

DUDLEY: A COMMUNICATIVE PROJECT

by

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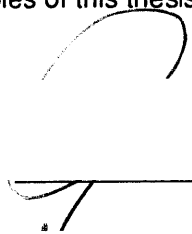
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A Ramonita y Anny;
mi madre y mi compañera.
Por velar de mis sueños
cuando niño, y cuando hombre.

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Ramón Borges-Méndez

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Abstract

The central thesis of this work proposes that the state, in this case represented by the Boston Redevelopment Authority, finds rationale for intervention in Roxbury in the process wherein the media reproduces negative stereotypes of peoples of color in Roxbury. Negative stereotypes are subservient to schemes for massive real estate investment proposed by the BRA. The stereotypes reproduced by the media stress the technical incapacity of the community, and blames the poor and the powerless for their own poverty and powerlessness. Lack of clarity about issues of land control and redevelopment, and racism on the part of the media provides the BRA with the ideological and political space to validate its schemes of intervention. It is clear that there is a need for intervention in some of the problematic affairs of Roxbury, however such intervention happens not because there is an initial real interest to correct such problematic state of affairs, but because such intervention would be fruitfull to the BRA's plan for massive real estate and capital investment. The ideological and political context in which the BRA acts, and which is provided by a generally racist society and constantly reproduced by the media, affects the power capacity of the community to decide its owns affairs in particular, issues related to land control, planning and redevelopment.

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Introduction

This thesis has four chapters. Chapter 1 serves as a thematic and theoretical introduction to the problem of land control in Roxbury. In this first chapter I delineate the conflict between community residents and the Boston Redevelopment Authority(BRA) in light of the plan for massive real estate investment proposed by the BRA. The purpose of this chapter is to express that the general conditions for massive real estate in Roxbury are accompanied by a process of legitimation that seeks to validate the BRA's view about development in Roxbury. This process relies upon socially upheld stereotypes, constantly reproduced by the media which offer the BRA an ideological and political context in which it can rationalize intervention in Roxbury.

Chapter 2 intends to explore, in relative detail, the ways in which the media reproduces negative stereotypes of peoples of color in Roxbury, and the effects that such stereotypes have on the capacity for power that community groups fighting for land control and control of the redevelopment process possess. This chapter relates the issue of land control and redevelopment planning in Roxbury to the problem of legitimation delineated in chapter one, in order to establish the mechanisms whereby the media becomes a subservient agent facilitating BRA intervention in Roxbury.

In Chapter 3 I discuss the structure of a videotape that may serve as a tool, or as a counterhegemonic force, to undo and fight the negative stereotypical images reproduced by the media, which serve to open an ideological space for BRA intervention in Roxbury. In this chapter I discuss, first, the practical steps taken to construct the video. Second, I discuss the objectives of the video. Finally, what is the theoretical importance of fighting stereotypical

images and considering issues of "perception" in terms of our planning practice, in a society dominated by capital and racially discriminatory behavior. In Chapter 4 I discuss the conclusions of this thesis.

Chapter1

A THEMATIC AND THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Broader Picture

Roxbury has experienced 20 years of institutional neglect and disinvestment. During those twenty years, the area of Roxbury has lost about half of its housing stock to arson, demolition and tax foreclosure. The government of the City of Boston, during the same period, became the largest landowner in the area. In early 1985, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) designed a plan to redevelop the Roxbury area. This plan raised great concern among residents, small business owners, activists, church leaders, and social services organizations in the area.

In preparing the redevelopment plan, the BRA did not consult any of the residents of the area. Even though Raymond Flynn had been elected to office in 1984 on a "populist" pro-neighborhood platform, to a large extent, local authorities and the BRA assumed the technical and political incapacity of the leadership and residents of the area to design any type of plan to redevelop the area. The major points of contention between residents and the BRA have been the problem of land disposal and control over the design and planning of the redevelopment process.

Given the simultaneous need for legitimization and accumulation, the BRA has had to strengthen its ideological position regarding the process of redevelopment in Roxbury. The BRA basically needed a rationale to intervene, regardless of the fact that there are community organizations with the capacity to cope with the technical and political needs of the community.

Racial stereotypes play a crucial role as one of the many sociological processes that rationalizes the BRA's intervention in favor of capital reproduction. The BRA has been both an instrument of the dominant class , and an autonomous agent that preserves the general social conditions for capital reproduction in Roxbury by using the general hegemonic framework provided by a racist society. The BRA tacitly relies upon circulating stereotypes that are reinforced through the media. Such stereotypes serve as a pivot to rationalize intervention. However, an analysis of these ideological forces remains insufficient if we do not explore the rationale behind them and the ways in which such ideological forces become operational in affecting the conflict between the BRA and community residents.

It should be clarified at the onset that the BRA is the redevelopment strongarm of the state and that it tries to fulfill two basic and often mutually contradictory functions characteristic of the modern capitalist state--accumulation and legitimization. On the one hand, the BRA needs to preserve the conditions of capital reproduction in Roxbury. For example, the BRA seeks to create incentives for massive real estate investment (cheap land, tax incentives, and provide subsidies), but on the other hand, sees itself as reproducing the base of its mass loyalty, by providing an elusive political space for residents and community groups to discuss decisions already made by the BRA. The BRA must constantly strive to perform such contradictory functions. However, within such a mechanistic framework, it is rather difficult to understand the ideological means of legitimization, for example, the uses of racial discrimination, through which the BRA indirectly rationalizes its "legitimate right" to intervene in the community. The BRA is more than a "blunt" instrument of the dominant class.

I propose a less instrumentalist view of the role of the BRA in legitimizing capitalist relations of production :

"The alternative view is that the state does not favour specific interests, and is not allied with specific classes. Rather, what the state protects and sanctions is a set of institutions and social *relationships* necessary for the domination of the capitalist class ...the state is neither a 'servant' nor an 'instrument' of any one class. While it does not defend the specific interests of a single class, the state nevertheless seeks to implement and guarantee the *collective* interests of all members of a *class society dominated by capital.*" ¹

The role played by the BRA is one of co-participant in the general social and political conditions that protect and reinforce the process of capital accumulation, along with other institutions, such as the media, which are directly subservient to the process of capital reproduction. Racial stereotypes play a crucial role as one of the many sociological processes that rationalizes the BRA's intervention in favor of capital reproduction.

Negative stereotypes of peoples and communities of color are subservient to schemes of state intervention. As an integral part of dominant ideology, they serve to foster a general image of incapacity and powerlessness in communities of color. This general image of poverty and powerlessness is taken to be a permanent physical or spiritual feature of peoples and neighborhoods of color. Thus, the need for intervention. In the context of capitalist relations of production, stereotypes serve as a pivotal point creating dichotomies that facilitate the process of state intervention. Intervention, in the case of Roxbury, consists of granting a good investment "climate" for real estate investors, and obtaining from the community both peaceful acknowledgement and concessions to investors.

Stereotypes serve to open an ideological space for intervention. Stereotypes, on the one hand, attribute or attach negative images to peoples and communities of color, and on the other, serve to blame the powerless and poor for their powerlessness and poverty. In one sense, stereotypes they serve to rationalize intervention in the affairs of the community, and further contribute to eroding the legitimate power of the community. For the purposes of this discussion, stereotypes will be considered as the main form of ideological manipulation whereby the BRA manages to undermine main lines of identity and consciousness. That erosion delimits the action of the communities struggling to defeat social, political and economic forces which do not favor collective empowerment, but rather, favor the preservation of a particular class structure and a system of racial domination.

1.2 The Cycle of Abandonment, Investment, and State Legitimacy

Gaston and Kennedy² have analyzed the process that left Roxbury has become a decayed area. This history of mounting decay is organically linked to the economic, social and political development of the City of Boston. In general, neighborhoods go through cycles in which they are developed, decay, and are rebuilt, cycles which occur in the context of the general economic conditions of the city as whole. Through the cycles, the various branches of the state, in this case, primarily the BRA and the Public Facilities Department, insure that the conditions are favourable to the capital accumulation process. However, the BRA must maintain its legitimacy, in order to perpetuate this process.

Boston has experienced an economic boom during the last 6 to 8 years. The foundations for this boom were laid by the urban renewal projects during the late 50's and 60's, projects

like highway construction, and the Southwest Corridor Project. During those years, local government and the BRA saw their legitimacy severely eroded vis-a-vis Boston's communities of color. Roxbury, in particular, did not benefit from those development projects, but rather, saw growing decay and racial segregation. Most of the fiscal resources of the 1960's were not devoted to maintaining physically and economically ethnic neighborhoods, but, rather to enhancing conditions in the city conducive to downtown redevelopment. Only limited resources were devoted to minimal maintenance of a social services network, which was basically a system to channelling and controlling unrest.

While local government "prepared" the conditions for capital investment, Roxbury grew poorer and increasingly abandoned by city government. The result was an emerging "rent gap"³ that would then hatch Roxbury neighborhoods, especially the Dudley Street area, for reinvestment. The city emerged as the largest landowner in the area, specifically through tax foreclosure and through policies of demolition and eminent domain .

Because the city of Boston has become saturated, there is an urgent need for expansion into other areas of the city. Roxbury, the nearest area to downtown Boston with the largest concentration of vacant land, represented the next step in the BRA's process of recreating the conditions needed for expansion. In early 1985 the BRA proposed a \$750 million dollar investment plan for the Dudley area. The next problem faced by the BRA and the city administration was how to create the ideological conditions for legitimization for this plan.

The erosion of the BRA's legitimacy during previous cycles determined, to a great extent, the series of struggles waged by the community. The BRA has historically faced community

opposition to their plans. However, such opposition must be appeased :

" On the one hand, it is desirable for capital that these communities function smoothly, without upsetting the established order of things... On the other, such a stable community tends to generate consciousness of its own oppressed condition, a sense of collective self, networks of social support, creative ideas, solidarity and political power which contradict the needs of capital to maintain the neighborhood as a pliable 'free' commodity for the market."⁴

Since the 1960's these cycles in Roxbury, described in relative detail by Gaston and Kennedy, have produced a series of struggles related to a broad range of issues: housing, land control, displacement, school desegregation, etc. During the last 3 to 4 years, a series of new organizations have emerged as result of the unbearable abandonment of the Roxbury area, climbing real estate speculation resulting from the "rent gap", and gentrification and displacement of the residents of the area. Three of the most important organizations are the Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority, Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, all related and products of the struggle to control the land development process.

These new organizations that have emerged to fight the forces of the market and the exclusionary pro-capital plans designed by the city administration and the BRA, differ substantially from the ones established during the struggles of the 60's. These new organizations possess substantially greater technical and political experience with which to counter the problems posed by the wave of gentrification and real estate expansion, threatening displacement of the area residents. Technical and political capacity are crucial elements

counteracting efforts by the BRA and the city to "sell" their plans and projects as "adequate" and beneficial to the Roxbury area. Furthermore, the struggles and consequent organizations that have developed in the Roxbury area rally around issues not only related to class discrimination, but also racial discrimination. These struggles and organizations have built race and class into their analysis of the situation. Class is not subordinated to race nor vice-versa. These organizations, at the practical level, rely upon a coalition of Blacks, Latinos, Cape Verdeans and Anglos, for their success, and see coalition as precondition to face the BRA and other city authorities.

Gaston and Kennedy specified the structural situation which provoked the decay and vacant land concentration in the first place, and the response by organized groups in the community. However, two relatively unexplored questions emerge. Both have a tremendous importance on the process of recreating the conditions of capital accumulation. The first question is, if city government and the BRA are to remain legitimate "voices" of authority in order to foster the "new wave" of real estate investment, how are they going to justify intervention-the implementation of the BRA's plans-- so as to maintain their legitimacy and also materially realize the interests of capital in Roxbury? The second question is, what form will such basic ideological process take, and upon what premises will it rest?

1.3 Legitimacy, Dominant Ideology and Community Struggles

Given a historical loss of legitimacy vis-a-vis Roxbury residents, the BRA had to avoid any conflict in reproducing the conditions for massive real estate investment in Roxbury. The BRA had to avoid the formation of community based organizations, and had, to the extent

possible, to de-politicize the public realm. The ultimate objective was to avoid political pressure given the new phase of capital expansion into the Roxbury area; the ultimate objective was to avoid political pressure by de-politicizing the community.

The development of the Dudley plan rested upon three elements: a) marketplace conditions had to be improved;(b) exclusionary practices that sought to de-politicize the issue of development in the area;(c) the assumption that the BRA was the only capable agency of handling the development and implementation of the plan. The "managerialist" approach to community development provoked exclusion of residents from all stages of the planning and design processes happening in the future. Development and planning were assumed to be non-political processes, thus justifying the exclusion of the community from them. However, the "leaking" of the plan to redevelop the Dudley area in early 1985 would change dramatically the course of events.

Community opposition to the plan mounted fast and in an organized fashion. The conditions for legitimization had changed for the BRA. The BRA and city government were faced with a situation which demanded a new strategy to rationalize consensus and intervention in Roxbury, in a more discrete and ideological fashion. The BRA went public, stressing the need for technical skills and the need to improve market conditions. However, the community responded by rapidly building a technical skills pool, by stressing that the problem was not to improve market conditions but the market itself, and that the issue in question was community control of the land and the process of planning and redevelopment.

Against this backdrop, the BRA and city government, saw that an ideological struggle

mounted to mitigate pressures issuing from the community would be the only way in which they could succeed. An ideological struggle legitimizing the BRA's desire to create the "appropriate" conditions for future real estate investment, relied upon employing a broader context offered by the media as it reproduces racial stereotypes. The BRA had to continue stressing the technical incapacity of the community, the non-political nature of the process of planning and redevelopment, and had to facilitate the political space for future implementation of the BRA plan. An outcome of this ideological battle between the BRA and city government and residents and organizations, would be necessary to decide which side would have the "legitimate right" to control the process of planning and redevelopment, and according to whose interests such processes were to occur.

1.4 Stereotypes and Dominant Ideology

The aforementioned cycles of investment and abandonment had negative effects on the physical appearance of Roxbury. It is a physically decayed community. The wave of gentrification in the South End and other parts of the city, and historical segregation in the city of Boston had secluded peoples of color in Roxbury. In this context, the City and BRA found the elements justifying the process of intervention that threatened to undermine the struggle for the land organized by the residents and organizations in the area.

Though the political and technical expertise of the community had grown immensely, the BRA had to validate their intervention in the community. The BRA had to offer a technical rationale for intervention, but perhaps, such a rationale for intervention was not solely sufficient in justifying intervention. The BRA had to rely upon a general and more extended

strategy to justify their intervention. Similarly, the BRA and the city had to maintain political control over the situation ; they had to rationalize consensus and ideologically suppress the organizations that were opposing their plans. Based on notions guided by technical rationality, the BRA had rationalized little community participation in the development processes.

First, the BRA prescribed that "maximum efficiency" in the development process could only be achieved if their plan was implemented. According to this premise, and within the context of capitalist relations of production, the community based organizations that were formed disobeyed the predominant logic of capital accumulation and were rendered "inefficient", and thus were to be eliminated from the process. Second, the BRA asserted its capacity to make decisions in an ideological vacuum. Any attempts to politicize issues in the community development process were rendered as deviations from the supposedly "real" issues, and were thus ignored or semanticized in a different fashion. Initially, the BRA initially would not allow the proliferation of such discussions, because, in the context of the ideological reproduction of capitalist relations of production this simply meant an erosion of their power. Third, the BRA emphasized expertise and professionalism in performing public duties; they implied that governmental functions are largely technical, a matter of effectively managing the public enterprise. In the context of the community development process, this argument simply meant a complete disregard of the potential capacity of the community to a decisive voice in its own affairs and an emphasis on the need for institutional intervention. The BRA presupposed its superiority in all arenas and became the hegemonic discourse that colonized

any other possible discourses. The BRA ultimately intended to erode, any possible stronghold of informed opposition to their plan.

Given the fact that community organizations had acquired substantial technical and political experience, the BRA and city government had to rely on ideological mechanisms to obtain the "leading edge" in the battle for control of the land. The BRA had to enhance its capacity or ability to disarticulate any type of actions oriented towards problematizing their view of development.

The BRA relied on media reproduced stereotypes to stress the technical incapacity and powerlessness of the community. This "campaign" rested upon socially upheld stereotypes of communities of color. Such stereotypes stress, first, the "historical technical incapacity" of communities of color to deal with their own affairs, and second, their "powerlessness". Both "images" rely upon a "blaming the victim" stance to carry their message across. A myth of the supposed technical incapacity of the community was grounded on the "evident decay" of the community. "Powerlessness" was grounded allusion to the "poor spirit" of the community that "permitted" the situation to exist in the first place.

The next chapter is a detailed analysis of the way in which the media, by constantly reproducing socially upheld stereotypes, facilitates the political context of legitimization in favor of private real estate investment in Roxbury. The media lends legitimacy, and is subservient to the BRA's schemes for redevelopment.

Chapter 2

THE MEDIA AND THE COMMUNITY IMAGE

2.1 Introduction

How do negative stereotypical images of racial and ethnic groups projected by major media outlets affect the internal power of a community, and what is the importance of those images? This question is very important because the images circulated by major media outlets in Boston reinforce an increasing "need" for political, social and economic intervention by outside forces in Roxbury, particularly the BRA. This ideologically created "need" for institutional intervention further affects the struggle for the land because widespread stereotypical images lend legitimacy to institutional schemes of intervention. The reproduction of racial stereotypes lends legitimacy to the BRA's and City Administration's social prerogatives to foster private development in Roxbury and the reincorporation of Roxbury into the expanding service economy of Boston.

To document my analysis I have delineated the following methodological steps. First, I have collected newspaper clippings that run from mid 1985 to the present, regarding the issue of the struggle for the land between community residents in Roxbury, and the BRA and City administration.¹ I will analyze how the clippings reproduce stereotypes and prejudices that reinforce the "need" for intervention by outside forces. The media cultivates and reproduces a general image of "powerlessness" which ideologically denies the internal technical and political capacity of the community to take control of its own affairs. Second, I have held interviews (video-taped) with a numbers of community leaders, community

organizers, planners and residents in the area. The purpose of the interviews was to accumulate a set of community leaders' and residents' opinions about the issue of land control that would effectively serve to fight the ideological and material forces that rationalize intervention in the community.² Third, I have followed closely the development of the issue of control of the land by video-taping major meetings, cultural activities, etc. in the area.³

2.2 Media Image, Dominant Ideology, and Negative Stereotypes

The conflict over the struggle for the land in Roxbury is affected by circulating negative stereotypical images of the community and the peoples who live in the community. Negative stereotypical images in the context of the struggle for land, produce a general image of "powerlessness" and "incapacity" of Afro-Americans, Latinos and Cape Verdeans to control their own affairs. Stereotypes represent a direct attack on the identity and consciousness that has developed around the struggle for the land. The media reinforces a "imperative need" for an "institutional intervention" by dominant exogenous forces, and deny the community residents' capacity to control their affairs. Mel King in the Introduction to Change of Change :

"There is a pervasive underlying belief along the 'blaming the victim' model that people of color do not have the ability to develop a self-supporting community that can contribute to the larger economy and culture. According to the press and other media, which are controlled by those outside the community, it is some inherent flaw in the Black community which keeps it in rundown state. The media perpetuates a self-fulfilling prophecy of despair and hopelessness for people of color. This persistent message that white society does not believe in the commitment or the capability of the community of color to improve its situation has seriously damaged the self-image of people of color. The constant refrain 'There's no way' increases the anxiety and frustration of those who care. So internally, pressure builds and

the confidence to proceed with community building and development processes by community residents are inhibited... A careful evaluation lends credence to the idea that the negative image of our community is most strongly propounded by those who control the economic resources. "4

A study prepared by Kirk Johnson entitled Media Images of Boston's Black Community⁵ empirically supports King's statement . He took a representative sample of local news reports "to form a representative collection of images of the black community as seen through the eyes of the media".⁶ Of the twelve media outlets in the Boston area, eleven were chosen for the study.⁷ The study covered newspapers, radio and TV. The results of the survey were :

1)"major media news about Roxbury and Mattapan is biased in the direction of commonly held stereotypes about blacks and the poor . Stories featuring crime and violence predominate, even in the presence of newsworthy stories that reveal aspects of the black community that defy these stereotypes." For example, 93% of the crime reported in the major media occurred outside Roxbury and Mattapan. But 59% of the news from these two neighborhoods concerned crime."⁸

2)"by and large, the ways that the major media reported the news during this period reflected white, upper-middle class values...local news displayed a bias in favor of lifestyles and institutions of the relatively affluent."⁹

3)"even when stories dealt with social inequity, including clear disparities in education and employment, and black community disenchantment, most reporters failed to acknowledge racism as an underlying mechanism."¹⁰

4)"by propagating information that fails to reflect the true nature of the black community, the local media, too, serve as perpetrators of racism."¹¹

The conclusions from Johnson's research clearly establish the role of the media reproducing dominant ideology; racist stereotyping of Blacks; negative images about Roxbury

as a multi- ethnic community; failure by the media to understand the effects of generalized social, political and economic structural inequities. The media contributes to undermine and disrupt the basic lines of identity which constitute crucial elements in the struggle for the land in Roxbury. Ideological reproduction of stereotypes, together with the lack of understanding shown by the media about the roots of poverty, represent an important "building block" to dominant ideology rationalizing institutional schemes of intervention. The rationale for institutional intervention proceeds to the extent that dominant ideology manages to undermine, disrupt or disarticulate consciousness and identity of the community.

Three basic lines of identity can be clearly identified in relation to the struggle for the land : race/ethnicity, class and citizenship. The three lines of identity are disrupted and misrepresented by the media. They are disrupted to the extent that the media , as the reproductive medium of dominant ideology, disarticulates any effort by community groups to use those possible lines of identity as crucial elements in the organizing process regarding the struggle for the land . Also, lines of identity are misrepresented to the extent the media distorts images by attaching unwanted meanings to those lines of identity. But how are the disruption of group identity and misrepresentation of group identity are determinant of the power legitimacy of a community struggling for the land?

Stereotypes facilitate the process whereby peoples are presented not as those who have suffered the rigour of exploitation and domination, but those responsible for deterioration. Reproduction and dissemination of stereotypes facilitate problematic social, economic and political conditions to be taken as the characteristics, or the reasons, why poor communities

deteriorate or look deteriorated. The causes of the problems are not differentiated from the peoples, so the peoples themselves become responsible for the effects of deterioration and abandonment. The causes for the existing poverty, crime and general community deterioration come across as the immediate identity of the peoples in the community. Oppression and exploitation are sematisized as an internal community problem , as an identity problem . That is, problems exist because "Blacks do not care about their community" or because "Latinos lack the consciousness or will to change things ", therefore the "need" for institutional intervention.

2.3 Race, Ethnicity and Communtiy Identity

Race and ethnicity are recognized by the media as one of the major axes of communtiy identity:

a)"District residents, an equal mix of Latinos, Blacks and Cape Verdeans..."¹²

b)" ... the diverse peoples in the area--blacks, Hispanics, Cape Verdeans and whites..."¹³

c)"In the area of some 10,000 Latinos, Blacks,Cape Verdeans and whites..."¹⁴

However, the treatment of racial/ethnic composition rarely goes beyond a mere mention of what it is to be considered a characteristic "feature" of the neighborhood. In this sense the neighborhood is characterized as a "Melting Pot" , with integrationist overtones. Ethnic and racial identity are mentioned in total isolation to the general state of affairs in Roxbury. The press makes no remarks to the effect that most of the people of color from the city of Boston

live in the area , and that the same area shows the most deterioration in the city of Boston. There is a systematic absence of any attempt to link the racial/ethnic composition of the area with underlying the geographic segregation of peoples of color into one area. Racial and ethnic characteristics and customs are not part of any explanation whatsoever of the possible cultural and political identity of the residents and communitiy groups in the area. The press makes no special point in recognizing that the struggle for the land derives power from the racial and ethnic composition of the area.

2.4 The Powerless

The lack of political and economic power is a reality in the community. However, such a lack of power cannot be blamed upon the residents of the area. The lack of of political and economic power is a direct outcome of social relations of production. That is, the lack of power is product of a social, political and economic system whose major priorities are not to encourage collective empowerment , but rather the maintenance of an oppressive class structure, capital accumulation, and racial domination. Stereotypes derive their discriminatory power precisely from the process wherein the dominant classes blame upon the poor their situation of powerlessness and thus rationalize the "need" for constant intervention. Stereotypes, in the context of the struggle for the land in Roxbury, simply reinforce the notion that the community is incapable of transcending the situation of powerlessness by its own efforts, and that the community residents' "state of consciousness" "betrays" their capacity to acquire power in the future. The press implicitly denies the space for an active and developing class and political consciousness.

On the one hand, the media expresses a profound disbelief in the technical capacity of the community to organize themselves, thus the "need" for institutional intervention. It hatches a general community image of dependence and powerlessness. On the other hand, the media communicates a profound skepticism regarding to the amount of power the community may eventually acquire in the struggle for the control of the land. The media , while it stresses the dependence of the community upon the philanthropic spirit of the rich towards the poor, also stresses the "tenuous idealism" of a community attempting to fight the "invincible" and "invisible" forces of the market.

The first form reproduces an image of "organizational/technical incapacity" when attributing internal organizational capacity of the community to exogenous forces, to external agents rooted elsewhere, and whose source of power rests outside the community(City Hall connections, Federal Funds, Foundations, etc.). Community residents , according to that general image, are dependant upon the power of others in order to express their potential and demands. The capacity of the community is portrayed as if it were motivated by exogenous sources. Several articles serve to illustrate the points made above.

This article says that the problem of disinvestment and abandonment is rooted in the incapacity of residents to take care of their community:

" The vacant lots are in fact symbols of disinvestment, which is just a fancy name for that process in which *people let everything go to pot, abandon their properties, refuse to fix up what they own*. The poor inherit the remains, and the results are not only physical decay but also poverty of neighborhood spirit."¹⁵

The above definition of disinvestment lacks any understanding of the structural economic and

political forces that bear the problem. The article takes structural problems as problems of "individual will", and actually points towards the "lacking" of such "will" in situations, or areas, characterized by poverty and physical decay.

Another article attempts to summarize cleaning efforts in the Dudley Street neighborhood area identifies this area as the place where: "[c]ity officials say rats outnumber humans 3-to-1".¹⁶ The article repeats quotes from city officials without really considering the implications of such statements. In comparing rodents (animals of dirtyness) to humans, the quote establishes an immediate association between the "poor people" in the area, and a stereotyped image of their "subhuman quality". Such a comparison would not produce the same effects in other areas of the city of Boston. Rats certainly exist in Beacon Hill but that is because the Hill is a "very old part of the city", the press may say, but the problem would not be associated with the negative stereotypes held against racial or ethnic groups because you have affluent white people living on the Hill.

The media basically transforms objective conditions of poverty, which can be attributed to structural inequities and ideological domination, into characteristics of the community and the peoples who live in it. The media tacitly blames the powerless for its powerlessness by semanticizing oppression, and blurring the real structural and ideological problems responsible for powerlessness in the community. The residents of the community, according to the view projected by the media, come across as powerless not because they are structurally and ideologically oppressed by dominant classes, but because community residents "lack" the moral and political capacity to organize themselves towards an end.

The capacity of the community is portrayed as if it were motivated by exogenous sources. An article entitled "Change is in the air along Dudley Street " serves as an illustrative example.

The article begins:

"One day last April(1984), some officials of a non-profit foundation were visiting La Alianza Hispana on Dudley street, a Roxbury neighborhood that *has seen little unity and received less attention* . They noticed a lot of gray-colored spaces on the map of the area. They asked what grey represented. Was it,one asked, new housing? Nelson Merced, who runs Alianza, a social service agency for Latinos, said no way did gray represent new housing. No, it stood for vacant land, for houses that had been gutted or torched. 'The trustees were shocked that much consequence of disinvestment and neglect', recalls Newell Flather, administrator of the Riley Foundation. 'Then we toured the neighborhood and saw what we had seen on the map. A lot of dumping had been going on. There were abandoned automobiles.Weed grass was growing all over the place.' After that April 1984 meeting at Alianza, the foundation trustees told Flather and his staff to study the neighborhood and see if foundation money could turn things around."¹⁷

The rest of the article is almost entirely devoted to the history and role of the Riley Foundation in funding activities and organizing meetings in the area. The initial anecdote is more than a clever journalistic and literary ruse to capture the attention of the reader. That initial anecdote forges two impressions in the reader's mind. On the one hand, the article, by devoting its first six paragraphs to the Riley Foundation, gives the impression that the Foundation is the one that has sparked the organizing process of the community. On the other hand, it creates the false impression that any possible struggle engaged in by the community in the future , in order to control its own environment and land , may be attributed to an almost casual discovery made by one outsider (one member of the Riley Foundation). Although the

Riley Foundation has been crucial to the initial organizing efforts in Roxbury, particularly in the Dudley area, the problem here is not related to the importance of the Riley Foundation in the process. The problem remains that the press minimizes the process wherein the community has taken consciousness of its own reality in favor of the process that an outside agent must come to the area to tell the residents what the problem is with their community. Moreover, the role of the Foundation, as described by the press, is consistent with the philanthropic attitude often attributed to the powerful towards the poor. The article reflects a state of affairs in which the community remains practically dependent upon the effort of others.

Dependence of the community upon outside sources of power and resources to change their immediate reality is also reflected in the ways the press organically separates community leaders and organizations from community residents. Not only are funding sources portrayed as main actors in the ongoing process of community organizing, but community organizations and community leaders are treated also like outsiders. This can be illustrated by an article entitled "Dudley Street Residents Seek a Stake in Their Future"¹⁸ where Melvyn Colon, executive director of Nuestra Comunidad Development Corp. and member of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative(DSNI), is presented as an "M.I.T. alumnus" totally independent from the community. Furthermore, several articles often depict Peter Medoff, acting director of DSNI, as a "professional organizer" whose important work has been "out-of-the-state" organizing work.¹⁹ Regardless of the truth in these statements regarding the background of some of the planners and leaders in the community, the press tends to emphasize a clear-cut

dichotomy between those doing the organizing and those being organized (community residents). The organizers: non-poor, outsiders, are presented as the actors "behind the scene" giving the impression that the process of empowerment could not be lead by the peoples themselves.

Consistent with the disbelief in the capacity of the "powerless" to organize themselves and eventually acquire power, is the tendency to highlight how "difficult" and "impossible" the community development process is, even with an organized community. The work of the organizations in the area is seen as an idealistic task, as they are trying to fight the "invincible" forces of the market and "progress". This perceived weakness (by the press) triggers a very sympathetic attitude in the media towards the efforts that are on the way in Roxbury. The attitude is very consistent, on the one hand, with a general appeal for social justice, and on the other, with a charitable attitude towards the weak. In fact, most of the articles praise the efforts of the community, sympathize with their demands and plead for someone to help. However, the advocacy is directed almost exclusively towards the authority, impersonated by the City Administration and the BRA. The media tacitly appeals to the dual nature of state intervention in which, on the one hand, there exists a real need to change a problematic situation, and on the other, that problematic situation would be changed as long as it becomes fruitful for private real estate investment. Two articles are illustrative of this problem.

Both articles follow similar strategies as far as the presentation of the economic situation in the Dudley area. The first one, presents the current general economic and real estate

environment in the the Dudley area: prices in the Dudley area are soaring . The reason for this situation in the Dudley area, with no further explanation, is simply attributed to the "fact" that the area "slipped into decay after World War II" ²⁰, and as consequence of abandonment, prices became so cheap that speculators became very anxious to buy in. This process produced fear of displacement of businesses and residents in the area , and quite sympathetic support is offered in the article. However, despite the fears , the Boston Redevelopment Authority will not, supposedly, allow that to happen to the residents and businesses in the area . According to the author, the "redevelopment authority says that[displacement] won't happen". The problem is not that alarming, according to developer Kenneth Guscott, cited in the article, because there is supposedly nobody there[the community] to be displaced in the first place : "the bulk of the land is vacant. What are you going to gentrify? You're not displacing anybody. Who's there to displace?"²¹ In the end the article calls upon the BRA to intervene in favor of the community, perhaps in a limited way: " [t]he BRA says its redevelopment plan will ease those fears". Stephen Coyle, director of the BRA says:

" We'll do as much as we can to stop displacement and chill speculation. But in any undertaking you never achieve the absolute maximum. That's naive. This isn't a chapter out of Che Guevara's America."²²

In this article the efforts of the community advocating for some type of control over the real estate market remain very marginal, which in any case such efforts would not be able to achieve the "absolute maximum". That is too idealistic according to Coyle, [t]his isn't a chapter out of Che Guevara's America.

