use. In general it calls for "rows of structures of moderate height running parallel to the long-massive granite structures" as the preferred solution. Its intentions are to preserve the old finger form of the waterfront for historical and "urban design reasons," including a view to the sea from Atlantic Avenue. The corporation's plans call for a series of towers, three of which reach out into the water and one of which fronts on Atlantic Avenue. It would also like to build the old granite structure to six stories along its full length. To shield the project from noise and increase its privacy, it would have liked to block off Atlantic Avenue by building parallel to it. The zoning of the waterfront on these sites limits the height to that of the rehabilitated structures and the FAR to 2. In effect, what the architectural
plans call for are changes in these restrictions and the above objectives to produce a higher return on a small original investment, and the sacrifice of certain public for private objectives. The BRA position is to hold the towers off until later stages of development, when conditions in the North End become clearer.

A second waterfront scheme mentioned earlier, in South Boston but not in a renewal area, was proposed by Max Kargman and the First Realty Corporation. This would be a $23 million 221(d)3 project located on Northern Avenue at "Pier 2" about three-quarters of a mile from the Waterfront project. The site is described as being a seven-acre wasteland but, according to the General Plan, is scheduled for commercial development. Here a zoning change was involved. According to Kargman, Logue opposed the change because he feared competition between the two waterfront proposals and because Kargman had taken a stand against "design review censorship."

Kargman points to several of his earlier projects, including Riverview in Cambridge and middle-income development in West Roxbury as examples of attractive housing better than that with which the BRA has been connected. Criticizing Logue, review, and the BRA approach, Kargman claims he was asked to have his architects make drawings even though these would have been unrealistic and preliminary to test borings. The official reasons, however, and those which were the basis for the BRA's recommendations opposing the variance, according to the Director of Design Review, were that it violates the General Plan for the city which pinpoints the area for commercial development. Their recommendation also points out that it would be a residential island
located in a hazardous environment surrounded by industry with no support facilities. What ensued, according to Kargman, was a political fight in which he had the support of the Mayor and the Cardinal. The result was that the variance was granted.

If design review was the BRA objective, this case suggests means to push developers into review, although these were unsuccessful in the particular case. Among them are the granting of a variance and opposition expressed to the FHA as Logue is reported to have done. These are the points on which the speculator is most sensitive.

The Development Corporation of America, which is involved in several renewal projects, particularly 221(d)3 housing in Washington Park and the South End, constitutes a speculative builder that has had very little difficulty with design review. They have consistently hired known architects including Tad Stall, The Architects Collaborative, Jose Luis Sert, and Mies van der Rohe. According to its president, James Linehan, a continuous working relationship rather than one of formal presentation and approval has developed. Although he does not consider design to be an important factor in the economic viability of a project, the Corporation is concerned about producing good quality architecture. In contrast to the First Realty Corporation, which complains about design review, Linehan states that his corporation is able to do well in renewal areas because they are "builders rather than promoters." Thus, for example, he claims to have shown a profit on Academy homes after the First Realty Corporation lost money and backed out.
One can speculate that American Development Corporation's success is a product of its skill in reducing building costs to a minimum, its prior experience in such cities as New Haven, and its long and continued efforts to establish good relations with both the ERA and FHA. By its experience it has learned how to handle the "red tape" of working with government agencies. Though not considered vital to economic viability, it finds the way to get renewal jobs in Boston is through design capability.

Development for Personal Use. The projects most amenable to review have been undertaken by various private enterprises or institutions which have been building for their own use. The YMCA in Washington Park is cited by both the design staff and the architect as representing an especially smooth working relationship between the architect and the staff. Located on a "gateway" into Washington Park across from the shopping center, the design schematics, among other points, called for diagonal pedestrian movement from the corner. With a little modification, this was incorporated in the final design. The architect was able also to develop a small tower element to mark the corner by placing a music listening room on top of a staircase. The failure of the Public Works Commission to put in the kind of paving pattern and sidewalks desired and the need to fence off the play areas for reasons of liability and insurance were some of the difficulties mentioned by the architect. He claims that because of concessions made elsewhere by the Commission, the ERA was reluctant to make an issue of the paving here. The fencing represented a reasonable concession to the private interest of the YMCA.

