

Ballots Are Free, Get Yours Tuesday! Vote!



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FINAL

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Slums Like This Could Vanish Under An All-Out Urban Redevelopment Program

Cut-Rate Urban Renewal: Legislature Paves Way

By CHARLES KURLAT
Charlotte News Staff Writer

Charlotte can now rid itself of slums at cut-rate prices. The urban redevelopment bill passed this week by the General Assembly will mean the end of the vermin-infested tenements that make up much of Greenville and Brooklyn.

That bill — if Charlotte wants it to — can move the people who live in this squalor to above-standard dwellings with fresh air and play space.

It can turn the slums into valuable business and industrial sites, which is all they are fit to be. The bill can do more — if Charlotte wants it to. It can renew aging neighborhoods, sliding into "slumdom" today. It can help "better" neighborhoods "maim" themselves against a similar decay. It can widen streets and build parks and schools and sidewalks.

City Now Has The Tools

If Charlotte really believes these are worthwhile goals, it now has the tools to reach them.

And the federal government will pick up two-thirds of the multi-million dollar check.

In the long run, the nation's urban redevelopment experts say, the whole program won't cost Charlotte a penny. This may sound like a pipe dream, but it isn't.

The only prerequisite to seeing it come true is a lot of hard work. This program is no federal giveaway. It will require backbreaking strain. It will require fights in the courts, and most of all it will require of Charlotte an iron determination that the slums must go.

The General Assembly has provided the ammunition by voting to comply with federal requirements that slum areas may be condemned if two-thirds of its buildings are substandard.

It was the Assembly's 1953 insistence that ALL buildings in a slum area must be substandard before the action could be condemned that slashed to ribbons Charlotte's last attempt at urban renewal.

The Assembly has changed its mind. The next move is ours.

In every community, there is some opposition to large

scale urban renewal and this one is no exception. The opposition crimped up five years ago when the city made the first ill-fated start on the project. It came from owners of vast clusters of slum jobs, who know the sale of property would not be as profitable as renting it.

Even Tenants May Oppose Plan

It came also from the tenants themselves, many of whom were unwilling to give up their shabby dwellings to move elsewhere. Some of them have lived in their decaying houses all their lives — and there is no place like home, even when home is a dirty slum.

But the greatest roadblock to the bright, new profile Charlotte could have is public ignorance. Not many people know enough about urban redevelopment to know where they're for or not.

To qualify for federal aid, Charlotte must do seven things:

1. Check its codes and ordinances to make sure they are sufficient to do the job. At present, for example, there is no law that governs how many people may live in a dwelling unit. As a result, slum apartments are packed far beyond healthy capacity.

2. Set up an administrative organization for vigorous action. Enforcement of housing controls, use of community pressure to remove the causes of blight. Under this organization must come neighborhood improvement associations, civic groups and citizen planning bodies.

3. Take a good look at itself and decide what kind of community it would like to be. Analyze neighbors (this analysis is already being conducted by the city-county planning department) and work up a concrete plan of action for presentation to federal authorities.

4. Integrate the above plan with the overall city plan for parks, schools, major arteries of transportation, shopping centers, residential centers and business and industry.

5. Develop a financing plan. The city's one-third share of the project cost doesn't have to be in cash. It can take the form of public improvements.

How Financing Might Work

Here is an example of how that might work. The city buys a block of slums in Brooklyn. It pays the owner the appraised value, say, \$200,000. Then it pays \$100,000 to clear the residential buildings.

The city's total investment is now \$300,000. When it sells the land for commercial uses, it can get only \$200,000 for it.

The federal government pays \$200,000 of the loss. The city makes up the other \$100,000 but it can do it by widening streets, installing adequate sewers, or needed schools or parks.

6. Another thing the city must do to get federal aid is work up a plan for rehousing slum dwellers. It must find decent, safe and sanitary dwellings for all families displaced. An inventory of available adequate housing five years ago showed most Charlotte slum dwellers could be relocated easily and cheaply. Some private or public housing might have to be constructed.

7. The city must also involve its citizens in the program.

See BILL on Page 2-A

City's Chance Of Getting NCAA Cage Tourney Zooms

It's baseball time in action — but real news is being made by speculation on the basketball front. Chances for Charlotte's playing host to the NCAA Eastern Regional next March were enhanced today by a strong recommendation from Eddie Cameron, the Duke University athletic director. Also on Page 1-B can be found a story concerning Will (Stu) Chamberlain of Kansas, who may quit to turn pro.

Books	5B	Radio-TV	5B
Classified	1A-C	Serials	5B
Comics	4B	Sports	6A-B
Crossword Puzzle	2B	Theaters	6B
Fall Wilson	4B	TV News	6A
Editorials	4B	Women	1B-5
Obituaries	2A	Worry Clinic	5B

Rains Add Woes To Flooded Texas

Families Evacuated By Police

WICHITA FALLS, Tex. (AP) — Several bridges were covered by flood waters here today as steady rains fell all ready overflowing creeks and lakes and police and civil defense units evacuated more flood-threatened families.

Rain fell through the night and water in the south section of this Texas city rose more than four inches in one hour, according to Police Sgt. Kenneth Edmonds.

The officer said Hempstead Lane Bridge was under two feet of water. The bridge is on one of the main streets across Holiday Creek, the creek that has poured its water into the homes of dozens of residents.

FAMILIES MOVED

Edmonds said at least 15 families had been evacuated.

He quoted officer John Laffin as saying "this flood will be worse than the one in 1953 when hundreds were evacuated."

Edmonds said "I think we'll get quite a bit of trouble. Wichita Lake is pouring into Holiday Creek and the lake is rising all the time."

