

# *North End Task Force* **REPORT**

*June 1988*

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## City of Middletown

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### REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MAYOR AND COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MIDDLETOWN

JUNE 6, 1988

#### NORTH END TASK FORCE

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NORTH END TASK FORCE

EXCERPT FROM RESIDENTS AND HOMEOWNERS PUBLIC HEARING

MARCH 3, 1988

Testimony of Felicity Markham:

W. Corvo: Any other questions? Thank you very much for your time. Earle Roberts - do you want to speak briefly Earle.

E. Roberts: Briefly - no. I am going to let someone speak ahead of me. I'll change positions with her, she's got two kids. She's here in the hallway.

W. Corvo: Come on in. We're firm believers in women and children first. Have a seat. What is your name for the record?

F. Markham: My name is Felicity Markham, I'm a current resident of 47 Ferry Street, Middletown. I empathize with the people on the extreme north end about being afraid to walk on the north end of Main. I really understand that. I used to live on Grove Street. I've listened tonight to people explain how the people who live on Rapallo, Green and Ferry are drunks and stuff like. I really resent that. I have thoughts and feelings - I'm a human being too. As a current resident, I can only mention what I'm aware of and since I try and keep my house very separate from what goes on in the street, I know very little. We have palmetto bugs in our building. Those are the large cockroaches that run one to three, one to four inches and they fly. I live on the third floor of a three story building, we have no working fire alarms on the inside stairwell. One bedroom in my apartment is about to fall in. We do not live here because we choose to. We live here because presently, we don't have options. Personally, I'd rather be working, but we don't have affordable day care and I don't see affordable housing. But, we are considered one of the lucky ones because we do have a roof over our heads. In the morning, when my son enters the backyard to pick up his friends for school, he has to be careful of the large Norway rats. The alcoholics urinate and exerbate in the yard, in the alley way and on the sidewalk and it doesn't seem to bother them about what time of day it is. I really object to that and they don't really care who is watching. In the front of my building are hypodermic needles, you've heard about those. As my 5 year old walks up to the corner - this is my 5 years, this is Robert - Robert, turn around and say hello - Robert: HI!

W. Corvo: Let the record show that Robert said hello.

F. Markham: As he walks up to the corner of Main and Ferry where he catches his bus in the morning to go to kindergarten, he can watch prostitutes and their customers having oral, vaginal and anal sex. He can also watch the TV, doing the same thing. As he waits for his bus in front of the book center and I use quotes loosely, he can watch sexual, deviates

and alcoholics and the druggies vomiting as he plays amongst broken glass. We are constantly assaulted by drug dealers selling their wares in the middle of the day. These drug dealers buy cars with cash. They have plenty of money. Usually, they also have women who are on welfare. I don't know, I'm trying to keep separate, I'm guessing on that one. But, I see the guys come in, buy a new car. I don't have that kind of money. You can listen to the boom boxes around 3:00 in the morning as the teenagers rode around in gangs. You can watch cars, that don't belong in our neighborhood, come by and throw garbage because its only Ferry Street and nobody gives a damn about Ferry, Green or Rapallo and, at night, there's shootings, stabbings, domestics and fires, as you know about 40 Ferry, who one of these days is going to be fixed up. During the Christmas season I had a Fed and a State cop at my door looking for one of my neighbors. Something about drugs, I have no idea and I'm not going to get into that one at all. I'm aware that the police force is trying. I watch the police come in, they make a bust, the next day - the dealers are back out on the street. He is on the side of the street in Marino's parking lot, they are standing there, they are selling drugs - it is open season. Anything you want - you want coke, PCP, acid, angel dust, heroine, crack, you can get it. It's very simple. It's like a drive up window in a bank. You drive up, you deposit your cash to the dealer, and the dealer hands you whatever you want. And, I'm sick of it! Five or ten years ago, maybe something could be done about Ferry Street - 5 or 10 years ago - who cared. I didn't - I'll be honest, I didn't care about Ferry Street. Constant police patrols help. But the MPD can only do so much. I don't know how much more they can do. To my way of thinking, you have three options: you can expel all the dealers from town - I think that has something to do with the rights bill; you can turn the North End into a police state, kind of like East Berlin; or, since Ferry Street has become a cancer in Middletown and every resident in the City should be ashamed for allowing a beautiful neighborhood to become such a lousy neighborhood; you could 3), well you could level it and make it a parking lot and that would solve all your problems, but then I wouldn't have a place to live. Because I don't want to take up a lot of your time, I invite any or all of you the first weekend of August of 1988 to my home at 47 Ferry Street, 3rd floor, the 4th, the 5th, the 6th or the 7th, right after all the welfare people get their first checks of the month in the heat of the summer to listen to Ferry Street between 9:00 p.m. and 1:00 a.m. so you have an idea what the North End is like. I do not exaggerate on the needles. I do not exaggerate on the heroine. Thank you.

W. Corvo: Thank you very much.

W. Stohrer-Hoyt: You mentioned that you lived there not by choice, but you had no other options. Can you explain? What options have you explored? What options do you feel should be there? Why not public housing?

F. Markham: I'm on Section 8 presently. The options that I explored presently are different towns.

W. Stohrer-Hoyt: So you're saying there aren't other housing units available in town for you.

F. Markham: Not at this time. Unless of course, if I wanted to move to the Village, which is, you know, they just torched the command post....

C. Marselli: Have you complained to the landlord about the rats and the cockroaches?

F. Markham: Yes, I did complain about the roaches and I am one of 5, 6 people that live in the building and they have constantly complained and, yes, we do have spraying now.

C. Marselli: Thank you.

F. Markham: I don't know about the rats. Because 40 is shut down, they kind of come across the street to visit.

W. Corvo: Any other questions? Thank you for your very coordinated comments.

C. Marselli: Good night Robert.

Robert: Good night.

.....

On December 7, 1987, the Common Council of the City of Middletown passed a resolution creating a North End Task Force to: "Review the current situation in the North End of Middletown and to report back to the Common Council with recommendations on or before the Common Council meeting of May 2, 1988."

Beginning December 15, 1987, the nine members of the North End Task Force (NETF) met and began planning and defining the scope of the study which they were assigned by the Mayor and Council and deliberated the methodology to be used in acquiring data and testimony so that the findings and recommendations would have a factual basis and not rely on inaccurate assumptions, opinion testimony or hearsay.

