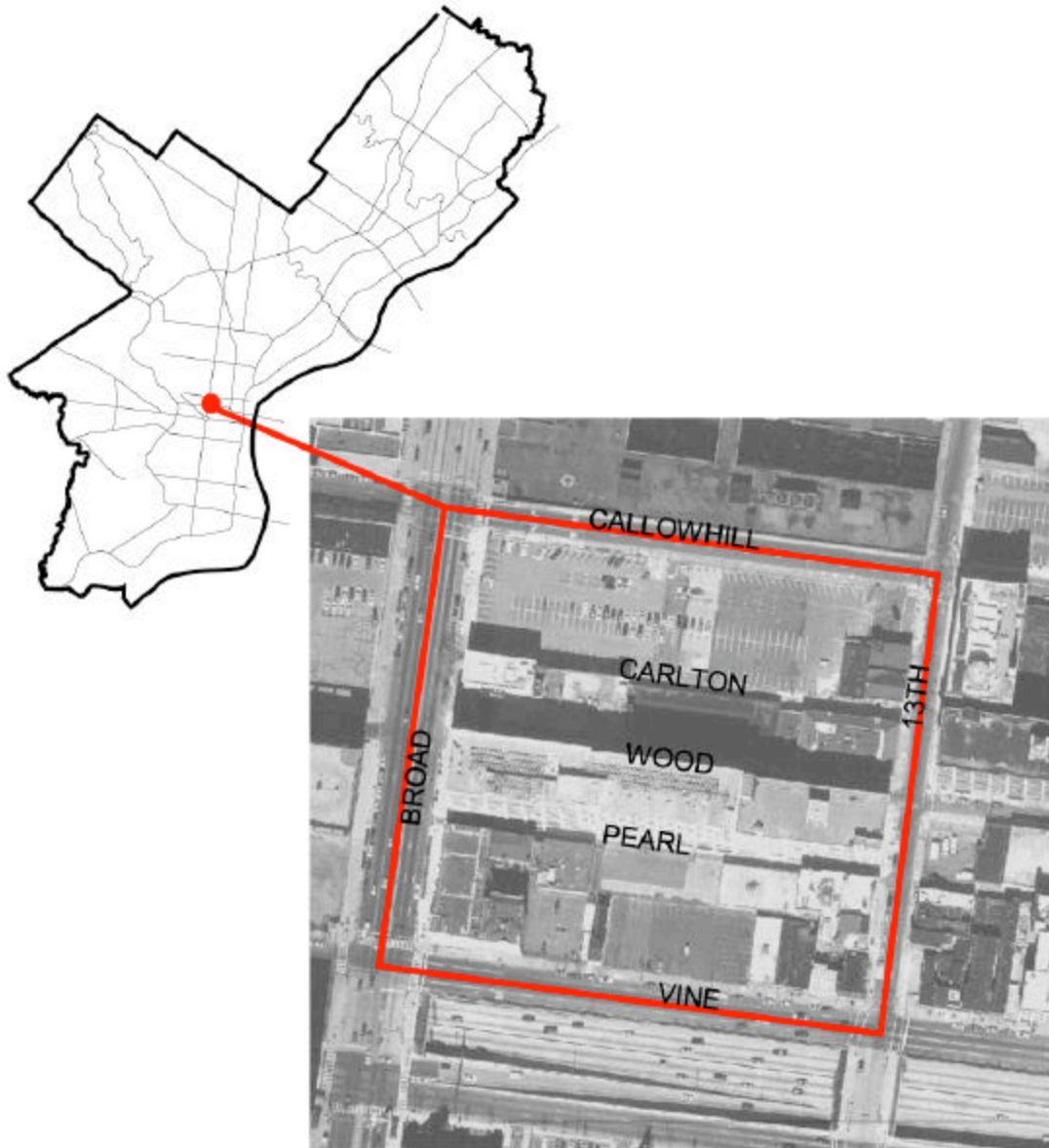
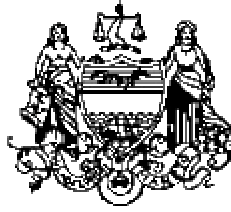


BLIGHT RECERTIFICATION FOR THE AREA BOUNDED BY VINE, BROAD,  
CALLOWHILL AND 13<sup>TH</sup> STREETS

CENTER CITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA



**Philadelphia City Planning Commission**  
July 17, 2002



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Blight Recertification: Redevelopment Area Bounded by Vine, Broad, Callowhill and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets

I. INTRODUCTION

This report presents an evaluation of blight in the area bounded by Vine, Broad, Callowhill and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets. These four city blocks are part of the Callowhill West neighborhood of Center City Philadelphia and are located within the Center City Redevelopment Area, which was certified as blighted by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission on January 8, 1963. The 1963 certification is superseded by this recertification only for the area bounded by Vine, Broad, Callowhill and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets.

