

**Blight Recertification
for the Area Bounded by
N. Broad St., Clearfield St.,
N. 15th St., and Westmoreland St.**



Philadelphia City Planning Commission
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City of Philadelphia

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**Blight Recertification
for the Area Bounded by
N. Broad St., W. Clearfield St., N. 15th St., and W. Westmoreland St.**

This Blight Recertification is intended to facilitate development on the 3100 and 3200 blocks of North Broad Street. Recertification is driven by two development proposals: the McDonald's Manager Training Facility at 3100 North Broad, and Overbrook Investment Partner's mixed use commercial / retail office building at 3200 N. Broad Street.

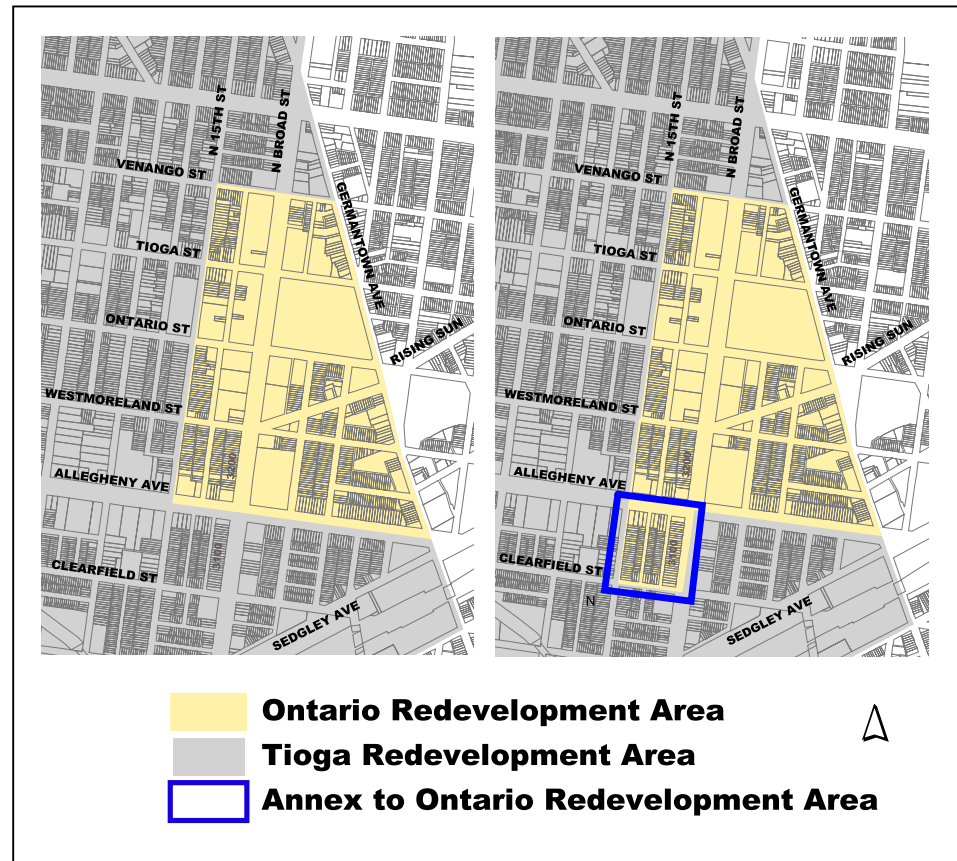


**3200 N. Broad Street
looking South**

I. INTRODUCTION

This report presents an evaluation of blight in a five-block area in Upper North Philadelphia. The boundaries of the study area are North Broad St., W. Clearfield St., N 15th St., and W. Westmoreland St. The study area is wholly within the boundaries of the South Tioga neighborhood.

The area to be recertified includes portions of two adjoining Redevelopment Areas: the Tioga Redevelopment area as certified on June 16, 1970, and the Ontario Redevelopment area as certified on September 8, 1961. The Redevelopment Authority has requested the extension of the Ontario Redevelopment Area boundary to annex the 3100 blocks of N. Broad St., Carlisle, and N. 15th street (between Allegheny Ave., and Clearfield St.), removing these blocks from the Tioga Redevelopment Area. This recertification supercedes earlier Blight Certifications that address this area.



II. CRITERIA

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, which stipulates that only one of these criteria must be met to make a finding of blight in an area. The law also states that blighted conditions need not be evident throughout the entire 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.

Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law contains the following criteria for establishing the presence of blight in a particular area::

1. Defective design and arrangement of buildings
2. Economically or socially undesirable land use
3. Unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate or overcrowded conditions
4. Inadequate planning
5. Excessive land coverage
6. Lack of proper light, air and open space
7. Faulty street and lot layout.



Vacant Lot on N. 15th St.



**Vacant structures on
Rosewood St.**

The following section describes the characteristics of blight evident in the area bounded by North Broad St., W. Clearfield St., N 15th St., and W. Westmoreland Street. This section cites specific examples of the conditions listed in two of the criteria. Blight does exist in the area.

1. ***Unsafe, Unsanitary, Inadequate or Overcrowded Conditions***

Evidence of this criterion is presented in the following categories primarily by the presence of a significant number of vacant deteriorated structures and the existence of numerous vacant, trash-strewn lots. Vacant lots and buildings create conditions that increase the potential for crime, and may become breeding areas for vermin.

