Liberal Ends Through Illiberal Means: Race, Urban Renewal, and Community in the Eastwick Section of Philadelphia, 1949-1990

Guían A. Mckee

*Journal of Urban History* 2001; 27; 547
DOI: 10.1177/009614420102700501

The online version of this article can be found at:
http://juh.sagepub.com

Published by:

SAGE
http://www.sagepublications.com

On behalf of:

The Urban History Association

Additional services and information for *Journal of Urban History* can be found at:

Email Alerts: http://juh.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts

Subscriptions: http://juh.sagepub.com/subscriptions

Reprints: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav

Permissions: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav
LIBERAL ENDS THROUGH ILLIBERAL MEANS
Race, Urban Renewal, and Community in the Eastwick Section of Philadelphia, 1949-1990

GUIAN A. MCKEE
University of California at Berkeley

The Eastwick section of Philadelphia is a three-thousand-acre tract of low-lying land that stretches along the city’s southwestern boundary. To the east, Eastwick is separated from downtown Philadelphia by the Schuylkill River and by a large installment of oil refineries. To the south, it is bounded by Interstate 95 and Philadelphia International Airport (see Figure 1). Prior to the 1950s, Eastwick was a sparsely populated, semirural area featuring small farms, trailers, scattered housing developments, and, by the mid-twentieth century, an assortment of auto junkyards and burning garbage dumps. During the 1950s and 1960s, however, the reform Democrats who gained control of Philadelphia’s city government conceived of a plan that would make Eastwick the largest urban renewal area in the United States, the subject of a $78 million effort to build an unprecedented “city-within-a-city.” This plan projected the creation of a new Eastwick that would be far more than a typical urban renewal project: not only would it provide twenty-thousand jobs and homes for as many as sixty-thousand people, but it would also be racially integrated. ¹ Through the reorganization of urban space in Eastwick, Philadelphia’s reform liberals thus attempted to promote racial integration while attacking decentralization and deindustrialization, the two dominant patterns of American political-economic development following World War II. ²

The pursuit of these goals brought an attendant element of tragic irony, as the project required the destruction of the area’s unique existing community, which, unlike most of Philadelphia during this period, was already racially integrated. Constrained by the limits of local finance and the regulations of federal urban policy, as well as by their own presumptions about Eastwick, Philadelphia’s postwar urban liberals found no way to balance the interests of the existing community with their otherwise innovative effort to address the

AUTHOR’S NOTE: The author would like to thank those who offered suggestions on earlier versions of this paper, and in particular Robin Einhorn, Mary Ryan, Joanna Vondrasek, the two anonymous reviewers for the JUH, and the participants in a conference panel at the 1999 Organization of American Historians annual meeting in Toronto, Ontario.
social and economic problems facing the postwar city. In contrast to most accounts of postwar urban history, the ensuing clash between the community and the city demonstrated that working-class urban residents could engage in interracial political action. Although the opposition effort in Eastwick ultimately failed, its existence provides evidence that working-class communities in postwar American cities possessed the capacity for racial cooperation as well as conflict.

Despite the brutality inherent to the renewal process, the long-term outcome of urban renewal in Eastwick suggests a second conclusion regarding the nature and potential of liberalism in the postwar city. Although plagued by both lengthy delays in its development and reductions in its final scale, the Eastwick project eventually attained many of its original goals. The project’s provision of thousands of units of lower middle-income housing and its creation of the infrastructure for a significant employment base provided the physical and economic foundation for the eventual emergence of a stable and largely integrated community in the new Eastwick. The actual achievement of this end, however, also required the initial implementation of an illiberal policy of racial quotas in housing sales and, later, the emergence of a community organization that emphasized the common interests of all residents over the particular divisions of race and neighborhood. Despite the project planners’ insensitivity to the human costs of such a dramatic reorganization of urban physical space, the Eastwick project indicates that racial integration could
succeed when linked to the creation of both affordable housing and blue-collar jobs, when monitored through policies of racial management, and when supported by concerted, community-based action.4

THE EASTWICK COMMUNITY BEFORE URBAN RENEWAL

In 1950, Eastwick constituted less than an ideal site for housing thousands of people. In addition to the nearby airport, refineries, auto junkyards, and burning dumps, much of the area also lay as much as twelve feet below the level of the Delaware River, making it marshy and prone to flooding.5 In addition, much of Eastwick had an aging and dilapidated housing stock, and few neighborhoods had paved streets or sidewalks. As most of the area also lacked sewers, sewage and rainwater flowed into stagnant, open ditches that often overflowed after heavy storms. Even in good weather, these ditches attracted large populations of rats.6 Perhaps of greatest importance to city policy makers, however, Eastwick’s numerous vacant lots had a tax delinquency rate of 84 percent (see Figure 2).7

In spite of Eastwick’s problems, the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority’s (RA) 1951 description of the area as “predominantly open land” represented a significant exaggeration.8 Although 60 percent of Eastwick was uninhabited, the occupied area contained a population of 19,300 low- and middle-income residents. A total of 72 percent of this population owned their own homes, but this high rate of home ownership belied the relatively low income of area residents, 67 percent of whom were eligible for public housing. Many residents worked in Eastwick’s 11 factories, most of which stood in the northeastern section of the area and varied in both character and size, “ranging from nationally operated, large-scale enterprise [sic] to smaller, locally owned industries.” In combination with Eastwick’s 278 commercial businesses, these industrial facilities constituted a primary source of local employment. City planners, however, placed little value on this relationship between community and work, as a preliminary RA plan simply noted that land use in Eastwick consisted of “a confusion of residential, commercial and industrial uses mixed with vacant land.”9