#### METHODOLOGY

The NETF made a preliminary determination that the scope of the study would be very broad. It was the intention of Committee members to include all aspects of municipal, non-profit agency and private services in their accumulation of data. In addition, the Committee was separated into four Subcommittees for preliminary data accumulation. This Subcommittee assignment was not mandated by the Mayor or Council, but was used as a tool to attempt to complete the work in a timely fashion since the time constraints imposed by the Council in their resolution were less than six months.

The methodology which eventually developed and was used by the NETF is as follows:

- A. Accumulate as much data as possible from as many sources as possible comparing the North End Target Area to the rest of the community. This would give the NETF a "database" from which it would be able to draw analysis and conclusions and would provide the Mayor and Council with much needed hard information based on existing facts and data and not on assumptions or opinion.
  
- B. Hold public hearings to have a maximum input from the community, but hold the hearings in such a way as to avoid the confrontations which had occurred at several "public hearings" sponsored by the City and various and sundry agencies over the previous years. To that end, a deliberate separation of groups was evolved calling for members of: the Business Community to appear at the invitation of the NETF (February 11, 1988); followed by, a public hearing for Social Service Agencies (February 25, 1988); then, by a public hearing for Residents and Property Owners (March 3, 1988).

All three public hearings were well attended and a good part of the NETF report is made up of the transcripts of the hearings. In addition, a decision was made by the NETF to send individual letters to all directors of departments of the City of Middletown and to Connecticut Valley Hospital to help provide the Committee with more data and background material. Letters with specific questions relative to the North End Target Area were sent to directors (Section V - Supporting Documents) which were responded to by all City personnel in an exceptional and exemplary manner.

As a follow-up to the information and reports received from the departments, the NETF took the time to interview all department

heads or other personnel relative to topics raised in the reports or questions and concerns raised by citizens at the three public hearings outlined above (Section V - Supporting Documents)

A special meeting was held at the St. Vincent DePaul Soup Kitchen with Sister Patricia McKeon and members of her staff (March 24, 1988). The purpose for holding this meeting separate and apart from the Social Service meeting (February 25, 1988) was to allow the St. Vincent DePaul Place discussion to take place without any form of adversary proceeding. The importance of having the time to discuss difficult topics in a controlled environment (although the Press was present for the entire meeting) was seen as the best way to establish a clear record for the Mayor and Council to examine.

A number of invitations were extended to the Community Health Center and to Nehemiah Corporation, both active in the North End Target Area and both recipients of City and State financial assistance. No personal appearances were made by anyone from either non-profit company. Eventually, a letter was sent to all members of the Task Force by Mark Masselli, Executive Director of the Community Health Center and President of Nehemiah, outlining in a general manner the philosophical attitude of both agencies towards the North End. The NETF members never had an opportunity to ask questions relative to either agency's function or purpose or the long range goals.

- C. Once the data from all departments and agencies was submitted, interviews with directors completed and public testimony taken, the Committee began the process of deliberating the various topics and

issues which had developed. The NETF held several meetings open to the public where no votes were taken, but recommendations to all City departments were discussed and a range of topics were analyzed. The specific recommendations, included in this report, are derived directly from those discussions which were tape recorded, but not transcribed.

### HISTORY OF THE AREA

The problems which brought about the creation of the North End Task Force by the Mayor and the Council in December of 1987 were problems which have always been with our community in one form or another.

The catalyst, in this particular case, happened to be the obvious and apparent convergence in one geographical area of the community (the North End Target Area) of a multitude of serious problems, with no adequate municipal preparation to confront them.

What has happened to the North End is not unique to our City. It is a problem that has touched most cities and middle-sized towns in the land. In the 1950's and 1960's, the Federal Government sought to resolve such problems through multi-million dollar Urban Renewal Programs.

Locally, our municipality utilized the Federal Urban Renewal Program to save the South End of the town from the same blight and neglect which has caused the decay of structures, infrastructures and quality of life in the North End.

Urban Renewal Programs and funding for housing were phased out in the early 1970's and replaced by selective programs and Section 8 Housing Assistance.

The Section 8 Housing Program was calculated to initiate the scatteration of lower income families and eliminate neighborhood racial discrimination through the granting of Federal rent subsidies.

Our City addressed the problems of the South End and the black and poor ghetto which had been created there through the planned elimination of substandard housing. However, it failed to replace (in violation of HUD policies) the number of apartments that had been eliminated by the Metro-South Urban Renewal Project that was eventually put in place.

Many of the residents of South Street, Sumner Street and East Main Street found accommodations at the North End which, at that time, was being abandoned by second and third generation Italo-American families in favor of new, suburban homes in Westfield and South Farms.

A new influx of black families from the south and Hispanics from Puerto Rico and Latin America placed new demands on available low cost housing. In addition, the dynamics of social change created pressures through the release of institutionalized citizens who suddenly became the problem of local officials, social and public service organizations. Were this not enough, typical alcohol and drug problems of a community the size of Middletown, have finally created an acute crisis situation.

The complete absence of a Federal housing program, for the past twelve years, has finally come to be felt at every level of American life - Middletown is no exception. The recent modifications in Federal Tax Law (1986 Tax Reform Act) have also robbed the private sector of any indirect (i.e. tax) subsidies to meet the housing crunch at the lowest economic levels in our community. The failure of surrounding communities

(Middlesex County) to even begin to address their own social and housing problems in a responsible manner has placed a burden on the City of Middletown and its taxpayers, disproportionate to any form of Federal or State assistance (in lieu of grants and tax payments) which it receives. Nonetheless, Middletown, as a major urban center in the central-southern part of the State of Connecticut, must prepare to address the problems of affordable housing in an organized and cohesive manner. At present, the only alternative available to Middletown is to utilize the Housing Authority and Redevelopment Agency as tools to confront the housing and urban blight problems. Aggressive establishment of a long term revitalization program for the North End is a first step to resolve part of the problem. A coordinated effort to obtain as much money from the State of Connecticut, through lobbying efforts with local and area State Representatives and Senators, to achieve the multiple goals laid out by the NETF in its recommendations is an absolute must if this program is to succeed.

## FINDINGS

The North End Task Force Committee, through its requests for information from City departments, local businesses, social service agencies and the citizenry, was able to identify the serious problems which are inherent in the North End.