The second article goes over the same issues the previous article described. However, community residents and community organizations are strongly depicted as "dreamers" fighting for the impossible dream represented by issues of community development and building housing in the vacant land:

"To passers-by, the vacant lots are no-man's land symbols of filth, neglect and poverty and hiding places for those who would prey on the innocent. To a developer, they are gold mines, the sites of future townhouses or condos in a city starved for housing. To those trying to make a life for themselves in the neighborhood, the vacant lots are the sites of future affordable homes, small business and parks. Filthy vacant lots become the stuff of dreams. To help the dreamers compete with the speculators, neighborhood activists two years ago began organizing the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, a coalition of social services agencies and neighborhood organizations."(emphasis mine)²³

The "dream" could not be realized if it were not for the intervention of the City and the BRA.

The article gives the impression that "activists" or "hyperactivists" , as they are later called in the same article, and residents may try to build the "dream", but that they will not be able to do so by themselves.

2.5 The Civic Self and Community Identity

The press largely characterizes community residents as "citizens" exercising their civic rights to petition or to protest. For example consider the following excerpts:

a) "A *broad based Roxbury coalition* yesterday called for halt to all proposed development projects in the area until a city-state-community partnership can be created to share in the decision- making on land use and development. Calling itself the Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority, the group said (...) that residents are concerned about the nature, scale, impact and long-term benefits of development proposals..."²⁴

b) "A group of Roxbury residents said yesterday it plans to file a lawsuit next week against the Boston Redevelopment Authority..."²⁵

The articles , even showing dates apart of almost one and a half year, still treat the multi-racial, multi-ethnic community coalition as an undifferentiated group where race, ethnicity, or socio-economic background have no significant role. As such , the community , once it has crossed the threshold of civic politics , becomes a "civic entity" totally undistinguishable from other communities. The conflict is semanticized and "cleansed" of conflictive roots.

In summary , the press juxtaposes stereotypical images upheld by dominant ideology that always justifies or reinforces the "need" for intervention in the general affairs of the community: a) the "good/weak/poor" is played against the "bad/violent/dirty/poor" ; (b) the "minority groups" who compose most of the population in Roxbury are played against the "citizens" of Roxbury. The press and other media reproduces stereotypical dichotomies which reinforce the need for state intervention on practically any ground. Stereotypes disrupt possible strongholds of consciousness and identity. They serve as an ideological fulcrum to dominant ideology in the sense that they facilitate the manipulation of contradictions so as to further express the "need" for state intervention.

So far the media has reinforced the " need " for institutional intervention, but more important has contributed to give shape and disseminate an image of the community which constitutes a denial of self-identity in the process of social development. The media has not only opened an ideological space to rationalize institutional intervention, and thus limit

community participation in the community development process , but has distorted the social, and political identity of the peoples in the community. The media has undermined the power of the community to act on its own behalf by undermining publicly the sources of identity.

Chapter 3

A CRITICAL VIDEO-TAPE ABOUT LAND CONTROL AND COMMUNITY STRUGGLE

3.1 Video as the Means of Communication

In Chapter 2 an important question remained unanswered: how as planners can we counteract the negative effects of stereotypes that undermine the power of community groups in Roxbury, and that rationalize the BRA's priorities for intervention in the area? The question has both a practical and a theoretical dimension. The practical dimension calls for: a) an active practice that in reality could change attitudes in the community; (b) the material means to convey to people outside Roxbury a different story about the struggle for land control in Roxbury; (c) an instrument to gather power in order to counteract the BRA's rationale for intervention, which directly affects the capacity for power of community groups fighting for land control. The theoretical dimension of the question addresses basically how as planners, can we incorporate into our day-to-day activities an understanding of how negative images affect the planning process, or affect our perception of any particular problem, within the context of a society that favors capital and that is racially discriminatory.

A video-tape represented the solution to the practical dimension of the unanswered question. I choose video-tape for several reasons. First, audiovisual technology, video in this case, given the expansion and impact of television over society at large, seemed to be a compelling tool to initiate a process whereby it may be possible to counteract the negative stereotypical images reproduced by the media. Video offers an opportunity to capture action for further evaluation, repetition and critical reflection on issues and ideas that circulate in the

community. Second, there are political, social, and economic structural reasons indicating that poor communities in particular have lacked the technical infrastructure and technical capacity to elaborate and disseminate their own views of their problems. This issue, as pointed by Mel King in the previous chapter, has been crucial to problems of collective self-image, self-definition and of the general social tendency by mainstream media to uphold discriminatory views of community problems and conflicts related to the social, political and economic situation of poor communities. Most of the time communities do not have the chance to elaborate their own messages and images; increasing centralization of decision making processes in capitalist societies, non-community control over the technical means to disseminate information and deliver messages about the community's issues have definitely contributed to misrepresentation of the community self-image.¹ Third, in Roxbury there seems to be a reason to rely on video, given the fact that the community is comprised by different ethnic groups. Language diversity, plus a probable high level of illiteracy, are powerful reasons to rely on a medium that offers the possibility of simultaneous visual and auditive discourse, as opposed to only verbal or written communication. Fourth, video can not only be illustrative with respect to certain planning issues and practices and any living situation, but it provides a great educational opportunity for self-reflectiveness. Finally, video facilitates expressing the relationship between "spatial perception" and "relational perception"; people can perceive the surrounding physical environment and also the social, political and economic relations that affect their own physical space.

3.2 Video and its Message

Once I chose the practical means (video) to convey the message, it became a question of how to elaborate the content of a message with the capacity to counteract negative stereotypes and stress the efforts of the community involved in the struggle for the land. The first step was to interview community leaders, residents, and planners involved in the issue of land control in order to "build" a "verbal story" of the conflict. The second step was to obtain a cultural/ethnic profile of the community in order to accurately portray the composition of the community, therefore, I followed cultural activities and filmed them. The third step was to "build" a filmed physical/environmental profile of the community; vacant lots, streets, gathering places, such as workplaces, restaurants, cafeterias, bus and train stations, small businesses, residents' homes, churches and one night club. The fourth step was to follow and film meetings and activities related to the issue of land control and community development. This methodology produced about 15-20 hours of video material, enough to reconstruct the issue of the struggle for the land and to produce a favorable image of the community that helped to sustain the struggle for the land.

The video material was edited to produce a 17-minute documentary piece in which the major objective was to combine a critical portrayal of the struggle for the land and an accurate portrayal of how the community has struggled to face the BRA and fight for the control of the land. The video could be roughly separated in six segments: a) introduction to the conflict between the BRA and the residents and community groups in the area; (b) why this conflict emerged in the first place; (c) how the residents have responded to the pressures and plans

introduced by the BRA and what kind of organizations have formed to counteract BRA plans; (d) which ethnic/racial groups form the community and what is their importance (e) how the struggle has evolved, and; (f) what concrete actions have the residents and community groups taken in their struggle with the BRA and what they have achieved.

In general the video was intended to convey three important messages.² First, that the community was capable of deciding for themselves what they wanted to do with the vacant land in their community. Second, that the community was capable of organizing and producing the technical skills necessary for the planning and redevelopment process, and that the BRA was mistaken in excluding the community because of their assumed incapacity for self-determination. Finally, and not least important, that although the community was in physical decay, the ethnic/racial groups that live in the area had the will to change and improve the state of the community, and that the ethnic/racial groups in the area derived organizing power from their ethnicity and class insertion. In conclusion, the video was intended to demythify the stereotypes reproduced by the media and used by the BRA as their rationale for intervention. The video was constructed³ so as to point to the organizational strength developed by the community, and to stress the need to cultivate a vision of political and economic power in a community which is currently threatened with losing their land and resources. For example, Mauricio Gaston said:

"The vision and the scope of the efforts that are underway in Roxbury are brilliant, and the community has been very creative in generating very innovative approaches to organizing themselves. The Dudley Street Initiative which combines organizing and planning for a more defined neighborhood it's

fairly a new model. It's also interesting because it's a Black, Hispanic and Cape Verdean coalition. The Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority... The concept of "neighborhood authority" originated here as far as I know, and it's a model that can be projected to other communities in this area and nationally... And insisting in democratic popular control of the process of re-investment and development." ⁴

But the "scope and vision of the efforts" are eroded by negative images projected by the media as was expressed in a speech by Georgette Watson at the First Annual Meeting of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative shortly after a documentary shown by "Frontline" through WGBH:

"We are a family in Roxbury. And in the words of Dr. King: How long will there be negative showing about Roxbury? Not long because we are building. How long will they show that we are divided? Not long because we are not divided, we are standing. If you are going to tell the story again tell the real story, so we can say: How long? Not long. How long? Not long. Because we are Roxbury and we can say to Dr. King: How long? Not long Dr. King because Roxbury will rise again and rise again strong." ⁵

Both views about the community provided perspective alternative to the one presented by the media and actually stressed the internal capacity of the community to respond to the material and ideological elements of a dominant society that threatened their existence as a community in control of its own affairs.

3.3 Video and Planning Practices: How to Fight Negative Images

Clearly, the process whereby the media frames the context for governmental action is a problem of perception; how the different actors involved in the process of planning and development are to understand their respective roles. Siding with the state, the media opens an ideological space for intervention; on the side of community groups the media serves to

undermine an alternative form of community development an in fact to undermine a counterhegemonic form of organization and consciousness. But how is an analysis and understanding of such process important for planning practice and the planning profession?

In 1960 Kevin Lynch published a landmark book, The Image of the City,⁶ which explored the importance of our perception of the urban environment; the role that environmental imagery, visual and symbolic, plays in our capacity to understand our environment. Lynch succeeded in presenting an insightful account. However, his attempt did not account for, or did not intend to explore, how, within a conflictive context, the visual and symbolic imagery people may perceive of their environment and themselves, through a specific portrayal of the physical environment and of the social relations that condition people's living situation, contributes to objectification of people's consciousness. Lynch made a major breakthrough as emphasizing to city planners the importance of perception:

" The observer himself should play an active role in perceiving the world and have a creative part in developing his image. He should have the power to change that image to fit changing needs. An environment which is ordered in precise and final detail may inhibit new patterns of activity. A landscape whose every rock tells a story may make difficult the creation of fresh stories. Although this may not seem to be a critical issue in our present urban chaos, yet it indicates that what we seek is not a final but an open ended, order, capable of continuous further development... Each individual creates and bears his own image, but there seems to be a substantial agreement among members of the same group. It is this group images exhibiting consensus among significant numbers, that interest city planners who aspire to model an environment that will be used by many people."⁷

From Lynch's work it is possible to see the role that perception plays in framing available

planning alternatives. It is crucial that the planning profession understands how the perception of the problem by different actors makes an important difference in the outcomes of the planning and development process. In the case of the struggle for land control in Roxbury, perception is tailored by the media in a society dominated by capital. The positions of the actors and their spheres of action are "tailored" by the media to a large extent. Such "tailoring" is crucial understanding the ideological difficulties faced when building a counterhegemonic notion of community development. Chuck Turner says:

" We must not accept their(meaning city administration) version of material reality--as soon as we do we've lost more than half the battle."⁸

Chapter 4

Conclusions

4.1 The Media and the Rationale for Intervention

The rationale for institutional intervention in of Roxbury obeys the contradictory nature of a society dominated by the interests of capital and racial inequality. Intervention is framed within the need of the state to maintain social harmony while it fosters a general class structure and racial arrangements that favor capital accumulation. For that reason, the process of intervention obeys to a dual dynamic. While, on the one hand, there is a real need to correct a problematic state of emotional and material affairs in the community, on the other hand, there is also a "need" that prescribes intervention in this state of affairs because it would be fruitful to the processes of capital accumulation. Institutional intervention in Roxbury is crucial, not to the extent that it helps to correct a problematic state of affairs , but to the extent that the correction of such a problematic state of affairs serves as the rational basis to intervene in favor of the conditions that will foster capital accumulation. Negative stereotypes, as part of dominant ideology, are subservient to the rationale of institutional intervention in poor communities of color.

Media reproduction of negative stereotypes about communities of color singularly isolates a problematic emotional and material state of affairs , mostly a result of social, political and economic inequities, but not clearly identified as such. When the media reproduces such negative stereotypes it opens an ideological space for institutional intervention. Stereotypes connote negatively and bring about the "necessity" to intervene in order to correct the

"problems" . The media equates the problematic state of affairs with the identity of the peoples in those communities and with the physical appearance of the community.

The media first validates technical rationality, and second, offers implicit legitimacy to the actions of the state. Validation and dissemination of technical rationality by the media helps to convince people that planning and development are not political, and that the prerogatives of development are not guided by the need to reproduce the conditions of capital accumulation. This process, paired to the way in which the media transmits and disseminates racial stereotypes, opens the ideological space for the state to intervene in favor of a society dominated by capital. Thus, the media becomes an "unrecognized" reproductive agent of dominant ideology in the process of intervention.

The semantic process is more complex than overtly "blaming the victim" for its problems. As a product of perceived conditions of poverty and decay, the image of the community as profiled by the media reproduces a view of general powerlessness. The media rhetorically transforms what otherwise can be identified as the result of structural inequities, into problems of group identity, "individual will" and, a general incapacity to act collectively. Perhaps the relationship between poverty and powerlessness is a reality in the community. However, neither poverty nor powerlessness can be attributed to an inherent structural or spiritual flaw of the community. The media tacitly supports a general premise for institutional intervention when it discursively transforms the structural arrangements that foster oppression into an immanent reality that lends identity to the peoples in the community.

But how is it possible to recapture negative stereotypical images that serve to reproduce

inequities, and that undermine the identities of peoples in the community? How to attack and reverse notions reinforcing prejudiced ideas about the identity of the community so as to further reinforce the "need" for direct institutional intervention? Practically all the residents and leaders I interviewed agreed upon the need to build a positive image of the community that could counteract circulating negative images, and that, at the same time, could contribute to fostering consciousness regarding the struggle to control the land.

The city administration and the BRA have clung onto socially upheld stereotypes reproduced by the media to rationalize intervention and justifying their technical superiority, thus "defending" their role as the legitimate "voice" in the conflict for the control of the land. Planners must address this ideological process and understand that the process of intervention has been "carved" in the public arena to thwart the internal power capacity of the community in the conflict. How can we concretely fight such effect?

Paulo Freire said that:

" Although the dialectical relations of men with the world exist independently of how these relations are perceived (or whether or not they are perceived), it is also true that the form of action men adopt is to a large extent a function of how they perceive themselves in the world."¹

Community planners and leaders should be concerned with the process wherein a problem is delineated so as to be perceived in any particular way. Also, they should be concerned with how the actors involved in the conflict define each other. In the case of capital-dominated societies, we refer to how dominant ideology chooses to define (or objectify) dominated individuals in order to justify intervention, and thus resolve the contradictions that emerge from the

simultaneous process of accumulation and legitimization.

If we assume that planning is simultaneously a discursive and a pragmatic activity , we maybe able to understand how planning could lead us into analyzing how planners with their "saying" and "doing", influence the outcomes of conflicts in general, and how the media , by upholding negative stereotypical ideas, reinforces the discursive practices of dominant institutions.

The outcome of a social conflict may be tilted towards one side or to the other, given the strength of the means by which planners either enforce, convince or oppose circulating notions of community development. The process whereby a planner reproduces or creates a notion of development is in itself an action, an action that reproduces an ideological content against a material context. Planners' actions ,in general, could be understood as having a discursive and a pragmatic dimension. As such, planners must be concerned not only with what they do, but also with what they say, and how they say it. Forester says:

" What planners do not say can be as important as what they do say. Planners shape not only documents or information... but also, citizens' access to information, their understanding and interpretation of such information and their ability to participate effectively in political processes affecting their lives. The structure of the planning process reflects a systematic patterning of communication that thus influences levels of community organization, citizen participation, and outonomous, responsible citizen action." ²

Planning then, could be understood as a way of not only shaping material reality but also shaping a discourse about what it is being said about material reality. Planners have the capacity to influence the perception of a problem, and have the capacity to shape how actors are

to be perceived in any particular planning process, thus substantially affecting the outcome of socio-political processes.

Planning happens at the heart of social relations , and planning itself is product of social relations. Planners (and planning agencies) in their work , theoretically speaking, reproduce or recreate social, political and economic notions of the world . For example, the Boston Redevelopment Authority and City Administration controls over 40% of the vacant land in the Dudley /Blue Hill Avenue. Their role is not only to offer "viable" practical alternatives for the development of the vacant land. Theirs is an ideological role as well, because they have to introduce and circulate in Roxbury a notion of the world (a notion of social development) that serves to rationalize their intervention and that implicitly convinces people that the notions of the world sponsored by the BRA and City Administration are in the "best interest" of the residents in the area . The BRA and City Administration create a discourse that "convinces" people about imminent political and social intervention , and that allows, in this case, development to happen in the way the BRA and City Administration propose.

Footnotes

Chapter 1

- 1) Offe, Claus. Contradictions of the Welfare State. Chapter 4. pp. 119-120
- 2) Gaston, Mauricio; Kennedy, Marie. Capital Investment or Community Development? (1986)p.5.
- 3) The "rent gap" is defined as the process whereby "price of suburban land rises with the spread of new construction, [and] the relative price of inner-city falls... the devalorization of capital in the center creates the opportunity for the revalorization of this 'underdeveloped' section of urban space(physically decayed poor communities)". See Smith, Neil. Gentrification of the City. pp.23-24.
- 4) See Gaston and Kennedy(1986). Cited above.

Chapter2

- 1) A complete list of the newspaper articles cited and used in this thesis is provided with the bibliography. Appendix I contains a copy of all the articles.
- 2) A complete list of the video-taped interviews is provided with the bibliography.
- 3) A list of the most important activities recorded is provided with the bibliography.
- 4) King, Mel. Chain of Change. Introduction.
- 5) Johnson, Kirk. Media Images of Boston's Black Community.
- 6) Ibid. p.9
- 7) Ibid. p.9
- 8) Ibid. pp.25-29
- 9) Ibid. pp.36-37
- 10) Ibid.p.40
- 11) Ibid.p.42
- 12) La Semana 8/1-7/85
- 13) Dorchester Community News 4/29/86
- 14) Boston Globe 12/27/86
- 15) Boston Globe 2/17/85
- 16) Dorchester Argus-Citizen 6/26/86
- 17) Boston Globe 2/17/85
- 18) La Semana 8/1-7/85
- 19) Bay State Banner 5/29/86
- 20) Boston Globe 7/14/85
- 21) Boston Globe 7/14/85
- 22) Boston Globe 7/14/85
- 23) Boston Globe 12/27/86
- 24) Boston Globe 2/15/85
- 25) Boston Globe 6/7/86

Chapter 3

- 1) Tichenor, et.al.. Community Conflict & The Press.
- 2) A full transcript of the video is included as Appendix II, also a copy of the video itself.
- 3) Much of this work was accomplished together with Anny Rivera-Ottemberger from the School of Communications at Boston University.
- 4) Video-Taped interview with Mauricio Gaston
- 5) Georgette Watson at the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative First Annual Meeting .
Video-taped material.
- 6) Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City.
- 7) Ibid. pp. 6-7
- 8) Chuck Turner cited in Kennedy, Marie. Lessons From Community Planning in Boston. 1986.

Chapter 4

- 1) Freire, Paulo. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. p.71
- 2) Forester, John. " Critical Theory and Planning Practice " in Critical Theory and Public Life. Introduction.

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Appendix I

Globe
2/15/85



Melvin King (seated, center) speaks at meeting of Organizing Committee for a Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority. GLOBE STAFF PHOTO BY GEORGE RIZER

Community coalition urges halt to development plans in Roxbury

By Charles Claffey
Globe Staff

A broad-based Roxbury coalition yesterday called for a halt to all proposed development projects in the area until a city-state-community partnership can be created to share in the decision-making on land use and development.

Calling itself the Organizing Committee for a Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority, the group said in a statement read by Melvin King, former mayoral candidate and head of the Rainbow Coalition, that residents are concerned about the "nature, scale, impact and long-term benefits" of development proposals by the federal government, the state and the city.

A controversial plan by the Boston Redevelopment Authority to revitalize the Dudley Station area of Roxbury is only one of the proposals in which the coalition wants a partnership agreement. Other stations include the development upgrade of Grove Hall, the Hill Avenue Corridor, Boston State Hospital, Heritage Park, a South-

west Corridor-related development and the MBTA Orange Line replacement service.

A spokesman for the BRA noted that the agency's director, Stephen Coyle, and his delegates have already held more than 100 meetings with community representatives about the Dudley Station plan during the last four months.

The spokesman, Ralph Melo, said that once the BRA plan is made public "we are of course committed to a process of community involvement - involvement in equity, opportunity and economic participation."

King said the Organizing Committee also wants the federal government to cease any future disposition of private sales of HUD properties acquired multifamily housing. Such an agreement is needed to insure the continued use of the properties as low and moderate income housing.

The Organizing Committee also wants to ensure that in any planning and development there will

be no displacement of residents or commercial tenants. It called also for expanded home ownership and ownership and residential equity options, expanded mixed-income rental options, local development and ownership of commercial enterprises, and equity participation by community organizations and minority entrepreneurs.

King said he felt it was important for the welfare of the community to take part in the decision-making process in the development of Roxbury. He noted that it was important to prevent a reversion of the disastrous effects suffered by residents in the wake of the demolition of Dorsey Place, the South End and the West End.

King said that the Organizing Committee is a coalition of people who are concerned about the future of Roxbury and that it is important to insure that the community has a voice in the decision-making process. He said that the coalition will continue to work for the betterment of the community and that it will be a voice for the black people of Roxbury. Rushing added.

Change is in the air along Dudley Street

Area residents work to take charge of their future

Alan Lupo
Special to the Globe

One day last April, some officials of a nonprofit foundation were visiting La Alianza Hispana on Dudley Street, a Roxbury neighborhood that has seen little unity and received even less attention. They noticed a lot of gray-colored spaces on a map of the area.

They asked what gray represented. Was it, one asked, new housing? Nelson Merced, who runs Alianza, a social service agency for Latinos, said no way did gray represent new housing. No, it stood for vacant land, for houses that had been gutted or torched.

"The trustees were shocked to see that much consequence of disinvestment and neglect," recalls Newell Flather, administrator of the Riley Foundation. "Then we toured the neighborhood and saw what we had seen on the map. A lot of dumping had been going on. There were abandoned automobiles. Weed grass was growing all over the place."

After that April 1984 meeting at Alianza, the foundation trustees told Flather and his staff to study the neighborhood and see if foundation money could help turn things around. The foundation, established in 1971 and named for a Newton businessman, has about \$20 million in assets and, according to Flather, "has been willing to take risks" by funding neighborhood-based projects.

"We knew," Flather says, "that if the incentive didn't come from the neighborhood, it wouldn't succeed. And we recognized that the need there is so great that even if the foundation put in all its mon-

ey, it wouldn't be sufficient to turn around the neighborhood."

At some point, the Riley Foundation must decide how much of its own money it should invest to rebuild the neighborhood and how it can best serve as bait for other private, nonprofit and public investment. But equally important is what's been going on since September — the process of community organizing.

The participants say they began doing in September what Mel King contends the city should have done to prepare for the Dudley Station renewal plan. They call their project the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, because whatever comes of it — housing, small businesses, more social services — it will have come up from the neighborhood.

For five months, community leaders have been meeting, first, to take measure of one another, and then to create the support system for a true neighborhood program. After some 20 meetings, the participants are about ready to go public at community meetings scheduled for 9:30 a.m. next Saturday and 7:30 p.m. March 7 at St. Patrick's Church.

It was a long and arduous process. "It takes a long time for something like this to jell," says Flather, "for people to feel comfortable. There were a lot who came to the meetings who didn't know one another."

The meeting chairman, Bill Slotnik, of the Community Training and Assistance Center, explains: "A real planning process with some 20 agencies and even more individuals is more time-consuming than one person making all the decisions."

STREET, Page A24



Street

Continued from Page A23

A major issue was the exact boundaries of the area to be included in the project. Other questions involved how to build a continuing membership, how the organization should be run, how to maintain community involvement, how to create a planning process that sets priorities, attracts investment and prevents the residents from being picked off one at a time by speculators and developers.

At the public meetings later this month and next, community leaders will suggest geographic boundaries and discuss potential programs, and the community will elect a 23-member governing board "with no less than three representatives, respectively, from black, Cape Verdean, Hispanic and white cultures." That board will take on the onerous task of determining whether a neighborhood can save itself before real estate speculators price the residents out of their homes.

Valerie Gregory, director of the Cape Verdean Community House, says housing will be one priority. "the rehabilitation of existing housing and possibly new housing on vacant land. We want to see betterment, but our basic concern is not to see the residents displaced by renovation."

Concern over "gentrification"

Mary Rogers, a staffer at WAITT House, a social service agency, agrees. "There's a lot of concern that what happened with gentrification in the South End could now happen here."

A drive along Dudley street today would not prompt fears of gentrification. The vacant lots are in fact symbols of disinvestment, which is just a fancy name for that process in which people let everything go to pot, abandon their properties, refuse to fix up what they own. The poor inherit the remains, and the results are not only physical decay but also a poverty of neighborhood spirit.

But there is another side to the picture of the vacant lots.

One can look at those vacant lots and see the potential for rebuilding a community and making money. With more private-sector jobs in Boston, with diminishing office space downtown, with increasing numbers of single people and working couples seeking housing in a tight market, and with a Southwest Corridor project that will open up opportunities for housing, jobs and recreation, Roxbury has become gold-dust city, and real estate speculators are working the territory.

Residential property values in Roxbury, for many years over-assessed and highly taxed, have shot up dramatically. In the last five years, Proposition 2½, revaluation and tax classification combined to knock down taxes. The combination of lower taxes and a citywide housing shortage helped pump up real estate values to the point where Roxbury homes have "experienced greater value increases than the city average," according

to one BRA report. All this has happened in an area that from 1944 to 1975 lost half of its taxable parcels.

For the social service and community activists along Dudley street, it is crucial that a community of Latinos, blacks, Cape Verdeans and some whites take charge of its own future.

The specific community in their minds is the Dudley street area south and east of Dudley Station to a point short of Upham's Corner in Dorchester. They contend this area has been the most neglected part of the city and worry that it is about to become one of the most coveted pieces of turf in town, especially in light of the city's proposed renewal plan for Dudley Station to the north.

Merced estimates the project area will include 100 city blocks and perhaps 10,000 persons. He also sees the initiative as complimenting Mel King's concern about community participation.

For the social service and community activists along Dudley street, it is crucial that a community of Latinos, blacks, Cape Verdeans and some whites begin to take charge of its own future.

"If left to their own design," Merced says, "economic forces would displace all the poor, convert all the housing, and you'd have something like the South End or Jamaica Plain, where even moderate-income people have trouble finding housing. We want to make sure that whatever happens is to the benefit of the community, and that means little or no displacement and that current residents have the opportunity to participate."

After the community meetings, the next step is to build something specific upon that community consensus and to do so in an era of diminishing public funds. That's where the Riley Foundation could weigh in, both as a source of money and as a neighborhood booster that gets corporations and non-profit outfits to do some investing.

Whatever ultimately happens, for Ricardo Millet, who runs the Roxbury Multi-Service Center, the initiative has been "a very unique experiment. If this works, I think we can prove that neighborhood-based planning is viable. So far as I'm concerned, it's already been successful in bringing people together to the table. We've transcended the barriers, both ethnic and language."

So, down below Dudley Station and beyond the controversy over that project is the initiative. "It's interesting to see all this converging," Millet says. "Mel's group, the BRA plan, and the initiative. The irony is that everyone could learn from the initiative, and perhaps it's not too late for others to build on it."

Alan Lupo is an author and journalist.

March 5, 1985

SPECIAL REPORT

Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative brings community together



EXPLAINING THE BOUNDARIES of the area to be included in the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative is, standing, Bill Slotnik of the Community Training and Assistance Ctr., and, seated, Melvyn Colon of Nuestra CDO. Others on the panel at Feb. 23 community meeting are, left to right: Nelson Merced of La Alianza Hispana, Shelley Moon of Roxbury Multi-Service Ctr., Robert Holmes of the Riley Foundation, and Steven Johnson of Greater Roxbury Development Corp. Photo by Carolina Salguero.

by Bob Keough

Controlling the cycle of deterioration and renewal that keeps our neighborhoods on a rollercoaster has been the goal and the hope of many a community group in Boston. And while a variety of local organizations and institutions, from block clubs to community development corporations to civic associations, have all had some impact on it, they often find themselves too small or too isolated to harness the gyrations of the private development market or to overcome the inertia of government bureaucracy.

But now one of Boston's most forsaken neighborhoods has embarked on a broad-based and ambitious effort to control its own destiny. The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, which held its first community-wide meeting Saturday, February 23 at St. Patrick's Church in Roxbury, has begun to bring together a network of agencies, churches and individuals from the area between Uphams Corner and Dudley Square in order to spur and direct development in the interest of the community.

A twenty-year decline

The Dudley Street neighborhood is sorely in need of attention, having endured twenty years of disinvestment. Consisting of a border area between Dorchester and Roxbury and known primarily as the territory between better known reference points, Dudley Street has been particularly neglected by government and private capital alike. "Some people call it the Bermuda Triangle, or the Black Hole," according to Melvyn Colon of Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation.

The signs of that disinvestment are stark: an estimated 30% of the land in the area is vacant. In some parts of the area, as much as a quarter of the remaining housing units are unlivable. Not surprisingly, the people who live in the neighborhood are very poor: in the highest income census tract, half the households earn less than \$13,000; in the lowest, half make less than \$6600 per year.

Change in the air

Despite the disinvestment and poverty, there is a sense that something is about to happen in the Dudley Street area, and soon. "In the next five years, Roxbury and North Dorchester will change," Nelson

Merced of La Alianza Hispana told the meeting. "That confronts us with the three questions: Who will change the community? Who will benefit from this change? And how will this change come about?"

In an interview, Merced explained why he is sure change is on the way. "The market is right. There is not enough housing, so there is a high demand for it. There is full employment in the state, although that has not yet included minority communities." In addition, Merced noted, "There is the willingness on the part of the city to target these problems and focus resources on them. The commitment is there on the part of the state as well."

The sense that change is in the air was buttressed early this year when Boston Redevelopment Authority plans for a \$750 million development project for the Dudley Station area was leaked to the press. The lack of community input on those plans has angered many in the Roxbury area who fear an urban renewal-style project that will sweep current residents out of its path. The BRA's outreach to the community, complained Steven Johnson of the Greater Roxbury Development Corp. at the meeting, "has been insulting and offensive."

A crossroads for Dudley St. area

So community activists and agency officials now believe the Dudley Street neighborhood has come to a crossroads: still plagued by the affliction of disinvestment, but concerned that the antidote may be a kind of development that does not benefit the community now there.

"We are still working in a neighborhood where disinvestment is the main market force," said Colon in an interview, "but we are girding our loins for an onslaught of speculators."

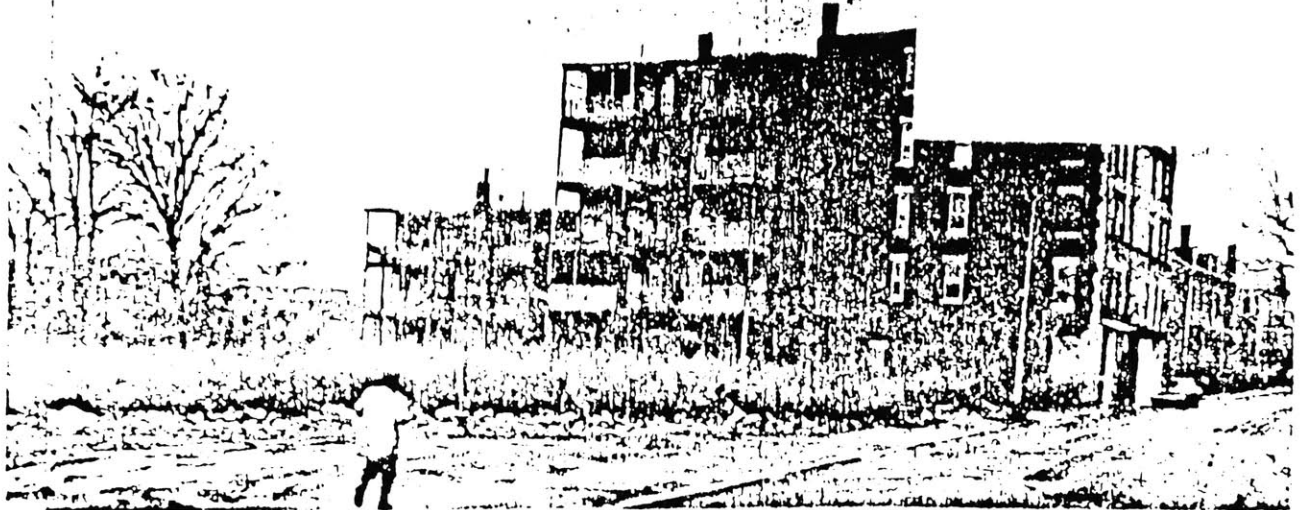
Already, according to Colon, there have been some "inklings" of new investor interest in the Dudley corridor. A building on Mr. Pleasant St. recently made available by the city attracted the attention of some private developers, as well as Nuestra. And a Fairland St. lot whose owner had previously allowed it to be used as a community garden has just had five condominium units built on it, with a two-bedroom unit priced at \$60,000.