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Other small projects in Washington Park, such as the Boys' Club and two industrial expansions, have been progressing smoothly. One of these, mentioned earlier, required some redesigning by the staff "because the architect needed help." It has otherwise presented no major problem in review.

The Tufts New England Medical Center represents a much larger undertaking by an institution which is in the very early stages of development. An interesting case highlighting coordination and design flexibility is developing because of its size, importance, complexity, and the difficulties the architects have been experiencing in fitting the function of the building to the illustrative form suggested by the BRA. The project to date has remained in the informal stages of review. The parcel plans show a concept based on a series of towers connected by bridges, one of which constitutes an air rights connection over Washington Street. Because the architect has found it inefficient to use towers and bridges, he has developed a proposal to build a platform over Washington Street. In addition he has proposed that the interiors of blocks be used for commercial arcades and that the platform be penetrated by courts to bring in some light to portions of the street. According to the architect, the reaction of the BRA project designer was that the street would then become dark and unpleasant, and that it would be preferable to have pedestrian activity focused on the street. There was also some concern that the commercial development would be unsuccessful economically and in danger of being converted to medical use.

The medical center is dependent on the BRA to provide not only land but also support before the Public Works Commission for
approval of an air rights scheme. In spite of the reaction from the BRA designer, the architect is continuing to develop the scheme in an attempt to better establish that the center will be well served by the change without harm to the city.

Summary

The most difficult and intractable design gap to bridge is that between the BRA and other public agencies. This may be due to the superior power of eminent domain exempting the agency from planning controls, differences in standards, and the inability of the BRA to select the developer on the basis of his architect. Not concerned about zoning variances or financing, and concerned about their own prerogatives, these have less interest in the offered BRA services. This among other things has led to breakdowns in continuity of liaison. The DAC, on the other hand, becomes an important source for arbitration and pressure to submit to "voluntary review." In one case, liaison and flexibility set the stage for a design breakthrough even though formal review could not be exercised.

The private speculative developer may see review as a positive opportunity for assistance in getting information, zoning changes, and approvals in financing. Particular users appear to conceive of review as an acceptable prerequisite and concession for the opportunity to build. Relatively specific and inflexible design objectives and controls are seen as important in containing speculative development pressure.

Review works best where there is a strong architect and a strong working relation between the developer-architect team and the staff. Though objectives and controls may be very specific, flexibility
to meet special needs and accommodate new proposals is seen as desirable by developers and worthy of consideration by the DAC. In cases that have come before the committee, it has weighed carefully the functional burdens put on the designers by the design objectives before making concessions. This is an attempt to assure that neither public nor private objectives are unduly sacrificed.

CONFLICTING AGENCY OBJECTIVES

By taking a priority position, objectives other than design have the potential to modify the review process. In most cases design is considered the overriding criterion and review a necessary means to achieve it. This has discouraged certain developers from investing in renewal areas. Public acceptance through the provision of low cost and relocation housing quickly built, on the other hand, has meant some concessions and short-circuiting of the process.

a. Good Design

In the typical case, developers have had good architects or disposition has been delayed until a suitable architect-developer team has been found or a satisfactory solution achieved. Though the speculative investment builders have not been absent, part of the effect of this policy is the relative exclusion from renewal areas of developers not interested in going through the red tape and design development necessary to get a project accepted. The First Realty Corporation, mentioned earlier, has based its decision to stay out on these reasons, according to Kargman. He points to bad experiences with renewal in other cities, and criticizes the ERA concern for the envelope of build-
ings at the cost of their interior planning. Other local and national
developers may undoubtedly be staying out for similar reasons.

b. Public Acceptance and Other Agency Objectives

Low rent housing for relocatees has been an important
objective both as a desirable end in itself and as a means to achieving
public acceptance. A second new possibility is the individual con-
struction of two-family dwellings, giving priority to relocatees.