Eastwick’s physical and environmental deficiencies had not prevented the development of a strong community, as many residents felt a deep sense of loyalty to their neighbors and a powerful personal identification with the area.10 The inhabitants of Eastwick also relished the semirural character of Eastwick’s large lots, gardens, open fields, and nearby marshes. Residents often referred to the area as “the Meadows,” identifying their community with its natural surroundings.11 While residents acknowledged that Eastwick had numerous physical problems, they attributed them to the city’s failure to install sewers and enforce building and housing codes.12
Figure 2: Three views of Eastwick in 1950-1951 that illustrate the wide range of housing and environmental conditions in the area.

SOURCE: Urban Archives, Temple University, Philadelphia.
In its existing form, Eastwick possessed one other notable characteristic. Unlike most of Philadelphia during the 1940s and 1950s, the area included both whites and blacks who lived in relative, if not total, integration. In 1953, 1,700 dwellings in Eastwick’s northwest section were nearly all white. In the remainder of the redevelopment area, however, 2,188 white families resided alongside 1,127 nonwhite families in what a federal housing official described as “considerable racial interspersion of residence.” Throughout much of Eastwick, racial interaction constituted a commonplace element of daily life; Eastwick’s public elementary schools, for example, served children in the surrounding neighborhoods without regard to race. This racial coexistence extended in some cases to even the most intimate areas of life, as a black Eastwick obstetrician served a clientele composed of “more white patients than Negro.” When viewed within the context of the often explosive interaction of race, gender, and sexuality in American history, the presence of a black, male professional in such a role is extraordinary.

Eastwick’s racial accommodation struck both residents and outside observers as noteworthy. In 1959, a member of the Philadelphia Housing Association commented that “most remarkable of all, Eastwick is an integrated community, with Negro and white living together without friction, but as neighbors and friends—and without the stimulus imposed by an outside social agency.” In 1974, Eastwick native Ida Scheer recalled that before urban renewal,

this was a wonderful community for generations. Blacks, whites, Indians, Chinese, you name it. We were integrated before they even made up the word. . . . I got to laugh at all this talk about race trouble these days. . . . Blacks and whites have been neighbors here, living together and helping each other, before any of us were born. When somebody gets sick or somebody dies in the meadows, your neighbors are always there with you, and it don’t count what color they are.

Such patterns of racial cooperation may well have been easier to maintain in the spread-out neighborhoods of Eastwick than in the densely populated row-house neighborhoods more typical of Philadelphia, but it is nonetheless significant that they existed at all in a working-class area of the post–World War II urban north. During the middle and late 1950s, this tradition of racial interaction and accommodation would provide the basis for a sustained, interracial campaign to oppose the city’s plans for urban renewal in Eastwick.

**URBAN LIBERALISM AND THE VISION OF A CITY-WITHIN-A-CITY**

In recent years, political historians have argued that the late New Deal and the Second World War marked the “end of reform” in American liberalism. With few exceptions, such accounts address only national level politics while paying little attention to locally based policy initiatives. This national focus, however, is premised on a narrow conception of postwar liberalism that
drastically underestimates its capacity to influence multiple levels of the American state. Evidence for the postwar persistence of a local variant of reform liberalism is provided by the emergence of a vibrant, urban-based liberalism in Philadelphia during the late 1940s and early 1950s. Coming to power in 1951 with the support of an often-tenuous coalition of civic and political organizations, business groups, labor unions, African Americans, and Democratic ward organizations, Philadelphia’s postwar urban liberals pursued public policy goals that are often thought to have disappeared from American politics during this period. Premised on the belief that pragmatic policy experimentation, social-scientific expertise, and physical and economic planning could serve the interests of all citizens without regard to race or class, the postwar liberal agenda in Philadelphia included racial integration, construction of public housing, expansion of health care services, implementation of civil service standards, revitalization of the city’s physical infrastructure, and intervention in the local economy to preserve jobs and secure the tax base. The broad social and economic transformation of American cities during this period, along with the naiveté of the reformers’ assumptions about the universal nature of the public interest, ultimately undercut much of this agenda. Nonetheless, Philadelphia’s postwar pattern of local governmental activism raises the possibility that the liberal reform impulse survived the demise of the New Deal and reemerged after the Second World War as a new form of locally based urban liberalism.

Although this liberal ideological framework provided the context for urban renewal in Eastwick, the project itself was actually a partial inheritance from the reformers’ Republican predecessors. During the late 1940s, city planners began to view Eastwick’s vast and relatively open spaces as a potential solution to the problem of residential displacement from redevelopment projects in largely black sections of North and West Philadelphia. In 1949, the RA argued that low-income blacks in these areas could be relocated to a new, planned community in Eastwick that, in the words of one commentator, “would not only siphon off the black overflow but would be a low visibility cul-de-sac into which the burgeoning Negro population could be stuffed.”