Still, any speculation going on now remains "anticipatory." Said Colon with a chuckle, "there are no quiche parlors here yet."

Bringing together diverse community

But concerns about future development did inspire directors of 21 area social service agencies to begin meeting more than six months ago. Planning a process of community decision-making was not easy for this predominantly minority, but highly diverse neighborhood, home to substantial numbers of blacks, hispanics and Cape Verdeans, plus a small but growing Asian population. For the community

to influence future development



SOME 30% OF THE LAND in the Dudley Street area is vacant. Impact on the market." Photo by Carolina Salguero.

Nelson Merced: "To the extent that we can decide how to dispose of the vacant land, we can have a big

meeting, planners rented equipment for simultaneous translation into Spanish and Cape Verdean creole, making the St. Patrick's chapel look like the United Nations.

The meeting itself, which drew a crowd of about 150, was intended to give the community an opportunity to react to the initiative idea, and to establish a membership and governance structure for what had been to date an informal grouping. Comments included the need for jobs to come out of area development, particularly for Orchard Park public housing residents, who complained of being denied promised jobs at the Digital Corp. plant at Crosstown Park. Also noted were the high cost of housing, and of food in an area served primarily by small stores.

The complex, 23-person governing board proposed by the planning group came under some fire from

Dudley area residents as disproportionately representing social service agencies. Since the directors of many of the agencies do not live in the area, it was feared that community residents might be limited to a minority role on the governing body of its own neighborhood. The meeting passed a motion to revise the board to ensure that at least 51% of the members live in the neighborhood.

While the governing board controversy generated some heat at the time, the planners were not displeased. "I was really impressed," said Colon. "The community people really took over the meeting."

The next meeting of the Initiative will be March 7, when a revised, 21-member board will be recommended. Elections to the board were originally planned for that meeting as well, but delaying any vote until April will also be suggested in order to give members some time to get to know nominees.

Controlling the land

When the governing board is finally in place, the real work can begin. The success of neighborhood-based planning, Colon and Merced agreed, will depend on gaining control over the vacant land which, according to Colon, is at least 30% publicly owned and "we suspect a large part of the remaining land is tax delinquent."

"To the extent that we can decide how to dispose of the vacant land," offered Merced, "we can have a big impact on the market. That tells developers in the city what people want in this area."

A united voice, it is hoped, will help the Dudley Street neighborhood, ignored and neglected in the past, to determine its own future. "We are looking to build a consensus," noted Merced. "To the extent that consensus gets built, that's a political force."

La Semora

Agosto 1-7/1985

Dudley Street Residents Seek a Stake in Their Future

By Lawrence Thomases



Melvyn Colon

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, a organization which has been able to recruit members in just a few months time, is trying to ensure that residents of the Dudley Street area in Roxbury and North Dorchester exert some control over the future of their community. This area, which stretches from Dudley Station to Cream's Corner, was once characterized by poverty. Many now predict, however, that it will be a centerpiece of development within the next few years. The district's residents, an equal mix of blacks, and Cape Verdeans, may be understandably skeptical that their

neighborhood could soon become prized ground. Melvyn Colon, director of the local Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation, concedes that the area has seen steady deterioration over the past 20 years.

"The evidence is the sheer number of vacant lots," observes Colon, who blames their profusion on a combination of demolition and arson. Poverty also haunts the area. There is a high frequency of welfare dependence and single-parent families, and, according to Colon, almost half of the residents of the area do not participate in the labor force. The M.I.T. alumnus is quick to add, however, that "there is still remarkable strength" along Dudley Street. One indication of this is the high rate of home ownership; almost half the structures in the neighborhood are occupied by their owners. Moreover, says Colon, "Vacant land is no longer a blight—it's an asset."

The question at this point is who will benefit from these unused lots. They could prove lucrative investments to real estate speculators, who have begun to show increasing interest in Roxbury-North Dorchester, or they could be put at the disposal of community groups. The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative intends to work for the latter option; otherwise, its members fear their neighborhood could become another Jamaica Plain or South End, with long-term residents swept away by a tide of gentrification and condo conversion.

"This used to be a forgotten area," says Colon, contrasting this image with an estimated \$750 million in public and private investment that is expected to materialize within the next few years. "Now we are worrying about speculation. (Investment) has changed the ground rules of the game."

Building a Coalition

One major ally in efforts to revive the Dudley Street area to the benefit of its residents is the Riley Foundation, which provides "seed money" to fund innovative community-based projects throughout the city. The foundation, a past contributor to La Alianza Hispana, which bears a Dudley Street address, visited the agency in 1984

to learn more about the problems it was addressing. Included in the visit was an eye-opening tour of La Alianza's immediate surroundings.

"They were appalled at the conditions of the neighborhood," Colon recalls. "It made them question the one-shot approach of giving money. They wanted to establish a different relationship."

The foundation decided to invite organizations that serve the area—including social service agencies, churches, and development corporations—to inventory its resources and make specific proposals for its future, thus marking the beginnings of the Initiative. Members of these organizations met 20 times over a 5-month period, then went public at a community meeting at St. Patrick's Church last winter. The Initiative now includes a 20-member governing board, comprised of three representatives each from the Anglo, Latino, black and Cape Verdean communities, along with representatives from such diverse institutions as the American Muslim Mission, WAITT (We're All in This Together House), and the A&L Body Shop. Hispanic members of the governing board are Tubal Padilla, Ephraim Escobar, and Esteban Soto Jr., while Hispanic institutions represented include Alianza Hispana, Nuestra Comunidad, and the Roxbury Multi-Service Center.

The Initiative is still in its incipient stages, but its members know that they will have to confront some hard realities soon. Boston's tight housing market, the search by corporations for office space in the city's outlying areas, and a development boom brought on by the Southwest Corridor project could produce incursions by a number of outside forces. Already, the Boston Redevelopment Authority has floated a "feasibility study" which suggests the placement of condos, hotels, and light manufacturing in the area.

"There's a lot of political maneuvering," says Melvyn Colon. "It will be interesting to see who is going to have real power in this neighborhood in a couple of years."

WILLY STATE BUREAU
JUNE 6, 1985

Dudley Initiative begins housing and jobs planning

Irma Wright O'Connor

A neighborhood effort to create housing and employment for residents of the Dudley Street area is being organized in three languages: English, Spanish and Cape Verdean Creole.

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, about six months old, is a collaborative effort reflecting the various ethnic and cultural groups residing in the neighborhoods to the north and south of Dudley Street from Harrison Avenue to Columbia Road.

At the first official meeting of the Dudley groups membership, the trilingual approach to development was symbolized by non-English speaking members wearing headsets and listening to instantaneous translations of comments made in the basement chapel of St. Patrick's Church.

Held last week, the meeting was intended to set forth the process of

identifying priorities for the organization, which has been supported by a start-up grant from the Riley Foundation.

Like other groups in Boston's low-income neighborhoods, the Dudley Initiative is seeking to promote housing, business and job opportunities for its membership.

According to Newell Flather, ex-

ecutive director of the Riley Foundation, which has been supported by a start-up grant from the Riley Foundation, Flather said the foundation does not have nearly enough funds to solve the economic problems of the Dudley area.

Flather said trustees hope the Dudley Initiative will use its organizing capabilities to leverage money for housing and business develop-

Like other groups in Boston's low-income neighborhoods, the Dudley Initiative is seeking to promote housing, business and job opportunities for its membership.

ment in the area. Heading up last week's meeting was the Dudley Initiative's interim president, Nelson Merced, who is executive director of the social service agency Alianza Hispana.

The decision by Riley trustees to make a modest contribution to the group's start-up budget does not

ment in the area.

It was a visit to Merced's office on

continued to page 14

•Dudley

continued from page 1

Dudley Street near Blue Hill Avenue that first prompted Riley trustees to plan support of a community organization that could collect around issues of concern.

So far, the Dudley Initiative has over 200 members and has elected a 12-person governing board representing various churches, agencies and businesses in the area.

Black members of the governing board are Earl Coleman, who also heads the vacant land committee, Gail Latimore and Che Madyun. Hispanic representatives on the board are Ephraim Escobar, Esteban Soto Jr. and Hilda Vega.

Cape Verdean board members are Miguel Brando, Manuel Goncalves and Ulisses Goncalves. White members are Betty Brickley, Padre Pio Gottlin and Sister Theresa Kelly.

While the Dudley Initiative is still in the formative stages, Flather said Riley Foundation trustees are eyeing its progress closely. If the leadership is able to put together an effective structure for addressing neighborhood problems, the Dudley group may be granted seed money for starting up specific projects.

Che Madyun, a board member from the American Muslim Mission, expressed optimism about the Dudley group's potential. "It's just beginning," she said, "but so far it looks good."

Property values soar in Dudley Sq.

Planned renovations in Roxbury section lure urban professionals and speculators

By John Powers
Globe Staff

Strangers with grand visions have been coming by Charles Calvey's Warren Street jewelry store, asking how much he wants for his building. "Yeah, I'll take half a million dollars," Calvey says. "And they say, 'Okay, let's sit down and talk.'"

In and around Dudley Square in Boston's Roxbury section, any numbers seem to be reasonable numbers these days. A retail building on Washington Street recently changed hands for \$450,000. A pair of unrenovated yellow brick structures near the Cape Verdean Community House were sold for nearly \$300,000 apiece this spring. And a three-family house across from Boston Technical High School went for more than \$100,000.

Those prices, once thought ludicrous for properties in one of Boston's poorest neighborhoods, are not unusual. "There are single-family houses going for \$80,000 now," says Shelley Hoon, director of community development for the Roxbury Multi-Service Center. "A couple of years ago, you could have picked up one of those for \$20,000."

Now \$20,000 won't even buy a rundown shell. With the Orange Line's elevated tracks scheduled for removal, the Boston Redevelopment Authority planning a \$750 million renovation for the area and citywide housing scarce to begin with, Dudley has become one of the city's hottest real estate markets.

Yet those rising prices, for both residential and commercial property, have tenants and merchants worrying whether there'll still be room for them in the Dudley renaissance.

Area slipped into decay

Once a bustling commercial center surrounded by graceful 19th-Century houses, Dudley Square slipped into decay after World War II. Adjacent streets are now pockmarked by trash-filled vacant lots and boarded-up houses taken by the city for tax delinquency.

But urban professionals, black and white, are seeing the potential there and rushing to buy in. So are speculators. "People are inventorying now," says a local developer. "They're buying and holding and waiting."

Who "they" are is not often clear. "A lot of Roxbury property doesn't really belong to the owner-of-record," Hoon says. "There are a lot of straws. It's almost impossible to determine who really owns the property."

Rumors abound. Someone is supposed to have offered \$1.2 million for a four-story building at Dudley and Warren streets. There is talk of Greek speculators, of Arab cash from Houston, of laundered drug money, of overseas syndicates that sense a quick windfall.

"We haven't come across evidence of rampant speculation," says Newell Flather, administrator for the nonprofit Riley Foundation which funds some projects in the Dudley area. "But I think it's a very legitimate and genuine concern."

Worries about speculation

A full-scale land rush would drive up rents for Dudley-area residents, a third of whom are on public assistance, and drive them out. It would threaten the small businesses which they rely upon for food and clothing. And it would prevent community groups from creating badly needed housing units. "If the speculation continues and intensifies," fears Nuestra Comunidad's Melvyn Colon, "We may not be able to find vacant land to build on."

The redevelopment authority says that won't happen. As a start, the city's Real Property and Public Facilities departments agreed four months ago not to sell off any abandoned buildings in the Dudley area. "There are ways to control speculation," says BRA director Stephen Coyle. "You do it through zoning, through landmark designation, through open-space policies."

"There is a certain economic incompatibility between development and the status quo," says Ricardo Millett, executive director of the Roxbury Multi-Service Center. Given the large number of abandoned houses and buildable lots, mass displacement of residents seems unlikely. "The bulk of the land is vacant," says local developer Kenneth Guscott. "What are you going to gentrify? You're not displacing anybody. Who's there to displace?"

The threat to small businesses is more real. "Ninety-nine percent of the merchants here are renters," says Raymond Coleman, president of the Dudley Terminal Merchants Association. "Even the larger ones."

The demolition of the elevated tracks, scheduled for 1987, worries them. "What happens when that begins?" wonders Ronn Garry, Tropical Foods store manager. "Will it be impossible for customers to come in? Will we be driven out of business?"

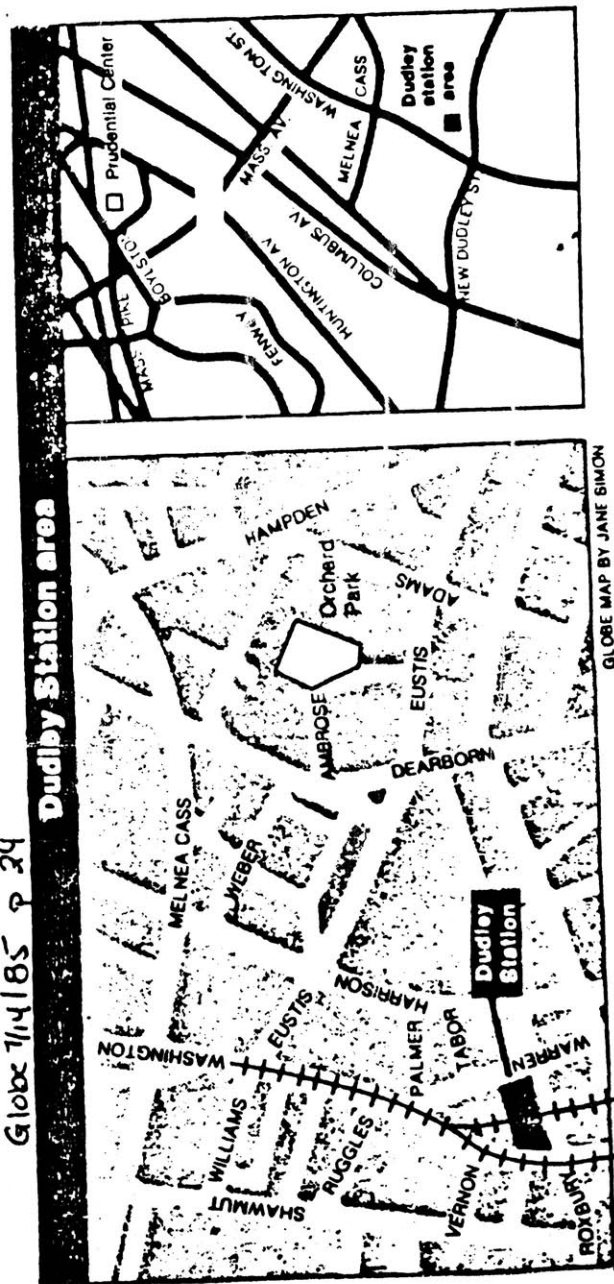
Selling prices for their buildings that approach \$500,000 worry the merchants nearly as much. "We want the area to be developed, but the people who are already here should have first crack," Coleman says. "But the way things have been going, we don't find out until it's too late, after somebody has already bought the land."

The BRA says its redevelopment plan will ease those fears. "We'll do as much as we can to stop displacement and chill speculation," says Coyle. "But in any undertaking, you never achieve the absolute optimum. That's naive. This isn't a chapter out of Che Guevara's America."



An ethnic food store in Dudley Square GLOBE STAFF PHOTO BY

GEORGE RIZER



*BB Salasda,
June 7, 1986.*

Roxbury residents to file suit against BRA

By Joanne Ball
Globe Staff

A group of Roxbury residents said yesterday it plans to file a lawsuit next week against the Boston Redevelopment Authority charging that the agency's urban development activity in Roxbury is illegal.

The lawsuit, to be filed in Suffolk Superior Court on behalf of 10 Roxbury taxpayers, claims that the BRA has broken the law by proceeding with substantive urban renewal in Roxbury without first submitting a comprehensive urban renewal plan for public approval.

"They keep on saying they don't have a plan, just a framework for discussion," said Kenneth Wade of the Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority and one of the intended plaintiffs. "Still they're disposing of land."

"They leaked a plan last year," he added. "Yet everything that we get from them, we get indirectly, and it's all stamped 'Draft for discussion only.'"

BRA Director Stephen Coyle, reserving comment on the group's planned litigation until he has seen the documents, said yesterday, "I would like to see it [the issue] resolved other ways, but we'll see."

Coyle added that he would view such a suit seriously, saying "I fundamentally approve of people using the legal process to resolve their disputes."

The proposed suit came after negotiations broke down between Roxbury community groups and the Flynn administration. A suit was viewed as necessary especially after a BRA board of directors vote on May 1 reduced community participation in the pending development of the Dudley Station area of Roxbury. Community group members said they felt betrayed by the action.

According to state law, before a public agency may engage in an urban redevelopment project, a specific plan must be released and public hearings must be conducted, said attorney Bradley Honoroff, who wrote the brief. In addition, the plan must be approved by the mayor and city council, he said.

"The BRA has never done that," said Charles Turner, vice-chairman of the Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority and another prospective plaintiff. "They make it a badge of honor to say they have no plan."

BRA plan calls for renewal of 17 apartment buildings

By Michael K. Frisby
Globe Staff

The Boston Redevelopment Authority yesterday unveiled a program to turn 17 boarded up apartment buildings — remnants of the failed federal Infill Housing Program — into affordable housing units in Roxbury and North Dorchester.

Under the BRA plan, four community development corporations were designated yesterday to redevelop the 17 buildings into 84 three-, four- and five-bedroom condominiums and cooperatives that will sell for approximately \$70,000.

For the past 16 years, the uncompleted housing units have been eyesores in several neighborhoods, and community leaders have complained that they are

frequently used by drug addicts and squatters seeking shelter.

"There have been complaints of people shooting drugs in those buildings," said BRA director Stephen Coyle. "This program is long overdue and I am pleased that the administration could play a role in getting it started. It is a case of promises long broken finally being answered."

Coyle said construction would begin this summer and is expected to take a year before the units are completed and ready for occupancy.

He said the units will be marketed under a city policy being prepared, which, when finalized will call for up to 70 per-

ROXBURY, Page 20

Plan would renew 17 buildings

■ ROXBURY

Continued from Page 17

cent of the units to be sold to neighborhood residents and at least 30 percent to be marketed throughout city.

Developing the units will be Nuestra Comunidad Development Corp., the Roxbury Multi-Service Center, Roxbury North Dorchester Neighborhood Revitalization Corp. and the Codman Square Community Development Corp.

To keep the purchase price low, the BRA is providing the developers with technical assistance in planning and construction management and will provide \$499,000 for site preparation, asbestos seal and architectural and engineering costs.

Peter Dreier, the BRA housing specialist, said the four development corporations will use the same architects and contractor, which will help lower construction costs. Dreier also said city and state resources will be sought to provide mortgage financing.

"This will provide affordable housing units and remove eyesores from the community," Dreier said. "These places have been used for drugs and have blighted neighborhoods. The program will help restore confidence that the BRA and the city want to work to improve the neighborhoods."

Dreier said resale controls will be placed on the units so that the

original buyers can not make a large profit off the condominiums if they are sold. The resale price will be tied to an increase in the inflation rate.

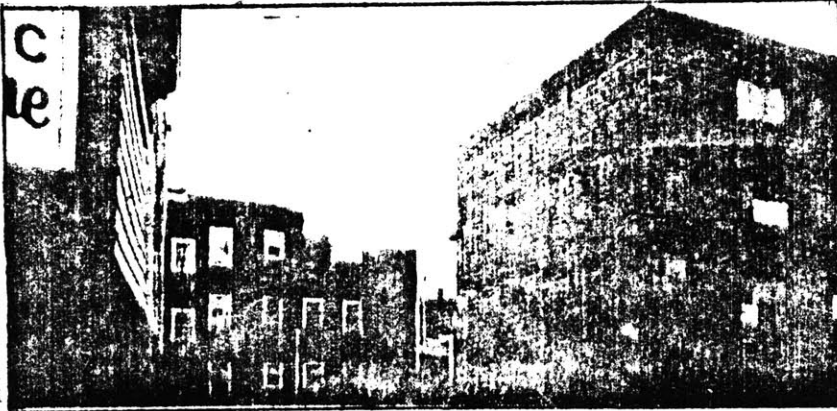
The original Infill program, directed by former Mayor White and the Federal Housing Administration, failed because the developer encountered financial troubles and the failure left a bad impression on many community residents.

"It was a bad signal to the neighborhood that boarded up buildings were left there for so long," said Sharon Riley, director of the Roxbury-North Dorchester Neighborhood Revitalization Corp. "It had a negative impact on people who wanted to upgrade the neighborhood."

The community development corporations say the program to turn them into affordable housing will help breathe the new life into the neighborhoods.

William Jones, director of the Codman Square Community Development Corp., said the rebuilding will be a "tremendous lift" for people who have struggled for years and stayed in the neighborhoods.

"Every day," said Melvyn Colon, director of Nuestra Comunidad, "we see people come in needing housing. There is a terrible crisis in housing. Three and four families are living in one apartment. This program will put some affordable units on the market."



The city plans to renovate vacant and boarded up buildings like this one in the 500 block of Blue Hill avenue in Roxbury. GLOBE STAFF

PHOTO BY JOHN BLANDING

Neighborhoods

UPHAMS CORNER

A raising of houses, a lifting of spirits

10 families selected for \$60,000 homes

By Sarah Snyder
Globe Staff

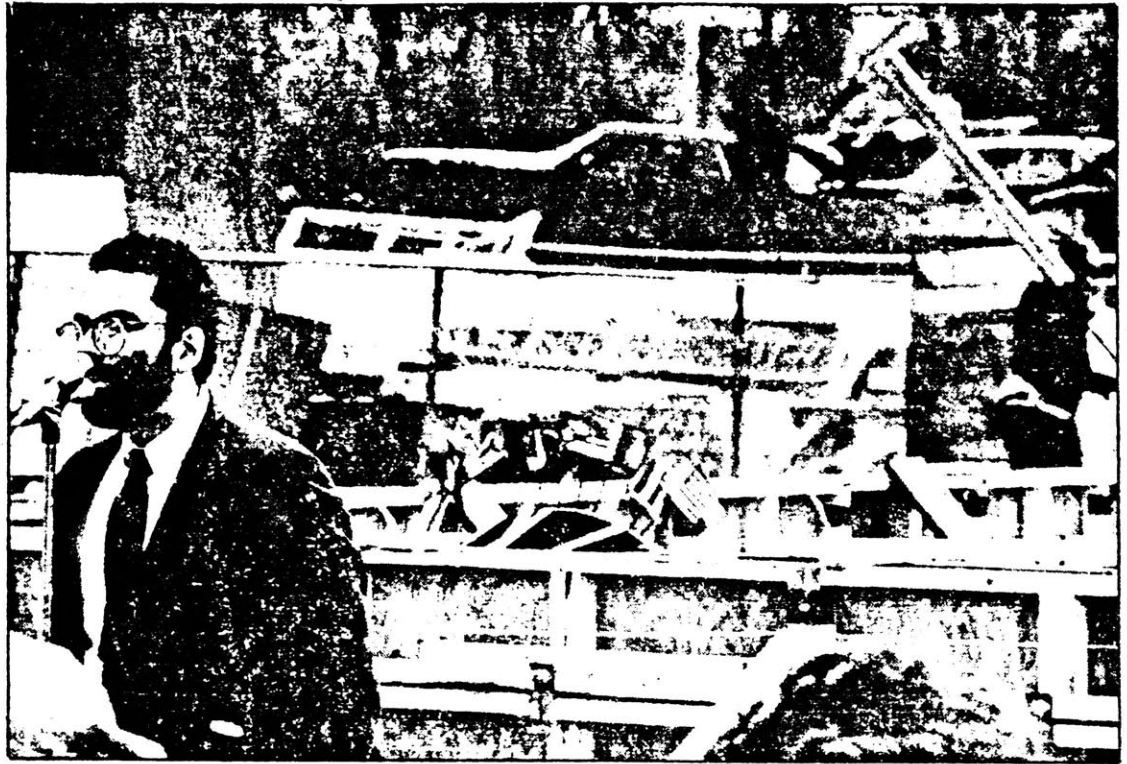
In a rare event for the Uphams Corner section of Dorchester, a house was being built yesterday instead of coming down.

Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation, a nonprofit group, is building 10 homes near Dudley Street for low- and moderate-income families, to sell for \$60,000 each.

The group bought land from the city for \$500 a parcel and got \$150,000 in federal money through the city and a reduced-interest loan from the state. The result is new homes in a neighborhood that from 1948 to 1978 lost half of its housing, said Melvyn Colon, director of Nuestra Comunidad.

"We are committed to building these houses affordably," Colon said at a "house-raising" celebration yesterday at the first of the homes, under construction on Harlow Street. "After decades of arson and demolition, there is very little left to rebuild." New construction, Colon said, is the way to go.

Residents for the homes have been picked by lottery, in which 68 people applied. Colon said his group spread word of the availability of the homes by distributing leaflets at stores and social service agencies. Of the 68 prospective homebuyers who responded, 10 percent were white, 45 percent Hispanic and 45 percent black. The winners of the lottery were five black families and five Hispanic families, most of



Workman carries material for a new dwelling as Melvyn Colon, director of Nuestra Comunidad, speaks at "house-raising" in Uphams Corner. GLOBE STAFF PHOTO BY TED DULLY

whom earn \$20,000 to \$30,000 a year, Colon said.

Two of the families soon to own the houses were at the house-raising yesterday. Migdalia Cuevas, 32, an administrator for Alianza Hispana, a community service

other lottery winner. She will move into one of the homes with her two sons. Fontanez currently pays \$400 a month for a South End apartment. She said she had not looked for a house before learning of the Nuestra Comuni-

The method differs from prefabricated housing in that 80 percent of the construction is done on-site.

"With high unemployment in Roxbury, it didn't make sense to build housing that wouldn't mean jobs for residents here," Colon said.

All 10 homes, six on Harlow Street and four on Dean Street, are scheduled to be finished by the end of the year.

Colon said there are 800 vacant parcels of city land in the neighborhood, and that his group, with cooperation from the city, hopes to build as many as 200 such houses over the next few years using some of that land.

Lisa Chapnick, director of the city's public facilities department, praised the project.

"Boston's got to try every possible form of housing construction" over the next few years, she said. "We need three or four years worth of experimentation and creativity to then look back and assess what is most efficient."

After decades of arson and demolition, there is very little left to rebuild. . . New construction is the way to go.

— Melvyn Colon, director of Nuestra Comunidad

agency, will buy one of the homes with her mother and sister. Cuevas now rents in a three-story home in Dorchester and has been house-hunting for three years, she said.

María Fontanez, a social worker at Dennison House, was an

dad project because "I knew it would be impossible for me to do."

The three-bedroom houses are being built by a method new to Boston, Colon said, called post-and-beam panel construction, in which panels are preconstructed in a factory in Pennsylvania.

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FREE

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Dudley Street area works to rebuild

by Mark Pickering

"Arson has been an important factor in shaping" this community, stated Melvyn Colon, president of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, at an April 16 meeting of that group. "We have to be mindful of the possibility of a new wave of arson," he said.

Arson in Boston was the theme of an educational slideshow watched by over 40 residents interested in combatting this problem and rebuilding their neighborhood, which stretches west from Uphams Corner to Dudley Station. Almost half the audience at the April 16 meeting listened on headphones to Cape Verdean Creole and Spanish translations.

In the past, residents of this area on the border of Dorchester and Roxbury were unable to stop the fires and subsequent building demolition, resulting in the trash-filled vacant lots which scar the community. Now, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative seeks to organize area residents to gain control of vacant land and see it developed for those currently living in the Dudley Street area.

New staff hired

The organization has been "chomping at the bit" to begin planning the neighborhood's future, said Colon, who is also the director of the non-profit Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation. In the past month, he said, the "second phase" of the group has begun with the hiring of their first two staffers. Also, a new office on Dudley Street near Blue Hill Ave. will open in May.

The organization was begun in 1985 by 21 area social service agencies who sought to unite the diverse peoples in the area—blacks, Hispanics, Cape Verdeans, and whites—into one neighborhood group.

Peter Medoff, the newly hired project director, calls the group a "unique" blend of organizing and planning. He said that the first task of the staff is to organize residents to tackle neighborhood problems—such as illegal dumping, trash-filled lots, lack of services, or arson fires. The organization's long-term task is to find out what community people want and then draw up a plan for developing the vacant land.

Vacant land is problem and hope

The Dudley Street group estimates that almost 30% of the land in the area is vacant. In some parts of the neighborhood, as much as a quarter of the remaining housing units are unliveable. These ravages of arson and abandonment will take time to remove. The group's members fear this situation may offer developers, in the near future, a convenient amount of cleared land near Boston's booming downtown.

At this time, it may be difficult for many people to see fancy condominiums moving soon into this

(Continued on page 10)

West of Uphams Corner, vacant land waits

(Continued from page 1)

area. What would the developers call the area, Blue Hill Avenue North? Uphams Corner West?

Medoff replies that fifteen years ago it was difficult to see Boston's South End as an area of gentrification. Now, he notes, the South End is flourishing, but not for the people who were living there before.

Medoff says that the Boston Redevelopment Authority's draft plan calls for "swinging hotels" to be located in the Dudley Street area. He states that there is a "tremendous amount of [real estate]

market pressure" on the area. And not just from the downtown, but from the escalating housing prices of other parts of Dorchester.

"I think the initiative can show that a multi-ethnic, multi-racial community can put aside its differences and work together," states Earl Coleman, a board member of the organization.

The group was able to hire staff after receiving a grant for \$70,000 from the Riley Foundation.

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Vacant lots receive non-profit townhouses

by Mark Pickering

It was not a place you would expect a traffic jam. But cars, construction workers, and police were assembled next to the lone three-decker, clogging a dead-end street near Uphams Corner on a breezy April day.

The gathering just off Howard Avenue in Dorchester, was not for a spring planting of the ample vacant land, but for a "houseraising." The non-profit Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation began work on 10 three-bedroom townhouses for "moderate-income" buyers. Most of the construction will be done by local workers.

"All those lots used to be houses," commented William Weather, a resident of the neighborhood for about 15 years. The houses "got old" and there were fires, Weather said, and then many were torn down. He thought building new homes was "a good thing" but seemed skeptical that anyone would even try.

"The Dudley Street neighborhood has not seen new housing for some time," said Melvyn Colon, director of Nuestra. Colon pointed to the "importance" of building new housing in a neighborhood that has "suffered so much arson and demolition that there is little left to rebuild."

With land from the city as well as \$150,000 in federal Community Development Block Grant funds, Nuestra estimates that the townhouses will cost the ten families less than \$60,000 each. Also, at 9.9% interest, the state-subsidized mortgages will be below the going rate.

Local people build townhouses

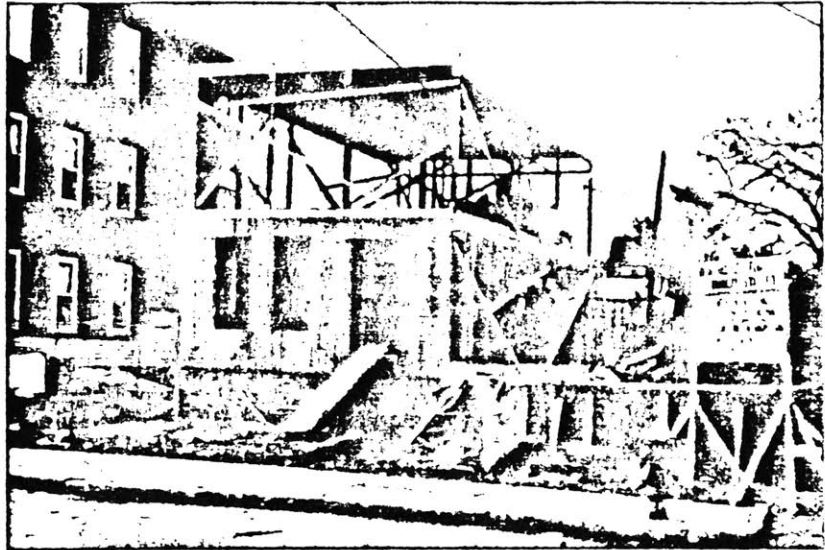
Colon said that the project showed Nuestra's commitment to "affordable housing for neighborhood residents." He added that the construction process was chosen because, unlike manufactured housing, it provides jobs for local residents while also being cheaper than the usual home-building methods.

The townhouses are being built with "post-and-beam panel construction." Although the insulated panels are pre-cut in a factory, "over 80% of the construction takes place right on site," according to Colon.