Most of the problems were identified for us by City Departments. Specifically, reports from the Fire, Health, Public Works, Police and Welfare Departments, with accompanying statistics, give an impartial, factual assessment of the harsh reality existing in the North End Target Area (Section V of the Supporting Documents).

The standard, set out in the "Declaration of Public Policy" for consideration of an area or zone of a community to be included in a Redevelopment project, is defined as being one where the existence of: "substandard, unsanitary, deteriorated, deteriorating, slum or blighted areas which constitute a serious and growing menace, injurious and inimical to the public health, safety, morals and welfare of the residents" can be found (Chapter 130, Section 8-124).

Using the standard defined by the State of Connecticut and comparing it to the testimony and data received from all parties, a strong case for implementation of the assistance contemplated by Chapter 130 of the Connecticut General Statutes, "Redevelopment" could be made.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

In a February 5, 1988 communication from the Chief of Middletown's Fire Department George Dunn, it was clearly stated that:

"...the area contains mostly older buildings and has been a transitional zone for many years. In this transition, many occupancy changes and structural modifications have been made without regard for fire or building code requirements; therefore, the groundwork has been established for a fire or structural disaster." (emphasis added)

Obsolete building methods and lack of zoning regulations which allowed high density, highly combustible construction has established the distinct potential for a conflagration in much of the area being considered."

In a March 9, 1988 communication from Police Chief George Aylward to the North End Task Force, a memorandum prepared by Lieutenant Ron Lee giving an indepth analysis of the complaints received by the Police Department from February 1, 1987 through January 31, 1988 for the entire community with the North End Target Area extrapolated, was included.

The data in Lieutenant Lee's memorandum is silent testimony which speaks volumes about the real conditions of public safety in the North End Target Area. Granting that the North End Target Area contains some of the most densely populated streets in the community, the proportion of police response required by the North End Target Area is disproportionate to the geographic size. According to Lieutenant Lee's data, approximately 12.4% of the police activity in Middletown is centered in a four block area of Middletown. While the bulk of the police activity in the North End (31.79%) is related directly to special property checks, service calls and other complaints, the most specific problems of the North End deal with:

intoxicated persons - 9.08%; larceny - 6.64%; trespass - 6.54%; fights - 6.36%; and, sick/injured persons - 5.7%. All of the specific police complaints mentioned above (approximately 34%) deal with problems related directly or indirectly to alcohol and drug abuse. It may be concluded, statistically at least, that when 12.4% of the Police Department's time is spent in an area which is approximately 1.6% of the geographic area of the community, there is something wrong with that area.

The testimony supplied to the Committée by members of the public at the business, residents and social service public hearings buttressed Lieutenant Lee's memorandum.

Specific testimony relative to the public safety issue was provided to the Committee on a variety of topics. In the Business Hearing, the Committee received testimony relative to trespassing problems (see P. Keithan, Section IV - pages 1-6); vandalism and drugs (see Rosemary Wilkos' testimony - Business Hearing - page 10 and Larry Mancarella's testimony - page 11); drug sales (see Don Miner's testimony - page 15); intoxication (see Santo Vinci's testimony - page 21); indecent exposure (see Joe Lombardo's testimony - page 26 and 27); and, weapons (see Paul Fazzino's testimony - page 36).

In addition to specific criminal problems, some of the residents and businessmen in the area made comments relative to the fact that the existing Police Department methods were inadequate to meet the challenge of the North End Target Area (see Jeffrey Fine's comments - Business Hearing - pages 29 through 32 and John Kapalewski's comments - pages 33 through 35).

The social service providers in the community were also concerned with the apparent lack of safety in the North End Target Area (see Social Service Agencies Public Hearing - testimony of Janine Fay, Visiting Nurses Association - page 7 and 8):

"There have been incidents of a lot of drug interaction. One recent incident, I heard of gunshots, that was through my nurses' experience...through people that we visit. But certainly, the nurses hear the concerns of those people and the idea that to call the police and tell on somebody else is a real risky thing to do."

Additional testimony relative to the real problems of living in the North End, especially for young mothers with small children was given to the North End Task Force by two young women who appeared at the Social Service Public Hearing, but were allowed to testify. One young woman came to testify specifically about a problem he was having in her apartment on Green Street (see Social Service Public Hearing - C. Goodwin's testimony - page 19):

"....and, I think the issue that is a big issue - right now, we have a man running around our building at 1:30, 2:30, 3:30 at night trying to break into our apartments. So, the safety in the North End is pretty scary because I live alone with a baby and that's scary."

Testimony relative to victimization of the inhabitants of the North End was given to the North End Task Force members by Sister Patricia McKeon at a special meeting held at the St. Vincent DePaul Place (see Sister Pat's testimony - page 9 and 11):

"There was--the police did arrest one fellow who supposedly is the one that beat John Higgins with a baseball bat for 60¢ or something and he had been robbed repeatedly." (Sister Pat - page 11)

Sister Pat: "Well two things, number one - the victimization was nowhere to the extent that it is now, when more people lived here as a neighborhood - no. That was not as great - it's increasing as the neighborhood characteristic goes down. Number two, we would be very happy to have people have homes out in Westfield, any place, Ridge Road - but I don't think that's really too possible." (Sister Pat - Page 12).

She also testified as to the effect of drugs in the North End.

W. Corvo: "...is it possible that the drugs and the other things that are up here are scaring people the hell out?"

Sister Pat: "Well, I think the drugs do - yeah." (page 17)

Members of the staff of the Soup Kitchen also testified as to the effects of area landlords allegedly engaging in questionable acts:

T. Carbone: "It's also a power, when you rent to low income who are uneducated people and, next door, that man plays power trips - he walked around here when first that.....with two fellows on either side of him - muscle around people - threatening people. He threatened someone with a gun."

W. Guilmartin: "Is this the owner or the manager?"

Sister Pat: "He's now the owner."

T. Carbone: "He's part owner."

C. Wilcox: "Tony Galazan?"

W. Corvo: "Threatened somebody with a gun???"

T. Carbone: "Yeah - it was a police incident and he threatened someone with a gun, walked around with two body builders, walking around - and he asked people over there, who can be easily intimidated and he certainly flexed his fat muscle. So, I think it's an abusive situation. He feels he has power and he's extending that to whoever he can."