In the aftermath of the reform Democrats’ victory, this conception of Eastwick’s future underwent a dramatic transformation. The culmination of this change came in December 1953 with the release of a preliminary redevelopment plan prepared by the Eastwick Planners, a group of consultants directed by noted city planner Henry Churchill. Instead of a planned ghetto, the new Churchill Plan called for the creation of a “balanced community which will demonstrate that good living can be provided within a big city.” Influenced by the “Garden City” principles of the British theorist Ebenezer Howard, as well as by Churchill’s experience during the 1930s as an architect for the New Deal’s Greenbelt town program, the Eastwick Planners projected a self-contained community with a carefully planned and closely interrelated mixture of housing, industrial and commercial areas, and community and
recreational facilities. According to this vision, the new Eastwick would be nothing less than a city-within-a-city that would allow Philadelphia to compete with suburban areas for both population and jobs.23

The Churchill Plan’s specific characteristics left little doubt that such a goal drove the Eastwick planning process. Attempting to incorporate elements of suburban design while still maintaining “the characteristics of the city of Philadelphia,” the Eastwick Planners projected a development of 45,000 people living in 4,100 apartments, 670 detached and semidetached houses, and 7,800 units derived from the traditional Philadelphia row house.24 Public housing would be included in the new Eastwick, but in a striking contrast to the typical, isolated housing projects of the era, the plan recommended that it “be dispersed in small units throughout the redevelopment area, related in scale and type to other housing.”25 A system of parks, pedestrian greenways, schools, churches, and community facilities would be linked to one another, as well as to commercial areas. The latter would include one of the largest shopping centers in the city, as well as smaller shopping facilities within each of Eastwick’s four residential districts. Traffic would be shunted away from each of these neighborhood blocks and onto a series of “collector” roadways surrounding each neighborhood.26 Also included, in the southwest corner of Eastwick, would be a bird sanctuary, the first of its kind in any major American city.27

In one of the plan’s most important features, 1,263 acres would be devoted to industrial uses, two-thirds of which would be integrated into a planned industrial “estate” on the east side of Eastwick. Although residential areas would be shielded from factories by greenways, they would be close enough to allow residents to work within walking distance of their homes.28 The Eastwick industrial districts provided the first indication of a new concern with industrial renewal that within a few years would become a central feature of local public policy in Philadelphia. By creating suburban-style industrial parks such as the one in Eastwick, Philadelphia attempted to provide open land that would allow the city to compete with suburban areas for the manufacturing firms and jobs that had already begun to disappear from the city in significant numbers.29 The recognition of a relationship between housing and work constituted a central principle of Garden City planning theory, and it would play a crucial part in the eventual outcome of urban renewal in Eastwick.

More important than any aspect of the physical plan, however, was the city’s decision that the new development should be racially integrated rather than exclusively African American.30 Multiple motives guided this change. In part, the decision can be traced to the racial liberalism of the new Democratic administration, which adopted housing integration as a goal of city policy. Mayor Joseph S. Clark spoke publicly on the issue and backed up his rhetoric by supporting the investigative efforts of the city’s new Commission on Human Relations (CHR), which had been created by the Home Rule Charter to investigate and defuse racial conflicts.31 Within this context of racial liberalism, Eastwick’s existing multiracial character and its physical separation from
Philadelphia’s endemic racial conflict seemed to offer the possibility of achieving, in the words of a 1954 federal assessment, a “landmark” racial success.\(^\text{32}\) 

Purely pragmatic considerations also pushed the city toward a policy of integration in the new Eastwick. Faced with a serious decline in the tax base, the reform Democrats initiated a series of programs designed to slow the flight of whites out of Philadelphia. In the Society Hill area, the quasi-public Old Philadelphia Development Corporation restored eighteenth-century townhouses and built new luxury homes and apartment towers to attract affluent white residents.\(^\text{33}\) Eastwick, with its progressive planning, modern amenities, and job opportunities, provided a working-class parallel to Society Hill, designed to induce blue-collar whites to remain in the city.\(^\text{34}\) The final and most important reason for the change, however, lay in the nature of the Philadelphia housing market. Early plans for Eastwick forecast that prices for new housing in the project would range from $10,000, a price close to the minimum possible for new, privately built housing in the Philadelphia area, up to $13,999. A study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania indicated that at these prices, housing demands from blacks alone would not be sufficient to support a development of Eastwick’s size.\(^\text{35}\)

The decision to develop Eastwick as an integrated project thus emerged from a set of mixed yet mutually reinforcing motives, ranging from racial liberalism to the constraints of the local housing market. That Philadelphia’s reform Democrats undertook such a massive integration project at all is significant in itself, given the troubled history of urban race relations during this period. Nonetheless, the necessity of relying on white housing demand to ensure the project’s financial viability exacted a serious cost. From this point forward, city officials and project developers performed a delicate and emotionally charged act of racial balancing, as the University of Pennsylvania study also concluded that white demand would decline rapidly if African Americans occupied a significant percentage of Eastwick’s homes. This intertwining of the imperatives of white racism with the reform Democrats’ desire to create an idealized city-within-a-city thus produced a strange contradiction: to achieve integration in the new Eastwick, African American access to the housing would have to be limited.\(^\text{36}\) Concerns about the level of white housing demand also led to the elimination of Henry Churchill’s innovative plan for dispersed public housing.\(^\text{37}\)