Colon contrasted the method chosen by Nuestra with manufactured housing where "80% of the construction jobs" go to the residents of other states, like New Hampshire, that have the house-building factories.

Regarding cost, Terry Baston of Sunlane Builders Corporation, the contractor, said that the price of the post-and-beam panel construction is "roughly the same as or less than" pre-fab. He added that the townhouses would also have somewhat larger rooms and be better insulated than manufactured housing.

This type of construction saves on labor costs as compared to conventional construction, Baston said. Only three of the eight crew members that day were "experienced carpenters," he noted, adding that the



FROM THE GROUND UP. Construction begins on 10 townhouses near Uphams Corner, built by a non-profit corporation. Photo by Shelly Berkman.

Nuestra builds up

(Continued from page 1)

"houses were designed for do-it-yourselfers."

Nuestra plans to build more townhouses in the future, Colon said, but that with "property values rising at such a fast rate, we are worried about being able to buy land cheaply enough" to build affordable housing. Colon pointed to the city as a potential source of help, saying that an estimated 800 vacant parcels of land in the Dudley Street area are owned by the city itself.

City holds key to vacant land

Colon urged the city to convey the land to non-profit corporations or to private developers who will build 100% of their units for low to moderate income families. "There's plenty of privately owned land in the city" for more expensive, market-rate development, he said.

While Lisa Chapman, director of the city's public facilities department, did not make any firm commitments about use of additional vacant land in the future, she said she was "excited" about the Nuestra project, and called on the community group to line up with additional projects in the future.

Perhaps summing up the feeling of many, Theodore Hampton of field Corner, a carpenter and supervisor at the site, commented, "I think it's about time some of these vacant lots got housing."

The ten buyers of the new houses were selected by lottery. According to Colon, seven of the families have incomes from \$20,000-30,000, while three earn "a little more" than that. The 10 townhouses, which will be on Harlow Street and Dear Street, are scheduled to be finished by the end of the year.

(Continued on page 10)

Nuestra Comunidad builds 10 new homes

The posts and beams of new homes near Dudley Street were joyfully raised in a recent ceremony marking the return of residential construction to the neighborhood.

Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation, a five-year-old Roxbury-based non-profit group, is building six homes on the Harlow Street site to be sold for \$60,000 each. Four other homes are planned for nearby Dean Street. All 10 will be sold to low and moderate-income families.

The Nuestra-sponsored construction near Dudley Street uses the relatively new technique of post and

are built mainly on site and more than 80 percent of the jobs go to local trades people," said Abramson.

The Harlow Street parcel was bought by Nuestra for \$500 from the city. Financing for the project came from city, state and federal sources.

The five black and five Hispanic families selected to live in the 10 townhouse units were selected by lottery from a pool of 68 applicants. According to Nuestra, the families have an annual income between \$20,000 and \$30,000. Federal block grant money and below-market mortgages from the Mas-

"We urge the city to convey more land to us so that we can build 40 or 50 houses a year."

—Nuestra director Melvyn Colon

beam panelized housing, which provides pre-cut pieces designed to fit exactly into place. According to Arne Abramson, Nuestra's development director, the technique offers considerable work opportunities for local residents, as 80 percent of the construction is done on site.

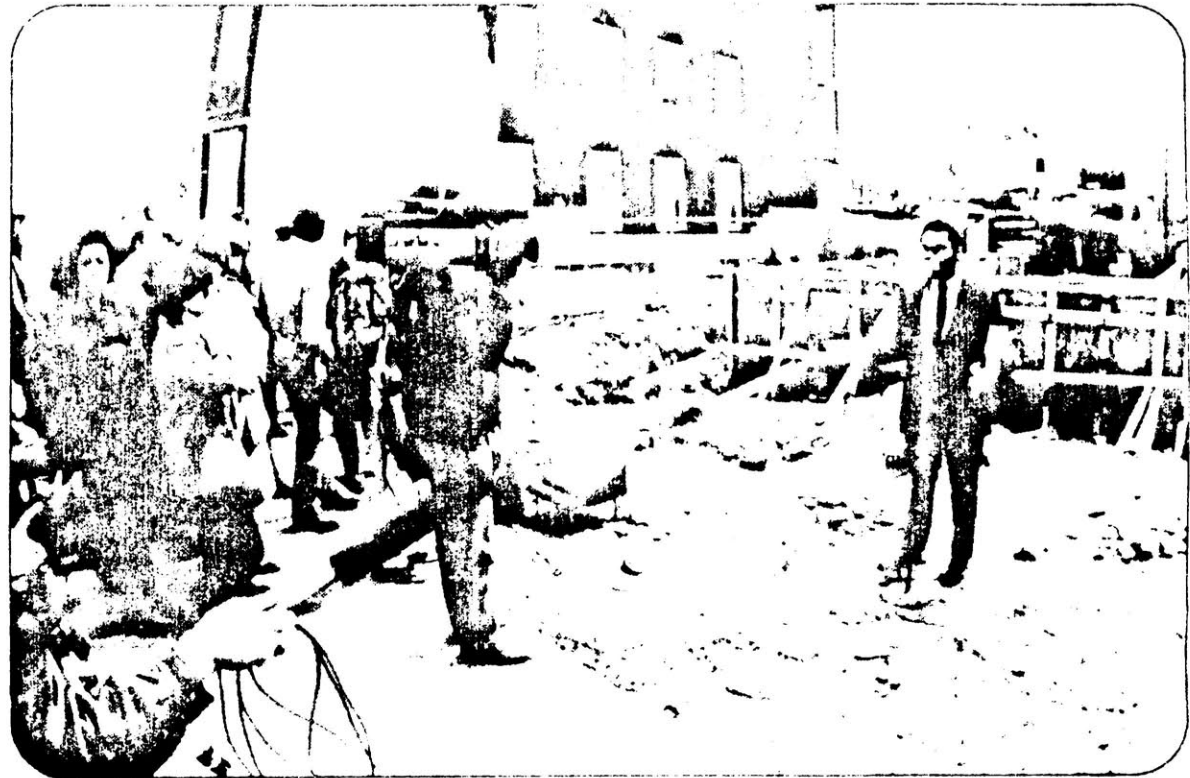
By contrast, manufactured or pre-fabricated housing requires initial site preparation but relatively little work after installation of the pre-fab units. "It makes no sense that more than 75 percent of the construction jobs in manufactured housing go out of state. We searched for alternatives that would keep as many jobs as possible in the community," said Abramson.

"These post and beam houses

sachusetts Housing Finance Agency made the purchases by moderate-income families possible, said a release from Nuestra.

Mayor Flynn said of city participation in the project, "Our involvement with Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation demonstrates the city's commitment to expanding the supply of affordable housing and ensuring that this housing is attractive and that it fits into the neighborhood setting. This can be achieved through continued partnerships with the state and with community organizations such as Nuestra."

Colon said Nuestra intends to build other houses in the area. "The Dudley street neighborhood has



Melvyn Colon, executive director of Nuestra Comunidad, speaking to reporters and members of the community during a press conference in front of a building site for six new homes on Harlow Street. (Don West photo)

over 150 acres of vacant land, much of it owned by the city," he said. "This represents a tremendous resource, most of which should be used to build housing for low and moderate-income families. With these ten homes, Nuestra has shown the capacity to build quality, affordable housing. We urge the city to convey more land to us so that we can build 40 or 50 houses a year.

"There is a great need and we are able and eager to continue the work of re-building the Dudley street neighborhood."

General contractor on the project was the Sunshine Builders Corporation of Roxbury.

Nuestra's last major project was the renovation of a fire-damaged 35-unit apartment building at the intersection of Dudley and Hamp-

den streets. Nuestra repaired the building and renovated eight commercial spaces on the ground floor facing Dudley Street. Tenants in the building all receive state or federal rent subsidies.

Reviving the American Dream in Dorchester

By Lawrence Thomases

When Roxbury's Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation began operations in 1981, its goals included the development of low- and moderate-income housing and the optimal use of the numerous parcels of vacant land in its Dudley Street neighborhood.

Nuestra has now translated these goals into action with the construction of ten new homes for families whose hopes of home ownership were fading in the face of Boston's overpriced real estate market.

"Buying a house was too expensive to consider," says Carmen Carrasquillo, one of the ten new homeowners chosen by lottery from among 68 applicants. Carrasquillo, a teacher at the Rosa Parks Day Care Center, has been seeking to relocate from her Dunkeld St. apartment since 1970, a move encouraged by her children.

"Every day they asked me, 'When are you going to buy a house?'" she recalls. Carrasquillo says that her children are already planning which rooms they will claim in their new quarters--and she finds herself eagerly anticipating the move too.

"I'm really excited and happy to be able to say, 'This is mine,' says Carrasquillo of her new home.

The "house-raising" in the Dudley Street neighborhood demonstrate that Nuestra has taken important steps towards bridging a critical gap between rising housing demand and lack of housing construction. Rehabilitation of existing structures was not a viable option in the Dudley Street area since arson and demolition had already wiped out so much housing stock.

"There was so little left to rebuild," says Melvyn Colon, Nuestra's director. "But there were incredible amounts of vacant land to build on. Our conclusion was that we needed to build new houses and give families equity opportunities."

To proceed with the plan, Nuestra needed the cooperation of the city. It found it when Boston's Public Facilities Department made land available and granted subsidies which lowered the eventual costs of the houses to homebuyers.

Heartened by such assistance, Nuestra then investigated housing models that would provide jobs for local residents.

"We rejected anything that had to do with manufactured housing," says Colon, who



Nuestra Comunidad's chief of design Ricardo Medina.

of-state factories, rather than here in Boston.

"They answer a housing need, but not an employment need," says Colon. Instead, Nuestra sought out alternatives, finally settling on a method known as post-and-beam panel construction. This building system uses pre-cut posts and beams as the structural components and super-insulated panels as the interior, or

panels are put into place, the house is finished using conventional methods. Nuestra's development director Arne Abramson and chief of design Ricardo Medina attended house-raising in other parts of the country, then modified the ranch house archetype to fit a contemporary urban setting. The result, says Colon, is a house which is "affordable, spacious and remarkably energy-efficient." Of equal significance, he adds, is the fact that 80 percent of the construction is done on site (while more than 75 percent of the construction jobs in manufactured housing take place in the factory).

As Colon notes, affordability is a key feature of Nuestra's overall plan. The ten houses will be sold to families earning between \$20,000 and \$32,000. Resale provisions will insure that the homes remain accessible to low- and moderate-income residents.

"If people are looking for an investment, they should invest in stocks and bonds, not our houses," observes Arne Abramson.

Community reaction to the new housing, says Colon, has been "universally good." Nuestra's director, who calls the housing site a "magnet" for local interest, points out that many Roxbury-Dorchester residents are volunteering their labor to the project. There has also been a welcome absence of vandalism. Abramson recounts the message of one onlooker who told him: "Folks aren't going to fool around with housing. It's such a bad need."

Abramson expects the first two houses to be finished by June, and the entire ten--which are located on Harlow and Dean Streets in the Upham's Corner area of Dorchester--to be completed by November.

For Colon, the current house-raising represent a mere beginning.

"The Dudley Street neighborhood has over 150 acres of vacant land, much of it owned by the city. This represents a tremendous resource, most of which should be used to build housing for low and moderate income families. With these ten homes, Nuestra has shown the capacity to build quality, affordable housing. We urge the city to convey more land to us so that we can build 40 or 50 houses a year. This is a great need and we are able and eager to continue the work of rebuilding the Dudley Street neighborhood.

"Nuestra is ready to answer the challenge again and again," concludes Colon. "We want to see

Dudley group opens neighborhood office

The neighborhood coalition formed in the Dudley Street area recently opened an office in the heart of its neighborhood near the intersection of Blue Hill Avenue and Dudley Street.

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative's new office at 385 Dudley Street is located in the storefront of a building owned and managed by one of its coalition members, Extra Comunidad.

The Dudley Street group got its office 12 months ago with help from the Dudley Foundation, which gave a \$200 grant to fund the office's start.

Peter Medoff, the newly named director of the Initiative, said the group's first objective would be to raise funds and hire a planning firm to help create an overall neighborhood strategy for employment, housing and business needs in the neighborhood.

The Initiative's target area extends from Massachusetts Avenue to Quincy Street. Blue Hill Avenue and the Penn Central tracks

roughly form its western and eastern borders.

The 23-member board leading the group includes representatives from the neighborhood's major service agencies, ethnic groups and

"Just because you live in an area that's, quote, depressed, unquote, that doesn't mean we can't be involved. And that's why we're here."

—Che Madyun

residential associations.

Medoff, who came to Boston after working as a tenant advocate in New York City and Hartford, said that efforts would be made to organize neighborhood residents around major issues while the plan



During an open house sponsored by the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Tubal Padilla (left), a member of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative's Board of Direc-

tors, joins Melvyn Colon, acting president of the Dudley Initiative and Peter Medoff, the director of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative. (Don West photo)

is being formulated.

A prime objective of the Initiative will be controlling land disposition, said acting Initiative President Melvyn Colon. "There are so many vacant parcels that the city can dispose of the land for families that pretty much resemble the current residents," he said.

Colon said the planning strategy

would gather input from all the representative groups to devise appropriate land-use plans for each area. "At the same time the plan is being developed, we can't wait while land is being disposed of, so we're playing a strong role in advocacy," he added.

Plans that have an impact on the Dudley Street area, such as a new

house of correction and a waste-to-energy plant for South Bay, will also get attention from the Initiative, said Medoff. "Why if they're talking about \$40 million for that site can't there be some money for fixing up Hampden Street?" he asked.

Betty Brinkley, a neighborhood representative on the Initiative board, has lived in Roxbury all her life. She said at the office opening, "I've seen the ups and downs of Roxbury. Right now it's building up and we're trying to get proposals in to help that."

Che Madyun, a Dudley Street resident who works as a parent coordinator with Metco, said the Initiative would serve to screen proposals for development in the neighborhood. "Just because you live in an area that's, quote, depressed, unquote, that doesn't mean we can't be involved. And that's why we're here."

Roxbury residents tell city they want dumping to stop

By Bonnie V. Winston
Globe Staff

Boston Globe
June 19, 1976

dumping will stop.

The problem is old, but the sentiment is as fresh as ever: Roxbury residents do not want to be dumped on.

At a meeting last night sponsored by the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, residents had a chance to tell city officials, including Mayor Flynn and City Council president Bruce C. Bolling (Roxbury), they want the vacant lots that have become dumping grounds for contractors and car thieves cleaned up and the waste transfer stations out of their neighborhood.

"We are tired of being dumped on," said Jean Porter, who lives in the Orchard Park area. "Who wants to live with rats? Who wants to live with filth? Who wants to live with disease?"

"Dump some good things, if you're going to dump," she said. "Dump some money in the area."

Harold Hughey of the Office of Neighborhood Services said there are more than 1,000 vacant parcels of land in the Dudley Street area that have become dumping grounds in recent years. Additionally, he said, several waste transfer stations are operating in the area, drawing rodents and creating other health hazards.

Flynn told the group of about 100 meeting at St. Patrick Church Hall on Dudley Street, the city has spent \$6,000 to clean many of the lots, but that people always "go back and dump on them."

He also said the city "is going to go forward" to close the waste transfer stations, many of which, he said, are operating illegally.

Flynn said that once the city has a major "waste-to-energy facility," which has been proposed by his administration for a site on Southampton Street with a new county prison, much of the illegal

Several residents disagreed, saying the waste-to-energy facility will be an even bigger dumping ground in their neighborhood.

While the city can impose fines for illegal dumping, residents said last night that other attempts to stop dumping — such as erecting concrete barriers and fencing on the vacant lots — have not been effective. People simply take down the fence or dump in front of the concrete barriers.

Flynn and other officials asked residents to help by reporting illegal dumpers. Hughey asked that residents refrain from confronting offenders directly, but urged them to call a city hotline — 725-DUMP — with the license number and description of the vehicle used and the time and place of the dumping. He said the city wants to prosecute offenders.

Bolling said, however, while cleanup efforts are under way, Roxbury residents should focus on a long-term solution to the problem. The solution, he said, is development of housing or businesses on the vacant lots. That, he said, will stop the dumping.





Jose and Olivia Barros survey lot full of dumpsters located less than 15 feet from the back porch of their home on East Cottage Street. The city's Health and Hospitals

Dept. contends that the lot is being used illegally as a transfer station for rubbish.

(Lovett photo)

Group Seeks Action on Dumping, Waste Sites

by Chris Lovett

A coalition of groups in Roxbury and Dorchester got a pledge of help from the city in a campaign against illegal dumping in neighborhoods along Dudley Street.

Speaking at a meeting organized last Wednesday in St. Patrick's Church by the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Mayor Raymond L. Flynn promised funding and "any kind of help" to clear lots with illegal dumping.

"It requires a full commitment from the city to clean up vacant lots," said Flynn, "because it's an eyesore and it's not fair to the community."

But Flynn linked prospects of a lasting clean-up to construction of a waste-to-energy plant at the former incinerator site, near the Southamp-

ton Street expressway exit. It is expected to take 2 to 2½ years before construction of the facility can begin, and opposition has already surfaced in surrounding neighborhoods.

Flynn said the city would also continue attempts to close down illegal transfer stations for rubbish in the neighborhood.

"The reason they are allowed to stay open," said Flynn, "is there is no legal place to dump rubbish (in Boston)."

John Shea, administrator of environmental hazard assessment in the Environmental Affairs Office of the Dept. of Health and Hospitals Dept., blamed an Appeals Court judge for allowing one disposal company to keep operating over the city's objections.

Because of that decision, said

Shea, the city has been unable to get tougher action from Boston Housing Court against AFL Disposal Co. and owner Anthony Leopardo. Shea said Leopardo was fined for running an illegal transfer station in lots on Robey Street. Because of the Appeals Court judge, said Shea, Housing Court has balked at finding Leopardo in contempt.

"I feel outraged," said Shea. "His decision allows criminals like Tony Leopardo to destroy the community for long periods of time."

And the lots on Robey Street appear to have attracted even more dumping by neighbors.

Jose Barros, who bought house on East Cottage Street abutting the lots last September, has complained about the alleged transfer station to city inspectors. The trash dumpsters

are located within 15 feet of Barros' three-family house.

"Now we have rats and mosquitoes," said Barros. "We cannot go out into the yard. We have three kids. They cannot go outside because it smells bad. We cannot open the windows because of the smell."

City officials say rats outnumber humans 3-to-1 in the Dudley Street neighborhood. Winthrop Street resident Della Jones complained about even more rodents at last Wednesday's meeting.

Jones said illegal dumpers tore down a fence around a lot cleaned by the city on Winthrop Street. They dumped old refrigerators, she said, and when the city put up concrete jersey barriers one dumper even left rotten meat and vegetables.

(Continued on Page 3)

Group Seeks Action on Dumping, Waste

(Continued from Page 1)

"And the terrible thing that has happened to our house is that the mice have taken over," said Jones.

The "final straw," said Jones, came when a neighbor taking down a license plate number from an illegal dumper saw the driver stick out a gun.

But city officials were also faced with complaints about a "permanent dump" next to the Midlands tracks on Alexander Street. And area resident Julio Henriquez said he and his neighbors have yet to hear any more from the city on complaints last year about dumping near West Cottage and Julian Streets.

Edward Roche, Real Property Commissioner, said the city plans to "stabilize" 62 lots in the neighborhoods near Dudley Street with barriers and security.

"The quickest thing we could do with any stretch of vacant lots is to get them back on the tax rolls," said Roche.

"That's the only way we're really going to resolve this dumping issue--take away places for people to dump," he said.

District 7 (Roxbury-Uphams Corner) City Councilor Bruce C. Bolling blamed the dumping on people from outside of Dorchester and Roxbury, but he also called for more housing development on vacant land.

"Housing development is the only long-term solution to the problem," he said. "As long as the land remains vacant the problems are going to continue."

Nor, according to Shea, will new, legal disposal facilities necessarily put illegal facilities out of business.

"I don't see where it would affect AFL in any way," said Shea.

"What they're doing is they're saving money and the heck with the community," he said.

The Environmental Affairs Office is still awaiting an Appeals Court decision on K and C Disposal on Norfolk Avenue. The Health and Hospitals Board has denied a site assign-

ment for K and C's demolition waste facility. The Environmental Affairs Office is also asking two other waste facilities in the area to make changes that would bring their operations into compliance.

Shea said Tuesday that his office is now considering a "different means of attack" on AFL Disposal.

"Unless we get results in court," he said, "there's not much we can do."

Dorchester Argus-Citizen

6/26/86

Dudley St. neighborhood group cleans up lots, organizes patrol



NEIGHBORS CLEAN LOTS at cleanup day sponsored by the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative. Photo by Sandy Lowe.

by Sandy Lowe

With city help, residents of the Dudley Street area recently worked with rakes, shovels, and weed cutters to clear the litter and debris from a large group of vacant lots off Blue Hill Avenue that had become an illegal dump site and a breeding ground for rats.

The July 19 cleanup day, organized by the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, a coalition of community groups in the Roxbury and Dorchester areas, attracted over sixty residents and city officials, including Mayor Flynn. The city provided the tools for the cleanup and hired a contractor to clear a heavily dumped lot on Winthrop Street.

"The city is spending over \$50,000," said Jim Vrael of neighborhood services, explaining that, in addition to providing materials and contractors to clean up the lots, the city is exterminating for rodents.

Ulisses Goncalves, a Dorchester resident for nine years, said that some neighborhood children have been hospitalized because of rat bites. While handing out buttons that said, "Don't Dump On Us," he noted that trash-filled lots and rats have been a continuing problem for the area. The buttons' slogan, printed in both Portuguese and English, is the neighborhood group's motto for their cleanup campaign.

On a hopeful note, Goncalves said that the Cape Verdian, Hispanic, and black people in the area "are all getting together to build this city." While other cleanup efforts in the past have been unable to prevent the lots from being dumped on again, he thought this time the community would be more successful.

To prevent future dumping, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, working with the city, has organized a "dump patrol." Area residents plan to drive around the streets, two volunteers per night, to spot illegal dumpers.

In addition, the neighborhood group is publicizing the city's new 725-DUMP telephone number for phoning in the license plates or other information on illegal dumpers.

The cleanup effort also provided help to individuals who lived near some smaller vacant lots. Cynthia Jefferson and her husband bought an abandoned house on Woodville Park last year. The lot in back had been used as a dumping ground. The couple cleaned some of it themselves, but ran out of money. Jefferson was able to use the tools provided by the city, and the contractor picked up the remaining piles of old furniture, wood, and trash.

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Expert sought for Dudley

A group of private agencies and residents in Roxbury plans to hire its own consultant to develop a plan for the Dudley area—a function usually performed by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA). The organization, called the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, last week advertised for proposals from consultants. Peter Medoff, the group's executive director, said the organization will fund the study with \$75,000 to \$125,000 in private money, although he said not all the funding is certain yet.

A BRA spokesman said the agency views the neighborhood group's effort "complementary to city planning and development." The BRA is working on a \$750 million redevelopment of the area around Dudley Station, including the construction of housing, retail space, offices and parks.

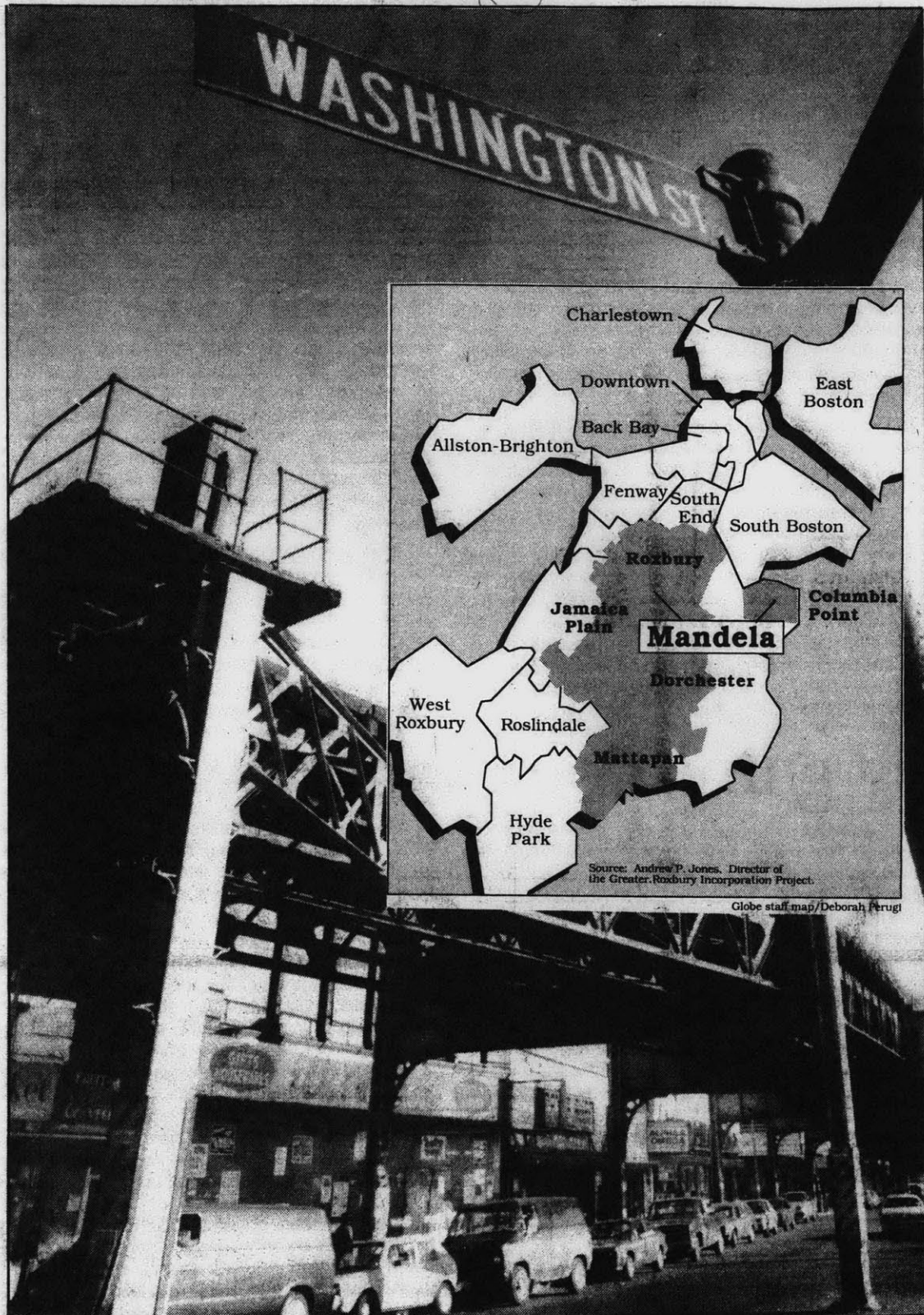
The neighborhood group has representatives of 10 social service and community development agencies in Roxbury on its board, as well as individual residents. Medoff said the organization was established to develop a plan, organize the community and acquire control of some of the 1000 vacant parcels in the area, most of which are owned by the city.

The group's aim, according to Medoff, is to devise a plan that provides housing, social services and employment, without displacing current residents. The plan should be completed by next summer, he said. With neighborhood backing, the group hopes to get approval from the city.

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative opened an office five months ago. Medoff said the group received a \$70,000 grant from the Boston-based Riley Foundation and is expecting more help from that group.

—Sue Reinert

Boston Globe 10/12/86



The Dudley Square business area.

Globe staff photo/Tom Landers

Boston

Minority firms say no to Mandela

By Gregory A. Patterson
Globe Staff

There are two buildings near Dudley station in Roxbury that help tell the tale of how community activists managed to get a referendum question on the region's secession from Boston on next month's ballot.

The first is the building that houses Royce Specialty Shop, a small women's boutique that sells factory seconds of middle-class clothing inexpensively. The owners of the building complain about the sidewalk outside the store, a sidewalk that the city water department tore up five years ago and thus far has not restored.

The second is the building next door, the Windsor building, which has sat vacant, ugly and rotting for more than a decade. The owners of Royce's, who asked that their names not be published, want the building to be developed. They have proposed buying the building and putting a business in it that would contribute to

the tax and employment base. Nothing has happened.

The Royce building is a story of hope and of managing, barely, in a neighborhood that has a high crime rate and is said to have slow police response; a neighborhood where plywood masks many storefronts, buildings need a fresh coat of paint and streets need cleaning. The Windsor building is a story of abandonment. They are both stories of Roxbury, some of whose residents want it to secede from Boston along with parts of Dorchester, Mattapan and Jamaica Plain to become a 12.5-square-mile town named Mandela.

"I have mixed emotions," said the manager of Royce's while tidying a clothing rack. "I can see how some of the secessionists feel. The lack of police protection, the filth on the street. As a merchant, I feel like I've been screwed."

But in the next breath he talks about the crippling impact of the 44 percent tax increase
MANDELA, Page A3

Firms say no to Mandela

■ MANDELA

Continued from Page A1

for businesses and the 61 percent tax hike for residential owners that Mayor Flynn's office said would be necessary to pay for services if Mandela is formed.

The business community of Roxbury and surrounding areas that would be included in Mandela uniformly oppose the secession movement, but they give the city of Boston an F in city services.

"There is frustration in a school system that has a dropout rate of over 3,000 students per year; a school system that hasn't prepared kids to get in the colleges that they want to attend, or to learn the skills for the jobs they want," said Kenneth Guscott, general partner of Long Bay Development Co, a Boston minority development firm. Guscott opposes secession.

The area's business sector is comprised mostly of developers and service businesses, not many of them and not much of anything else. Their opposition to the non-binding referendum question corresponds to what they feel they have to lose should secession occur.

Something to lose

Those with the most to lose, the developers and construction people, stridently oppose secession. For them, secession would destroy the linkage plans proposed by Mayor Flynn's administration. Without being part of Boston, Roxbury developers would lose their 30 percent stake in a \$400-million project that links the construction of a downtown office building with a Roxbury commercial development.

Boston's only minority-controlled bank, criticized the secession proposal for being divisive. "Clearly, we're in favor of seeing a unified city, a city in which everyone participates," Smith said. The Boston Bank of Commerce is part of a group of businessmen that is seeking a piece of Boston's linkage development project.

Some positive steps

Kern Grimes, president of Grimes Oil Co., said the secession proposal, "has brought to the fore the legitimate frustrations and anguish within the community." Secession may be a good idea, but its time has passed, Grimes said, noting several positive steps Boston's political and business sectors have taken to include more minorities in the city's wealth.

The proposal also is out of favor with retailers, who point to the projected property tax increase that they say would cause them to raise their prices and would diminish the spending power of their clientele.

"Sure, services could be better, but I believe secession would bring more harm than good," said Joe Cohen, owner of National Radio & TV, in Roxbury. Cohen, who has operated his store for 31 years, said he has seen the area go from being one that contained flourishing businesses to an ill-kempt neighborhood that the city seems to have forgotten about.

"This should not be the forgotten area just because minorities live here," Cohen said, adding that residents also bear a responsibility to make efforts to improve the community.

Services catastrophic

Although disappointed with

the services the city provides, the consensus in the business sector is that they doubt that an autonomous Mandela could provide better services for itself. At best, the businessmen say, city services would be a catastrophe as the government climbed the learning curve before improving.

But Mandela secession leaders have continued to point out that smaller municipalities historically have been better at providing services than larger ones. Davis, of GRIP, said the transition of services from Boston to Mandela would be gradual, so as to ensure the residents received full services.

Davis also disagreed that taxes would have to be increased. He said the projections of Mayor Flynn's office were flawed in several respects; the major instance being that Flynn's estimate assumes Mandela would spend as much per capita as does Boston. "The overhead would be lower, and Mandela would be more efficient," Davis said.

Boston negligence

But along with their rejection of secession, the businessmen indict Boston for its negligence in delivering services. Most will admit that if they thought they could get a better deal with secession, they would support it. The businessmen, too, are frustrated, but see no way to achieve progress, except through constructive engagement with Boston's political and business communities.

"If you could convince me that it would work, then I would be for it," said Leroy Smith, who manages the Woolworth store at Dudley Station. "But I don't see how it could work."

"Roxbury only recently has begun to attract outside capital, where before the only outside capital it attracted was in the form of government subsidies. Secession would put it even farther behind," said John Cruz, who heads Cruz construction, a minority contracting firm that plans to participate in the linkage development.

But, Curtis Davis, co-founder of the group leading the secession move, the Greater Roxbury Incorporation Project, known as GRIP, disagrees that secession would diminish the area's ability to attract investment capital. "When have capital markets been limited to municipal boundaries?" Davis said. "Boston banks finance municipal developments all over the world."