This recertification study reviews existing conditions in relation to seven criteria used to determine whether blight exists in an area. The criteria are set forth in Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law (P.L. 991, May 24, 1945 as amended), which stipulates that only one of the criteria must be met in order for an area to be deemed blighted. The law also states that blighted conditions need not be evident throughout the area under study. The fact that individual properties are free from blight does not make the finding of blight arbitrary, according to the law, because comprehensive planning requires that areas be considered in their entirety and not in their unseverable parts.

II. CRITERIA

Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law has established the following criteria for evaluating blight in a particular area.

- Unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate or overcrowded conditions
- Inadequate planning
- Excessive land coverage
- Lack of proper light, air and open space
- Faulty street and lot layout
- Defective design and arrangement of buildings
- Economically or socially undesirable land use

III. ANALYSIS

The following section describes evidence of blight in the area bounded by Vine, Broad, Callowhill and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets according to Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law.

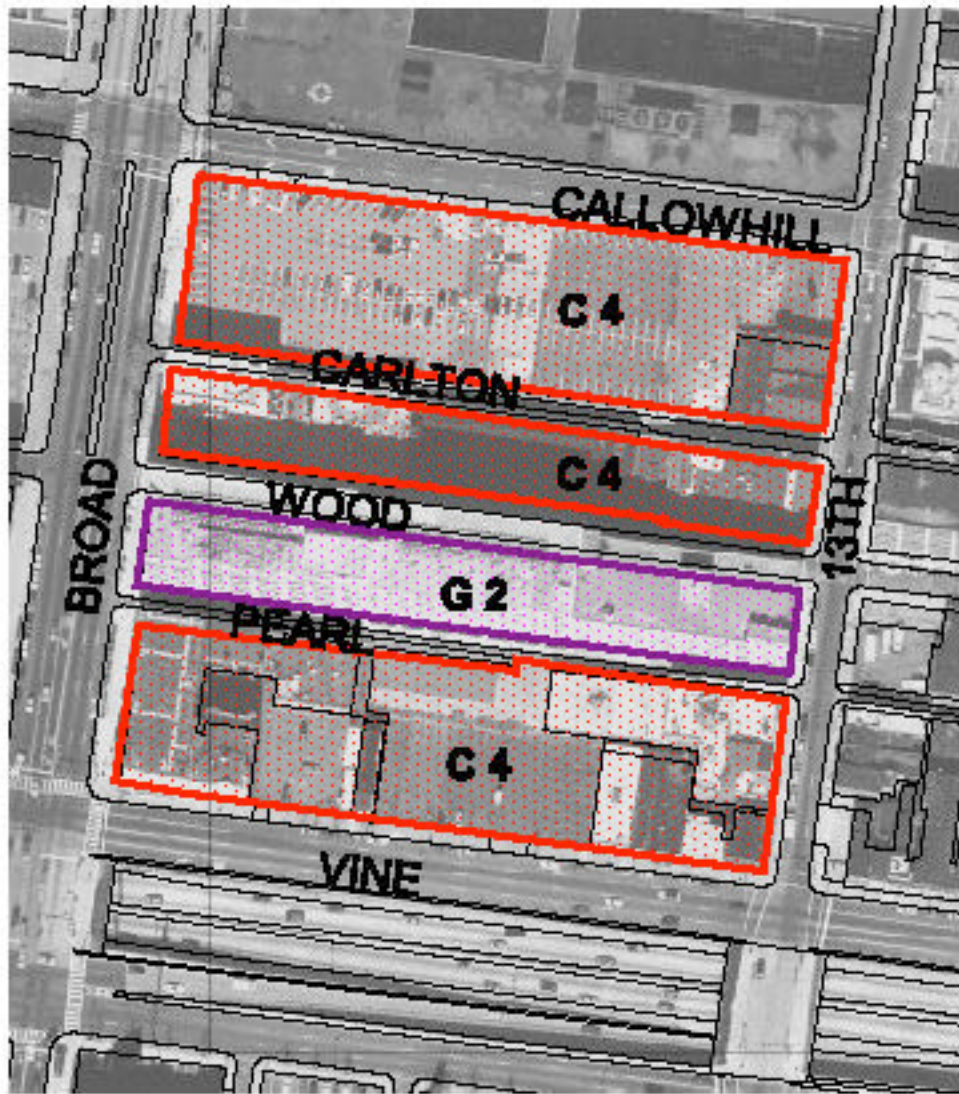
1. Economically or socially undesirable land use