Public housing and 221(d)3 housing have been the major
tools for building low and moderate income housing. Except for housing
the elderly, public housing has met with mixed reactions from local
groups. It has not been allowed to go ahead without design approval,
as was pointed out in the case of the public project at Egleston Square.
The 221(d)3 projects, particularly Academy Homes which was the first,
have been pushed very hard. According to the architect and the develop-
ers, Academy Homes was a political football in which review was done by
the Mayor. No one, the architect stated, was "picky about design." It
did not go before the Design Advisory Committee.

The only project that the review staff mentioned as a
major failure of review was a second 221(d)3 project. The developer
had stated that he could build brick and stay within the rent limitations.
But as the project progressed, costs mounted, forcing cutbacks in land-
scaping and site improvements. Had design been the major criterion,
additional financing might have been arranged.

A possibility which the ERA may be facing in Charlestown
is the construction of as many as 400 two-family homes built by individ-
ual owner-occupants. Because this may strain the means of some of the
relocatees who would like to build, the BRA housing specialist states that guidelines and procedures will be very open and lenient. To handle this kind of development, the BRA is encouraging individual architects to volunteer review and consultation services in a manner similar to legal aid rather than the more formal presentations to the BRA.

**Summary**

In a small number of cases the desire for quick results and low cost housing has led to a short-circuiting of the review process. In cases where relocatees may be building private two-family homes, procedures and standards will be considerably more open and less formal. In these cases the Design Advisory Committee plays a minimal role.

**STRONG AND WEAK MARKET CONDITIONS**

Developer demand in terms of numbers and financial resources for a particular site and use may be an important factor in supporting the degree of specificity of controls and objectives, making those which are more demanding feasible. Where there is a weak market or many unknowns, flexibility is an increasingly important factor. Here there is likely to be a larger number of compromises.

a. **Strong Market**

Early market studies showed impressive demand for new office space, hotel accommodations, retail space, and apartments in the downtown area. This appears to be true for most residential neighborhoods as well where the 221(d)3 program has been a major resource.

The most complex sites and demanding objectives and controls can be found in the Government Center. There demand for the few private projects is generally strong. For example, the Cabot Cabot
& Forbes office tower now under construction was selected through a developer design competition. Here and in other cases the design staff has been able to demand arcades, pedestrian penetrations, and other concessions. In the case of 1 Center Plaza it was possible to force the developer to include in the facade the same brick as is used in the Government Center Plaza instead of building solely in concrete.

Similarly it was possible with the assistance of the Design Advisory Committee to produce a change in Pei's design for a Waterfront proposal. The site plans had originally called for a group of four apartment towers, but the developer found that foundation conditions made this unfeasible. Instead he made a proposal for three buildings which the design staff and the DAC considered too "squat." After much negotiation the scheme was changed to three forty-story towers. Though exceeding the height limit, it adequately fulfilled the plan objective of framing the southern end of the Waterfront project.

In 221(d)3 projects, objectives and controls have generally been more diagrammatic and the site situations less complex. Reflecting the strong demand, several groups have expressed interest in sites recently opened in the South End. Architects that have been hired for such projects include well-known names like Karl Koch, Hugh Stubbins, Tad Stall, and Walter Gropius. As was pointed out earlier, the BRA considers only one of the first projects a design failure. This it attributes to its own inexperience at the time and the failure to foresee that mounting costs would make it impossible to meet both design and rent objectives. Normally, the projects have turned out to their satisfaction.
b. Weak Market

Some parcels are or have been searching for developers. Only recently has there been received an offer for the Government Center Parcel 7 which has long been on the market both in toto and in sub-parcels. It presents difficult planning problems because of the META below one corner, its long, thin, and curving mass, and pedestrian easements. In addition it faces both the new and the old with the Government Center on one side and the Blackstone Block on the other. To make it more attractive, a few concessions have been made, including a change from what was at one time a curved block standing on piloti for its full length, providing a stronger visual penetration to the Blackstone Block from the Government Center.