Business unconvinced

Still the business sector is unconvinced. "I don't really believe much of the basis of the Mandela proposal is grounded in trying to solve business problems. I think its root is based in trying to gain political self-determination. The movement is grounded in disappointment over services, schools, and to a limited degree, development," said Richard Taylor, president of the Minority Developer's Association.

"I don't believe the tax issue has been discussed," Taylor said. "There has been no discussion on how it will affect the overall business climate. For example, will this improve the jobs base. Will this improve business expansion? Will this encourage consumer spending in the area?"

Warren Smith, vice president of the Boston Bank of Commerce,

BOSTON

Boston
Globe 10/12/86

Districts to Flynn: Lend us an ear

*Neighborhoods grumble
at neighborhood mayor*

By Charles A. Radin
Globe Staff

In Roxbury, resentment over Mayor Ray Flynn's redevelopment approach and distribution of city services fuels a movement to secede from the city.

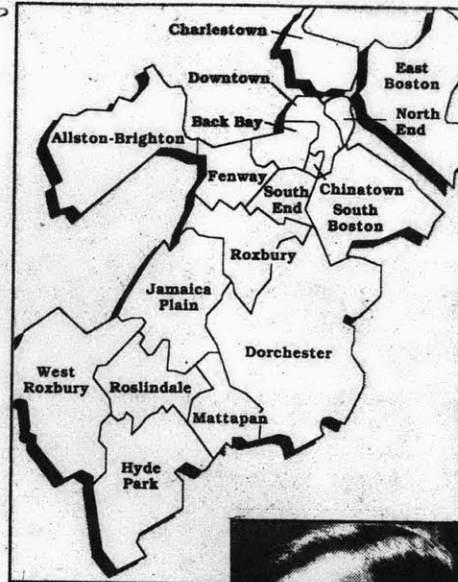
In East Boston, one of the community's most respected leaders says the mayor has loaded a new planning group with payroll patriots. She refuses to serve.

In the South End, a number of staunch Flynn supporters, including many providers of social services, rebel at the mayor's proposal for a shelter for battered women.

Around the city, lesser brush fires - in Charlestown over community gardens, in Allston-Brighton over housing construction, in Chinatown over jobs and encroaching development - are more or less under political control but smoldering.

Why is the neighborhood mayor having a hard time with these neighborhoods? Why do community leaders increasingly find reason for dissatisfaction with Flynn's administration even as they continue to be confident of the mayor's personal sincerity?

"It's an irony more than it is a mystery," said Tunney Lee, a veteran city and state development official who now heads the urban planning department at the Massachusetts Institute of Technol-



Mayor Raymond Flynn is having trouble meeting the demands of Boston's numerous neighborhoods.



ogy. "Ray really is a dedicated neighborhood person from way back."

But Lee, who has been widely praised for organizing community participation in Copley Place in the Back Bay and Boston State Hospital in Mattapan, said Flynn's administration is overly concerned about community participation delaying development decisions, and underestimates the importance of such involvement.

"Really good community participation early on does not take any longer; they make a mistake thinking it does," Lee said.

"The city is so dense [in population] that all actions impinge on something else, and the people being impinged on ought to have their say. That doesn't remove the need for executive decision-making," he said. "A governor or mayor

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Flynn

Continued from Page 67.

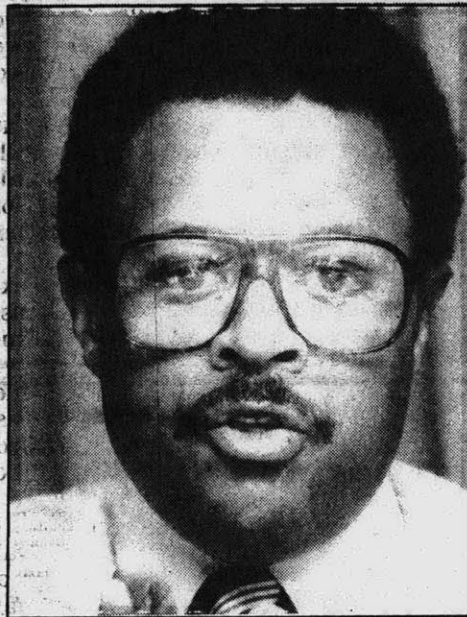
may have to make the hard decision, but first you have to hear."

There is an emerging consensus among community leaders and planners about what's going on in developments such as the women's shelter in the South End, the Prudential Center in the Back Bay and the Dudley Station area in Roxbury.

They say that:

- Flynn's perspective is increasingly that of an executive who doesn't focus on the specifics of issues until they are ready for final decisions to be made. While this is seen as a traditional way to govern, it tends to work against substantive neighborhood-level decision making.

- Boston Redevelopment Authority director Stephen Coyle is privately contemptuous of public officials and community leaders who have pushed for a process that would empower residents in redevelopment planning. Many have heard Coyle's complaints about "process commandos" slowing the pace of projects.



Globe staff photo/Wendy Maeda

'In some respects, Flynn has a holier-than-thou attitude,' says City Council president Bruce C. Bolling. 'He says: I'm going to do what needs to be done for them because I'm the mayor.'

organizations and citizens groups have been here for decades and have well-established credibility, but this administration has trouble building on what has been created previously."

Anna DiFronzo, for 20 years a community activist in East Boston, concurred and cited Flynn's recent creation of a new neighborhood planning committee in her neighborhood as a case in point. DiFronzo was appointed to the committee but backed away when she saw the whole membership.

Manipulation charged

The city administration "had the thing all set. . . They didn't give the community any chance to say who was wanted for chairman. A lot of community people sent in their names and weren't chosen." DiFronzo said the new committee duplicates the function of the long-established East Boston Land Use Planning Council and is top-heavy with city and state employees.

"If you work for the city, you've got to do what you're told," DiFronzo complained. When she tried to say that to the committee, "They looked past me like I was talkin' ragtime. There were three community people, and 18 who were city or state workers. . . I could see my vote wasn't going to be worth anything."

Donald Gillis, Flynn's director of neighborhood services, said DiFronzo's "numbers are correct" but that she had "misconstrued" what that meant about the nature of the committee. City employees on the committee "are people who have long been leaders in the community who are now in the government," Gillis said. He also said DiFronzo "is having discussions with us and is considering coming back" to the committee.

Janice Fine, who is active in the Boston Linkage Action Coalition and also is an organizer for Boston Fair Share, said the Flynn administration is "skittish, well-intentioned and inconsistent. They treat different neighborhoods different ways and accuse us of sitting on the sidewalk in the lotus position when we advocate process."

Gillis and Sullivan both assert that the various committees being set up by Flynn are bringing together communities that had been divided over development issues.

Tales of Chinatown

A case in point, according to Sullivan, is Chinatown's response to linkage of redevelopment rights to the city garage on its borders to development of a large parcel of land in Roxbury. He said Chinatown residents "had not been together. . . There were many spokespersons with different viewpoints" before the Flynn-appointed neighborhood council was set up.

Chinatown leaders tell a starkly different story, saying that there was practically no chance for Chinese participation in the linkage proposal first presented to them. The administration "proposed something in the backyard of Chinatown that Chinatown had no part of," said Paul Chan, a minority businessman who now stands to acquire part interest in the development through the Flynn-Coyle linkage plan. "The community was kind of in shock but was very much together," Chan said.

He told a story echoed by other community leaders. After an initial angry protest that they had not been consulted in advance, the community got city officials to reconsider their plans and timetable and achieved a more satisfactory result.

"It's a very destructive way to go about doing things," said Charlotte Kahn, director of Boston Urban Gardeners Inc., a large community gardens asso-

● The administration's key officials don't work together on development policy in a structured way. John Connolly, chief of development on Flynn's personal staff, is thought to be the most powerful development official, but when he, Coyle and Neil Sullivan, the mayor's policy director, discuss development with Flynn, it is on an ad hoc, project-specific basis.

● Flynn has personal enthusiasms and priorities he holds so dear that he is quick to move unilaterally to fulfill them. That is what many believe happened when the mayor declared flatly, in the absence of a promised community-wide planning effort, that the Tree of Life women's shelter would be built on city-owned land in the South End.

"There's been 10 years of planning in the South End, and it's resulted in virtually nothing," Flynn said last week. "I want to see those parcels [owned by the city in that neighborhood] developed and move forward."

Sullivan further stressed the administration's willingness to rely on executive action to achieve results.

"There's a whole series of priorities — transit, housing, the need to grapple with waste disposal or build a humane house of correction — that demand leadership," he said. "That will necessarily create a very public and contentious process.

"We will conduct that sometimes loud process with respect for the neighborhoods, but we will deal with the priorities. We will make decisions."

He labeled "bunk" the suggestions of some community activists that there should be an orderly outlining of neighborhood priorities before specific projects are proposed from downtown. •



Globe file photo/Ed Jenner

The Flynn administration, says Paul Chan, a Chinatown businessman, 'proposed something in the backyard of Chinatown that Chinatown had no part of.'

"The process is working"

"There are competing self-interests that people have to be honest about," Sullivan said. "That's not what cool process is about. Let's get the priorities on the table, have a little noise and move forward. The noise is how we know the process is working. . . I am very honest in laying it out to the people [in the administration] who work the neighborhoods that there are some things the mayor has got to do."

Some of the political trouble that's brewing stems from Flynn's efforts to create his own neighborhood committees.

Marketed by the mayor in his inaugural speech as groups that would "work closely with district city councilors and school committee people and city departments in charting the future of each community," the councils were to represent "a new generation of neighborhood leaders [to] begin the process of decentralizing the delivery of services."

Existing neighborhood groups, community leaders and city councilors say it's not working out that way.

"In some respects, Flynn has a holier-than-thou attitude," City Council president Bruce C. Bolling said. "He says: 'I understand the poor, I understand the oppressed. . . I'm their champion, and I'm going to do what needs to be done for them because I'm the mayor.'"

Flynn "is seemingly trying to create his own network and bypass networks created previously," said Bolling. "Some

ciation that has had a number of run-ins with the administration on planning issues. "After a whole lot of struggle, [Flynn's development] officials back off and try to give you a good, honest response."

John Gould, a senior vice president of Shawmut Bank, who has long been active in local matters for the business community, said much of the problem for Flynn comes because people have faith in him.

"Would these problems have evolved under the prior mayor?" Gould asked rhetorically. "Certainly. Would they have been worse? Probably. It was expected that Kevin White would ignore them. It is expected that Ray Flynn will solve them."

Bostonians Debating Drive To Carve Out a Black City

By FOX BUTTERFIELD

Special to The New York Times

BOSTON, Oct. 11 — A referendum on the Nov. 4 ballot that calls for the secession of black neighborhoods in Boston has touched off an emotional dispute and raised fears of renewed racism here.

The proposal would seek to carve out a new 12-square-mile city in the heart of Boston, with about 22 percent of Boston's 600,000 population, including most of its black residents. It would be named for Nelson Mandela, the jailed South African black nationalist leader.

The question on the ballot asks voters in 10 legislative districts in Boston if they want to instruct their state representatives to pass a bill that would create a separate city.

Supporters of the nonbinding referendum contend it would enable blacks in poor neighborhoods like Roxbury to obtain more municipal services, including better schools and police protection. But opponents, who include some of Boston's leading black ministers and Mayor Raymond L. Flynn, argue that it would reverse important recent gains by blacks here and would leave the new community with an annual deficit of \$135 million.

Move Seen at Threat to Harmony

"This fans racism on all sides and is very self-defeating," said the Rev. Bruce Wall, pastor of the Twelfth Baptist Church in Roxbury. "We've been trying to work for racial harmony and sow the seeds of opportunity for people of color in Boston, not go back to ground zero."

Boston suffered a decade of racial turmoil over court-ordered busing to end school segregation in the mid-1970's.

"The irony of Mandela is that we are finally beginning to make progress towards empowerment within the mainstream," said Bruce C. Bolling, the president of the City Council, who is black. Mr. Bolling cited his own election earlier this year and the appointment of a black educator last year, as evidence of progress.

nally from Richmond, Va., denied that the referendum question is racist. "Boston created Mandela already by its discriminatory housing policy, driving blacks into the poorest area. Now that we want to incorporate ourselves, they call us racists."

Endorsed by Leading Politician

The proposal has also been strongly endorsed by Melvin H. King, Boston's best-known black politician, who twice ran unsuccessfully for Mayor and was defeated in last month's Democratic primary for the Eighth Congressional District by Joseph P. Kennedy 2d. Mr. King's position may end his career, however, said Michael Goldman, a political consultant, since it goes against his longstanding attempt to build a multiracial coalition.

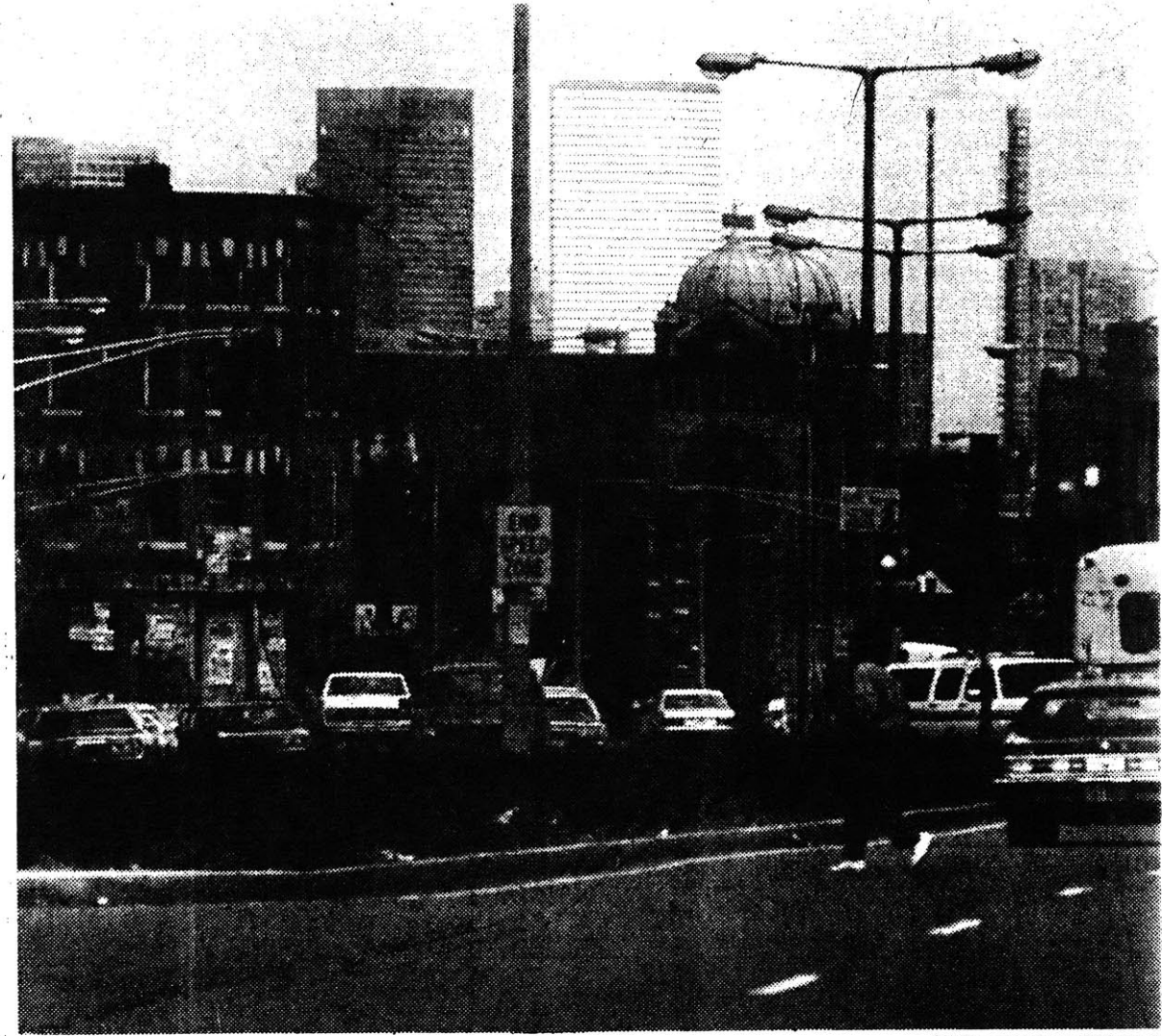
It is unclear what the outcome of the vote on the referendum will be, and even if it wins, it is unlikely to receive approval from the Legislature or Gov. Michael S. Dukakis, thus making it a largely symbolic gesture.

Initially a petition to gather 5,000 signatures to get the question on the Nov. 4 ballot had widespread support from leaders among blacks, including Mr. Wall and Mr. Bolling. But in the past few weeks, as the economic implications have become clearer, Mr. Wall, Mr. Bolling and some other prominent figures have turned against it.

"Blacks normally don't vote on referendum questions, but this year there is real excitement about this," said Mr. Wall. "I don't think ordinary folks have really focused on the economic problems."

To further complicate the issue, about half the population in the 10 districts where the vote will be conducted is white, including parts of Dorchester, Hyde Park and Jamaica Plain. This has raised the possibility of a white backlash, with some whites voting in favor of secession.

"I'm almost afraid to talk about this," said State Representative



The New York Times/Rick Friedl

Part of the Roxbury section of Boston. The 12-square-mile neighborhood is among city's poorest.

we'd be glad to get rid of the obligation," Mr. Finneran added.

"They say, 'You're the only ones using the schools anyway, so you can have them,'" he said, referring to the fact that 73 percent of Boston's public school students are members of minority groups.

Mr. Finneran is in an unusual and delicate position having been elected in a district where 75 percent of his con-

since people haven't paid much attention to the financial aspects," he added.

Mayor Flynn initially was cautious in his opposition, trying to avoid charges that his position was based on racism. But last week his office released a study showing that Mandela would face a first year deficit of \$135 million. Among those who worked on the study was George Russell, the Treasurer,

have to raise residential property taxes by 61 percent. The report also found that Mandela's ability to provide city services would be further reduced because homes in the area account for the highest rate of tax delinquencies in Boston.

Moreover, the report said, Mandela was already getting more than his share of police patrols, street sweep-

Flynn says Roxbury secession would halt progress

By Doris Sue Wong
Globe Staff

Mayor Flynn told a church congregation in Roxbury yesterday that it would be a folly to secede from Boston when the neighborhood is just beginning to benefit from the downtown economic boom.

"The doors to opportunity are finally opening for the residents of Boston neighborhoods," Flynn told about 200 parishioners during a morning service at the Charles Street African Methodist Episcopal Church in Roxbury.

"The doors are not all the way open yet," Flynn said, "and the feeling of frustration over years of exclusion is expected and understandable. But we should not slam the door on the future to make up for problems of the past."

Residents of Roxbury and Mattapan and sections of Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, the Fenway and South End will vote Nov.

4 on a nonbinding referendum asking whether their neighborhoods should secede from Boston to form their own municipality. The proposed 12.5-square mile municipality would be named Mandela, after Nelson Mandela, the jailed South African leader of the African National Congress.

The group advocating secession, the Greater Roxbury Incorporation Project, has contended that the neighborhoods, which are heavily populated by members of minority groups, have not received their share of city services and have not had enough say over development in their communities.

But the gathering yesterday was receptive as Flynn spoke against secession. The pastor of the church, Rev. Mickarl Thomas, is a member of the One Boston Campaign, a group of black religious leaders and businessmen

that is opposed to forming a separate municipality.

When introducing Flynn to the congregation, Rev. Thomas said, "You should not expect a man to do in three years what was not done in many preceding years. You have worked too hard in this city not to sit at the table and get your share of the pie."

Studies released by Boston officials have concluded the proposed municipality would face a \$135 million deficit in its first year as property taxes soar and city services shrink. Members of GRIP have disputed the finding, saying the studies were politically motivated and aimed at discouraging voters from secession.

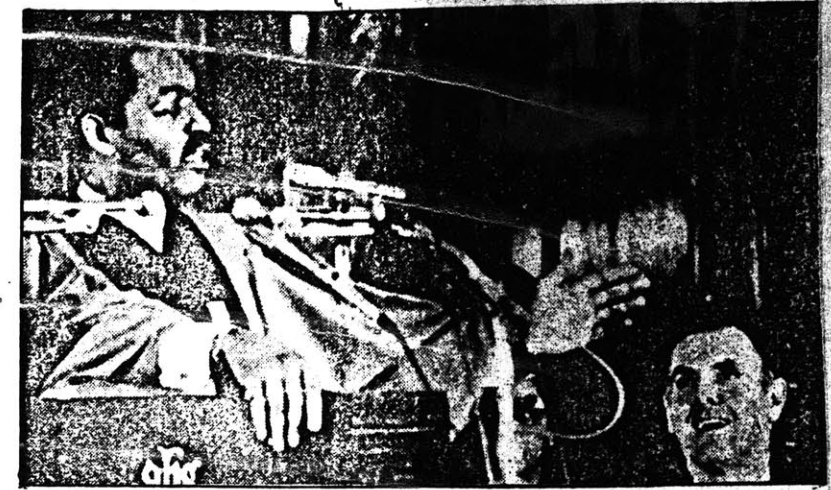
"After 22 years of neglect and for the first time since the passage of Proposition 2 1/2 in 1980," Flynn said, "city government is investing \$799 million citywide on new improvements to parks, schools, branch libraries, police stations

and state-of-the-art fire equipment for this community and every community."

Strides also have been made by the city in ensuring employment opportunities for minorities and residents, expanding the number of low- and moderate-income housing, setting up educational incentives for public school students and giving minorities a chance to take part in downtown development projects, Flynn added.

"When I opened new fire stations, planned new police stations and a new hospital, started to rebuild the park and beefed up schools in this community, I did so for a simple reason," Flynn said.

"I didn't do it because of who lives here. I didn't do it despite who lives here. I did it because this neighborhood and its residents are integral members of the community of Boston.



Globe staff photo/Ted Dully

Rev. Mickarl Thomas of the Charles Street African Methodist Episcopal Church in Roxbury introduces Mayor Flynn to the congregation yesterday.

"With secession, though, all of this progress would be halted. We have made too much progress to turn back now. We have too much work ahead to spend time looking back."

GRIP

GREATER ROXBURY INCORPORATION PROJECT

A New Municipality

791 TREMONT STREET • SUITE W412 • BOSTON, MA 02118 • 617/267-2036, 267-2992

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON MUNICIPAL INCORPORATION QUESTION #9

Q: What is the Greater Roxbury Incorporation Project Question?

A: Question #9 on the November 4th ballot will read, "Shall the representatives from these districts be instructed to vote in favor of legislation forming the following wards and precincts of the city of Boston into a new city of the Commonwealth?" **

It is a non-binding vote to incorporate Roxbury, Mattapan, parts of Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, Columbia Point and the South End into a city independent of Boston. Municipal self-government is the only way to acquire final say over what happens to our land and our tax dollars.

Q: Is there enough of a tax base?

A: Yes. Residential property alone in the area is valued at over \$1 billion. We pay more taxes than most other parts of the city, except downtown, but receive fewer services. Our problem is not lack of tax dollars but *lack of control over tax dollars*. Tax revenue goes out and doesn't return. Municipal incorporation will give us the fiscal control we need to serve our community's needs. *Development planned for the area over the next decade is in the billions of dollars*. The Dudley Station development alone is going to cost \$750 million. Who will control this development? Where and how will the revenue be spent? Will we be displaced once again? The answer to the last question is YES, if we do not vote for municipal incorporation this fall.

Q: Will taxes go up or down?

A: *Taxes would be the same or less*. We already pay higher taxes than other areas of the city and we benefit from fewer abatements. *Property taxes, per Proposition 2-1/2, cannot exceed \$25 per \$1,000 in valuation*. Our challenge will be to control real estate speculation which is driving up housing values beyond what resident homeowners can pay. As a city we will be legally able to pass laws which inhibit greedy development schemes, condo conversions, and arson for profit. *High property assessments in Greater Roxbury neighborhoods, twice those of other parts of the city (reported by BRA Research Dept., 1983), have cost hundreds of residents their homes*. This will be halted.

Q: What about housing?

A: As a city, we will have a housing authority, a redevelopment authority, rent control board, assessors office, building inspectors, and other bureaucratic entities to protect public housing interests. Similar departments operate daily within the municipal structures of Massachusetts' cities and towns. For years we have been frustrated by Boston's attention to commercial development first and housing second. *Mandela, Massachusetts will be able to establish and implement its own housing policies under Massachusetts General Laws which give cities and towns significant autonomy in municipal affairs*. If displacement and/or rent control were major concerns, they would be addressed by community hearings, then acted upon by city government.

Q: Will rents increase?

A: Not necessarily. We already pay high rents, even though many of our areas suffer from neglect. Absentee landlords own more than 90% of the properties in Roxbury. *The Boston bureaucracy has never held these landlords accountable for property deterioration and has never enforced ordinances designed to protect tenants' rights*. Incorporation will allow us to create and enforce zoning laws which halt property deterioration and disinvestment.

Q: What will happen to schools?

A: Municipal incorporation will empower us to design and control a school system based on the needs of our children. *Over the last ten years, only one new school, Madison Park, has been built in Mandela. Fourteen schools have been closed*. They sit vacant in neighborhoods deprived of the educational resources that schools bring to a community. Over 18,000 of our school children have been bused to other Boston neighborhoods under the false premise of a better education. 40% of Boston's High School students drop out of school. 90% of them are Black. Because 70% of students currently enrolled in Boston public schools live in our area, most of the state aid, currently financing the \$291 million Boston school department budget, will be redirected to Mandela.

(Con't)

Vote "Yes" on Question #9

Question #9 Supporters:

Hubie Jones
Dean, Boston University

Andrew Jones
Director, GRIP

Curtis Davis
Cofounder, GRIP

Byron Rushing
State Senator

Gloria Fox
State Senator

Charles Grisby
President, CDFC

Mel King
Candidate, 8th District

Clark Arrington
Industrial Coop. Assn.

Royal Bolling, Sr.
State Senator

Rev. Gilbert Thompson
New Covenant Christian Ctr.

Ruth Batson
New England Television

Royal Bolling, Jr.
State Senator

Juanita Wade
School Committee

Bruce Bolling
City Council President

Minister Don Muhammad
Nation of Islam

** see page 3 for list of wards and precincts

Vote "Yes" on Question #9

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON MUNICIPAL INCORPORATION (CON'T)

Q: What would happen to commercial development?

A: We live in the fastest growing metropolitan area in the United States. It is no secret that developers are attracted to this area because of its proximity to downtown Boston. *As a city, we will be in a position to choose commercial developers who offer our community growth and prosperity, rather than short term gain and long term failure.* By cleaning the streets and solving crime, we can attract those commercial developers who stand to protect our collective interests and provide jobs.

Q: What is the area like?

A: Mandela, Massachusetts contains 150,000 residents living in a 12.5 square mile area. The majority of these residents are between the ages of 20 and 34 years old. Racially, 74% of residents are black, 10% Hispanic and 16% white, Asian and other races. We command the hills. Our houses sit on rock foundations, and overlook the Boston harbor. Many of our streets are lined with tall trees and beautiful shrubs, which give our communities a rural flavor en ed by other Boston neighborhoods.

Q: Has this been done before?

A: Yes. In 1630, the year both Roxbury and Boston were established, there were only 17 municipalities in Massachusetts. Now there are 351. *The overwhelming majority of Massachusetts cities and towns resulted from deannexations.* Brookline seceded from Boston in 1705. Dedham was divided into 12 separate cities and towns, and both Watertown and Belmont seceded from Cambridge. The last incorporation in Massachusetts took place on March 24, 1920, when Gov. Calvin Coolidge signed a bill into law creating the town of East Brookfield. On June 7, 1983, the mostly black and Hispanic residents of East Palo Alto, a 2-1/2 square mile area south of San Francisco, incorporated themselves as a city. All Massachusetts cities and towns were formed by the legislature in response to the will of the people.

Q: Is this segregation or secession?

A: No. Segregation was the means by which the city of Boston forced us away from development in Back Bay, on Beacon Hill, and in the South End. By not enforcing real estate discrimination laws, the City of Boston allowed private real estate interests to confine people of color to what was for decades the least valuable, now most valuable, part of the city: Mandela. Secession was the process by which 125,000 whites fled the city to avoid school integration. Municipal incorporation is our remedy for decades of segregation and disinvestment which has *robbed our community of the benefits of Boston's economic renaissance.* Our community is integrated and our city will be, too.

Q: Why the name, Mandela, Massachusetts?

A: Nelson Mandela and his wife, Winnie, have gained an international reputation for the sacrifices they have made in the struggle against apartheid. They are fighting a system which was invented in the United States and copied by white Afrikaaners. There is a desperate struggle which has cost the lives of untold men, women and children. They need us and we need them. The final name will be chosen by the people via a referendum, but for now *Mandela, Massachusetts is the working title used by GRIP to carry the incorporation message forward.*

Q: Will incorporation solve all our problems?

A: No. By incorporating, as an independent city, we will acquire the tools necessary to solve our social, political, and economic problems. We will be legally able to levy fees and taxes, manage expenditures, assemble police, fire, sanitation, health and education facilities, plus design and implement policies to provide efficient services. We will also be able to have parades, concerts, and celebrations to preserve our heritage and our culture. *Our destiny will be in our own hands, where it belongs.*

Vote "Yes" on Question #9

How QUESTION #9 will appear on the ballot:

Shall the representatives from these districts be instructed to vote in favor of legislation forming the following wards and precincts of the city of Boston into a new city of the Commonwealth?

| | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Ward 4 | Precincts 8, 9 |
| Ward 8 | All Precincts |
| Ward 9 | All Precincts |
| Ward 10 | Precincts 5, 6, 7 |
| Ward 11 | All Precincts |
| Ward 12 | All Precincts |
| Ward 13 | Precincts 1, 2, 3, 5 |
| Ward 14 | All Precincts |
| Ward 15 | Precincts 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 |
| Ward 17 | Precincts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10 |
| Ward 18 | Precincts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 21 |
| Ward 19 | Precinct 7 |

Vote "Yes" on Question #9

Self-Government

NEGLECTED COMMUNITY SEEKS INDEPENDENCE

Today we live on one of the most valuable parcels of land in the United States. Developers worldwide make deals daily with the City of Boston over the fate of the 7,600 acres on which we reside. *The Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) has negotiated over a billion dollars worth of development projects which stand to permanently alter the face of our community.*

But what is our plan? Where is our response to this challenge which seeks to take over our community after years of neglect? How can we expect to be here if we do not have the means to fight for what is ours?

Becoming an independent city gives us control over our affairs, once and for all. As a municipality we can make and repeal city ordinances, create zoning laws for residential/commercial/industrial development, manage police/fire/public works, elect local officials and exert direct control over the education of our children, the only children being bused in Boston.

We have tried every way, except incorporation, to solve our many serious problems. We have been frustrated by not having the resources to exterminate the conditions which have blighted our neighborhoods. *Nothing short of total independence will do.*

It is not a matter of more politicians or more political deals. We are talking about controlling the land, the buildings and the pavement on which we tread. This is not something which can be bought or sold. *This is freedom. Now we have a choice. To choose is to be free!*

Vote "YES" for incorporation Question #9!

47 SCHOOLS OPEN
14 SCHOOLS CLOSED SINCE 1975
1 POLICE STATIONS
1 POLICE SUBSTATIONS
9 FIRE STATIONS
5 HOSPITALS
12 COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS
8 LIBRARIES

The Economy

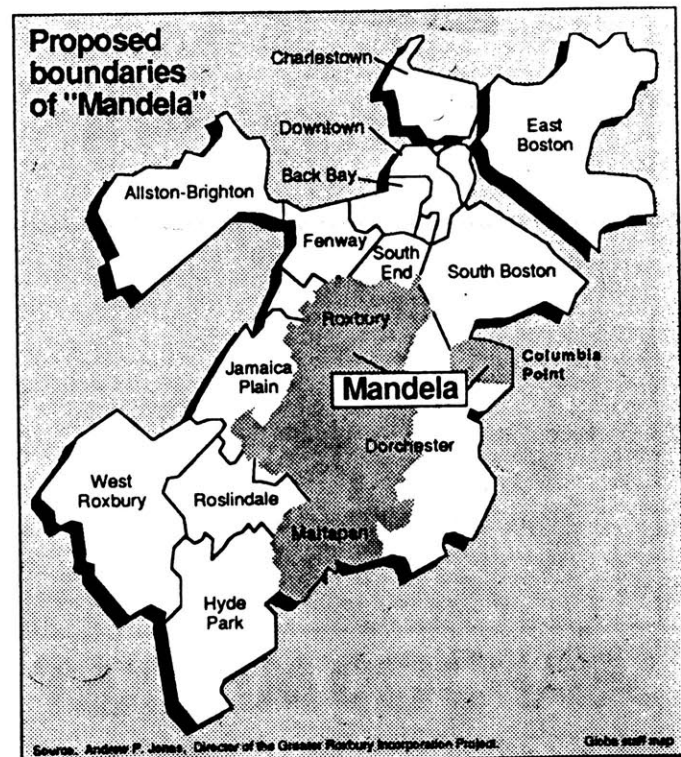
INCORPORATION MAKES FINANCIAL SENSE

One of the first questions people ask about incorporating Greater Roxbury is "*Can the area support itself?*" Because average household income in the area is relatively low, some doubt the new city would generate enough revenue to deliver better police, fire, schools and services to its constituents. However, the two largest sources of revenue to this area are currently aid from the Commonwealth and property taxes, and those would remain constant under the new charter.