Evidence of this criterion is illustrated through the concentration of surface parking and underutilization of the development potential available under the current zoning.

Of the total property in the subject area zoned C-4 Commercial and G-2 Industrial, 35% is underutilized as surface parking. Surface parking as a primary use is not permitted in C-4 zoning, rendering the block of surface parking bounded by Carlton, Broad, Callowhill, and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets a non-conforming use under current zoning. Lack of pedestrian activity in this area due to the preponderance of parking contributes to a perception of danger in the area. If a higher proportion of this area were developed with office or retail, rather than surface parking, safety would be enhanced.

With a potential Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 5, the portion of the subject area zoned C-4 could support a minimum of approximately 875,000 square feet of development, whereas it currently supports only

approximately 160,000 square feet. This represents use of the land at 18% of its potential. The graphic below indicates the zoning of the area bounded by Vine, Broad, Callowhill and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets.



2. Faulty street and lot layout

Evidence of this criterion is illustrated through the non-standard and inconsistent width of Carlton Street as it traverses the subject area.

Illustrated in the photographs on pages 3 and 4 is the variance in width that exists within the 1300 block of Carlton Street. The cartway varies from 9' 7" wide as it moves from Broad Street to 13<sup>th</sup>, becoming 6' 5" mid block and increasing to 14' 4" as it nears 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Such inconsistent street width, in combination with utility poles, constricts the functional width of the street to approximately seven and a half feet (7' 6")

Access to properties on both sides of Carlton Street within the subject area is constrained by the geometry of the streets as well as the two portions of the street that are offset. Trash service, emergency medical

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services, fire fighting equipment and personnel are only some of the services that may be reduced due to access problems along the 1300 block of Carlton Street. Non-emergency circulation of both pedestrians and vehicles is constrained by the current geometry of the streets.



Carlton Street toward 13<sup>th</sup> Street from Broad Street

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Carlton Street mid-block toward 13<sup>th</sup> Street



Carlton Street from 13<sup>th</sup> toward Broad Street

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IV. CONCLUSION

The existing conditions in the area bounded by Vine, Broad, Callowhill and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets exhibit two of the criteria necessary to produce a finding of blight under the Pennsylvania Redevelopment Law. Those criteria are:

1. Economically or socially undesirable land use.
2. Faulty street and lot layout.

The preceding analysis has demonstrated that these two criteria for establishing the presence of blight are present and the area is eligible for recertification as blighted.

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RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law, Act of May 24, 1945 (P.L. 991) as amended, authorizes the Philadelphia City Planning Commission to certify as blighted specific areas which may then in whole or in part, be made the subject of redevelopment proposals formulated by the Redevelopment Authority in accordance with said Act, and

WHEREAS, on January 8, 1963, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission certified the area bounded by Spring Garden Street, the Pierhead Line of the Delaware River, South Street and the Schuylkill River as exhibiting characteristics of blight under terms of said Act, and

WHEREAS, after substantial review and study, the City Planning Commission staff has presented a report concluding that the area bounded by Vine, Broad, Callowhill and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets as exhibiting characteristics of blight under terms of said Act, and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission concurs with the findings and conclusions set forth in said staff report,

NOW THEREFORE, on this 17th day of July 2002, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission hereby finds, based upon its staff report dated July 17, 2002 that the area bounded Vine, Broad, Callowhill and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets, exhibits the following characteristics of blight as established by Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law:

1. Economically or socially undesirable land use.
2. Faulty street and lot layout.

and hereby recertifies the above described area as blighted under the terms and provisions of the said Act.