### INTERRACIAL COOPERATION AND RESISTANCE TO URBAN RENEWAL IN EASTWICK

As the project’s racial contradictions indicate, the planning of Eastwick occurred in neither a social nor political vacuum. In the year following the release of the Churchill Plan, area residents began to recognize exactly what
the nation’s largest urban redevelopment project would mean for them. Accompanying its progressive planning features, the Eastwick project required one additional and less attractive element: the displacement of 8,636 people. As a result, Eastwick residents soon began to organize in resistance to the plan. The first indication of widespread opposition in Eastwick came in the spring of 1955 when residents refused to allow RA real estate assessors to enter their homes. Within weeks, residents organized protest groups, circulated petitions opposing the project, staged meetings and rallies, and spread rumors about the city’s plans. 

From the beginning of the protest movement, Eastwick residents developed an alternative portrayal of both urban renewal and the relationship between urban space and community identity. Resident William Hillier questioned even the city’s basic definition of the area, pointing out that in his opinion he lived in Clearview but that “the good folks up in the city call it all Eastwick now. We didn’t know that.” Hillier’s comment reflects a basic conflict between the city’s homogenizing definition of urban space and the more particular community identities developed by residents. In October 1955, one community group presented more than four thousand signatures on a petition that questioned even the basic premise of urban renewal: Eastwick, they declared, was not a blighted area. Instead, it simply needed basic services such as sewers, paved streets, improved lighting, shopping facilities, and better schools, all of which the city had neglected for decades and could provide without the demolition of their community.

These challenges delineated the point at which the nature of federal urban policy produced a fundamental divergence between the views of residents and city officials. While Eastwick residents desired the improvement of the area’s inadequate infrastructure and would even accept new residential and industrial development on open land, they objected to the wholesale destruction of the existing community. City officials argued that such improvements would be prohibitively expensive without federal assistance. During the 1950s, such aid was available only in the form of urban renewal, which required slum clearance. Thoroughly schooled in the principles of midcentury urban planning, such officials also looked at Eastwick’s mixed land uses, dilapidated housing, and propensity to flood and saw little reason to pass up millions of federal dollars simply to preserve such a community. To residents, such explanations appeared both penurious and cruel. To city officials, in contrast, the residents’ objections betrayed a narrowness of vision and a failure to understand the interests of Philadelphia as a whole. Each group’s logic seemed unassailable when seen from its own perspective, and, as a result, accommodation of the two positions proved impossible.

Such complete differences in perspective made continued conflict inevitable. After an interlude of relative inactivity in 1956, protests flared again after the Housing and Home Finance Administration (HHFA) approved the city’s preliminary loan and grant application in March 1957. In July, residents turned
a public hearing on Eastwick into a mass protest against the project, as a crowd of fifteen hundred jammed into Philadelphia’s Convention Hall and, according to one newspaper account, “hooted, shouted and screamed its protest amid tears, accusations and charges of collusion.” In the weeks that followed, opponents of renewal held protest meetings, marched on City Hall, and mailed twenty thousand postcards to City Council President James Tate. In an act that demonstrated the emotional intensity of the conflict, one woman wrote to Tate threatening “to bomb and bomb and bomb again until somebody is killed” unless council “got some sense” regarding Eastwick. The FBI matched her handwriting to one of the protest postcards and hauled her away to the psychiatric ward of Philadelphia General Hospital.

Significantly, these protests took place on a racially integrated basis. As early as July 1955, a member of the Citizens’ Council on City Planning, a local planning advocacy and watchdog organization, observed that “the protest groups have good leadership and a mixture of racial, national and religious groups not present heretofore in community organizations.” Not only did such groups have both black and white members, but in at least one case, an African American woman became the leader of a protest organization. The city’s African American newspaper, the Philadelphia Tribune, emerged as a leading opponent of urban renewal in Eastwick, but its coverage addressed issues that affected all residents without direct regard to race. Along with regular reports on the city’s planning efforts and the activities of the protest groups, the Tribune focused on such problems as the high housing costs projected for the new Eastwick, the difficulties that elderly Eastwick home owners would face in qualifying for new mortgages, and the future of local churches displaced by redevelopment. In 1958, Tribune columnist Art Peters emphasized racial cooperation as a defining characteristic of the Eastwick protest effort:

Negro and white residents of Eastwick are fighting together for what they call the “common cause.” The common cause, as they see it, is to prevent at any cost the planned redevelopment of Eastwick. Almost to a man, the Eastwick residents agree that the planned redevelopment of their community will cause segregated housing in Eastwick, which for years has been thoroughly integrated and which its citizens wish to remain integrated.

Such evidence of racial cooperation among the Eastwick protestors demonstrates that viable, interracial political activity and collaboration did take place in working-class communities in the postwar urban north (see Figure 3).