(Sister Pat - page 19)

Residents of the North End, particularly Ferry and Green Streets were equally open in their testimony about criminal activity in their neighborhoods. Drug and weapon sales were openly discussed by many of the residents (see L. Santiago's testimony - page 37 and A. Gomez's - page 58) as were problems of trespassing and disorderly conduct (M. Poliner's testimony - page 49 and H. McInvale's testimony - page 48). The single most graphic commentary offered by any of the witnesses in all of the testimony taken was presented to the North End Task Force by a young woman who attended the meeting with here two small children. Her brief presentation covered all of the present problems of living in substandard conditions in the North End (see F. Markham's testimony - pages 45 and 46).

It may be logically concluded by the North End Task Force that insofar as public safety matters are concerned in the North End Target Area, the expenditure of public funds for the preservation of public safety, crime prevention correction, prosecution, punishment and the maintenance of

adequate police, fire and accident protection, is disproportionate when compared with the rest of the community. It may also be concluded by the North End Task Force that the problems of the North End Target Area are beyond remedy and control solely by regulatory process in the exercise of the police power and cannot be dealt with effectively by the ordinary operations of private enterprise or the local government without some extraordinary measures being taken.

### HEALTH

In a response to the North End Task Force request for information, Health Department Director Leon Vinci delivered an extremely comprehensive analysis of the situation in the North End Target Area (see Section V - Supporting Documents) in a report dated February 10, 1988. The key areas of concern outlined in L. Vinci's report dealt with two elements: first, the physical conditions in the North End; and, second, the health indicators and vital statistics which key in to the quality of health of the people in the Target Area.

The age of the buildings and supporting services were of primary concern:

"The structures in this area are generally older than other commercial buildings in the City....Special surveys for lead paint and asbestos problems are required.

Abandoned properties, vacant lots and poor garbage control are present throughout the study area....Infestations exist, including cockroaches, silverfish, rats and others.....The public water and sewer lines are very old. The combined systems impact our river's quality."

As important as the comments relative to physical conditions were Mr. Vinci's statistics relative to health conditions of the people:

"Several factors and/or risks pertaining to the general health exist in this region. The socio-economic conditions, along with deinstitutionalization, contribute to health related problems.....Health indicators.....suggest public health needs/concerns. There are known mental health, drug, alcohol, homeless, elderly and lower socio-economic populations in this area....Public health statistics show increased tuberculosis as well as other communicable and chronic diseases for this area.

Health service delivery in this area has been dramatically impacted: high incidence of ambulance and paramedic response, as well as health, housing, police and fire department calls."

As an indication of how heavily the health support systems of the City of Middletown are impacted specifically by the North End, Mr. Vinci was able to compile data from support services and agencies that deal with the community. Data included such information as:

- . 18% of the clients to the Greater Middletown Counseling Center come from the North End Target Area (see The Connection, Inc. - Section V - Supporting Documents - March 28, 1988).
- . 50% of the paramedic calls to the North End are not needed (Emergency Room Services at Middlesex Hospital - Section V - Supporting Documents).

- . Of the 1,473 detoxification admissions to the Rushford Center, Inc., 60% or 884 of all admissions were comprised of residents from the North End Target Area (see Rushford Center, Inc. letter of March 29, 1988 - Section V - Supporting Documents).
- . Of the 888 ambulance calls logged for the North End Target Area, 666 were alcohol related and 12 were drug related - 76.35% (Professional Ambulance Service of Middlesex, Inc. - March 12, 1988).
- . While 12.2% of the population admitted to Connecticut Valley Hospital was from Middletown, 66.3% of the outpatient appointments (5,752 of the total 8,677 appointments made for 1987) were allegedly made by Middletown residents, while only 2,925 of the outpatient appointments at Connecticut Valley Hospital were made by people from outside of Middletown (see table 12 - page 10 - letter from Mr. Carl Cappello, M.P.H. - Addendum documents).

Needless to say, the statistics assembled from the various sources indicated a clearly disproportionate situation in the North End Target Area when compared to the rest of the community.

Testimony received from the public, at its various public hearings, buttresses Mr. Vinci's conclusions and analysis. The testimony is replete with references to deteriorating sanitation conditions (see R. Wilkos - Business Hearing - pages 8 and 9; L. Mancarella - Business Hearing - page 11; S. Vinci - Business Hearing - page 18; J. Kapalewski - Business Hearing - page 34; Sister Pat - page 21; F. Lentini - Residents Public Hearing - page 8; B. Dennis - Residents Public Hearing - page 13; Jean Lombardo - Residents Public Hearing - pages 23 and 24; L. Cavanaugh -

Residents Public Hearing - page 26; P. Fazzino - Residents Public Hearing - page 35; L. Santiago - Residents Public Hearing - page 38; T. Tine - Residents Public Hearing - pages 41 and 42; F. Markham - Residents Public Hearing - pages 45 and 46; and, B. Connelly - Residents Public Hearing - pages 53 and 54).

The North End Task Force can conclude from the evidence, documents and testimony presented that substandard, unsanitary, deteriorating conditions inimical to the public health exist in the Target Area and that the City of Middletown must take special action to remedy these conditions.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE

Both the Water & Sewer Department of the City and Public Works Department were helpful in identifying problem areas of the North End. The age of the buildings and support infrastructure hamper future development possibilities and serve to create many of the present problems. Since both reports are brief and to the point, they need not be expanded upon as part of the Committee's findings, rather it would be best to adopt the reports in the simple form that they were submitted. The North End Task Force acknowledges that the reports submitted by Mr. William Baron, from Water & Sewer and Mr. Salvatore Fazzino adequately convey the needs for substantial activity beyond the normal scope of City activity in the North End Target Area (see Mr. Fazzino's letter of March 25, 1988 and Mr. Baron's letter of February 26, 1988 - Supporting Documents - Section V).

## R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

The North End Task Force recommendations to the Mayor and Common Council of the City of Middletown are divided into two sections. The first section (Part I) deals with overall recommendations for the infrastructure improvements in the North End Target Area with specific recommendations for individual blocks, areas and buildings.

The second section (Part II) is made up of specific recommendations which the North End Task Force has discussed and analyzed on a department by department basis for all City departments.