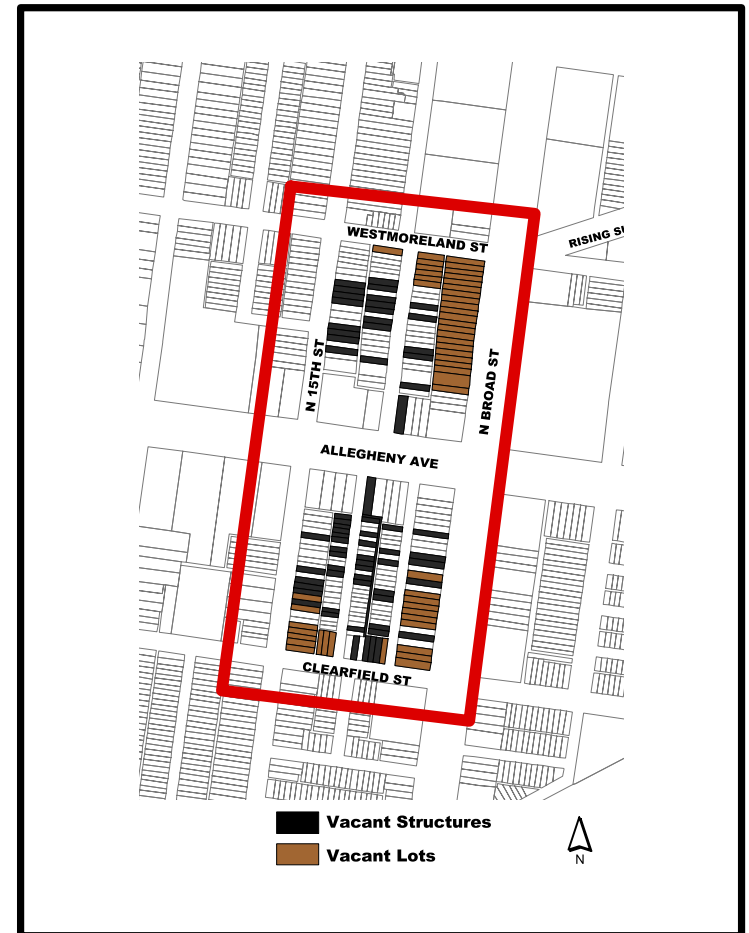
The area contains 239 individual properties. Recent field surveys indicate that 119 of the properties – 50% - are vacant

Vacant Lots:

Unsafe and unsanitary conditions were documented through observation of 51 vacant lots. Thus, approximately 21% of properties in the study area are under-maintained and littered with debris.

Vacant Structures:

68 structures sit vacant and dilapidated in the study area. The lack of maintenance of these buildings further create unsafe and unsanitary conditions in the area. These structures are mostly residential and comprise 29% of properties in the study area.



2) ***Economically or Socially Undesirable Land Use***

The high vacancy rate in the area, as stated earlier, provides substantial evidence of economically and socially undesirable land use in this area. More than 50% of the structures and lots are vacant within the study area.

Vacant structures and lots are economically undesirable. Citywide experience has demonstrated that vacant properties are likely to have long-standing tax-delinquency. Residential property abandonment deprives the neighborhood, the city and the region of purchasing power and does not encourage private investment. The effects of these conditions erode the local economy and results in reduced sales tax revenue to government.

Vacant structures and lots are socially undesirable for a number of reasons: they downgrade the overall physical environment of the neighborhood, they reduce the area's vitality, and they increase the potential for vandalism, arson, and other crime. The increased threat of arson is a hazard that affects both vacant buildings and adjoining, occupied structures in the neighborhood. Furthermore, many of the vacant buildings in this area are structurally deteriorated and therefore they pose a danger to passers-by and people who might trespass on the property.

Tax delinquency represents economically undesirable land use. Within the study area, 120 of 213 taxable properties - 56% - have been in delinquency in the years leading up to 2000. When real estate tax is not paid, privately owned properties are benefiting from municipal services without contributing to the revenue base that pays for those services. Therefore, it is apparent that the conditions in the area lead to low economic return to the City. Relatively low housing values provide additional evidence of economically undesirable land uses.

IV. CONCLUSION

In the area bounded by North Broad St., W. Clearfield St., N 15th St., and W. Westmoreland St., existing conditions are consistent with two (2) of the criteria necessary to produce a finding of blight under Pennsylvania Redevelopment law.

Those criteria are:

1. Unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate or overcrowded conditions
2. Economically or socially undesirable land use.

The preceding analysis has demonstrated that these two (2) criteria for establishing the presence of blight are satisfied and the area is eligible for recertification.

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 June 16,1970,on August 20, 1963, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission certified the Tioga Redevelopment area bounded by Tioga Street, Broad Street, 15th Street, Broad Street, Clearfield Street, Allegheny Avenue, Westmoreland Street. Bouvier Street, and 17th Street as exhibiting characteristics of blight under terms of said Act, and

WHEREAS,; on May 23, 1967, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission certified the Ontario Redevelopment area bounded by Venango Street, Germantown Ave., W. Allegheny Ave., and North 15th Street as exhibiting characteristics of blight under terms of said Act, and

WHEREAS,; after substantial review and study, the Commission's staff has presented a report concluding that the area bounded by North Broad St., W. Clearfield St., N 15th St., and W. Westmoreland St. continues to exhibit characteristics of blight as defined by the Act, and recommends that it be annexed from the Tioga Redevelopment area and incorporated fully into the Ontario Redevelopment Area, and

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

NOW THEREFORE,; on this twentieth day of March 2002, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission hereby finds, based upon its staff report dated March 2002 that the area bounded by North Broad St., W. Clearfield St., N 15th St., and W. Westmoreland St. exhibits the following characteristics of blight as established by Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law:

1. Unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate or overcrowded conditions;
2. Economically or socially undesirable land use;

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