Interracial cooperation also provided a crucial context for one of the protest movement’s most interesting and historically significant strands of dissent. In August 1957, protest leader Dolores Rubillo charged that the Eastwick project reflected communist influence in Philadelphia’s city planning process, claiming that “this could be a socialistic move which could go a lot farther than Philadelphia in its implications.” Rubillo soon gained the support of South Philadelphia City Councilman Gaetano P. Giordano, who supported her request
that the FBI investigate her findings. Richardson H. Dilworth, who had become mayor in 1956 when Joseph Clark entered the U.S. Senate, immediately rebuffed Rubillo’s charges, which in fact had little factual basis.  

Undaunted, Rubillo again linked her opponents to communism in October when she testified before an unsympathetic Senate Subcommittee on Housing, which happened to be chaired by Senator Clark. This time, Rubillo broadened her strategy by equating opposition to urban renewal with patriotism and Americanism, noting that the residents of Eastwick call this urban-renewal program as used in Philadelphia a socialistic move against the many for the capitalistic gain of the few. We revolt against it. We call for justice and truth to come to the fore. The strong city forces have called us “flag wavers.” We are proud of that title. Even the flag of our country is a symbol of ridicule and to be sneered at by these pseudointellectuals. We ask for the things that our ancestors fought for, and we fought for. We will fight again to protect our homes. It is indeed a sad situation that now exists in this proud democracy.  

Despite the weakness of Rubillo’s specific, factual charge, her underlying ideological position managed to link a populist critique of business interest in urban renewal with the dominant political discourse of the period. Defining the protests as the revolt of hard-working Americans against a suspected, if perhaps contradictory, alliance between business and leftist intellectuals, Rubillo

Figure 3: Racially mixed group of Eastwick residents at the final public hearing on the Eastwick Urban Renewal Project, Convention Hall, Philadelphia, March 19, 1958. SOURCE: Urban Archives, Temple University, Philadelphia.
justified the legitimacy of her cause through a conception of citizenship grounded in patriotism and property ownership. Rather than a transformative demand, Rubillo thus presented a claim for inclusion: not only did the Eastwick protestors accept the principles of patriotism, anticommunism, and property ownership, but they also demanded that these principles be applied in defense of their rights and their interests.

By the time of Rubillo’s appearance before the Senate Committee, a variant on this strategy had also appeared in the African American press. On September 28, a full-page advertisement in the *Pittsburgh Courier* linked the Eastwick protests to patriotism and democracy as well as to religion and the New Deal. While it avoided the specific charge of communist influence, the ad decried the Eastwick project as an attempt to deploy the RA’s eminent domain power for the benefit of real estate and construction interests and asked “if this is not conspiracy, tell us what is conspiracy?” Featuring pictures of Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, and George Washington Carver, the ad stated that “redevelopment of Eastwick will be the worst attack on the American people since the attack on Pearl Harbor” and argued that the project would destroy “1. Our Democratic Way of Life 2. The Constitution of the United States 3. Our Churches and Homes.” The ad also juxtaposed quotations from Roosevelt’s four freedoms and day of infamy speeches with the Gettysburg Address and passages from the Bible and declared that “God sent Franklin D. Roosevelt to us. He was born again. God hears his children when they cry and he answers their prayers.” Finally, the ad concluded with a statement of the Eastwick residents’ desire for improvements without complete clearance. In combination, Dolores Rubillo’s statements and the *Courier* advertisement present a striking contrast to events in other northern cities during this period, in which working-class whites employed both anticommunist rhetoric and home-ownership-centered “rights talk” to defend racial segregation. In Eastwick, black and white protestors used similar rhetorical strategies in a cooperative, multiracial effort to block an unwanted urban renewal project. The existence of such cooperation provides evidence that race relations in urban, working-class communities could follow a range of patterns far wider than existing historiography has acknowledged.

**RATIONALIZING THE BULLDOZER:**

**THE LOGIC OF CITY POLICY IN EASTWICK**

During the late summer and early fall of 1957, it seemed that the Eastwick protests might be sufficient to force a political victory. In August, the staid *Evening Bulletin* chided the city for failing “to sell the idea gracefully to those who do not want to be redeveloped,” and a number of city council members expressed misgivings about the project. Commenting on Eastwick’s size and
cost, Councilman Giordano described the project as “too big a bite,” while Councilman Victor Moore suggested that it be built only in stages, “testing out each stage as we go along.”56 The Philadelphia Daily News reported that out of twelve councilmen available for survey, only three supported the project; while only one would go on record against it, eight stated that they were undecided and might vote either way. Eastwick’s “shouts, screams, and tears,” it appeared, had at last become audible in City Hall.57

In addition, the Eastwick protest movement coincided with the completion of a major internal reevaluation of Philadelphia’s entire urban renewal program. In early 1956, the RA released its Central Urban Renewal Area (CURA) study, the product of a two-year review of urban renewal’s progress and future goals. The CURA study estimated that the total cost of clearing and rebuilding the city’s existing blighted areas could run as high as $1 billion and concluded that at such costs, the city could not possibly keep pace with the formation of new slums. As a result, it established a new approach: rather than attacking the worst areas with aggressive clearance programs, the city would focus on the conservation of declining residential areas. Concurrently, it would pursue a vigorous program of economic development. The study drew a boundary around the central part of the city and proposed that no new renewal work should be undertaken outside of that line.58 Looming along the city’s edge, far outside this boundary, the massive and costly Eastwick project now became a source of frustration for many within the city’s urban renewal hierarchy. As one planner quipped in 1960, the city might have done better simply to turn the area into a racetrack.59