### PART I

It is the recommendation of the North End Task Force that the City of Middletown implement the following plan of action for the North End Target Area as defined on a map submitted as part of the Support Documents delivered to the Mayor and Common Council on May 2, 1988:

- A. That the Mayor and Common Council of the City of Middletown authorize the Public Works Department, Water & Sewer Department, Health Department, Fire Department, Police Department, Park & Recreation Department and Parking Authority of the City of Middletown to assemble all necessary and proper information and data relative to the North End Target Area which information shall be turned over to the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Middletown for the eventual implementation of a proposed Redevelopment of the North End Target Area; and

B. That the Municipal Development Office of the City of Middletown assisted by all necessary and proper City departments, agencies and commissions be authorized to draft an appropriate "request for proposal" for a consulting engineering firm which will implement an engineering study which will include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Analysis of the existing infrastructure of the North End Target Area, including but not limited to street scape, traffic flow and pattern, water and sewer conditions, sanitary access, fire access;
2. Analysis of current parking availability and development of a proposed new parking area in the North End Target Area, specifically behind the buildings located on the east side of Main Street from Washington Street, north to Rapallo Avenue;
3. Analysis of cost estimates for the acquisition and demolition of structures for the parking and service access proposed to be created in the area located behind buildings on the east side of Main Street, between Washington Street and Rapallo Avenue;
4. Analysis of undergrounding of electric, cable television and telephone wires throughout the North End Target Area and the cost related thereto;
5. Analysis of acquisition of existing buildings which are in an abandoned, blighted condition throughout the North End Target Area;

6. Analysis of the future development of the park area located off of Miller Street for possible development as a boat launch area;
7. Analysis of the construction of an alternative access route to the Miller and Bridge Street area;
8. Analysis of the possible future uses for the dump site located in the extreme north end of the North End Target Area;

and, further, that:

- C. All departments of the City of Middletown be authorized to assist the consulting engineer in drafting a proposed Redevelopment Analysis for the North End Target Area, specifically:
  1. Health Department to be authorized to conduct an inventory of all North End buildings to assist in the determination of blight and vermin infestation;
  2. Fire Department be authorized to assist the consulting engineer in determining the necessary safety requirements for establishing fire access safety lanes behind the buildings located on Main Street on the east side and throughout the North End Target Area;
  3. Police Department be authorized to assist in drafting specific safety requirements for patrol and security lighting purposes;
  4. Public Works be authorized to assist the consulting engineer in reviewing all street, sidewalk and basic infrastructure requirements;

5. Water & Sewer Department be authorized to assist in determining all related requirements and standards for the North End Target Area;
6. Parking Authority assist in developing a parking scheme, including the area located behind the buildings on the east side of Main Street from Washington Street, north to Rapallo Avenue;

and, further, that:

D. The City of Middletown examine the acquisition of the building known as the Arriwani Hotel, located on the west side of Main Street at Liberty Street and, specifically:

1. That a study be made of the population (tenants) of the Arriwani in order to ascertain if they might not best be located elsewhere;
2. That a study be made of the best use of the building, said study to include an analysis of its present use and degree of negative impact on the neighborhood;
3. That any present resident of the Arriwani and all other buildings located in the North End Target Area which might be acquired by the City of Middletown, be assisted by the City of Middletown with the relocation assistance mandated by State and Federal Law;

and, further, that:

E. The City of Middletown begin discussions and negotiations with St. Vincent DePaul Place Soup Kitchen and Shelter to relocate the Soup

Kitchen and Shelter to a new site off of the Main Street and, specifically:

1. That the City take an active role in the provision of an alternative site large enough for the needs of the Soup Kitchen and Shelter and space for training, educational and social programs;
2. That the programs address and help cure the causes of the problems of the clientele rather than simply move them to another part of town;
3. That the charitable activities of the St. Vincent DePaul Place need not be disrupted, rather, they should be enhanced by programs to promote self-sufficiency and the City should support these programs;
4. The City examine the following areas for possible relocation of the Soup Kitchen and Shelter and the creation of a training center and education center:
  - a. Meech & Stoddard building with use of Roosevelt Park;
  - b. Russell Manufacturing Company buildings on Main Street Extension;
  - c. A building at Connecticut Valley Hospital; or,
  - d. St. John's Convent building.

and, further, that:

- F. The City discuss with St. John's Church, the possible development of housing in conjunction with the State of Connecticut, in the St. John's Convent building;

and, further, that:

- G. The Johnson School building, also known as the St. Sebastian's School building located on Green Street, be utilized for purposes recommended by the Vacant Buildings Study Committee at its May 25, 1988 meeting:

To wit:

That the proposed use of the former St. Sebastian School on Green Street be a combination of office for Community Action for Greater Middletown (CAGM) and Municipal Annex. That in the event the City is unable to arrive at terms with CAGM for the use of the building, the City shall use the building as a Municipal Annex. The plans submitted by Henry Schadler & Associates for the above uses be accepted and approved for more detailed work;

and, further, that:

- H. The North End Target Area be designated by the Mayor and Common Council of the City of Middletown as a Redevelopment Area, in accordance with Chapter 130, Section 8-124 and the following of the Connecticut State Statutes for the purpose of eliminating urban blight and in order to expedite revitalization and that all reports collected by the various departments of the City of Middletown in accordance with these recommendations be turned over to the Redevelopment Agency together with the report of the North End Task Force and its Supporting Documents for action in accordance with these recommendations and those of the City departments, agencies and commissions that will follow.

## PART II

It is further recommended by the North End Task Force that the following departments be advised by the Mayor and Common Council of the City of Middletown to implement the specific recommendations of the North End Task Force:

### Board of Education

The North End Task Force recommends that the Board of Education:

- A. Carefully observe placement of bus stops with special regard to any possible accompanying dangers to the children; and
- B. The Truancy Officer consistently check out well known "hangouts" in the North End, i.e. the Miller-Bridge Street area; and
- C. A full day kindergarten program be implemented; and
- D. There be a Spanish speaking person on the staff of each school in the City to assist with bi-lingual problems and present a positive role model for the children.

### Municipal Development

The North End Task Force recommends that the Municipal Development Office of the City of Middletown:

- A. Accept applications for grants and loans only after applicants have filed documentation, guarantees and requirements similar to those

used by the Redevelopment Agency and at least as stringent as those used by banks and other lending institutions;

- B. Monitoring of outstanding grants and loans be subject to annual reviews and in the case of loans and grants in excess of \$25,000 annual audits;
- C. The Council provide funding for individual rehabilitation grants to be distributed within the context of upgrading an entire area;
- D. All fund distributions be monitored by the Municipal Development Office including the Neighborhood Assistance Act funds.