Similarly the Sears Crescent which is scheduled for rehabilitations has been a difficult site. With the strong support of the DAC, Pei, Logue, and others have resisted pressures from outside the authority to clear and develop the site for more intensive use. The Development Corporation of America has finally decided to attempt to meet its challenge, hopefully rewarding the BRA's patience without the need to make concessions.44

A few projects remain dormant or have been delayed for lack of financing. One such project in Washington Park consists of strip commercial facilities. It was stated, however, that design requirements would not be changed to make it more attractive. Two churches which were to occupy gateway points in Washington Park have similarly been unable to raise funds. Though this may represent a lost opportunity to get the best suited and most meaningful use of these sites, it will probably not seriously affect the visual gateway affect intended.
Summary

Where objectives and controls are specific and demanding, strong market conditions have helped support them. In those situations where objectives and controls are more diagrammatic and the market is strong, it has been possible to select good architects and demand changes within the financial limitations posed by the type of development.

As the market gets weaker, there has been some tendency to make more concessions, though this is not always the case nor has it been in highly significant matters.

RENEWAL AND NON-RENEWAL PROJECT AREAS

Though the legal power of review in non-renewal areas does not exist, a few projects have been the object of design concern and/or brought in for design review. The projects by the First Realty Corporation on Pier 2 and fronting on the Boston Common are two such non-renewal area projects already mentioned. A project brought in voluntarily for review is one being developed by Cabot Cabot & Forbes designed by Hugh Stubbins. This latter project also overlooks the Common on Arlington Street.

Each of these projects lies on the Capital Web. The waterfront project never came up for design review. Plans for the Tremont Street tower were made available to the design staff and the Design Advisory Committee in an atmosphere of crisis and without the developer's presence. In discussing the latter project the committee, according to the minutes of the particular meeting, "felt a letter should be sent to the Mayor and Mr. Logue requesting that the building be completely re-planned. If this proved impossible," it continues, "then the Committee
would write a second letter recommending that a design consultant be brought in to handle the exterior." The letter written states the following:

The massing of the building occupies so much breadth at such great height that it does not fulfil the potential for encouraging disciplined high-rise future construction in harmony with other important business development along this valuable frontage. The Committee is not only deeply concerned about the unfortunate exterior form of the proposed structure, but it is concerned for the building's interior environment as well. To mention only one example, there is absolutely no justification for asking human beings to enter and leave their apartments via a 5' wide interior corridor running an uninterrupted length of 221'.

It concludes that such a structure "would represent a very regrettable design disaster for the city of Boston." Thenmet effect of this effort was the retention of a Boston architectural firm to handle the building envelope. However, the emphasis on the interiors of apartments at the expense of the exteriors continues.

Brought up voluntarily for review, the Arlington Street project would appear to be in part an attempt by the developer to gain the support of the review staff and the Design Advisory Committee in obtaining a zoning variance. It also appears to be an attempt by the architect, who is a member of the committee, to persuade the developer to abandon a personal design preference. On this issue the promoter, according to Cabot Cabot & Forbes president, is reported to have flown the architect around the city showing the typical sloping roof forms on the tops of towers.

In reference to permitting the construction of the tower, the committee stated that if the city of Boston does so decide to allow construction to the height desired, "the building will have to stand
very severe scrutiny." It continues that the design gives evidence of a high professional standard. In its criticism, however, it points out that the bold modeling and deep reveals of its facade may be too far removed in character from the more delicate treatment of existing facades along Commonwealth Avenue. It was most critical of the treatment of the top of the tower, where a sloping pyramidal metal roof culminates in masonry towers that are probably part of elevator shafts. It then states:

This solution seems promoted by a nostalgic wish to recall traditional forms, but it is not a successful architectural device. The scale of the elements is so large that they convey a feeling of crudity and heaviness; moreover, the design emphasizes and glorifies the mechanical systems. It would be more appropriate to terminate against the sky with some luxury penthouse apartments whose large windows and roof terraces would be a more eloquent expression of the human use of this wonderful site. A move in this direction would still be consistent with the wish to have an interesting skyline rather than terminating with a flat horizontal line.