Amidst this context of community opposition, massive costs, and a reoriented urban renewal program, two policy considerations saved the Eastwick project from termination. First, had Eastwick been cancelled, the city would have lost approximately $54 million in federal urban renewal grants. In addition to the outright urban renewal grant of $22 million for the project itself, Eastwick had the potential to generate more than $32 million in future federal matching grants, which could be applied to projects in other areas of the city. This situation arose as a direct result of the incentive structure created by the Federal Housing Act of 1949, which allowed the city to claim all expenses for schools, streets, sewers, and community facilities within the project area as noncash credits toward the required local contribution of one-third of the overall project costs. Because the new Eastwick would effectively be built from the ground up, these items constituted an investment of more than $32.5 million. This allowed the city to exceed its required contribution by $16 million, and upon completion of the Eastwick project, the federal government would match such excess contributions on a 2-1 basis with grants for future urban renewal projects. Philadelphia’s entire urban renewal program had been predicated on the availability of the resulting funds, and the city had no plans to do anything that might jeopardize this money.60
The second window of continued relevance for the Eastwick project lay in the CURA program’s emphasis on economic development. Most existing accounts of postwar urban economic development emphasize the dominance of business-controlled, “pro-growth” coalitions that rebuilt downtown business districts, even as they destroyed existing communities that made up the organic urban fabric of American cities. Philadelphia’s economic plans included a heavy dose of such downtown rebuilding, but they also involved an extensive industrial renewal program designed to retain, and even expand, the city’s manufacturing base. Recognizing that the preservation of blue-collar manufacturing jobs constituted a central goal of local policy makes the concept of postwar urban liberalism far more meaningful. In the city of brotherly love in the 1950s and 1960s, it was indicative of a far-broader vision of the role of the local state in guiding economic development than has been previously acknowledged. Industrial renewal became a key part of the CURA program, and Eastwick’s place in this new industrial strategy provided a crucial reason to continue the project.

Such factors overwhelmed any doubts that city officials may have entertained about the project’s viability, and as a result, the protest movement in Eastwick ended in failure. After a series of delays, the HHFA announced final approval of the city’s loan and grant contract for Eastwick on November 13, and with the Planning Commission’s approval, Mayor Dilworth submitted the plan to city council in January 1958. The final public hearing on Eastwick, held on March 19, represented primarily an opportunity for residents to vent their rage as they faced a now seemingly inevitable defeat. One thousand residents attended, deriding the Eastwick plan as a “dream city with its monstrosities and ghettos” and as a “college boy’s idea of a dream city.” Dolores Rubillo delivered a petition with 4,500 signatures urging the city council to consider “the hand gnarled with labor extended for your consideration.” Even more than earlier protests, such comments delineated the distinct class differences that separated Eastwick residents from the planners and city officials who would determine the community’s future. In response, city council members expressed concern about rehousing residents, especially the elderly, who would be unable to afford homes in the new development. The lone African American city councilman, Raymond Pace Alexander, questioned the wisdom of destroying “this great and almost only integrated community in Philadelphia. . . . I do not want a beautiful Eastwick and an expanded pattern of segregation elsewhere.” Otherwise, council members seemed ready to give their approval, and on May 15, the Eastwick ordinance passed by a margin of fourteen to two. The Philadelphia Inquirer reported that only “a score of residents attended” this final meeting, some of them weeping as the city council approved the plan.
BUILDING THE NEW EASTWICK

In the years that followed the city council’s approval of the project, the implementation of urban renewal in Eastwick moved gradually and often haltingly forward. In many respects, the Eastwick project ultimately proved to be surprisingly successful but over a longer time period than expected and on a scale less grand than the city-within-a-city imagined by the project’s planners. Although Eastwick itself constituted a new community, its location within Philadelphia ensured that it could not escape such central dilemmas of twentieth-century American urbanism as racial conflict and rapid economic change. The area’s unique, if sometimes partial, success in addressing such issues rested on three crucial elements. First, the developers and the city relied on a system of racial quotas in the sale of the area’s new housing. Despite its blatant illegality, this policy succeeded in establishing an initial multiracial population. Second, the development process eventually provided both an expanding supply of affordable new housing and, in a feature nearly unique among postwar urban renewal projects, the physical infrastructure for a significant number of nearby jobs. In combination, these policies not only created a context of de facto integration but also supplied social and economic resources that made Eastwick a desirable place to live. Third, residents of the new Eastwick built on these basic resources by developing strong community institutions that allowed them to address divisive issues of race and establish a stable, integrated community.

Attainment of the official goals for Eastwick depended on the ability of the city to find a workable program for completing the huge project within the constraints imposed by a rapidly changing, and increasingly unstable, social and economic environment. In May 1960, the RA selected a joint development proposal from the Reynolds Aluminum Corporation and the small Philadelphia building firm of Samuel and Henry Berger. Reynolds and the Bergers organized a subsidiary known as the New Eastwick Corporation (NEC) and signed a ten-year contract that committed them to developing Eastwick on an integrated basis. At the September 1961 groundbreaking for Towne Gardens, Eastwick’s first new housing development, the developers promised to complete more than 2,000 homes by the end of their third year of work in Eastwick. NEC quickly fell behind this schedule, however, and by early 1966, only 503 new houses had been sold in Eastwick.