Human Relations Department and Social Services Liaison

The North End Task Force recommends that:

- A. These two departments combine and expand their scope of services to include the task of coordination of all social service agencies and their programs in the City by:
  - a. Sponsoring quarterly/biannual symposia for all groups offering social services in Middletown to attend, discuss their programs and attempt to avoid duplication of services; that emphasis be made on coordination of Alcohol and Drug Rehab programs and, that the first symposium be focused on the problems of the North End; and,
  - b. Publication and consistent updating of an expanded Social Services Directory to include all services and programs offered in the City.

- c. Identification of personnel with Italian and Spanish speaking capabilities in all City Departments which deal directly with the public.
  
- B. That the new Department of Human Services be of service to the Mobil Crisis Unit of Connecticut Valley Hospital (River Valley Services) in their efforts to place their discharged clientele and that they be kept informed of this clientele, their location and their caseworkers.

### Welfare

The North End Task Force recommends that the Welfare Department:

- A. Create a "Department of Guardian" within the Welfare Department for those individuals who are chronically irresponsible, financially, and who present a drain on society through mismanagement of funds. The "guardian" would manage all public funding for these individuals including welfare, disability and social security;
  
- B. Lobby the State of Connecticut to permit the \$10 weekly bonus for Workfare recipients be extended to those who chose to do an educational placement;
  
- C. Establish a strong job training program;
  
- D. Obtain permission, required from the State of Connecticut, to allow the department to pay client's rent directly to the landlord; and,
  
- E. Seek to establish mandatory alcohol and drug rehabilitation counseling as part of the regular Welfare program where necessary.

### Water and Sewer Department

The North End Task Force recommends that the Water and Sewer Department:

- A. Coordinate all activities with other appropriate City departments in order to avoid any disruption of streets and neighborhoods while replacing sewer and water pipes; and,
- B. Work with the Public Works Department to develop the new North End pumping station adjacent to Route 9.

### Public Works Department

The North End Task Force recommends that the Public Works Department:

- A. Analyze the replacement of sidewalks in the Miller and Bridge Street area and the St. John's Street and Portland Street area as part of their infrastructure review;
- B. Coordinate their efforts with Water and Sewer Department and all other City departments in an effort to minimize the negative impact of construction of improvements in the North End;
- C. Analyze the potential costs for replacement of infrastructure as outlined in Part I, above;
- D. Review the transcripts of the Residents' Public Hearing and the Bussinesses Public Hearing relative to the problems discussed about sanitation and garbage removal in the North End.

### Park and Recreation Department

The North End Task Force recommends that the Park and Recreation Department:

- A. Do a broad-based mailing of their quarterly brochure to include all potential clientele and that the brochure be distributed to all school children and to libraries;
- B. Review the existing parks in the North End and make a recommendation based on their experience as to continuation of the parks or discontinuance of the parks;
- C. Analyze the possible development of the park located off of Miller Street as a boat launch access area.

### Fire Department

The North End Task Force recommends that the Fire Department:

- A. Develop a budget for the inspection of all North End buildings;
- B. Develop a budget for the installation (with reimbursement) of smoke detectors in all North End buildings;
- C. Develop an inventory sheet for all North End buildings which will include data available from the North End Task Force relative to building construction, type and other pertinent data (see sample attached);
- D. Analyze the development of a clearly accessible area to be cleared behind buildings located on the east side of Main Street from

Washington Street north to Rapallo Avenue. This fire access could be used as a sanitary access for removal of refuse and temporary delivery of goods to buildings located on Main Street.

- E. That, at least one of the dispatchers from the Fire Department be able to understand and communicate with Italian and Spanish speaking people.

#### Police Department

The North End Task Force recommends that the Police Department:

- A. Establish a stronger police presence in the North End Target Area by:
  - 1. Having more foot patrols;
  - 2. Motorcycle patrols; and,
  - 3. More undercover drug enforcement.
  - 4. Encourage development of a Neighborhood Watch Program.
- B. Inform the FBI and the Central Connecticut Drug Task Force and State's Attorney's Office of the testimony given the North End Task Force relative to drug dealing in the North End Target Area;
- C. That, at least one of the dispatchers from the Police Department be able to understand and communicate with Italian and Spanish speaking people.
- D. Establish a security lighting system to be designed and installed throughout the North End to discourage illegal activity and protect police and residents;

- E. Discourage public loitering and panhandling of the type presently occurring in the North End;
- F. Enforce the laws as effectively and efficiently in protection of the people and property of the North End as they do elsewhere in the community. This would require not accepting as normal behavior acts which if they were not being performed by individuals in the North End would result in arrest.
- G. That the Police Department assist in the implementation of the River Valley Services program of Connecticut Valley Hospital.

#### Health Department

The North End Task Force recommends that the Health Department of the City of Middletown:

- A. Hire a consultant to design a program of comprehensive vermin control for the North End Target Area, especially considering the proximity of the river, the garbage dump and the dense population of low and moderate income individuals;
- B. Support the suggested "Blight Ordinance" to make fines and penalties more stringent for failure to enforce health codes and that condemned or abandoned buildings be fixed up within a reasonable length of time or demolished by the City at the expense of the owner;
- C. That additional funds for an intense review of all North End Target Area buildings be requested from the Council in order to do a proper inventory of conditions of buildings and vermin infestation;

- D. That the Health Department enter into an agreement with Connecticut Valley Hospital which would call for the delivery of patient discharge information to the Health Department and that a similar agreement be sought from CADAC.
- E. That the Director of the Health Department assist Connecticut Valley Hospital with the implementation of Rivery Valley Services.

City Attorney's Office

The North End Task Force recommends to the City Attorney's Office that:

- A. The City Attorney require that when a building is sold in which the City has invested public money in the forms of grant or loans, that all public loans be paid back at the time of the sale or transfer of the property and that such language be included in all mortgages relative thereto;
- B. The City Attorney review all projects which have received any City, State or Federal funding where the developer has reneged on his/her proposals in order to instigate procedures for the recovery of those funds, especially, if original program goals or standards are not met;
- C. The City Attorney's Office examine the proper method for implementing eminent domain in a condition of "blight" as in the case of several properties located in the North End Target Area.