In terms of hard numbers, projected revenue for the first year is \$129 million. Projected expenses are \$122 million for the same year, largely going to the school and city departments. This leaves a \$7 million surplus, despite the fact that these neighborhoods have experienced little commercial development to date. Considering the dramatic appreciation property has undergone recently with new development being negotiated, *tax revenue in our area will increase faster than in other parts of the city.*

City managers statewide agree that *revenue management is the key to effective municipal government.* Our biggest challenge will be managing the prompt, efficient and effective delivery of services. The new, smaller city will be more responsive to neighborhoods.

Our schools have long been neglected and poorly maintained. The City of Boston, as a matter of policy, in our area closes schools that could instead be repaired. Top quality education is the first priority for our new school system. *Schools that are now closed will be reopened to educate those pupils currently being bused outside the area.*



Vote "Yes" on Question #9

GRIP CAMPAIGN SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 10, 1986 (WEDNESDAY) EDUCATION FORUM

Invited Speakers

School Committee: Shirley Owens-Hicks, Juanita Wade, Jean McGuire,
John D. O'Bryant
Headmasters: Albert Holland, Jeremiah Burke High School
Stacey Johnson, Jamaica Plain High School
Curtis Wells, Madison Park High School

School Superintendent: Laval Wilson

Moderator: Dean Hubie Jones, Boston University School of Social Work

Location: Morning Star Baptist Church, 1357 Blue Hill Avenue, Mattapan
298-0278 (2 blocks south of Morton Street)

Time: 6:00 PM

SEPTEMBER 17, 1986 (WEDNESDAY) TOWN MEETING

Invited Speakers

J. J. Lyons, Brockton City Clerk
Saundra Graham, Cambridge City Councilor
Matt Clark, Framingham Selectman
Patrick J. Ward, Brookline Assistant Town Clerk

Location: Freedom House, 14 Crawford Street, Roxbury
445-3700 (off Warren Street)

Time: 6:00 PM

OCTOBER 1, 1986 (WEDNESDAY) HOUSING/TAXES/SERVICES FORUM

Invited Speakers

Riccardo Millet, Boston Redevelopment Authority
George Russell, Boston Collector-Treasurer
Chuck Grisby, Community Development Finance Corporation
Doris Bunte, Director of the Boston Housing Authority
Charles Yancey, Boston City Councilor
Bruce Bolling, Boston City Council President

Moderator: Philip Clay, M. I. T.

Location: Harriet Tubman House, 566 Columbus Ave., South End
536-8610 (corner Columbus and Mass Aves.)

Time: 6:00 PM

OCTOBER 15, 1986 (WEDNESDAY) STATE ELECTION CANDIDATES FORUM

Invited Speakers

All Candidates from Suffolk County Representative Districts 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17
State Senatorial Candidates: Royal Bolling Sr. (Incumbent)
Bill Owens

Moderator: Boyce Slayman, Boston Herald Columnist

Location: Madison Park High School, 55 New Dudley Street, Roxbury
445-3622 (off Columbus Avenue)

Time: 6:00 PM

OCTOBER 29, 1986 (WEDNESDAY) TOWN MEETING

Invited Speakers

Barbara Mouton, Mayor of East Palo Alto, California
Frederic A. Howell, City Manager of East Palo Alto
Dan Nelson, Police Chief of East Palo Alto
Gus Newport, former Mayor of Berkeley, California

Location: Shelbourne Recreation Center, 2730 Washington St., Roxbury
427-6533 (near Martin Luther King Blvd.)

Time: 6:00 PM

GRIP

Vote "Yes" on Question #9

GREATER ROXBURY INCORPORATION PROJECT

791 TREMONT STREET • SUITE W412
BOSTON, MA 02118



Roxbury: the next real-estate gold mine

If at first you don't secede . . .

The trouble with the Mandela idea

by Ric Kahn

Hopelessness lives at Dudley Station, in Roxbury. It resides in the ghost-town buildings on Warren Street abandoned by absentee landlords and now wearing the most common graffiti in the 'Bury: THIS PRIVATELY OWNED BUILDING HAS BEEN BOARDED AND SECURED BY THE TAXPAYERS OF THE CITY OF BOSTON FOR THE SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC. It echoes in the snarls of a hidden watchdog guarding a Washington Street market on Sabbath morning. It bounces off the political signs — for D'Amico and O'Neil and Owens and Bolling — plastered against the empty walls, reminders of a thousand and one fleeting promises. It hangs out at the Washington Street liquor store touting two computer terminals from which to play the Lottery (NO WAITING NUMBERS GAME DAILY), the American Dream of the down and out. It breathes in the empty bottles of Wild Irish Rose gathering in doorways of places where nobody's home. It slithers between the low dribbles and corner jumpers and "No arm? No foul!" hoopsters burning rubber on the green asphalt of the Captain David L. Ramsay Memorial Park. In the background, the pigeons are finding slim peckings in the low grass, dealers with Yankee caps and shoulder bags walk by and ask, "What do you need?", and the twin towers of another world — the Hancock and Pru of downtown Boston — look like they're gloating above the weary red brick and cement of the Lenox Street housing project.

Hopelessness powers the most provocative black-power movement to hit Roxbury in the last 20 years: a call to the people to revolt against their racial segregation, their poverty, and their political powerlessness and vote to create a new city out of Roxbury, Mattapan, and parts of Dorchester, the Fenway,

Jamaica Plain, and the South End. Mandela. The Great Black Hope. One of the strong messages seeping into the minority community via the Mandelaites is "Brothers and sisters, vote yes on Question 9 and everything will be honky-dory, you will be free at last." The slap-in-the-face political reality, however, is that this purported empowerment maneuver is not going to happen, for it depends on the approval of whiteness. And, for a variety of reasons, including the value of the land, whiteness ain't about to give it: the November 4

referendum is nonbinding — even if it wins, both the Massachusetts House and Senate have to pass a bill to allow Mandela to secede from Boston, and then the governor has to sign it. This is as likely to happen as South African President Pieter Botha's handing over the keys to South Africa to Nelson and Winnie Mandela tomorrow. Skinned of its unrealistic, radical-change rhetoric, the Mandela movement is revealed to be nothing more than a potentially powerful instrument with which to organize a community and force

concessions from a white establishment — a legitimate mainstream political tool but certainly not a hammer striking a revolutionary blow against the ruling class for control of one's own destiny. And in its lesser role, as a club to hold over the city administration's head, according to some political analysts and community sources, the Mandela movement has already failed to fulfill its potential on a number of fronts.

● The Mandelaites have failed to attract the support of some of the community's religious/political leaders, such as secession opposition heads Reverend Bruce Wall of the Twelfth Baptist Church, in Roxbury, and Reverend Charles Stith of the Union United Methodist Church, in the South End — folks who not only have credibility on the streets but also have the ear of the mayor and thus some hope of winning concessions from the city. These concessions would range from the mayor's eliminating the drug dealers who are destroying the minority community — rather than merely pushing them from one black neighborhood to another — to gaining a measure of control over development in Roxbury to acquiring more power in the upper echelons of City Hall.

● To maximize their leverage, the Mandelaites, led by Andrew Jones and Curtis Davis, should have planned their secession vote for next year, when Ray Flynn will be running for re-election — very possibly against a black candidate — and will be more vulnerable to charges that he has neglected the minority community.

● The Mandela movement is but three years young, two of those years having been devoted to research and intellectual debates around dining-room tables and only one year spent out in the streets trying to gain support for a complex



MARK MORELLI

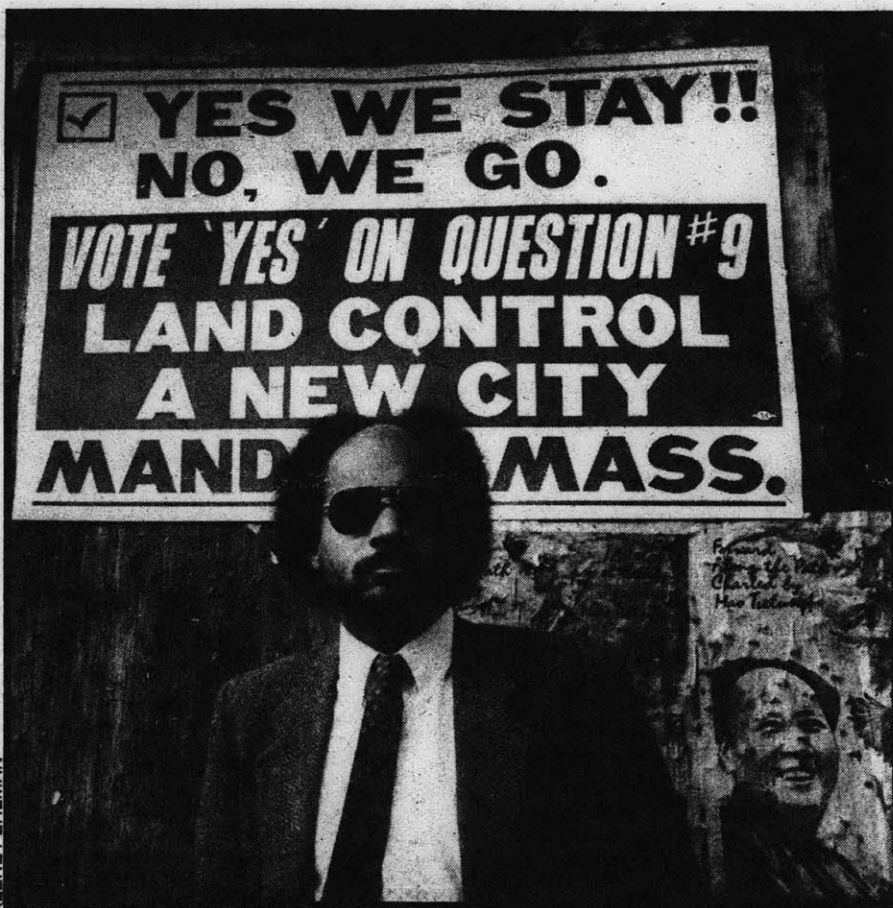
Wall: "Their haste is making waste."

proposal. As a result, the Mandelaites are heading toward November not with a united front but with a divided community. Their sales pitch is a rush job. By selling their scheme as immediate salvation instead of the beginning of a long haul, the Mandelaites have raised the expectations of the people, thereby potentially setting them up for a huge letdown.

Of course, the proponents of Mandela were doomed if they did, doomed if they didn't. They were forced to come up with a dramatic measure in order to rouse a community that has been ignored, screwed over, and made to feel powerless. But they chose a nonbinding vote — and then tried to get the community hopped up by packaging it as a change that is both revolutionary and achievable, a combination that requires a mighty hard sell. And in the pumping-up process, Jones and Davis have injected at least part of the minority community with some very dangerous hope. False hope.

* * *

The red-and-white signs slapped on buildings in Roxbury urge the people on: YES WE STAY!! NO, WE GO. VOTE 'YES' ON QUESTION 9 LAND CONTROL A NEW CITY MANDELA, MASS. Greater Roxbury Incorporated Project (GRIP), founded by Jones and Davis, says in its literature, "Today no one questions that we reside on what may be the most valuable piece, 7600 acres, of land in the United States. Developers worldwide are coming here daily to look and try to make deals with available business interests. . . . Ours is the most valuable land in the world, and we live here. We may never have this opportunity again." The dream calls for the creation of a new city of 12.5 square miles, containing 150,000 people, 65,000 of them registered voters, with a racial make-up of 74 percent black, 10 percent Hispanic, and 16 percent white. The city would have its own government, its own police force, its own tax collector. What form of government? The people shall decide.



Jones: no more living without a legacy

Jones — Roxbury resident, professional musician, independent TV producer, and director of GRIP — and the other Mandelaites have proclaimed: "It is not a matter of more politicians, nor more political deals. We are talking about controlling the land, the buildings, the pavement on which we tread. This is not something which can be given nor bought nor sold. This is freedom. We must seize it, govern it, and pass it gracefully on to our children for the sake of our future, our heritage, our freedom. The notion of living without a legacy must end here and now. Choice is the key. To choose is to be free."

The Mandela rap has captured the attention of both blacks and whites in Boston. But are the people affected buying it? A poll taken by the antisecessionist Campaign for O.N.E. Boston and released last week says no. Supervised by Commonwealth Research Consultants of Boston, the poll asked the following questions of 223 registered voters eligible to pull levers on the nonbinding referendum:

1) Have you heard about the question on the November ballot which asks voters to decide whether Roxbury, Mattapan, portions of Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, the South End, and the Fenway should be separated from Boston?

2) How do you intend to vote on that question?

The poll found 7.1 percent in favor of secession, 68.6 percent against, and 24.2 percent who were undecided or refused comment. Among black voters, the poll revealed 11.4 percent in favor, 62.6 percent against, and 26 percent uncommitted or not saying how they would vote. The pollsters found no evidence of a major white backlash. Because whites make up 65 percent of the registered voters in those areas eligible to decide on the referendum (the 10 state representative districts that both include Mandela and are entirely in the city of Boston), there was speculation that there was going to be a "Let 'em have their own city, their own state, their own country" antimorality sentiment expressed at the polls. Laurence Bresslour of Commonwealth Research Consultants cautioned, however, that the results of the poll should not be taken totally at face value as a voter would be less likely to reveal his or her racism in a phone survey than in the privacy of the voting booth. One other interesting point the poll brought to light: of those planning to vote yes on Mandela, according to Bresslour, all who gave a clear reason

said they were voting for a new city, not to make a political statement. This is a sign that the hope extended by the Mandelaites has hit home. Jones has said the survey results are bogus because the poll was done by the secession opponents. A *Herald*/WBZ-TV poll released last week, though revealing voter unhappiness with trash pick-up and the level of public safety, found 71 percent of the 400 eligible voters surveyed opposed to the creation of Mandela, 12 percent in favor, and 16 percent undecided; one percent declined to comment. Jones predicted a referendum victory nevertheless.

Of the state reps whose districts are eligible to vote on the proposed incorporation of Mandela, Sal DiMasi, Tom Finneran, John McDonough, Richard Rouse, Kevin Fitzgerald, and Paul White all said they support the question being on the ballot but are opposed to the creation of Mandela; Jim Brett said he opposes both the question being on the ballot and the creation of Mandela; and Byron Rushing, Gloria Fox, and Royal Bolling Jr. said they are in favor of Mandela.

On the streets of Roxbury are the pro and con crowds, the never-heard-of-it bunch, and many bound up in confusion. "Mandela? I don't want to have to move out of Roxbury," said a 33-year-old guy hanging on Washington Street who thought the proposed creation of Mandela would force him and his people out of Roxbury.

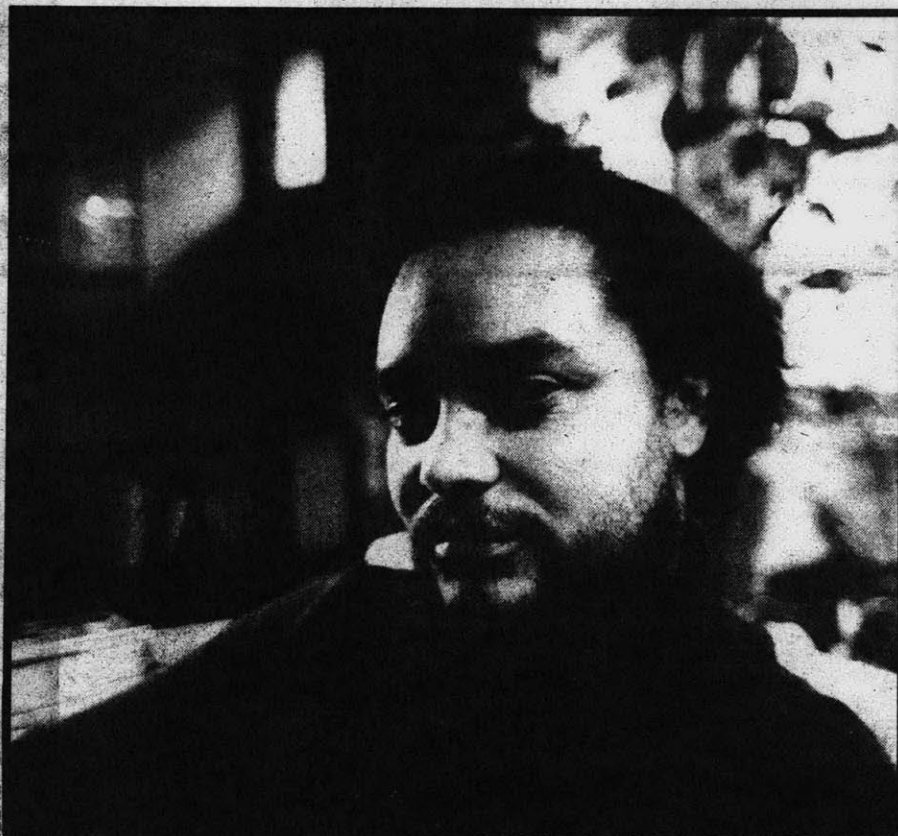
Jones and Davis possess a captive and vulnerable audience on which to lay their vision. The movement to create Mandela city would not be kicking around at all were it not for the depressed state of black Boston. "Blacks have participated little, if at all, in the economic benefits created in the 'New Boston,'" offers the intro to "The Emerging Black Community of Boston," a report issued last year by the Institute for the Study of Black Culture, at UMass/Boston. These statistics, the most recent available from the city and Census, show that in 1979-'80 Roxbury had the lowest median family income of any neighborhood in the city — \$9000 compared with Boston's \$13,200. The per-capita income of those living in the Dudley area was \$3541, compared with \$6555 citywide. According to the UMass stats, 28.6 percent of black families lived below the poverty level, as compared with 15.7 percent of white families. Black adult unemployment was double that among the white population.

KEITH W. JENKINS



Rushing: concessionist secessionist

ELENE PERLMAN



Dudley: independence would still require outside support

Much of the housing stock in Roxbury is decrepit and overcrowded. Arson is a major problem in both occupied buildings and those abandoned by absentee landlords with large unpaid property-tax bills. In 1985, according to city records, wards in Roxbury and North Dorchester/Mattapan had the highest number of major fires in the city. Entire blocks in Roxbury are controlled by highly organized and brazen drug gangs. The infant-mortality rate in the black community, according to GRIP, is the highest in the state. And now the city's planned \$750 million Dudley redevelopment project, which includes new housing, office, retail, and hotel space, has helped target Roxbury as the next real-estate gold mine in Boston. The project has sparked uncontrolled speculation, which is pricing residents out of their neighborhood, as well as major battles over community-versus-City Hall control of the development.

When you live on the edge, Mandela sounds light years better than where you're at. "I feel powerless with the way things are. I know that's [Boston's] not my city," says Eddie, the 43-year-old chess king of Roxbury's Washington Street. Eddie peddles his goods on Washington Street — combs, plastic wrestlers, perfume, philosophy — nine to six, six days a week. And he plays chess. The Dudley train screeches by, and Eddie does not cover his ears. "I don't even hear that," he says. Thirty years living in Roxbury will do that to a man. "I can't even get a loan for a business, to get some space inside," he says. "I go down to City Hall, and I feel like I'm going to Mars. I can't even get a bucket to throw my garbage away. I think Mandela is the most fantastic thing in the world to stimulate our minds. White folks say we're irresponsible, but they never want to give us any responsibility.

"If blacks held the power reins, had their hands on the money — I'd really get involved if I can have some say. Right

Continued on page 30

Mandela

Continued from page 7

now they got me in a place where I'm nobody forever. . . . Mandela. People say it's separatist. Talk about apartheid. Shit, I've been living in it."

But even Eddie was not swallowing the big Mandela pill whole, believing that, practically speaking, it was merely going to focus attention on the community and put pressure on the establishment. Another Washington Street sharpie, a Mandela opponent, was needling a guy pushing the Mandela proposition. "While you're at it," he laughed at the guy, "can you free Nelson Mandela from prison?"

* * *

"The false hope is that Mandela is the panacea, that we as blacks can solve our own problems if we have our own community," says antisecession leader Bruce Wall. "Mandela would become a ward of the state."

Even secession proponents admit that an "independent" Mandela would be dependent on state and federal funds — not the best possible fiscal plan, says Wall, since white folks control those buckaroos. "How are we going to argue on a federal level for our share of the bucks" he asks, "given the inherent nature of racism?" Wall says black folks are gaining power in the city — witness, for example, the stature of city-council president Bruce Bolling, school superintendent Laval Wilson, and Boston Housing Authority head Doris Bunte — and should fight for their rightful piece of an integrated Boston pie, rather than being asked to reach for a pie in the sky.

Jones and Davis have been busy writing letters to Winnie Mandela and trying to forge a link "between the minority community of Boston and the black majority of South Africa." Critics say they would have been better off building support a tad closer to home. Wall says the secession movement would have had much more bargaining power had Jones and Davis created a working relationship with black church leaders, perhaps spinning out a good guy/bad guy routine — Mandelaites raising hell in the neighborhoods while Wall and Stith kept their options open to support or not support Mandela as a way to win concessions from Flynn. Although Jones and Davis, through their Mandela proposal, have potentially offered themselves as part of a new leadership for the black community, critics say the two have not earned their stripes by doing grunt work in the trenches. Says Wall: "The difference between what Andrew [Jones] and others are doing is that Bruce Wall has paid his dues." Wall ministers to youths in his church, has led mass voter-registration drives, and has drawn attention to the heroin and cocaine epidemic in his community by temporarily moving into drug-infested housing projects. Stith is a confidante of the Reverend Jesse Jackson. Says Wall: "On the street, people know me, they know the person. They don't know Andrew and they don't know Curtis [Davis]. They are not perceived as part of the blood-sweat-and-tears piece. They're perceived as being carpetbaggers."

As a result of what many see as Jones's and Davis's lack of grit work, the black leadership is divided, the community is confused, and, some say, the GRIP leaders, despite their from-the-people rhetoric, are trying to impose their will on the community. "You build a house from the ground up, not the roof down," says Minister Don Muhammad of the Nation of Islam. Minister Don says he supported the secession referendum being placed on the ballot

as a way of keeping the issues in front of the Flynn administration, which he believes is doing a better job for the minority community than the White regime did. But Minister Don, who agrees that the Mandelaites need to be more clear about what a vote for Mandela will or will not bring, says there are better ways to control your own destiny. "My people need to be more economically viable," he says. "Eighty percent of my people in Roxbury are tenants." If they worked to maintain roots and own their own homes, he says, there would be no need to secede. They would already control the land. "Our point," he says, "is that economics is the soup and bread of life; politics is the dessert of life."

Critics say Jones and Davis may already have blown what leverage they might have had. "Their haste is making waste," says Bruce Wall, who believes the Mandelaites could have forced the city administration to ante up in '87, when Flynn may be running against a black candidate again, be it Mel King, Bruce Wall, city council president Bruce Bolling, Charlie Stith, school committeeman John O'Bryant, or the Reverend Michael Haynes of the Twelfth Baptist Church. Boston political analyst Tom Driscoll agrees. "In '87 you can go to Ray and say, 'You deal or the secession question's going on the ballot. You pledged to bring us all together. I've got 15,000 people saying you haven't.' Then it becomes a referendum on Ray Flynn, style versus substance. There's no way this can be debated and not appear to be racial either way."

Back in November '85, when GRIP petitioned Flynn to hold a nonbinding city plebiscite about incorporation — in which only those living in the proposed Mandela area would vote — Wall publicly supported the notion of a city referendum because he was at loggerheads with the mayor and wanted to turn the heat up. "I knew the mayor has a nose for the media and loves good press," says Wall. "How would he fare nationally if the slaves — I mean the blacks — on the plantation — I mean the city of Boston — if the guy being touted as mayor of the year had rumblings on the plantation — I mean the city."

Flynn rejected the idea of a plebiscite, so the Mandelaites went to work and collected more than 5000 signatures to put the question on the state ballot. The move revealed the potential power of a broad-based coalition of black leaders. Wall says Flynn responded with some positive bounty in the Wall-Flynn areas of contention: reappointing Clarence "Jeep" Jones to the Boston Redevelopment Authority Board of Directors, restoring some police cooperation with Drop-A-Dime (cofounded by Wall) that had been stripped, and widening the community roles of black members of his administration such as auditor Leon Stamps and collector-treasurer George Russell. In addition, in September Flynn backed a plan to give minorities 30 percent equity in a \$400 million downtown and Roxbury development under his parcel-to-parcel linkage program. According to sources, this was clearly a Mandela-related move intended to pacify the black community.

As things stand now, Wall says he has never seen Flynn so angry over an issue; the mayor, after trying to ignore the issue, has called the idea of Mandela reckless and irresponsible and has marshaled his forces to defeat the referendum. "Mayor Flynn has clearly stated his opposition to the proposal on the grounds that it is by definition a proposal to establish a community based on the color of one's skin," says mayoral aide Ray Dooley. "It is clearly racially divisive and

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Mandela

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economically not viable. Since Mayor Flynn took over we've been trying to work together to improve both the racial climate and the availability of equal access for all. Most people want to put the racial divisiveness of several years ago behind us."

The Mandelaites, say Wall and Driscoll, have thus already shot their secession wad with both the mayor and the community. "It's like you were a teenager, and you're with a girl for the first time," says Driscoll. "And you think it's going to happen and she says, 'No, not now.' And your answer is, 'But I'm ready now.' How many times can you do that before you just drop it? There's only so many cold showers you can take."

GRIP, in some of its literature, admits that Mandela will not mean instant Nirvana. "Q: Will incorporation solve all our problems? A: No. By incorporating, as an independent city, we will acquire the tools necessary to solve our social, political, and economic problems." But critics say that message is overpowered by rhetoric. Says Wall, "If this thing passes, and I believe it will fail, it is a victory for two carpetbaggers who whipped up emotions by waving the name Mandela. They're playing on the frustrations of blacks who feel their dollar has not earned them either the services or the dreams they thought about or prayed for when they came to Boston. They don't believe they're being duped. The average person thinks if we vote for Number 9 we have Mandela next week. But there's a potential backlash. The average person doesn't know the governor is not going to sign this. If it passes, people are going to say, 'Oh, we finally won something of major proportions.' Only to have their hopes dashed."

* * *

The politics of being left out is a tricky business. To lead a movement like Mandela one has



MICHAEL ROMANOS

Stith: a credible leader

to be a true believer. But there's a danger of becoming a prisoner of your own rhetoric when you offer not dreams deferred but pipe dreams.

Some 20 years ago there was a debate in the black community about seceding from Boston. The secession movement splintered into two groups: those who really wanted to split and those who wanted to use a threatened split to extract goods and services for their community. That movement, which included now State Representative Byron Rushing and Mel King, who both favored going for it — and who are today two important Mandela supporters — ultimately petered out. Today's Mandela movement faces the same kind of factionalism as its progenitor. GRIP cofounders Jones and Davis have publicly stated their disdain for previous movements aimed at concessions only. They say they're not posturing, that they are dead serious about Mandela. "We didn't go into this

just to use it for political leverage," Davis was recently quoted in the *Globe* as saying, "We want to win on the ballot."

Byron Rushing says there is room in the movement for both secessionists and concessionists. He believes that even if you want your neighborhood to remain part of Boston, you should vote yes on Mandela to send a dramatic message to the mayor. "Unless," Rushing laughs, "you think you can send him a letter."

Like a man who has recently found religion, Jones seems to be in this contest for all the marbles, not compromise. And so his strident seize-the-day-power-to-the-people-do-it deliverances invite comparison with the *other* take-the-land movements going on about the world. Nelson Mandela is not in jail so that someday he will rule one of the black "homeland" client states, such as Bophuthatswana, created under South African apartheid policy. Nelson Mandela wants

South Africa. The Palestinians don't want the West Bank and Gaza. They want Palestine. Native American radicals don't want reservation ghettos. They want America. I'm not arguing against secession, militancy, self-determination, black power, or revolution; I'm just saying that what Jones is selling is a hell of a lot softer than revolution.

In an August letter to the Brockton city clerk, Jones wrote in part: "I believe in democracy. I will continue to believe in it until something Better comes along. In it lies the means for revolution, and revolution is what municipal incorporation is all about."

Andrew Jones's revolution is by way of nonbinding referendum. Referendum and rap song. Cowritten/produced by Jones and singer/composer Armstead Christian, the rap song "Mandela, Massachusetts" contains such lyrics as:

"Being part of Boston used to be okay/When the city used to

allocate money our way./Now all that's changed, and it's plain to see/That the city only cares about property."

In a letter to a Los Angeles songwriter, Jones broached the subject of "Stevie" recording the song. Jones says he once played back up to Stevie Wonder on tour.

Early this month, the Flynn administration put out its own rap record, a hard-hitting number that just about equated Mandela's economic status with Bophuthatswana's. Entitled "Proposed Mandela Secession" and produced by the Internal Research Group of Boston City Hall, the sheet contains the following notes:

- The projected annual operating deficit would be more than \$135 million.

- Without benefit of the city's strong downtown tax base, Mandela would need to raise residential property taxes by 61 percent and industrial property taxes by 44 percent.

- A rebuttal of charges that the minority community is not getting its fair share of services. The report says that 10 percent more uniformed police officers are assigned to Area B — covering Roxbury, Mattapan, North Dorchester — than to the police district with the next-highest number of officers; 73 percent of the students in the school system are minorities, suggesting that the would-be Mandela area benefits disproportionately from the school department's \$293 million budget; Greater Roxbury gets twice as many street sweepings and trash collections as any other neighborhood save downtown.

Of course, this does not factor in the years of neglect Roxbury has experienced. And as Bruce Wall noted, forking over money does not necessarily mean effective services. Are the cops on the take? Why do the streets look as clean as Fenway Park after a ball game?

Andrew Jones has his own figures, which claim a first-year Mandela surplus of \$7 million.

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Rushing believes that Jones's and the city's fiscal reports are a wash. "The question is, do you want to be a poor neighborhood in a rich city or a poor town in a rich state? I'll take a poor town in a rich state. Black people have more influence in state government than in city government."

A sign that the concessionist/political-realist faction of the Mandela movement — which includes Mel King, Rushing, State Representative Gloria Fox, and Kenneth Wade of the Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority (GRNA) — may be flexing its muscles and an acknowledgment on the part of some GRIP leaders that earlier they were too far ahead of the people was evident at an October 13 GRIP press conference. Instead of proferring its own numbers, GRIP sought the establishment of a governor's commission to study the economic feasibility of incorporation — a move the governor rejected. "While there are obviously legitimate concerns within the community, the only way to address those concerns and to solve the problems that come about is to continue to work together," Governor Dukakis's deputy press secretary has said. "Secession does not accomplish that." And a GRIP/GRNA press release back-stepped from the previous secession-now hard line: "We believe that being for or against municipal incorporation is not the issue at this point. Our concern is for the gathering of clear answers on the question of our financial relationship with the city of Boston. Once we have the answers to these questions, then we can proceed as a community, to determine whether municipal incorporation is the best strategy for empowerment."