These criticisms are interesting in that they take place in a vacuum with no established formal criteria. The first concentrates on form, though what is meant by disciplined construction is undefined. The second is interesting because of its use of both form and non-form criteria: the conflict in character with existing facades -- form continuity similar to the emphasis in the U.R. plans; and a change from historic roof forms -- form discontinuity based on a condemnation of nostalgia and the elevation of human expression, indicating the search for some higher objectives.

Other more ordinary or less visible projects outside renewal areas do not appear to have been of concern. The only other project which came up in various discussions was the marshalling of the BRA design staff to help the Beacon Hill Architectural Commission guide
development by showing a positive and feasible alternative to a particular proposal.

**Summary**

Projects on non-renewal sites have been essentially exempt from review except by political pressure in crisis situations or where the developer-architects find reason to submit voluntarily.
The Boston Redevelopment Authority has undertaken a wide spectrum of design activities. Emerging is a more meaningful and helpful public policing of public and private development. Through urban renewal and design review, the BRA has become an important second client to architects and developers. As this second client it has effectively provided a two-way communication channel bridging the gap between the design plan and its implementation.

Its effectiveness is largely a product of the rights derived from eminent domain, the prominence and prestige of key political and administrative figures, and the high priority they have given design. Given this priority, it has proven possible to shape procedures which result in only a small number of design concessions in the various contexts examined. Other things being equal, each of these contexts has implied different modes of operation. They have caused variation from demanding to open objectives, from reliance on prestige and pressure to reliance on a smooth and continuous working relationship, and they have affected the desire and need to make concessions.

Though the above represents the main focus of the thesis, it is worth exploring briefly some of the many problems and issues that have been raised by review. From these some speculations are presented as to how the system might be improved. Assuming that it is desirable
to extend review outside renewal areas as indicated by the Capital
Improvements Program and General Plan, these speculations will relate
to both renewal and non-renewal areas.

ISSUES

Most of the issues relate to the review system in general. A
few are directed toward the BRA practices in particular. Others point
to the need for a design theory which defines a strategy of control
with strong legal foundations as well as implications for design.

a. Allowing Creativity

Many argue that control will destroy or hinder the
creative genius of a pluralistic system. The ordered city, they say,
is a dull one. Through review it will suffer a loss in the spontaneity,
contrast, clash, and variety that make up its delight and urbanity.
Further, they say, to be innovative one must take the good along with
the bad. A corollary is that the aesthetic values of the people
running the system are arbitrary and unarticulated. Beside inhibiting
creativity, this is said to result in cost and time expenditures for
the architects.

Others say that such freedom in the extreme leads to
confusion at worst and picturesqueness and quaintness at best; and
that with rising standards of living and higher expectations, design
should be more and more a public concern. Though some architects inter-
viewed expressed some concern about the scope of review, few complained
about being unduly constrained. Many feel zoning to be a worse con-
strainst because of its inflexibility. In design there are many points on
which a fairly wide consensus exists.
Implied is the need to make and leave creative opportunities as is attempted by the BRA, to provide a measure of flexibility, to take care in suppressing the complexity of the city, and to have clear objectives.

b. Placing Responsibility

Some developers interviewed argued that they are the ones who are primarily responsible for the success or failure of a design -- that they put in the money, have to make projects work and rent, lose money if they fail -- and that they should be treated as acting in good faith. Advice is considered fine, but control is too great an interference. A corollary to this argument is the developers' contention that the economic viability of a project is more dependent on project interiors. It is contended that architects and those reviewing tend to favor the envelope and are more concerned about monuments and about favorable comment from their confreres.