### Miller/Bridge Street Area

The North End Task Force asks the Mayor and Common Council to review our recommendations for the Miller/Bridge Street area of the community. This area of the North End is almost forgotten. We suggest the following recommendations:

- A. That an alternative access route be created, either through Miller or Portland Streets and that the Planning & Zoning and Public Works Departments work together to ascertain the logistics of this proposal;
- B. The feasibility of using Roosevelt Park as a small craft boat launch facility with accessory parking be studied by the Park & Recreation Department;
- C. The City dispose of all abandoned vehicles in the area;
- D. The Public Works Department accord this area at least the same standard of services accorded the rest of the City with regard to street sweeping, snow plowing, sidewalk repair, trash removal;
- E. The brush be removed in the area of the bridge in order to discourage people living there in boxes during the summer;
- F. The vacant buildings located in the flood plain be renovated or removed;
- G. The vacant buildings in this area be considered by the "Blight Ordinance" prior to any other buildings in the community.

- H. That an emergency access be mandated which will remain open when Route 9 is flooded;
- I. Any salvageable vacant buildings which the owners are unwilling to rehabilitate be acquired by the City and resold to moderate income individuals who qualify under a "Sweat Equity" or "Urban Homesteading Program";
- J. The garbage dump, located north of the Miller/Bridge Street area be considered for use as a future park and that the feasibility of it producing its own methane gas lighting be explored.

Mayor and Common Council

Finally, the North End Task Force recommends to both the Mayor and the Common Council of the City that:

- A. The recommendations presented by this document be discussed, debated and reviewed; but, that they eventually be acted upon in an expeditious manner.
- B. That wherever possible, the City attempts to obtain State and Federal funding and assistance to accomplish the goals outlined by these recommendations.
- C. Failing receiving State or Federal funds sufficient to achieve the goals outlined in this report, it is recommended by the North End Task Force that the City of Middletown, the Mayor and Common Council

take the steps necessary to draft a referendum to be voted upon by the citizens of Middletown which will contain funds sufficient to accomplish the revitalization of the North End Target Area.

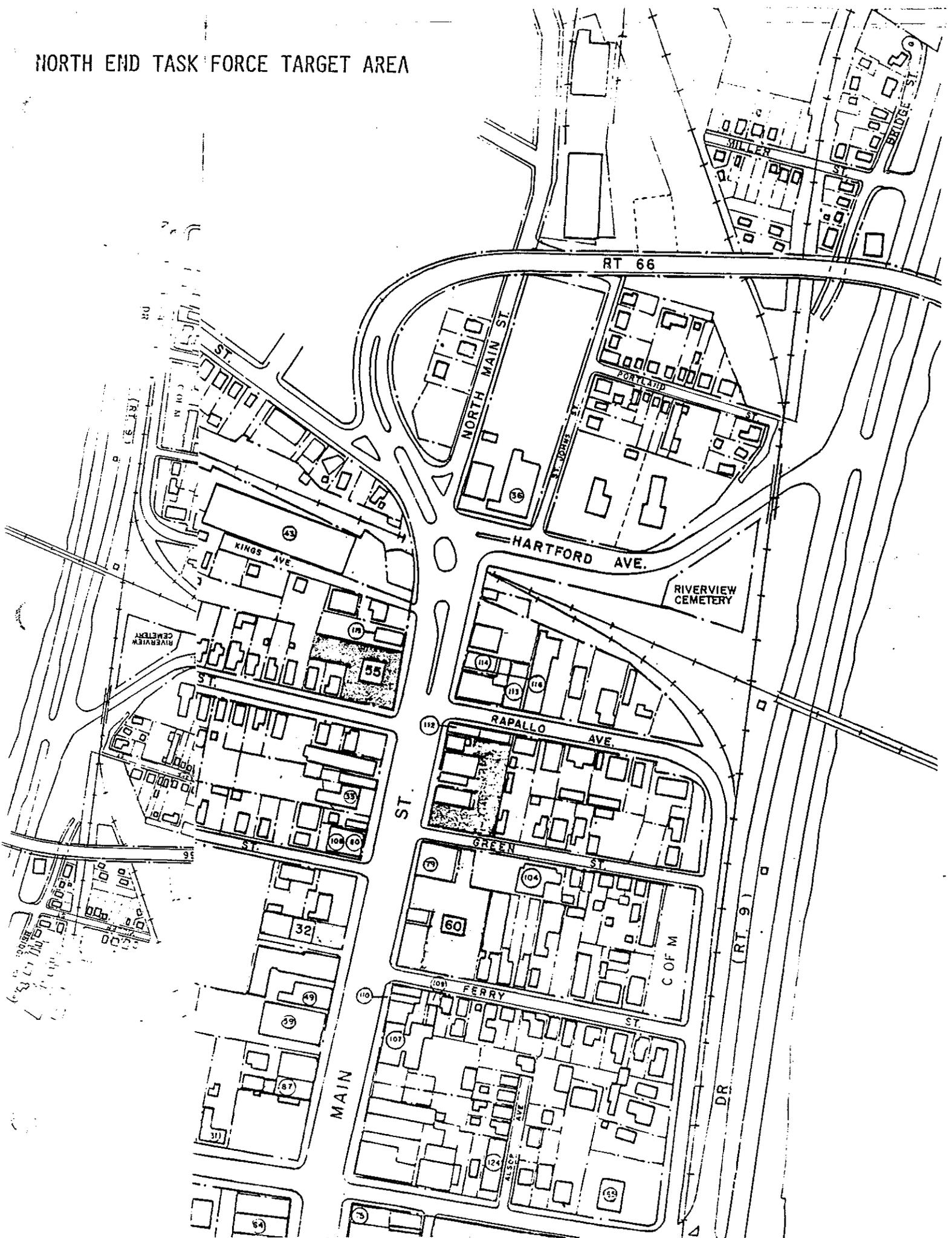
- D. That the North End Task Force be retained as an advisory board for the implementation of the recommendations of this report.
- E. That the citizens and business people of the North End be encouraged to form coalitions (North End Citizens Action Group) which would allow for the opportunity to express concerns to the North End Task Force, the Mayor and Council relative to the quality of life in the North End.