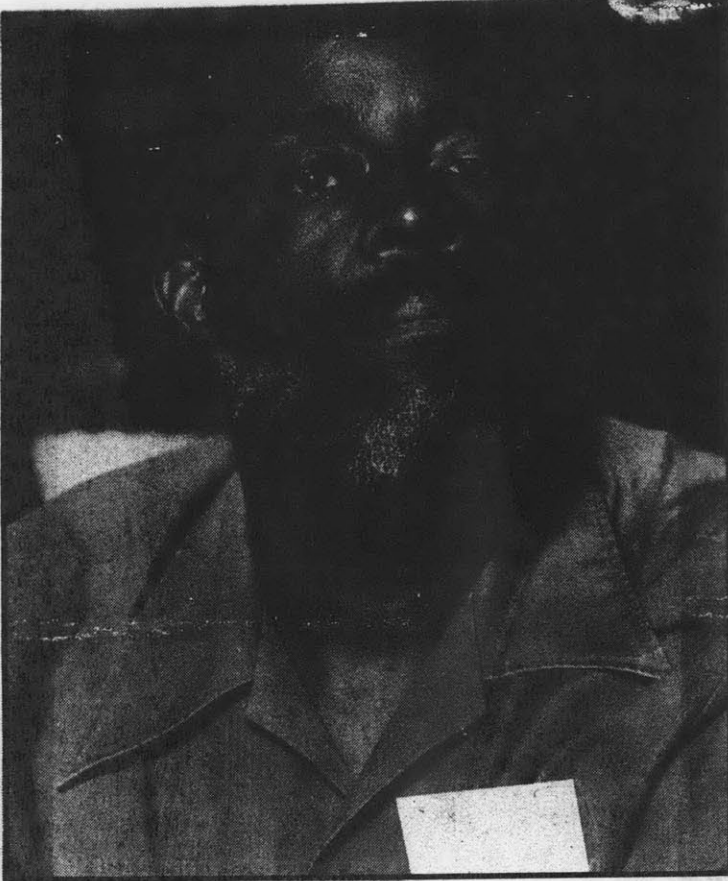
A few other strategies come immediately to mind, including the Black Panthers' creating their own liberation education/social-services infrastructure in Oakland in the '60s, which led to their de facto control over parts of the city; locally, the highly structured and moral in-the-street organization run by the Nation of Islam's Minister Don Muhammad, which has been successful in everything from reforming drug addicts to using food supplied by the Reverend Moon's Unification Church to help feed his community while rejecting the church's influence-peddling; the squatter-movement tactic of occupying all the abandoned buildings in Roxbury, fixing them up, and claiming them as community property. Byron Rushing recently had a smashing idea for Mandela: create a provisional government that the mayor might be forced to deal with. Rushing says Jones dismissed the notion out of hand. "Andrew believes you do it through a legitimate process," says Rushing.

* * *

"It is a once in a lifetime opportunity," GRIP says in its literature. "We must not pass it up. The GRIP effort has been reported in all 50 states, Europe, Africa, and South America. The whole world is watching our struggle for independence."

Among the publications near and far that have covered the effort, *Jet* magazine, a black publication, reported on the "revolutionary" Mandela movement last March this way: "A violinist and an architect are endorsing a plan to separate the mostly Black section of Boston and incorporate it as Nelson Mandela, Mass. Violinist Andrew Jones, 34, and Curtis Davis, 32, both Black, plan to ask the Legislature to turn a 12.5-square-mile area, with 150,000 residents, into a new city named after the Black South

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King: the second time around

Mandela

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African imprisoned for his stance in civil rights."

In an interview with the *Phoenix*, Andrew Jones says, "I've always been politically aware of my world. I've always been concerned about South Africa, about my community." Davis was raised in Jacksonville, Florida. Jones grew up in a black housing project in Richmond, Virginia. He says the city has had a black mayor and black city-council members; he says he went to an excellent all-black elementary school. "I had no doubt ever that black people could administrate," says Jones. "I knew who I was. I was never ashamed of being a black person." After attending Phillips Exeter Academy under a program created by President Johnson's Great Society, Jones went to college in Minnesota. He transferred to the New England Conservatory of Music and later received a master's in broadcasting from Boston University. He settled in Boston in 1973.

In 1983 Jones, a reporter/producer, was doing a piece for national TV on acid rain and New England town meetings. "I found democracy," says Jones. "The basic unit of democracy in New England is municipal incorporation. You had ordinary people conducting day-to-day business, doing it legally, statutorily. I considered it for my community." On August 2, 1983, Jones says he saw a front-page article in the *New York Times* about a minority community, East Palo Alto, California, that had voted to incorporate. The move was approved by 15 votes, and the community elected a black mayor. When he saw the article, Jones said to himself, "This is it."

He says that what he wants his community to go through is no different from what every other city and town in the commonwealth has experienced. "In 1630," GRIP wrote in a handout, "the year both Roxbury and Boston were established, there were only 17 municipalities in Massachusetts. Now there are 351. The overwhelming majority of cities and towns resulted from deannexations." Far from being racist, says Jones, who was once racial-slurred out of Castle Island, in Southie, the would-be Mandela was created by linking the parts of the city where black folks have been confined to live. "It was by design," he says of the

city's segregation. "There was a relationship between the city of Boston and private real-estate developers."

"We have tried every way, except incorporation, to solve our many problems," GRIP wrote. "We have been frustrated by not having the resources to exterminate the conditions which have blighted our neighborhoods. Nothing short of total independence will do." Now, with developers seeing green over land in Roxbury, Jones says it is time for the people to control the land and resources, control their own destiny. He is convinced it will happen. "It will pass," he says about the referendum. "The state legislature will pass it. The governor will sign it. I don't think the legislature or the governor will distort the democratic process in order to protect Boston's political interests."

Jones says he has no hidden agenda; GRIP is there to give the people a taste of power. "I have no political aspirations," he says. "I have never had political aspirations. To me, I'm doing my civic duty." Was Martin Luther King a carpetbagger? he asks. Was Malcolm X a carpetbagger? He believes that money is not the issue here. "In every case of municipal incorporation," he says, "the state has come in and helped out. . . . If we want to be a city, we will be a city, regardless of the economic circumstances." At the heart of Mandela, he says, is a cultural and psychological revolution grounded in the idea of self-esteem and empowerment. "We are divided in every way and don't have power," he says. "Power rests with land control, even if you just start talking about it."

But isn't it probable that the legislature and the governor will go thumbs down on the referendum?, I ask him. Aren't you selling your people counterfeit dreams?

Jones explodes: "The democratic process comes out of the will of the people. Power is not something they let you have. You must take it. The community will never let it go."

But a massive letdown can undercut any sense of empowerment, I say. For the black community, ebony deceptions are just as bad as — if not worse than — white lies.

"You listen to me," Jones says, pointing his finger. "You will eat your words. It's the will of the people, the democratic process that counts. It's not a matter of them letting us do it. We will get it. We will get it." □

Residents of Roxbury and other neighborhoods are being asked to decide in November whether they want to remain part of the City of Boston or become citizens of a new community to be incorporated – tentatively called Mandela. It is a decision not to be made lightly, since it involves the social and fiscal vitality of the entire Boston metropolitan area and the danger that the move would split Boston along racial lines.

A nonbinding referendum on the November ballot seeks to allow a 12½-square-mile area to form a separate city. The area has a population of about 150,000, of whom 74 percent are black. Residents would do well to weigh the pros and cons of secession between now and November.

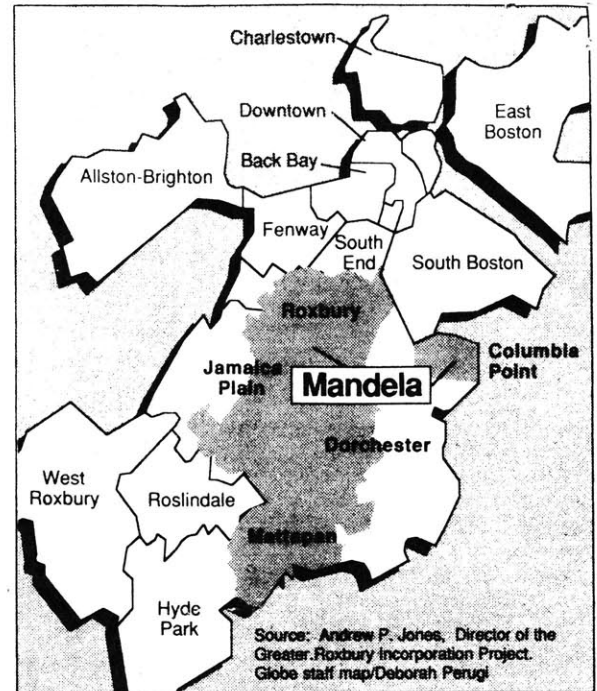
Leaders of the Greater Roxbury Incorporation Project say that Mandela would have a surplus of \$7 million in its first year, based on revenue of \$129 million. GRIP's fiscal forecast is not detailed, but it apparently does not take into account a number of expenditures, such as capital improvements for streets and parks.

City of Boston budget analysts present a gloomier, and probably more realistic, forecast. Using Boston's annual operating costs, and assuming that Mandela's share is equal to its share of the total city population, the analysts estimate that Mandela would have operating costs of about \$456 million and could raise revenue of about \$320 million in taxes, fees and state and federal aid.

Because the area is overwhelmingly residential, Mandela would not benefit from tax classification, shifting the tax burden from commercial and industrial to residential property. It is likely that Mandela would be forced to increase taxes to the maximum allowable, which would mean an increase of 44 percent for commercial and industrial property and 61 percent for residential.

Mandela would not benefit from the new hotel-motel room excise tax or the aircraft-fuel excise tax because it lacks hotels and an airport, nor from linkage fees or the Boston jobs program. Moreover, the federal government is ending the general revenue-sharing program – the only federal program that contributes to city operating expenses.

Andrew Jones, GRIP cofounder, makes some valid points. The minority community has often been ill-used by government and business. Few minorities have been elected to important offices. Black students are bused across the city to attend largely black schools. The high school dropout rate is alarming. Not enough has been done to reduce crime and poverty in minority areas. And the racial violence of the early '70s and the exclusion of minorities from certain neighborhoods have indeed left scars.



However, it is important to keep in mind that conditions have improved considerably over the past several years. The president of the Boston City Council and another district councilor are black, as are four members of the Boston School Committee, the superintendent of schools and the city treasurer. Mayor Flynn has significantly increased the number of minorities employed by the city.

Boston businesses have agreed to hire and upgrade minority employees, and provide jobs and college financial assistance to Boston public school graduates. Minority businessmen are bidding on the development of a major downtown project. Racial tensions have calmed. The changes are real.

Black clergymen and business leaders are organizing so that residents will hear voices other than those calling for separation. The campaign by Revs. Charles Stith, Mickarl Thomas, Bruce Wall and others will add perspective to the debate.

The opposition from these leaders comes at a particularly good moment, since some of the rhetoric is increasingly hostile and divisive. Secession can be discussed, but loud, angry charges by supporters cannot be allowed to drown out reasonable responses. The activity on both sides may inspire residents to go out and vote. It would be tragic if a handful of voters were to decide so crucial an issue.

Boston belongs to every citizen. Mayor Flynn has made progress in bringing the city together, and these efforts should be supported, rather than undermined. The voters will have to decide whether they support GRIP in the desire to control "the land, the buildings and the pavement we tread on." Or whether Rev. Stith makes a better point when he urges minorities to stay in Boston and continue to "so/ the seeds of opportunity."

The New York Times

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Boston and the Separatists

Boston's referendum next month on whether to create a separate municipality out of its black central-city neighborhoods already constitutes a civic tragedy, no matter how the vote turns out. It invites more of the racism that has periodically inflamed the city. It also bespeaks a disaffection so deep among some blacks in Boston that they are willing to embark on so self-destructive an experiment in racial separation.

The idea is to break out a 12-square-mile area of Boston that contains 22 percent of the 600,000 population, including most of its black residents. The new city would be named Mandela, after the imprisoned South African black leader. Proponents say it would provide better services for its residents. Opponents say that could happen only if taxes in Mandela, a community of poor residential properties, were raised astronomically. Even then, the new city would incur a \$135 million deficit its first year.

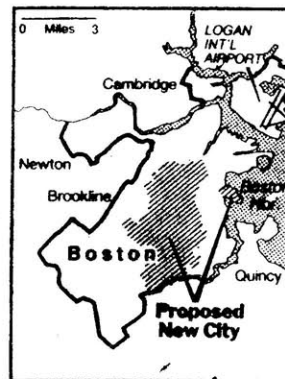
The argument need not depend on projections and speculation. Let the proposal's supporters ask Mayor Richard Hatcher whether attracting jobs, investment and Federal aid to Gary, Ind., wouldn't be easier if the city were more thoroughly integrated. Let them ask Mayor Sharpe James whether New York would not command more money and attention from the agencies and private investors if one-third of its population were not on dependency rolls.

Even after a generation of progress, to be black in a central city today is still often to be poor. And to be poor is to be powerless, except in judicious coalition with others. Boston's black central-city areas now have access to the resources of the entire city. They can join with other residents and interests for

help from the state or Federal governments. Separately, they would become just one more special interest — and one without much power.

The separatist push comes as blacks appear finally to be entering Boston's mainstream. Laval S. Wilson was appointed superintendent of schools last year and Bruce C. Bolling was elected president of the

City Council this year. Their achievements may explain the deeper frustration of those still awaiting their chance, a frustration that feeds the desire to secede. Those are understandable feelings; all Bostonians can take them to heart. Seceding, however, would just make the frustration worse.



Boston Globe 10/29/96

Mandela signs that confuse

Secessionists in the Roxbury area, determined to establish a new city, have stooped to disinformation to press their cause. Street corners and traffic islands throughout the 12.5-square-mile area that would be Mandela are plastered with signs that claim in large letters: "Yes, we stay. No, we go." That is false. The next line reads, "Vote yes on Question 9." The signs then promise, "Land control. A new city: Mandela, Mass."

The signs are as confusing as they are deceitful, and only push secession regardless of voter sentiment. "No" is the correct way to vote for those who want to stay in Boston and take advantage of hard-won opportunities.

Secession leaders should recognize the dishonesty in the signs. In the campaign by pro-Mandela forces, facts have played only a minor role. Much of the information disseminated has been based on nothing more than promises from those determined to see a racial division of the city.

Roxbury residents should not be subjected

to more disinformation. The negativism, untruths and confusion must be ended. Proponents say they have justification for calling for secession. If so, they would do well to emphasize the positive aspects of a new city and to abate the criticism and name-calling of those who oppose secession.

By contrast, the One Boston, antisecession campaign has emphasized the benefits of remaining a part of the city. Mayor Flynn is among those who deserve credit for letting people know about plans for new jobs and new programs for Boston residents.

Such deceitfulness is ironic in secession leaders who tout the proposed Mandela as a Mecca for average black citizens who long to control their own destinies. If secession advocates will not also wage a positive campaign, they should at least wage a fair one. And if secessionists are more interested in an honest polling of residents' sentiment than building a personal power base, they should take down the signs.

BOSTON

*Boston Sunday
Globe*

A new black leadership emerges

Nov. 9, 1986

*Minority voters rebuff
Melvin King on secession*

By Michael K. Frisby
Globe Staff

Melvin H. King led protests over the last 20 years that forced Boston's white power structure to hear blacks citing discrimination in jobs, housing and education. At City Hall and in corporate board rooms, the city today appears to be responding to some of those complaints. But there is a new group of leaders negotiating on behalf of Boston's minority community, and King is not among them.

Instead of dropping table scraps at a banquet head table — as King once did to seek a larger share of United Fund spending for minorities — the new leaders chat over lunch with corporate leaders at Locke-Ober or convene meetings in City Hall offices.

When the minority community voted overwhelmingly last Tuesday not to support the nonbinding secession referendum, some observers believe the community was saying that it wants to give this new generation of leaders a chance to prove their methods — working quietly within the system, rather than confronting it — can be effective.

The election outcome also raised serious questions as to whether King, who supported the secession movement, can continue as a viable candidate for public offices or will he be shoved aside by such emerging political spokesmen as City Council president Bruce C. Bolling, state Rep. Shirley Owens-Hicks, City Councilor Charles Yancey or religious leaders Rev. Charles Stith and Rev. Bruce Wall.

By opposing the secession movement, Stith and, to some degree, Bolling, gained added clout with Mayor Raymond Flynn and Boston's corporate leaders, who feared the issue would mean a return to the ugly racial divisiveness of the school busing crisis period. Emerging with Boll-

Blacks

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ing and Stith were individuals who, until the secession issue, had worked quietly behind the scenes, negotiating a piece of the economic pie for minorities. They have yet to show an interest in elective offices but may in the future.

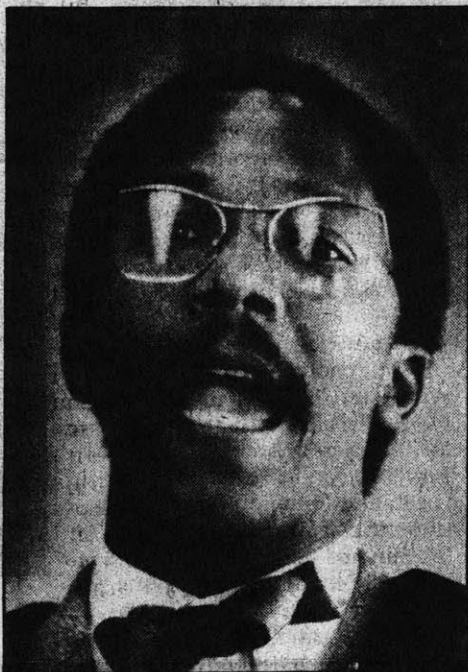
Among their ranks are Ricardo Millett, an assistant director of the Boston Redevelopment Authority; Hassan Minor Jr., president of The Partnership; Ron Homer, president of the Boston Bank of Commerce; and Richard Taylor, owner of Taylor Properties, and Boston collector-treasurer George Russell Jr.

"There is a new emerging leadership, although people still respect Mel and what he has done," said Joyce Ferriabough, a black political consultant, who directed the campaign against secession. "Mel created the climate for blacks to run for mayor and other offices, but now is the time to put together the legislation and implement programs to feed the hungry, house the poor and educate our children. Mel King will always be revered, but there needs to be new leadership, and I hope Mel will foster that."

A new pragmatism

The times have changed, she said, and the vote showed that the community doesn't want people constantly "bucking the tide with nothing to show for it." Instead, said Ferriabough, community leaders must look at broad-based points of view and be prepared to sit down and negotiate gains.

There was a near consensus among those interviewed that the 25 percent of the community voting for the secession referendum represents a devoted segment



Rev. Charles Stith



City Councilor Bruce C. Bolling

of voters who will continue to follow King's lead. Yet, they say King, a former state representative, must move toward the mainstream of his own community if he is to win another elective office.

Last week, Minor said that the minority community must begin to field candidates who can win elections, rather than casting votes for long shots who later say they lost in the final tally but won "a moral victory."

Running for office just to send a message "is a luxury that the minority community can't afford today," said Minor.

The community, said Minor, fails to progress when it is placated with moral victories and doesn't acknowledge losses. "A loss should be analyzed to determine why it happened," he said. "It is wrong for the community to be deprived of that learning experience and not begin the curve of correction."

He said The Partnership, a multiracial group of community leaders, public officials and influential businessmen, seeks to strengthen corporate access for minorities.

Some point to the Black Political Task Force's controversial endorsement of Robert Rufo over Georgette Watson, who is black, in the Suffolk County sheriff's race as an indication the minority community is growing more sophisticated and is recognizing the importance of backing a winner.

Some of the new players

But with changes comes anguish.

Millett, who has played a key role in assisting minority developers become designated for projects by the Boston Redevelopment Authority, has often been a target of King and others questioning whether the community has enough input into development plans.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE, SAYS KING

Former State Rep. Melvin H. King says "it would be great" if a new generation of minority leaders can accomplish their goals, but he says they have no right to pass judgment on his political future.

King has not yet decided what his future will be, but he dismisses contentions that he has lost influence or damaged his future by supporting the secession movement that was soundly defeated Tuesday.

"As long as I am breathing and I am able, what I stand for is empowerment of people," said King, adding he plans to continue as an influential voice in the city.

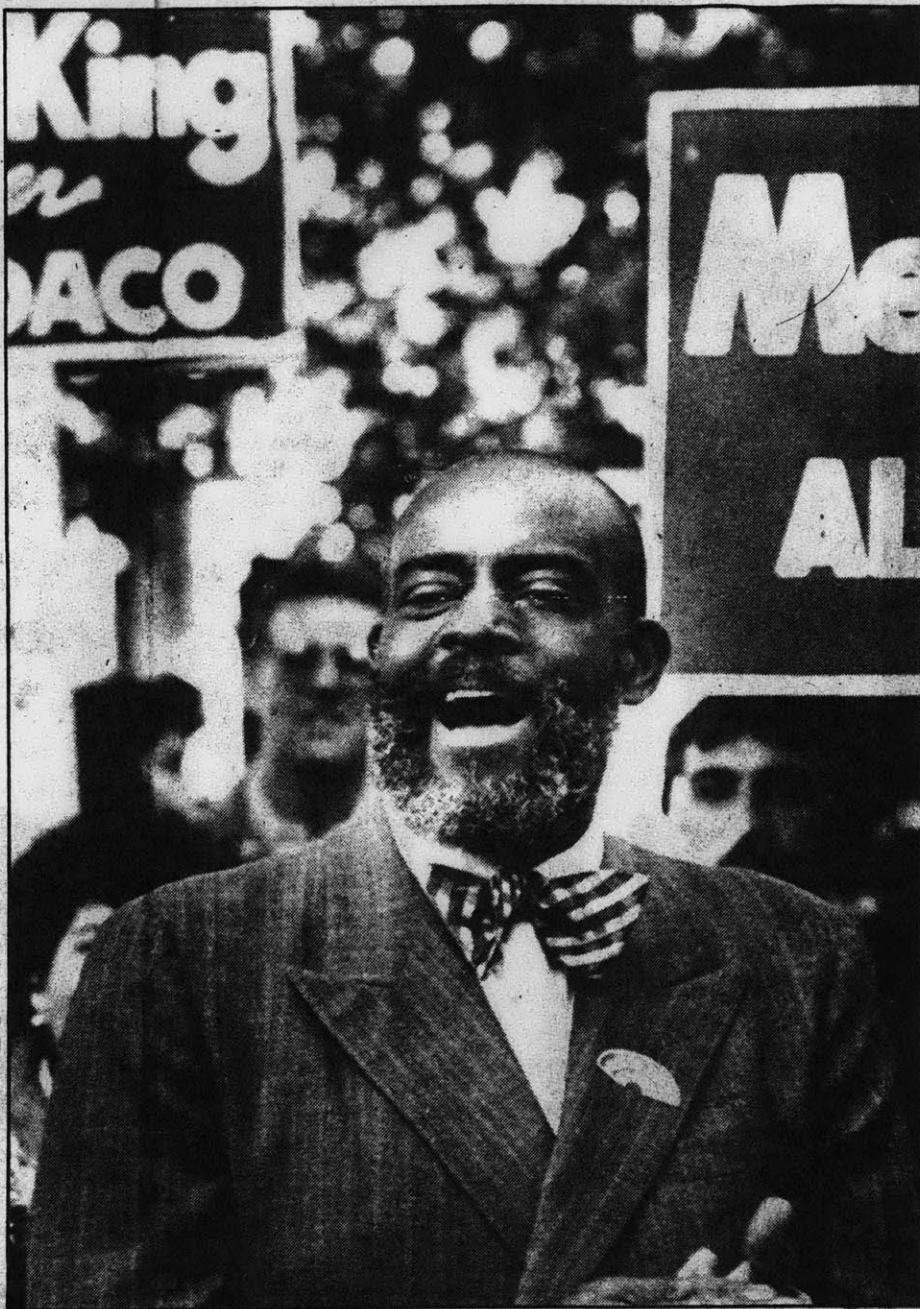
King says the people talking about negotiating for minority gains are not in tune with what the community wants. "They are talking about a subordinate situation," said King. "The community is not looking for a subordinate role; they want real equality and real integration."

The 25 percent who voted in favor of secession, King says, were not asking for negotiations "but real control."

King says some of the emerging new leaders are excellent people, but "collectively, they have not delivered the concrete jobs, education and scholarship programs that I have."

He also says it took two unknowns — secession leaders Andrew Jones and Curtis Davis — to create a climate that puts the new minority spokesmen in a position to broker with the power structure. "They didn't have that before," he says. "They moved in to play this role with the power structure. It will be interesting to see how well they play."

— MICHAEL K. FRISBY



Associated Press

Melvin King: discounts talk of his political demise.

"The old leadership has not fully accepted the value of the people implementing policies to help minorities," said Millett, adding that the old guard is "distrustful of those who mediate and implement."

Millett said the minority community, which includes an emerging black middle class, appears to want a leadership that can implement change, rather than just voice the needs for what improvements should take place.

Taylor, who has several development projects under construction in Roxbury, says that for years minorities didn't participate in the process and were not represented in government or in private indus-

try. Today, he notes, there have been many minority appointments in city and state government, and the corporate leadership is also discussing minority access.

"The community is saying that we now have a presence, and they want to give us time to deliver," said Taylor, adding the public should give the new leaders three to five years to deliver before seeking another approach.

While most observers agree there are new leaders emerging, some maintain the secession vote was not a statement on leadership. It was instead, says Marilyn Anderson-Chase, a community saying "a separate town is not the way to address the issues." Chase is director of Gov. Michael Dukakis' Community Service office.

Bolling, meanwhile, says the secession movement did serve to highlight frustrations in the minority community that must be acknowledged by the establishment and the new leaders. "The residents want improvements," he said. "And they will deal with the city under new terms. They want their problems addressed by the mayor and corporate Boston."

Kenneth Guscott, a longtime business leader in the minority community, reasoned that the difficult battles in the 1960s took a heavy toll on the black leadership in Boston.

Said Guscott: "What happened is that some of our leaders don't know how to do anything but fight."

Boston Herald 12/11/86

Roxbury group to plan land use

By BEVERLY FORD

ROXBURY residents, concerned that low-income families are being forced from their homes by real estate speculators, last night vowed to seize control of the situation by creating a planning committee to oversee development.

Members of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, which met with about 60 residents last night, said the group is interested in planning for Boston's future expansion by creating a development plan for their community.

"We need to develop some ideas about what to do with

the vacant land," said Melvyn Colon, one of the initiative organizers.

He said once the community has developed a plan to use vacant land, it would have better leverage in dealing with City Hall.

"A plan will give us a fighting chance," said Colon. "The city would be very hard pressed to say its plan was better than the community's plan."

The group said they will meet with planning consultants and members of various community organizations in the near future to put together a plan for the neighborhood.

ALAN LUPO

Trying to save Dudley area

In a vacant lot on Roxbury's Dudley Street, a kid pelts a burned-out hulk of an abandoned car with rocks. It's inner city recreation, the sort of thing the socially deprived kids of Weston don't get to do.

There are about 1,000 of these vacant lots in this neighborhood of 1½ square miles squeezed between Dudley Station and Uphams Corner. In this area of some 10,000 Latinos, blacks, Cape Verdeans and whites, more than 30 percent of the folks are poor, and 19 percent are jobless.

To passers-by, the vacant lots are no-man's-land symbols of filth, neglect and poverty and hiding places for those who would prey on the innocent.

To a developer, they are gold mines, the sites of future townhouses or condos in a city starved for housing.

To those trying to make a life for themselves in the neighborhood, the vacant lots are the sites of future affordable homes, small business and parks. Filthy vacant lots become the stuff of dreams.

To help the dreamers compete with the speculators, neighborhood activists two years ago began organizing the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, a coalition of social services agencies and neighborhood organizations.

"There's a lot of concern," one member said in February of 1985, "that what happened with gentrification in the South End could now happen here."

Since that time, the Initiative has hired a staff of four full-timers and one part-timer, who work out of a cramped two-room storefront diagonally across the street from St. Patrick's Church. To date, the effort has survived mainly due to donations from the nonprofit Riley Foundation and is trying to broaden its financial base. Next year, it hopes to operate on a budget of \$300,000, including \$125,000 for consultants.

These consultants, under the constant scrutiny of the hyperactivists in Roxbury, must develop a comprehensive plan for housing, economic development and social services.

But in the meantime, the Initiative's 23 unpaid directors, elected by the neighborhood, and its staff must make sure their neighborhood isn't stolen out from under them.

That means a lot of things. It means organizing every group in sight and beefing up those already organized — the Winthrop Street Crime Association, Orchard Park Tenants Association and neighborhood associations in Mt. Pleasant, Shirley-Dudley, Woodville Avenue, Julian Street, Woodland Street, Dacia Street and elsewhere.

To bolster these groups, the Initiative, working with the city, has sponsored an anti-dumping campaign and crime watches.

But protecting the area also means keeping on top of the real estate action — who's buying what and for how much?

Medoff says the Public Facilities Department has promised to share with the Initiative an inventory of the 500 or so city-owned lots and whatever information it might have on lots privately owned or in tax title.

The Initiative wants to determine the future of those city-owned parcels. "We also have to try to buy privately owned land," Medoff says, "and pull as much of it as possible off the market."

The Flynn administration has improved somewhat the arduous process of getting abandoned properties into the hands of those who wish to build low and moderate-income housing, but that process is still, as Medoff says, "gummed up."

The Initiative needs Flynn's continued cooperation on many fronts — making city-owned lots available for community priorities, getting a handle on the private market, improving police protection, removing waste transfer stations that litter the neighborhood and insuring that the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) cooperates with a citizens group intent on controlling its own future.

Medoff, effusive in his praise for the Public Facilities Department, voices cautious optimism regarding the BRA. "We hope the BRA will be supportive," he says. "The BRA needs to build trust in this area. It hasn't done that yet."

Medoff, once a community organizer in Harlem, the South Bronx and Hartford, now works in a building next to one large vacant lot and across the street from another.

"The weeds have already grown back since last summer when we had the cleanup," he says. "What needs to happen is housing and small business. That's what we've got to do."

Alan Lupo is an author and journalist in Winthrop.

ROXBURY

Dudley group seeks own answers

Booky Globe 1/27/87

Residents hire consultant to suggest creative ways to tackle area ills

By Joanne Ball
Globe Staff

One thousand vacant lots, littered with aged refrigerators and stoves, smashed cars and ordinary garbage, scar the city blocks that run off Dudley Street and Blue Hill Avenue in Roxbury. Heat leaks out of poorly built and poorly insulated apartments. Crime and unemployment are constant byproducts of poverty.

The residents of this area want the lots cleaned up and developed. They want better housing that they can afford. They want more jobs, less poverty.

Their plight is as common to inner-city life as their solution is unusual. These residents have chosen neither to fight City Hall nor wait for it to issue another new program.

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, a group of individual residents and agencies in the impoverished area, has decided to find out for itself what ails the community. The residents will announce today that they have hired a private consulting firm which they will pay \$123,000 to come up with some creative ways to remedy the ills.

The residents hope to count on City Hall as a partner.

Mayor Flynn and other city officials are expected to attend a news conference naming the consulting firm at one of the area's vacant lots.

"We didn't want to work from the top down," said Che Madyun, a Dudley Street resident and president of the Initiative, describing a process whereby city officials impose a solution on the neighborhood. "We want to work from the bottom up and have City Hall work with us so together we can determine our own fate."

Residents and observers fear that the Dudley area of Roxbury is vulnerable to the same market forces that caused thousands of poor people to flee the South End. In coming years, gentrification will transform the area, many believe.

"We do want development in the area," said Madyun. "But we don't want displacement. We don't want another South End."

By developing a plan now, the residents believe they can marshal forces in a controlled way to bring about the improvements, but at a pace the area can handle.

"We share a common goal,"

said Lisa Chapnick, commissioner of the city's Public Facilities Department. The city owns almost half of the area's vacant land.

"What we're promising to do is roll up our sleeves and get to work with the residents," she said. As an example of the forthcoming cooperation, Chapnick said some information that the city usually keeps from individuals "because it is often used for real estate speculation" will be shared with the consultants and members of the Dudley Street Initiative.

DAC International Inc., a Washington-based, minority-owned consulting firm, was chosen to study the available data and meet with the residents in order to develop a plan to entice investment, better housing and recreational facilities to the area. The plan is scheduled to be ready for final approval by the residents by next August.

"The greatest challenge is to put together a plan that works," said Steven Plumer, executive vice president of the 3-year-old firm. "We can't just concentrate on the absence of resources, but we must look at the resources that are already there and build on them."

Boston Globe 1/28/87

Study: Media in Boston reinforce racism by news coverage decisions

By Ross Gelbspan
Globe Staff

Boston's major newspapers and broadcast media perpetuate racism in Boston by the way they select and present the news, according to a study to be presented today at the University of Massachusetts at Boston.

In an analysis of 3,215 stories presented by 10 newspapers, television and radio stations during one month last summer, Kirk Johnson, a media analyst and magazine editor, found that:

- Coverage of the black community by white-owned news outlets disproportionately emphasized crime while giving scant coverage to stories on education, culture and civic and business achievements that reflect the values and aspirations of Boston's black community.

From June 9 to July 9, 1986, for instance, 70 percent of all stories from Roxbury and Mattapan in the city's major news outlets concerned either crimes or traffic accidents.

- Stories presented by The Boston Globe, Boston Herald, WBZ-TV, WCVB-TV, WGBH-TV's 10 O'Clock News, and WBCN-FM frequently quote only white "experts" about trends and events affecting blacks.

- The white-owned news outlets feature black celebrities - athletes, entertainers, criminals and public officials - much more than "ordinary black people."

- Many stories that do quote such "ordinary" blacks as tenants, business people and civil servants contrast their statements with those of white experts, giving the impression that whites have more authority than the black subjects of the story.

One television station, reporting on the disproportionately high failure rate among black and Hispanic public school students, interviewed only white educational experts - ignoring the availability of Boston's black school superintendent and four black School Committee members for comment, the study said.