Others argue that projects also represent a major investment from the city. In urban renewal the very heavy human costs must be in part offset by the best in design return. In addition the heavy demand for some kinds of development makes design a very low priority in terms of economic viability. If this changes, the cost may be paid by the city in future slums and redevelopment. In addition studies in perception and communication theory, rising living standards and expectations, and the search for beauty and delight in cities imply the need to attach considerable importance to exterior form.
c. Avoiding Corruption

Some argue that where there is administrative control and flexibility, the American political system opens the door to corruption. One should not mix politics with architecture. As Kargman points out, if one is in a difficult situation, he is best off hiring someone from the "in group." 52

As shown in renewal, discretion and flexibility are closely linked with achieving the best results. This and the opportunity for corruption must in part be played off against each other. It can in part be mitigated by political and professional watchdogging. An objective is to reduce to a reasonable range the opportunities for corruption and for conflict of interest.

d. Establishing Strategy of Control

Some cities that have undertaken review through zoning have based their approach on such things as protection of property values or historic preservation. 53

Others, such as the BRA in urban renewal, are attempting to establish a positive framework based on the assumption that design quality is desirable in itself. 54 At the largest scale, this includes the concept of the "Capital Web" to determine which sites are most critical in providing both orientation and social information, and what elements of the environment are most subject to public control. It will be argued here that other elements should be included. These will be based on assumptions about the questions of what are the most "sensual" elements, which are most important to people, and which are the most subject to control at this large scale. Most important parts of the BRA design program are at the project level, where there is a greater emphasis on sensuous form.
e. Other Problems

Other problems have been suggested elsewhere in the paper. Staff continuity and quality were considered critical. These are important because of the close and continuous working relationship that must be established between staff and architect-developer teams if the full review process is to be effective. If review is extended, the problem of overloading the Design Advisory Committee might be worse than at present. Beside overload, lack of participation in policy decisions, loss of interest and continued participation, and the dangers of forming an "in group" with conflicts of interest were also mentioned as problems for the committee. It is also suggested that review of future change is not provided for.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are suggested as means by which the review might be extended and improved.

a. Creation of a "Perceptual Web"

To incorporate other significant sensuous elements located in space, to strengthen the aesthetic and legal basis for review, to define which elements are most critical for design and control, and to structure what may be left for unreviewed development, a "Perceptual Web" might supplement the "Capital Web."

The Capital Web includes some ideas taken from perception theory. These include the structuring of orientational information suggested by Lynch and others as being important to the health and welfare of the individual. Even here it was pointed out as omitting important parts of the city. The "Perceptual Web" also suggests other kinds of information as being important both to individual welfare and
to the creation of a sense of delight. Also implied by investigations into perception is the need to provide range and diversity of perceptual information within some health and comfort limits. These may include such things as a connection between the formal image and socially, historically, functionally, and visually significant elements of the environment; and more control of the communication processes by receivers and senders.56

Those elements that are considered to be most important communication inputs in the environment and which can be controlled are suggested as those which might constitute a system of priorities. Those at the highest level are those which might be subject to the greatest direct control. Others at lower levels might be left for more spontaneous development. Thus tight controls at a critical "node" might direct sensuous elements ranging from space, light, activity, surfaces, and meaningful things (signs and objects), to noise and smell.

b. Structure Hierarchy of Objectives

To provide a positive framework for design and a balance between control and flexibility, the design program might be structured to different levels of control. Those elements considered most critical in a particular situation might be tightly fixed. Those considered important considerations as a basis for rejection but which might be violated with approval would constitute a second level. Those considered desirable but not necessary would constitute a third level.

The most frequent control of building at the first level would be limits on density. Height, setback, massing, access, circulation, and other and often similar controls as used by the BRA might vary between the first and second. Basic objectives such as continuity, scale, and visibility might also be at this level. At the third level might be such things as social, functional, "human" expression, and others
which may be worthy of investigation but which represent highly controversial issues. Also at this level might be suggestions for experimentation in design.

c. Improve Incentives for Voluntary Cooperation

In early stages in the extension of review and later in non-critical areas, voluntary cooperation could be encouraged through an extension of liaison services. Other government agencies might be the first required to submit to review, followed by private developers.