Respectfully submitted:

NORTH END TASK FORCE

William J. Corvo, Chairman  
John A. Giuliano  
Welles R. Guilmartin  
Christine A. Marselli  
Emanuel A. Pattavina  
Nilda Perichi  
Robert P. Santangelo  
Nathan Shapiro

NORTH END TASK FORCE TARGET AREA



12-2

10 6330  
City of Portland

11 433  
City of Portland

17-15

17-9

17-19

17-10

17-10A

17-12

17-13

17-14

NORTH END TASK FORCE  
TARGET AREA

17-20

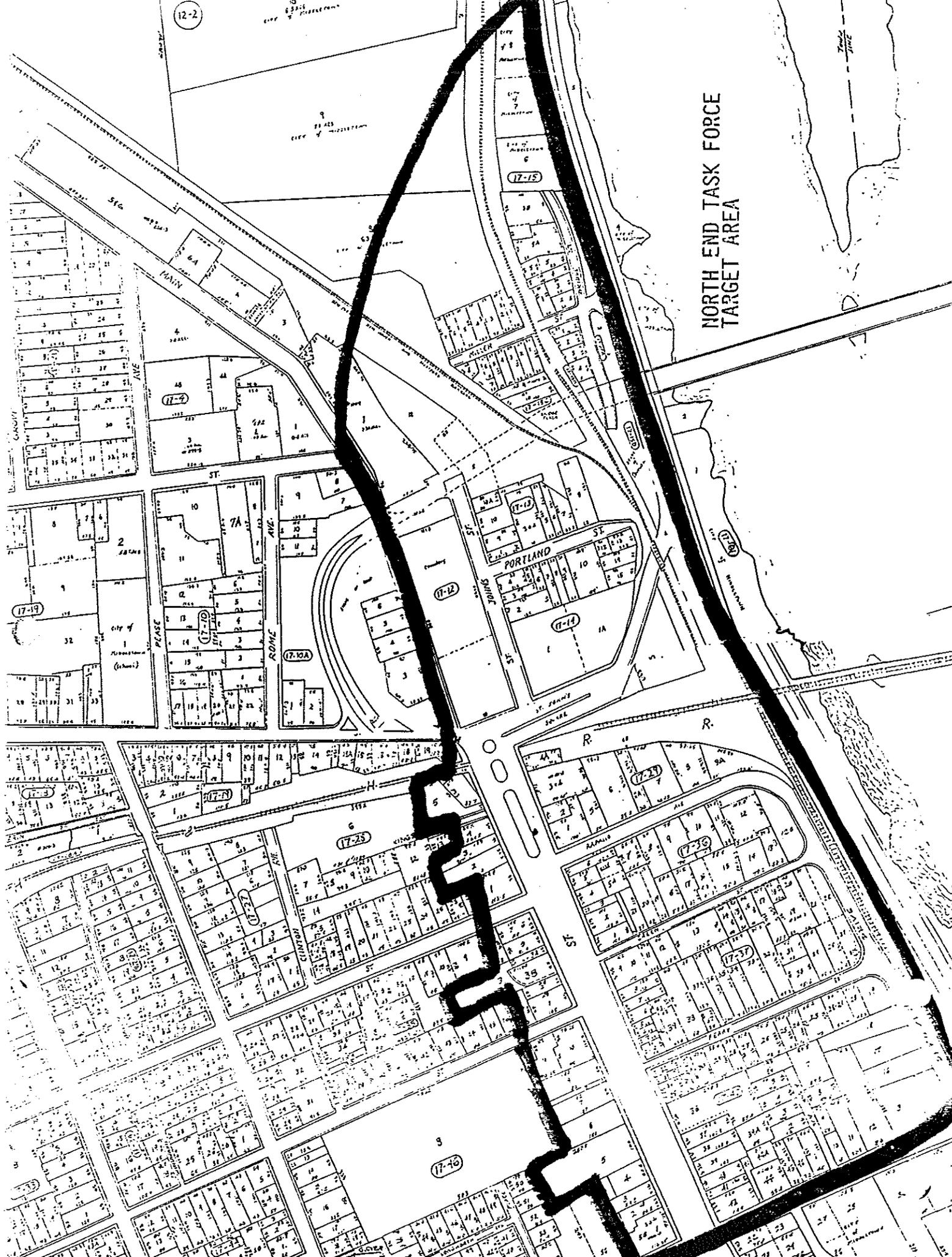
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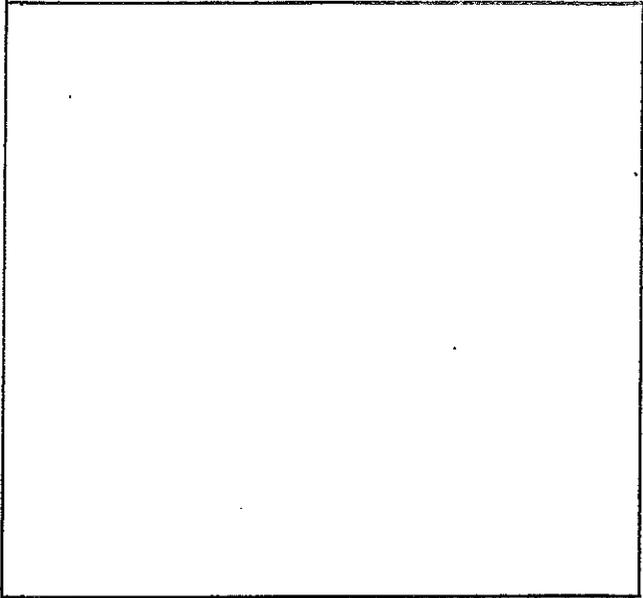
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**NORTH END TASK FORCE  
Building Inventory Form (Part I)**



Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Map \_\_\_\_\_, Block \_\_\_\_\_, Lot \_\_\_\_\_

Owner

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Building Description: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Condition of Building

Excellent ( ), Good ( ), Fair ( ), Poor ( )

Health Department Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**NORTH END TASK FORCE  
Building Inventory Form (Part I)**

**Police Department Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Fire Department Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**NORTH END TASK FORCE**  
**Building Inventory Form (Part II)**

Map \_\_\_\_\_, Block \_\_\_\_\_, Lot \_\_\_\_\_

**Occupancy:**

- A. Total number of units \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Households for each unit occupied: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Number of people per household \_\_\_\_\_

2. Number of adults \_\_\_\_\_

3. Number of children \_\_\_\_\_

4. Female head of household Yes ( ) No ( )

5. Annual Household Income \_\_\_\_\_

6. Race: White not Hispanic ( )

Black not Hispanic ( )

American Indian/Alaskan Native ( )

Hispanic ( )

Asian/Pacific Islander ( )

7. Number of Welfare recipients \_\_\_\_\_

C. Any social problems in these units?

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D. Recommendations:

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