Johnson, whose study was funded by the William Monroe Trotter Institute at UMass-Boston, found that 85 percent of news items about the black community in the dominant media reinforced stereotypes of black Bostonians as drug pushers, thieves, troublemakers, fomenters of violence and people mired in apathy.

For example, Johnson found that only 3 percent of the white media's stories about blacks dealt with educational topics, compared

'There is some feeling in the media that racism isn't happening anymore. That's dangerous, especially when a more subtle form of racism still pervades news coverage.'

**- Kirk Johnson,
media analyst**

to 9.1 percent of the stories in the black media.

While the concern of black Bostonians with education is evident in census data indicating that Boston has a higher percentage of black high school graduates over the age of 25 than white graduates, that fact is seldom cited in white-dominated media, Johnson added.

Were the white community to be portrayed by similarly "one-sided black stereotypes of whites," Johnson added, the bulk of the news would cover business ("since whites only care about making money"); the sports section would feature "awkward and out-of-shape white athletes"; and the lifestyle section would profile a Yuppie couple who cite their collection of Motown albums as proof that they are not racist.

In contrast to the city's major news outlets, 47 percent of stories from Roxbury and Mattapan in the black media reflected Boston blacks' desire for educational achievement, a drive to improve living conditions and a striving for greater business and professional accomplishments, the study noted.

The study is highlighted by a list of 36 stories from Roxbury and Mattapan that were ignored by the major news outlets but covered by the black-owned outlets.

Those stories include coverage of the first native black Bostonian to enter the Roman Catholic priesthood; the heart-attack death of an all-scholastic black athletic star; and a demonstration by Columbia Point tenants opposing a tax change that would have impeded development at Columbia Point.

The list also includes a number of "soft news" stories, such as a black sorority's volunteer work at a womens' shelter; a clothing give-away at Roxbury Multi-Service Center; and the designation by Black Enterprise magazine of Boston's minority-owned Bank of Commerce as the nation's bank of the year.

"Those kinds of stories - which the major news outlets do report from the white community - reflect a range of black activities, aspirations and values which are ignored when only crimes and accidents are covered," said Johnson, a research associate at the Trotter Institute and also an associate editor of East West Journal.

Deploring what he called the disproportionate coverage of crime in Roxbury and Mattapan, Johnson cited a quote from Rev. Vincent Dailey in the Bay State Banner that: "We are tired of having our community slandered in the media for the criminal action of less than 1 percent of our residents."

In conducting the study, Johnson analyzed 3,215 stories. Ninety percent of those stories appeared in Boston's major white-owned news outlets - the Globe, Herald, WCVB-TV, WBZ-TV, WGBH-TV and WBCN-FM. The other 10 percent appeared in outlets serving the black community - the Bay State Banner, Greater Boston News, Roxbury Community News and station WILD.

Calling on the city's dominant news media to increase hiring of minorities and their promotion to news executive positions, Johnson said yesterday that the problem of fair coverage is difficult because overt, violent racism in Boston has been replaced by a more subtle type.

"There is some feeling in the media that racism isn't happening anymore. That's dangerous, especially when a more subtle form of racism still pervades news coverage," he said.

Johnson also called on the city's major news organizations to institute special racial awareness training programs - and to solicit critiques of their coverage from minority communities.

Citing the negative impact on both black youth, whose self-esteem he said is diminished by uneven coverage, and on the white community, whose racist stereotypes are reinforced by unfair coverage, Johnson called on Boston's white news executives to become aware of their own "fear, distrust and anger" that prompts their "misrepresentation" of the black community.

Alan Eisner, managing editor of the Boston Herald, last night rebutted the thrust of the report, citing his paper's strong support of the Drop-A-Dime program in Roxbury.

"When we became aware of the program, we sought out its leader, Georgette Watson, and displayed it prominently in the paper. It's important to the community because police reports say that a major portion of drug-related crimes occur in the city's black areas," Eisner said.

Thomas F. Mulvoy Jr., The Boston Globe's managing editor, said: "From what I've been told about his work, Mr. Johnson certainly raises an issue that warrants a great deal of study and attention, but until the editors here have a chance to read the report, I think we'd like to reserve comment."

News executives at the television stations cited in the report declined to respond to the study without having read it.

Boston Globe
3/18/87

Fan Piers tests city's planning process

by M.E. Malone
Globe Staff
and Carol Beggy
Contributing Reporter

Jutting from the southern shore of Boston's inner harbor is one of the largest underdeveloped tracts of land in the city. It is practically bare, save for a busy restaurant and a daytime population of commuters' cars.

This week is expected to bring a new twist to the public approval process that stands between the vacant wharves and the landowners' vision of a bustling, billion-dollar community of hotels, condominiums, offices and public attractions.

The developers of the proposed Fan Pier-Pier 4 projects, collectively known as

the Fan Piers, are scheduled to submit to the Boston Redevelopment Authority early this week a massive application document asking the city to give the 30 acres of land along Northern Avenue a special zoning designation known as a Planned Development Area, or PDA. The matter will be discussed at a community meeting Thursday night in anticipation of a BRA public hearing on March 24.

The challenge from the community's point of view is to ensure that South Boston residents do not get dealt out of the planning process, though not all who are active in the project's planning agree on the method.

"What people are looking for is safeguards," said Lawrence Dwyer, a city employee appointed by Mayor Flynn to chair

a South Boston Community Advisory Committee, which has been involved in reviewing proposals by Boston Mariner Co. and HBC Associates.

Boston Mariner and HBC are working on the projects: one on Pier 4, owned by restaurateur Anthony Athanas, and the other on the Fan Pier.

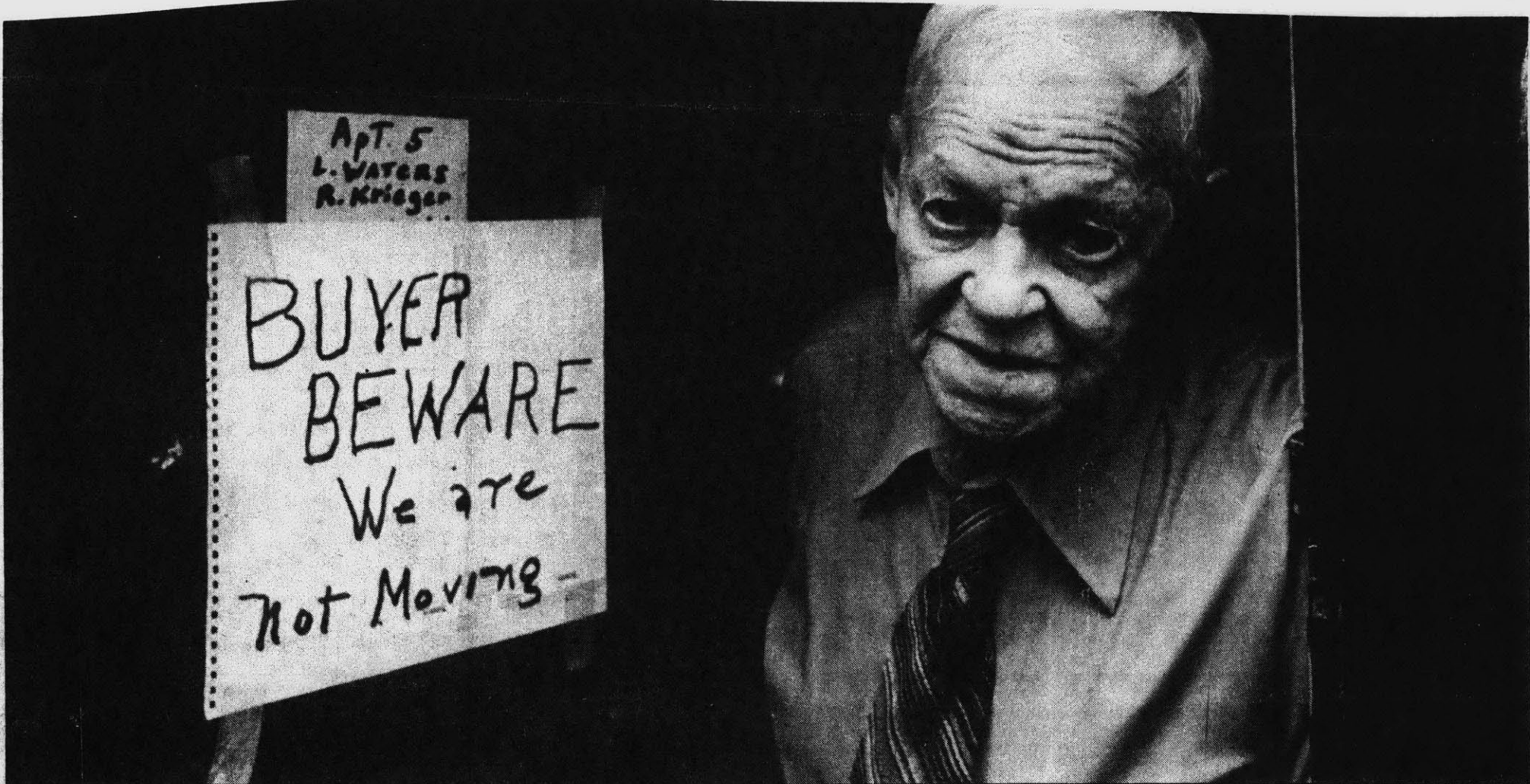
To gain the advisory committee's support for the proposed PDA, Dwyer said, the application will have to include provisions for a long-term review process and a mechanism to resolve outstanding issues in a public manner.

In general, PDA designation locks in height restrictions, density and usage, but does not address design considerations and other community concerns such as housing and transportation.

For the Fan Piers PDA application, at the community's behest, the BRA has required that the developers also submit plans to address traffic congestion during and after construction, infrastructure demands such as sewage and utilities, design considerations, and outline the public benefits of the project.

Dwyer said the consensus of the advisory committee is that the developers should be forced to include guidelines in their application on areas that most directly affect residents, but it is too early to "nail down specifics. . . . We want increased degrees of specificity as we move along the process," he said.

Daniel Yotts, another advisory committee member, said he is skeptical. FAN PIERS, Page 40



Globe staff photo/David L. Ryan

Lawton Waters, 79, the last tenant left in his South End building, says he has received harassing telephone calls. A sign he has posted on his door has been torn

down repeatedly, he says. "Of course they don't want me here," Waters says. "They could take this apartment, switch it over and get a lot more money."

Surging condo market creating class of nomads

By Bella English
Globe Staff

Diane Esdale got her notice two weeks before Christmas. She, her husband and two small children must be out of their Dorchester apartment by next December or face eviction. The building is being converted to a condominium. "We're all working class or elderly here," she said. "Everyone's real upset."

Grant Young, 31, considers himself lucky to have found a studio apartment in Brighton that is twice the rent of the one-bedroom he had that recently went condo.

Anita Bromberg borrowed money and sank her retirement savings into buying — reluctantly — the Brighton apartment she had lived in for 27 years. "I can't afford it, and I don't feel good about it," she

said. "I used the money I had hoped to live on for the rest of my life. But I had no choice. Where else could I go?"

They call themselves "urban nomads," and the stories they tell involve absentee investors, skyrocketing prices, decimated neighborhoods and a desperate search for an ever-shrinking commodity: affordable housing in Boston.

Since condominium conversion began

in Boston in 1969, some 25,000 rental units have been converted — 9,000 in the past two years alone. The House last week approved a city petition that would give Boston the authority to regulate condo conversion. The bill goes to the Senate this week.

Last July, the Supreme Judicial Court struck down a city law that required de-

HOUSING, Page 40

Surging condo market in Boston creating class of urban nomads

■ HOUSING

Continued from Page 29

velopers to obtain a permit before converting rental housing to condominiums. The Greater Boston Real Estate Board had challenged the law.

In the six months before the law was overturned, 1,600 units were converted to condos; in the six months after, 2,900 apartments were converted.

The human fallout has been considerable. Tenants and housing advocates tell of harassment by landlords, of renters who have ended up on the streets or in shelters, of elderly people who live in terror of an eviction notice.

"This red-hot market has got to be cooled down, or there's going to be a disaster," said state Sen. Michael Barrett (Cambridge-Watertown). "We're really seeing people in a terrible, terrible bind."

Barrett, during his door-to-door election campaign last summer, got a crash course in condo conversions, particularly in Allston-Brighton, whose housing stock went from 2 percent conversions in 1980 to 26 percent in 1986.

"I went to an entire block of Commonwealth Avenue that was supposed to be filled with people, according to a recent voting list, only to find the buildings completely empty," he recalled. "These huge apartment buildings, four or five stories, were empty from top to bottom. It was the urban equivalent of a ghost town."

Barrett discovered that the buildings had been purchased and were being converted to condominiums. He was even more upset by what he found in occupied buildings. Instead of hearing tales of street crime, he heard fears of conversion.

"I met a couple of people who had been mugged, but a dozen more who had just lost their homes," he said. "I met elderly people who were terrified that a knock on the door was to give them their eviction notice. To the tenants, it's a matter of sheer, stark terror."

Gabriella Halmi knows well the fear of eviction, having lived with it for 2 1/2 years. Shortly after her landlord announced that her building on Park Drive in the Fen-

were cut off.

Locks on the outside doors were removed, fire alarms and intercom systems were pulled out, and repairs stopped. Several fires were started in the basement by people who were living there illegally, hired by the new landlord to "work" on the building, Halmi said.

By the time tenants took the landlord to housing court, there were 125 code violations on the building. A decision is pending on whether the building was illegally converted, without prior notice of the sale or without giving tenants first right of purchase.

Meanwhile, Halmi, 29, who works for a nonprofit agency, feels she is on borrowed time. "I've looked everywhere, but a one-bedroom unit averages \$600 a month," she said. "I have no options."

Anita Bromberg did have an option, but it wasn't very palatable. Because she had lived there for nearly three decades, she felt she had to buy her apartment when it recently went condo. Of 15 units, she is the only insider to buy. Her friends have gone elsewhere - to Roslindale, Dorchester, farther out.

Bromberg's monthly payments doubled overnight, and she has sunk into debt and depleted her retirement savings. "No, I don't consider myself lucky at all," she said. "I look at it as one big nuisance. This apartment needs a lot of work, and I'll have to do all that. It might be worth something to someone else, but I'm not buying it as an investment. I'm buying it to live in the rest of my life."

The purchase has left her golden years in doubt. "It doesn't leave me with much," she said.

Those hurt the most by condo conversions are senior citizens, students, people with minimum-wage jobs and even professionals with moderate wages - people who have no margin in their rent budget.

"We're not talking about just very, very poor people," said Eddie Stiel, a tenant organizer for United South End Settlements. "We're talking about working people making \$10,000 to \$12,000 a year - like cab drivers and waitresses - who can't afford housing."

According to federal guidelines, 25 to 30 percent of a person's income should be used for rent. In Boston, most tenants are paying at least 40 percent, said Lew Finfer, director of the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance.

What happens to the casualties of conversion? They're moving farther and farther from the city, living with relatives, doubling up with friends, paying more for less space - or seeking refuge at shelters for the homeless.

"Young people are moving back in with their parents, and then there are those who go through the couch syndrome, moving around to friends' couches," Finfer said. "There are also people who have been condoed out of more than one place."

Randy Bailey, assistant director at the Pine Street Inn, said many of the elderly homeless at the shelter are victims of condominium conversion, particularly

of lodging houses. "They may have been living there for 20 years, and when they find themselves facing rents of \$500 a month, they can't afford it," he said. "They end up here and can't get out."

Conversions are also a main cause of homelessness for families. "If you're looking for low-income housing, you're looking for a needle in a haystack," said David Whitty, executive director of Shelter Inc.

There is some protection against eviction during conversion. Landlords must give between one and three years' notice, depending on a tenant's age and income level. Only the elderly and poor are protected from eviction if the owner wants to occupy the unit, but no one is protected from eviction in owner-occupied three-family buildings.

And when a building goes condo, tenants are to be given first purchase rights at "insider prices."

But tenant activists point out that the measures don't always work. "Ever, though there are some protections, what we see are landlords emptying out buildings and harassing people regardless," said Robert Van Meter, Boston organizer for the Massachusetts Tenants Organization.

"The elderly may not know their rights, or they may fight the battle, and eventually it wears on them, when their heat gets shut off, or they can't get hot water, or their apartment is entered by others," he said.

South End conversion

Lawton Waters, 79, is the only one of the former tenants remaining in a South End building at 34 East Newton St. that recently was

converted into a condominium. Because of his age, he was exempt from eviction, but his older friends fled because they didn't know their rights.

Waters, who recently suffered a stroke, said he has received harassing telephone calls in the middle of the night, and his heat had been withheld. He put up a sign on his door: "Buyer beware. We are not moving." It has been repeatedly torn down.

"Of course they don't want me here," Waters said. "They could take this apartment, switch it over and get a lot more money."

Nancy Grilk of the Allston-Brighton Housing Alliance believes that much of the damage to the housing market has already been done. "There's just been a staggering amount of conversions," she said. Laws must protect not only tenants, but affordable-housing stock, she believes.

Grilk, who was an aide to former state Rep. Thomas Gallagher, considers herself "traditional middle class." But there is no way, she says, that she could afford to move to a place in Boston these days should her Brighton rental go condo.

Housing activists decry the fact that many of the converted units are not going to owner-occupants but to absentee investors. According to a city study, 75 percent of the condo units sold between Jan. 1, 1984, and Aug. 20, 1985, were bought by investors who did not plan to live in them.

Evelyn Randall, 72, has been evicted three times, most recently in 1980. She looked for two years and finally got a spot in subsidized housing for the elderly. "I'm lucky to have it," Randall said, "but I'm so tired of being pushed out of my homes."

Fan Piers test planning process and clout of community groups

■ FAN PIERS

Continued from Page 29

"What is needed is time schedules and specific plans written into the PDA so they can be enforced. We need much of the traffic issues, community benefits and housing concerns written into the PDA so that it is formally addressed, not just some promises," Yotts said.

A draft of a public benefits package offered by the developers last week outlined a number of proposals for affordable housing, linkage payments, jobs and public amenities expected to be generated by the project.

The manner in which the public benefits package offered by the developers is guaranteed is one area of concern that illustrates the differing safeguards sought by the community.

Some, including Dwyer, want a specific accounting of the number and size of housing units to be reserved for low- and moderate-income residents within the project, but do not want the developers to dictate how the community can use the linkage funds they are given under the proposal.

Others, such as representatives of Massachusetts Fair Share, see a need for all the details, including the use of linkage funds,

to be agreed upon from the onset so that all members of the community, not just "insiders," will have input.

Impact on entire city

"Those folks who are included in the actual planning have a lot of say in what goes on, and others are viewed as being outsiders," said Janice Fine of Fair Share. "This project will have implications for people from all over the city. This will have an effect on everyone."

Dwyer says general, rather than specific, guarantees from the developer will allow the community to alter the plans as the project progresses and address community concerns as needs arise.

Portions of the developers' proposal have been reviewed by community groups at a number of resident meetings, but because the PDA application will be filed just one week before the BRA public hearing, several groups expressed concern that they will not have enough time to review all the information in next week's proposal.

Andrew Hamilton of the Conservation Law Foundation said one week is not enough time to study the final PDA proposal. "That's not much of a process," he said.

According to Fine, the limited amount of time to review the PDA application may also affect how many of the community's concerns are addressed. "Most of the people have no idea what they are really in for. Things are not guaranteed," she said.

Thousands of jobs predicted

In opposition to those who would like more time are the developers and union leaders who are concerned because the project is expected to generate thousands of jobs during construction and up to 10,000 when it is complete.

Yotts and others fear that the public discussion of plans for the Fan Piers will end if the BRA approves the proposed PDA at its March 24 public hearing. But Dwyer and BRA officials counter that the proposal still must go through more than a dozen reviews before other city, state and federal agencies throughout the planning and construction phases.

"We are dealing with a seven-year public process. The CAC [Community Advisory Committee] does not want a process that ends with the PDA application," Dwyer said. "The development is too extensive to be able to predict all of the significant factors in advance."

Flynn OK's sale of low-income housing units in Roxbury

By Joanne Ball
Globe Staff

After months of controversy, Mayor Flynn has approved the sale of the Westminster-Willard subsidized housing development in Roxbury. The decision gives the tenants and the Boston Redevelopment Authority broad powers to monitor management of the property.

Flynn's decision, made Sunday, was based on a recommendation from housing attorney Vincent P. McCarthy, whom the mayor appointed as a fact-finder in the \$5.5 million sale of the 276-unit development to Boston landlord Edmund Shamsi.

Westminster-Willard was built under a special urban renewal program offering tax breaks to the developers and requiring city approval of any transfer of the property.

McCarthy's report, which was due Monday, recommended six conditions on the sale to Shamsi, which were approved by BRA director Stephen Coyle.

These conditions, along with those approved by the BRA last December to correct code violations and improve the property, will become part of the terms of the transfer from the current owner, Alphonse Mourad, according to John Riordan, assistant director of the mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services.

Riordan said the transfer is expected to be completed in the next few weeks.

The mayor's decision, coming a year after Mourad and Shamsi entered into a purchase agreement, was controversial because some tenants feared Shamsi would convert the development into luxury housing. The develop-

ment is located near the intersection of Washington and Northampton streets.

Tenant leader Sandra Elam yesterday responded cautiously to the news of the sale.

"We just have to wait and see what happens. At least if Shamsi does anything bad, they'll [the city] be able to take him to court on their own."

A state Supreme Judicial Court decision last week on another housing matter forced the city to approve Shamsi as the owner, and approve him quickly, if the city wanted to place conditions on the sale, Riordan said.

The court ruled that if a property is in foreclosure or threatened with foreclosure, the city cannot hold up a sale, and if it tries, it risks losing the power to impose conditions.

Westminster-Willard, with 12 mortgages on the property, was threatened with foreclosure, according to McCarthy's report.

Under the agreement, tenants have the right to enforce conditions contained within the agreement as well as the approval power of a "tenant-management plan."

The agreement calls for continued, semi-annual monitoring by the BRA to determine that Shamsi is complying with all conditions set forth in the agreement.

In addition, Shamsi and his partners must personally guarantee any debt that arises from operating the property as a low-income development.

Appendix II
Video Script

- Mel King: Nowhere is the issue of the struggle for the land any greater than in the Roxbury, Dudley part of the City of Boston.
- Mauricio Gaston: There's going to be investment in Roxbury. The question is whether that investment can be controlled and transformed into development by community control.
- Narrator: Roxbury today is the result of 20 years of institutional neglect and disinvestment . Since the 1960's, arson and demolition destroyed 70% of its housing stock and left about 800 vacant lots ,the largest concentration of vacant land near downtown Boston. Incremental land abandonment, garbage accumulation and displacement in Roxbury, parallel to downtown growth hatch the neighborhood for reinvestment. Throughout this 20-years period the City of Boston became a major landowner in Roxbury: in the Dudley St/Blue Hill Av. area only the city holds around 40% of the vacant land. The Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) has designed an investment to develop the land this has raised great concern among the residents.
- Ken Wade: Two things about what the BRA is doing. On the one hand, they insist that they don't have a plan, but on the other we know that they have been working on a plan. The plan was leaked to the press back in early 1985. That plan called for \$750 million dollars worth of private investment in Roxbury. Essentially to get the private sector to build in Lower Roxbury office towers and a hotel.
- Mauricio Gaston: We have been suffering from disinvestment and now we're beginning to be threatened by reinvestment . For some people is seems like a reversible trend. In other words, we've been going through a drought for 40 years and they welcome any kind of rain that comes in. The problem is that is not drizzling, there's a flood situation at the moment in capital, and capital displacing or threatening to displace huge numbers oof people and destroy our community.
- Aaron(resident): No they can't do that. This is mine. I've been offered all kind of money. No, No.. I mean I'll die here.
- Julia Beato: Oh no... Eso es entonces uno estar arando las tierras, limpiando las tierras para que otro la disfrute. Pues yo no estoy de acuerdo con eso. Yo estoy de acuerdo que nosotros mismos tenemos que seguir luchando. Si aqui limpiamos aqui tenemos que quedarnos.
- Ken Wade: People are concerned that this development if not done properly will

cause massive displacement and gentrification of the Roxbury neighborhoods similar to what happened in the South End. And I think that people looked at the South End, looked at how low income folks, blacks, Latino people were displaced from the South End and recognize that's the potential that exists in Roxbury is development goes unchecked.

Narrator: Roxbury is a multi-ethnic and multi-racial community. Community character builds as Black Americans, Latinos, Cape Verdians, Haitians and White Americans decisively participate in the cultural and political life of the area. Most of the people who live in Roxbury have low and moderate incomes. Median household income as of 1980 was below \$ 5000 dollars. Almost one third of the families are below poverty level or have no worker in the household. Neither poverty nor social diversity has become an obstacle towards empowerment. Besides older organizations such as Alianza Hispana and the Cape Verdian Community Center, ongoing efforts to control land development have crystallized into new organizations. Dudley Street Initiative has been involved in neighborhood organizing and planning. The Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority is in the process of developing a comprehensive housing plan. Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation has begun to build affordable housing.

Nelson Merced: What Nuestra and Alianza and other organizations did together in this process was to then build the "community". But it was hard to do. It was not an easy thing to do because had not perceived the empty land as a resource, they just perceived as something that you could't do anything about. Alianza and Nuestra laid claim to that land, and said: but wait a minute, nobody wants to anything with this land, instead of an eyesoar this is a resource. And we proposed through the creation of Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation and through the process of creating community development to take that and build on it.

Melvin Colón: We believe that land should be used for housing, and that the housing that is built must be available to families that are in the low or moderate income range, or to families that are making between \$15 and \$30 thousands dollars(per year) and lower. The best way assure this is to give the land, or to dispose of the land and give priority to groups such as Nuestra that have the ability to develop the land and that won't take a profit. We've done ten houses, we've have done several rehab projects, and we have the staff and the capacity, and the experience to build on a much larger basis.

Mauricio Gaston: The vision and the scope of the efforts that are underway in Roxbury

are brilliant and the community has been very creative in generating very innovative approaches to organizing themselves; the Dudley Street Initiative, which combines organizing and planning for a more defined neighborhood, it's fairly creative and new model, and it's also interesting because it's a black, Hispanic and Cape Verdian Coalition.

Peter Medoff:

Our issue here is to create a plan, a comprehensive plan for the Dudley Street neighborhood working, hopefully with the city, but mainly with the residents and the agencies in the neighborhood to create a plan for how all the vacant land should be developed.

Mauricio Gaston:

The Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority... The concept of having a neighborhood authority originated here as far as I know and it's a model that can be projected to other communities in this area and nationally. And insisting in democratic popular control of the process of reinvestment and development.

Earl Coleman:

The more people learn about heir community, whether they have the time or not, the more empowerment they have.

Mauricio Gaston:

What the city is faced with is a community that is determined not to let itself get whipped off.

Georgette Watson:

How come we can't live in Roxbury? We were borned, and built and developed Roxbury can no longer live in Roxbury because we can even afford Roxbury!

Chuck Turner:

Development has meant removal of poor people. Not just removal of black people, not just removal of Hispanic people, but the removal of poor people. And so the question that's been raised by people in this community who were moved out of the West End, who were moved out of the South End, and who were moved out of other parts of the city, so the rich and the fluent could come back are saying: are we going to let the same thing happen in Roxbury...?

Narrator:

In 1985 the people of Roxbury created the Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority , GRNA, a broad coalition of community organizations, church groups, politicians, tenants and small landlords. Since then the GRNA has engaged in concrete actions to counterveil market forces and the BRA plans . For example, it helped to establish and "Eviction Free Zone" in some areas of Jamaica Plain and Roxbury and is organizing a network of tenants' organizations concerned with upgrading subsidized housing. The GRNA obtained major visibility in 1986 when it elected a representative committee, Interim -PAC, to mediate with the City and the BRA , over

the direct control over planning efforts and land disposal. Mayor Flynn, in a public community meeting, personally agreed to the proposed committee, but insisted that it should also include members appointed by the City. However, the agreement was short-lived.

Chuck Turner: Mayor Flynn came out to our community and said that as far as he was concerned, there was a deal that had been made. We called the city the next day and asked to have the document signed. The document was not signed. The mayor said six months later that he had been misunderstood.

Narrator: Soon after, members from the Interim PAC filed a suit against the BRA and the City of Boston. The final decision is still pending. In the meantime, the court has ordered to cease disposal of the land.

Joan Porter: They take everything they can throw bad at us, but do not want to give us anything that's good. How come they don't want to give us any piece of the pie of the \$750 million dollars?

Cesar Da Silva: We Cape Verdians are foreigners, like they imply, we like to make use of the land. I would like to see if the City could take that into consideration. Let us use the land because we need it.

Chuck Turner: The community has to rise up and show how determined it is to have control, and to show the Mayor that they are serious about power... And whether he wants to follow through or not the community is not going to allow him to back up. We are trying to do it through compromise and trying to do it through peaceful means, we are trying to hold back that despair and anger... But if we are not able to it, if the market forces are going to continue to operate, and the administration siding with them, then the Mayor will be faced with people who aren't compromising and will be ready to tear down the city.

Narrator: In light of the broken negotiations between the GRNA and the BRA, another vision for direct community control regained importance. In November, 1986 voters from Roxbury and the nearby areas voted in a non-binding referendum on whether the Greater Roxbury area should be incorporated as a separate municipality to be named Mandela. The battle over the proposal for Mandela City among other things focused on the struggle for control over turf -- the refusal of the black community to be displaced once more.

Julia Beato: Tenemos que seguir luchando en union todos, porque si no luchamos en union no hay fuerza...

Ken Wade: We are struggling pretty much on to fronts simultaneously. One is that we got to build a political base, consensus in the neighborhood, so we strength to influence the City. On the other side, we also got to elaborate a vision and begin working on elaborating our own plan as well... so are we not only struggling for control, but we are elaborating a positive program or a solution.

Narrator: In January 1987, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, a black, Cape Verdian and Latino neighborhood coalition also part of the GRNA, hired a Washington-based firm, DAC International, to design a neighborhood oriented plan for the Dudley area. This plan represents a concrete alternative to the BRA plan.

Steve Plummer: The BRA was essentially an intrusive plan. Regardless of intent it's a classic planner's approach. Planners tend to operate like any other technocrat in looking at a circumstance and deciding by their sets of rules how everybody should live their lives... And frequently is done by formula, and frequently is done with minimal consultation...

Chuck Turner: The City talks about how it's producing affordable housing. You see that's not a lie... But it's not housing, that's affordable for people in our community. And when we look at that we cannot allow an administration that does not even define affordability in relationship to the people of our community, to be making the decisions about how that land can and should be developed.

Steve Plemmer: Our view of planning is that the role of the people with technical skills should be to find out from people in the community how they want to leave their lives, and how they live them, and what changes can be achieved and then to try to make those things happen.

Narrator:

The plan for the Dudley neighborhood will include :

- Planning for the development of over 1,000 parcels of vacant land.
- Specific strategies for creating new affordable housing and maintaining and upgrading existing housing supply;
- Strategies for economic development, including job creation , local small business development, attraction of new business to the neighborhood and the creation of programs to offer job training to the residents.
- Strategies for improving social services in the area.

The plan will be designed under the supervision in the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative Board of Directors. Direct community participation is a top priority in the preparation, revision and execution of the plan.

- Ken Wade: It's about empowering people in the neighborhoods, so they could feel, that they, number one, create a vision, that they can do planning, that they don't have to have Masters and PhD's from Harvard and M.I.T.
- Steve Plummer: Our point of view, we don't want to feel like they have an active role. We want them to have an active role and to be the decision-makers...
- Manuel Gonçalves: The whole change is taking place. People live here, there' re vacant lots, dirtyness, everything here... I think one particular group of people probably won't do anything, but if different ethnic groups come together for the same reason is just great, and it works.
- Georgette Watson: We are a family in Roxbury. And in the words of Dr. King: How long will there be negative showing about Roxbury? Not long because we are building. How long will they show that we are divided? Not long, because we are not divided, we are standing. We must let it be known that we are not all drug users, that we are not all drug sellers, that we are trying to save our children, and that Roxbury is all not black. We must let that be known out there. If you are going to tell the story again tell the real story, so we can say: How long? Not long. How long? Not long. Because we are Roxbury and we can say to Dr. King: How long? Not long Dr. King because Roxbury will rise again and rise again strong.
- Narrator: Besides efforts to control development and land use, the community residents have been actively involved in improving the life conditions of the neighborhood. Residents have carried massive clean-ups of vacants lots, removing garbage and abandoned cars; drug-fighting campaigns have been launched, and people have come together as part of several multi-cultural festivals and activities.
- Resident: This is not a neighborhood to dump on, and we are not people to be dumped on either...
- Che Madyun: Everybody is really enthusiastic. I hope the City picks up on our enthusiasm and realize that no longer they just write us off the books, and that they know we are ready to work , and we're going make them give us our share... and give to us.