Although cost overruns, environmental problems, and construction defects plagued the early stages of the project, the most important cause of Eastwick’s slow residential development lay in the difficulties inherent to creating an interracial community. When housing went on sale in Towne Gardens in 1962, it quickly became apparent that the city had overestimated the feasibility of such a project. On the basis of the University of Pennsylvania housing study,
NEC feared that if a large number of blacks bought homes in Eastwick, white demand would fall off and cause the project to fail financially. To prevent this, they raised the price of new homes above $12,000, thus reducing the number of low-income families, and especially blacks, who could afford to live in the new Eastwick. Still, NEC sales agent Frank McClatchy reported that during this early stage of marketing, as many as two-thirds of white customers lost interest on learning that Eastwick would be integrated at all. The situation appeared even bleaker when the first black family moved into Towne Gardens in January 1963, as three recent white purchasers immediately withdrew their deposits.

NEC and the city thus found themselves caught between their commitment to an integrated project and their fear that if too many blacks bought homes in Eastwick, they might be left with thousands of acres of unmarketable land. With the approval of the CHR, NEC developed techniques of racial management to prevent such an outcome. Adopted in April 1962, the new approach had three elements: first, blacks would be encouraged to “window-shop” at other new housing developments in the Philadelphia area in an attempt to make the situation in Eastwick appear less unique; second, CHR staff would counsel NEC’s sales agents on how to handle the fears of white buyers; third, the city would “acquiesce to slightly dilatory tactics in the acceptance of Negro buyers.” Initially, NEC’s “slightly dilatory tactics” took the form of an appeal to African American customers to delay moving into Eastwick for a year. This, the salesmen told them, would allow the establishment of a white population large enough to assure racial stability in Towne Gardens. At that point, African American buyers could be safely placed throughout a “truly integrated Eastwick.” In contrast, salesmen told black customers that if they moved in immediately, they would “be living in an all-Negro neighborhood. Not only now, but forever.”

Such tactics placed the burden of overcoming white racism almost solely on African American home buyers. Not surprisingly, this produced an angry reaction in Philadelphia’s African American community. Stating that it sought “to place the Negro buyers in the same position as are white buyers,” the local branch of the NAACP filed a complaint in April 1962 with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) on behalf of four black families who had been denied their choice of housing in Eastwick. Under pressure from the PHRC, NEC agreed to give the plaintiffs their choice of houses and abandon the restrictive practices immediately. The racial dynamics of the Eastwick housing market had not changed, however, and once NEC’s “slightly dilatory tactics” had been disallowed, the company adopted more subtle measures. When the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) sent black and white “testers” into Eastwick in late 1962, the civil rights group found that

Negro prospects were not being accorded the same treatment as white prospects by sales personnel at Towne Gardens. . . . In every single instance where Negro
CORE testers had visited Towne Gardens, they had been advised that no homes would be available before Spring of next year. In addition, these Negro testers found it necessary to seek out sales persons to secure information and were only given terse answers to specific questions. On the other hand, white testers were actively pursued by sales personnel and were informed that homes were available for almost immediate occupancy. White testers also received follow-up telephone calls urging them to buy houses at Towne Gardens.\textsuperscript{96}

Faced with CORE’s threat to organize demonstrations in Eastwick, the CHR launched its own investigation and concluded in April 1963 that NEC “may be in technical violation of its contract in the handling of Negro applicants who want to purchase homes.”\textsuperscript{77} In September 1963, NEC agreed to the immediate move in of twenty-four black families who had purchased Eastwick homes, and company officials made strong statements to the newspapers about their continuing dedication to the goal of an integrated community. The developer also offered bonuses to salesmen who convinced white customers to buy houses on integrated blocks.\textsuperscript{78} A little more than a year later, however, an NEC official admitted that the developers still hoped to apply a quota controlling the black presence in the new Eastwick: “we’ve got to keep it under twenty percent if we are to make this thing a go.”\textsuperscript{79} Throughout the remainder of the development process, civil rights groups and the CHR filed repeated discrimination complaints against the developers. In 1970 alone, the CHR identified nineteen cases of housing discrimination in Eastwick, prompting CHR Director Clarence Farmer to characterize the situation as “just bad.”\textsuperscript{80}

Despite these continuing difficulties, the pace of construction gradually increased during the late 1960s, and by 1970 Eastwick had 1,654 new housing units.\textsuperscript{81} In the early 1970s, the selection of southern Eastwick as the route for Interstate-95 eliminated additional industrial and residential land, but construction in other sections of the project continued throughout that decade. By 1982, 4,022 new housing units, three shopping centers, two schools, a library, and a pedestrian greenway had been completed, and Eastwick’s population had risen to more than 18,000.\textsuperscript{82} Residential development in Eastwick moved far slower than city officials expected, and it ultimately fell far short of the projected fifty-thousand person city-within-a-city. Nonetheless, the Eastwick project eventually produced a significant amount of lower-middle-income housing, and the area as a whole constituted one of only three sections of Philadelphia that experienced population growth between 1970 and 1990.\textsuperscript{83}