This is the 17th day that floods have raged through parts of this state that went through seven years of scorching drought.

EVACUATION STARTED

Evacuation of families here started before 10:30 p.m. In 1950 about 300 families were evacuated when the creek flooded. This southwest Texas city has a population of 123,000.

Rains — more than six inches fell on the upper Brazos where some communities were evacuated during early floods. Water rose in Dennis and Bessett and near Tin Top which has suffered flood damage earlier.

Up south of Fort Worth is central Texas, caused some flooding. Valley Mills, Meridian and between Meridian and Blum.

Red Cross officials had estimated that up to 9,000 persons were driven from their homes along the floods. The state civil disaster headquarters said floods affected 25,000 square miles.

LUNCHING KILLED
LANSING, Mich. (AP) — The Michigan Senate has vetoed a move toward a return to the "free lunch" for high school students.

A House-approved bill to permit taverns — keepers to offer free snacks to patrons.

The arrest took place in the office of a justice of the peace across the street from Police Headquarters after Detective El Espesman witnessed the exchange of blackmail currency.

Haney stood without defense before Judge Basil Boyd dressed in a grey uniform shirt with the sleeves rolled to his biceps. He held a cap in his right hand as he requested his wife and daughter be heard in connection with the case.

Speaking in such low tones he could hardly be heard, Haney repeated the request once before it was denied by the judge.

"I've made some little investments lately and people in the neighborhood have been helping. Now I'm satisfied they will be taken care of probably better than you have looked after them," he added.

Haney, shoulders bent, looked pale as the sentence was read. He said nothing as an officer led him back to a cell, and a year's labor on the highways.

The charge of blackmail or extortion is punishable at the discretion of the court. The usual maximum punishment for a misdemeanor is two years in prison.

THE HORSE, in the foreground, apparently came up in this Texas farm house in search of feed as pastures near the Brazos River have been inundated by rising waters. Heavy rains have kept the river out of its banks in the low lands.



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Backmailer Given Year In Prison

By JULIAN SCHLEER
Charlotte News Staff Writer

Rep. W. C. Harris of Raleigh told Rep. Henry Wilson Jr., of Monroe, the other day that he was going to have in support the daylight saving time bill introduced in the General Assembly.

Harris figured Wilson, who has a house full of happy youngsters, ought to sympathize.

"Now that the time has changed," said Harris jokingly, "the television show — even on cartoon shows are coming on during supper time. It disrupts our household. Used to be rid of those things when I came from work, now we can't get the table in the table or any peace for papa."

Wilson pulled the "old farmer's tale" — next of kin to the "old wives tale" — on Harris. Will the cows on the farm know in the time change?

BURKE (Greensboro News) Davis, the Emmett Kellys of the General Assembly, and I had a lengthy and important discussion on lobbyists the other day.

There's suggests they do more work outside lobby than in now, names ought to be changed.

"Rebottlers" — after rebottles was suggested, as was Capitalists.

Sir Burke failed to mention a logical name, "Bosmans."

Could be named for Judge Fred Bowman, a lobbyist of the highest calibre and a Davis and GAV favorite.

THE jokes about Mecklenburg and Mecklenburg politics are some of the most lively in Raleigh.

LOCAL Republicans are running around like mad trying to tell people that party affiliations mean nothing in local elections, hoping, of course, to promote a drive for Kim Gibbons.

WHEN roll calls are made in the General Assembly, there are a couple of names which sound down right nice when Billy Acutt reads 'em out.

Names like Zollinger (Vance County) and Rodehorst (Stokes County).

Over in Senate, the name of Sen. James Sikekneater has a nice ring.

REF. Sidney Brin, in the public hearing on city limits extension, wanted to know status of farm animals on the health question in areas to be annexed.

Dr. M. B. Bethel told him, "Sir, only swine and goats have no friends in Charlotte."

KENNETH Whitsett asked the Local Government Committee, See STRICTLY on page 2-A

More Weather Data on Page 3-A

Strictly Political

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Program Strangled By Quirk In Law

Urban redevelopment? There is where we came in — on Aug. 28, 1951. That was the day the City of Charlotte established the Redevelopment Commission.

The commission under the chairmanship of Col. Paul R. Younts, talked to the federal government and received a grant of \$27,000 to get started. On re-building Charlotte's blighted areas.

Two sections were chosen for a start. They were plots of land along S. Tryon north of Bland St. and along N. Tryon north of the Seaboard Railroad tracks.

The commission surveyed the sections and planned their redevelopment. It prepared detailed maps, plans, cost estimates and reports.

The case the 1953 General Assembly — and the effort to modify the provision in state law which said a building which did not materially contribute to blighted conditions could not be condemned.

Recreation was dead, and the slums were still there.

Looks Chilly For Tonight

The temperature is expected to dip to 40 degrees tonight, putting a chilly edge on the first week in May.

The weatherman says frost and freeze warnings are being issued for the mountains and extreme Northern Piedmont.

Cool, cloudy weather will continue over the weekend in this area, but a warmer trend is expected Monday.

The low last night was 40 degrees and the high today was about 65. Tomorrow at high temperature is expected to be 60 degrees.

The rain should be gone by tonight, the weatherman predicts, but the cloudy weather will continue over the weekend.

The showers in past few days have given the area an excess of 40 inches of rain for the year and 55 inches for the month.

Our Weather

Cloudy and cool with occasional rain or drizzle today. Partly cloudy and cool tonight and Sunday.

Low this morning — 48
Low tomorrow morning — 47
High today — 61
High yesterday — 63
High tomorrow — 62
Sunrise today 5:29 a.m.; sunset today 7:11 p.m.

More Weather Data on Page 3-A