Incentives for voluntary cooperation could be improved through positive efforts in expediting and coordinating design, helping developers cut through governmental red tape (including zoning and design program changes), providing information, and investigating prototype design and construction. An extra degree of flexibility in the design program might be provided where plans are submitted to review. The use of voluntary techniques may be necessary as long as the political atmosphere is hostile to the extension of BRA power.

d. Strengthen Continuity

Where there is a high turnover rate of staff, methods for the keeping of records and improving the exchange of information should be strengthened. To maintain long-run quality, responsibilities should be kept at a high level and remain action oriented. To avoid expanding at the cost of quality and to provide long-range continuing review, more functions might be farmed out to consultants, particularly if review is extended.

As pointed out, an effective program is largely dependent on the quality of personnel. A good quality also serves to avoid some of the potential dangers of corruption in the system. To maintain the quality, there must be a sympathetic administration and suitable incentives. Jobs, at least in the short run, appear to be attractive to designers for experience in urban design and because of the action
orientation of the program. At higher levels where continuity is most critical, high salaries and status are also important factors.

Responsibilities emphasized might be those which are most action and design oriented. If surveillance activities are extended, these might be given to consultants hired by the ERA or by various community organizations, with the right given to the ERA to review decisions. This would provide, too, a basis for continuing review after redevelopment has taken place, and would help keep the staff small with a high esprit de corps.

e. Avoid Overload and Strengthen Communication

To avoid the overload of the Design Advisory Committee, to avoid the imposition of greater burdens on its time, and to allow a greater participation in design policy decisions, the projects brought before it should be those which represent the most significant design issues or critical situations. To avoid conflict of interest and to strengthen the force and vitality of the committee, its recommendations should remain advisory, rotation of membership should take place more frequently, and membership and invitational participation might draw on persons from design professions other than architecture and cities other than Boston.

The final review authority and the major load of cases should lie with the staff in order to make most effective use of the DAC. Because many of the most important decisions take place in design policy, it may be important and especially helpful to use the committee to review staff and consultant proposals. These policies, which effect parcelization of projects, landscape, massing, circulation, and the like, have as much if not more effect on the shape of final projects as do proposals by developers.

To strengthen design communication to the public, meetings and certain recommendations might be conducted with greater fanfare. This might be done by bringing in additional professionals...
and lay members where appropriate, and by making a greater effort in public relations. For example, use might be made of written discussions, press releases, and interviews on important design and policy decisions as they take place.
Figure 1

BOSTON: "CAPITAL WEB"
Figure 2

GOVERNMENT CENTER:
ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN
Figure 5

WATERFRONT: ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN
Figure 6

WASHINGTON PARK: ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN

ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN
Washington Park Urban Renewal Area

- Rehabilitation
- New Housing
- New Neighborhood Shopping Center
- New Community Shopping Center
- New School
- New Church
- New Civic Center
- New Community Facility
- New Park and Open Space
- New Industrial Facility

- north

scale

-101-
Figure 8
WASHINGTON PARK: SHADOW DRAWING OF PROPOSED PUBLIC HOUSING TOWER LOCATION

SKETCH "A"
1" = 100'
CHAPTER I


3. Based on my interpretation and elaboration of a definition put forth by Kevin Lynch in a seminar.

4. Urban Renewal Administration, op. cit., p. 4.

CHAPTER III


8. It has also been pointed out that minimizing the restrictions may have the added advantage that the developer may pay more for the land if given a freer hand. He may also come up with a scheme which improves on that of the local public agency in terms of local community benefits as well as creating maximum site value. See Richard U. Ratcliff, Private Investment in Urban Redevelopment, Research Report 17, Real Estate Research Program, Institute of Business and Economic Research, University of California, Berkeley, 1961, p. 19.


10. In a 1962 survey of over 500 local agencies to determine the basic disposition techniques used, the criteria for selection of a particular method, what policies as to method existed if any, and what legal restrictions may have been posed by enabling legislation, it was found that no one method was clearly favored.


**CHAPTER III**


15. Ibid., p. 23.


17. Ibid., p. 149.

18. Ibid.


20. B.R.A., *1965-1975 General Plan*, p. 148. For example, the citizen's group in Roxbury rejected a series of towers along a newly-created boulevard. Architectural site plans and drawings have been found to be useful devices in persuading local groups to accept renewal plans and particular projects. The generalized illustrative site plan was included in the Charlestown Urban Renewal Plan because of local pressure. Logue also claims that part of the reason for the rejection of a recent public housing proposal in Roxbury lay in the failure of the Boston Housing Authority to present drawings during the neighborhood meeting. He states, according to the May 14, 1966, *Christian Science Monitor*, that this was needed because the people do not "have the confidence in the public housing program that they do in our work."

21. Urban Renewal Administration Letter #249; emphasizing the importance of design is among these items.

22. See Chapter II, p. 20.
23. See "Signs in the City" by the M.I.T. Department of City and Regional Planning for an alternative approach to controlling and ordering the use of explicit communications.

24. See David A. Crane, "Public Art of City Building," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, March 1964, p. 91. The public design function is to "leave and make creative opportunities for the private sphere."


27. B.R.A., South End Plan, Section 603.


31. Another factor favoring the final acquiescence of the Public Works Commissioner was that a Catholic church is the sponsor for the project.

32. Richard Wallace Nathan, "The Government Center of Boston," The Inter-University Case Program, October 1960, p. 8

33. Pei's contribution to the earlier scheme, according to Lynch, consisted primarily of simplifying the traffic pattern so that the center became a superblock of which the Federal Office Building became a part. He also modified some of the building forms and siting, developed the tight controls on their height, aligned them with the Crescent, and moved the subway to allow the construction of the City Hall on the lower part of the plaza. The major spatial concepts came out of the earlier scheme.

34. Memo to the members of the DAC, February 1963.

35. Meeting, February 13, 1964. (Records of DAC meetings are kept informally by the Assistant to the Director of Design Review, Arlyn Hastings.)


37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

40. These cases are in order (1) a Washington Park 221(d)3 project, November 1963; (2) a tower for the elderly next to the shopping center in Washington Park, meeting, October 1964; and (3) a tower proposed by Cabot Cabot & Forbes for the corner of Washington and Commonwealth, see p. 85, Chapter V.

41. "Boston Redevelopment Authority - Design Review," criticism of the preliminary submission, (no date).

CHAPTER V

42. Based on interviews with the Boston Housing Authority and the architect. See also Note 21 where the B.H.A. is noted as being criticized for its failure to be responsive to the community.

43. Some public housing projects are being integrated with 221(d)3 housing. Though they have not always been presented with the most desirable site situations, they have accepted both the designs and the architects of the larger development.

44. George B. Merry, "Sears Crescent, Restoration to Save Boston Landmark," Christian Science Monitor, April 23, 1966. This quotes the advisory committee as saying, "We feel it is essential to retain and rehabilitate this building because of the important historical continuity that it will provide between the new Government Center and older buildings. . . adjacent to it."


CHAPTER VI

47. Kargman claims Shepley&Bulfine had very bad press. He also claims his work is better than that under the B.R.A. Also see Joint Committee on Design Control, Henry Fagin (ed), Planning and Community Appearance, 1958, Chapter II, "Philosophy and Action Program."

48. William Schroeder, an architect in Karl Koch's firm.

49. Comment by Lynch in a seminar.

50. Kargman. He states he is not a "bad guy" — that one can't dump bad buildings on suckers. Also the attitude of the Public Housing Authority.

52. He states Logue would have no part of this if he knew of it, but it is hard to avoid.

53. See Joint Committee, *op. cit.*, for other approaches.

54. Ibid. (Note 47).

55. Lynch, *Image of the City.* In terms of orientation, these have been reduced by Lynch to a very small number -- landmarks, districts, nodes, edges, paths.


57. See Asher, *op. cit.*
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