Construction of the industrial sections of Eastwick followed a trajectory similar to that of the residential areas. The industrial parks developed slowly and never completely met the expectations that had been raised by efforts to justify the overall project. Nonetheless, their presence ultimately provided an important source of local jobs that helped to stabilize the new Eastwick and preserve the community’s delicate racial balance. In early 1961, the RA selected the Philadelphia Builders Eastwick Corporation (PBEC), a consortium
of local builders, as the developer of Eastwick’s first industrial areas. PBEC focused its initial efforts on developing a 604-acre tract known as the Delaware Valley Industrial Park. Although high land and construction costs made it difficult for PBEC to compete with industrial parks in suburban Pennsylvania and New Jersey, the developer attracted a major industrial corporation as the park’s first occupant when International Harvester established a truck sales and service facility in 1964. Other companies soon followed and built a series of warehouses, distribution centers, truck terminals, and light manufacturing facilities in Eastwick. Each of these companies relied on the area’s nearby transportation facilities, and this established a pattern that persisted throughout the remainder of the industrial development process.

In 1972, responsibility for developing Eastwick’s industrial land passed from PBEC to the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC), a quasi-public authority charged with managing the city’s industrial renewal program. Under PIDC’s management, the development of the industrial park accelerated, and during the 1970s, southwest Philadelphia constituted one of only two city industrial districts in which the number of manufacturing jobs increased. PIDC made an explicit effort to take advantage of the nearby airport, highways, and port by encouraging the concentration of additional warehouses, distribution centers, and specialized manufacturing companies in Eastwick’s industrial park. Although such businesses did not always generate the density of employment that Eastwick’s planners had forecast or that Eastwick’s residents desired, the strategy quickened the pace of development by focusing on firms that could take advantage of a location near major components of the regional transportation infrastructure. By the mid-1980s, the industrial areas of Eastwick contained approximately forty firms that employed nearly two thousand people, while the airport and PIDC’s nearby Penrose industrial tracts offered more than 2,600 additional jobs. PIDC estimated that Eastwick residents held approximately one-eighth of these jobs, and in 1989, a community newsletter commented on the relationship between work and housing in Eastwick:

When Eastern Airlines first went on strike, there was [sic] a number of Airline related workers who came to the PAC [Project Area Committee] Office in search of work. This could attribute to the fact that many Airport employees live in and around the Eastwick Area. This also indicated the importance of having decent, affordable, housing in close proximity to one’s employment.

More than thirty years before, the original Churchill Plan had emphasized the need to link the creation of affordable housing in Eastwick to the establishment of a local employment base. The eventual achievement of this goal served the simple but critical function of increasing both the desirability and the stability of the new community.
INTEGRATION AND COMMUNITY IN THE NEW EASTWICK

As the physical development of Eastwick proceeded, race relations in the area gradually improved. Although NEC’s housing quotas were illegal, and without question illiberal, they ultimately served their intended purpose of establishing an interracial population.93 By 1975, African Americans constituted 20.8 percent of Eastwick’s total population, and this initial interracial population provided a starting point for the slow improvement of race relations.94 The growing supply of affordable housing and nearby blue-collar jobs made Eastwick an increasingly desirable community, and most residents found that the fact of integration proved to be at least a tolerable condition. For some in the new community, integration even became a point of pride.

For many of Eastwick’s new white residents, the actual experience of living with African American neighbors forced them to reconsider, if not completely reject, their racially based preconceptions. Faced with the character and responsibility exhibited by their new black neighbors, some whites displayed a capacity to accept specific blacks whom they actually knew, even if they maintained their prejudices about the group as a whole. In 1976, a white Eastwick resident’s response to a reporter’s question about race relations illustrated this pattern: “As to integration, no problems. Eastwick is a perfect mix of ethnic and religious groups. There are no welfare types. A black family lives right behind me. They’re very nice.”95 This observation indicates that along with the positive associations created by everyday interactions across racial lines, the relative similarity of incomes and social status among Eastwick’s black and white residents contributed to overcoming racial divisions (see Figure 4).

The interracial makeup of Eastwick’s population also affected the manner in which the new community dealt with problems. Originally organized during the early 1970s to take advantage of a federal loan and grant program for housing rehabilitation, the Eastwick Project Area Committee (EPAC) quickly broadened its activities and served an important function in the slow attainment of racial stability in Eastwick. Drawing participants from all of Eastwick’s neighborhoods, EPAC operated on an interracial basis and provided a venue in which residents could raise concerns and work collectively toward the solution of common problems.96 During the 1970s and 1980s, the organization published a community newsletter, secured improved public transportation, established a job referral service, and monitored development progress. In the face of city budget cuts, it lobbied for the repair of older streets, the improvement of conditions in the remaining prerenewal areas, and the enforcement of laws against illegal dumping.97 EPAC also actively addressed crisis situations in the community. In 1980, it responded to the racially tinged murder of a teenager by organizing summer programs and day camps for local children, programs that also employed Eastwick teenagers as counselors. During the same summer, the Penrose Park West section of Eastwick became the
target of block-busting efforts by real estate agents, and EPAC worked with the
CHR and the Philadelphia Board of Realtors to impose a ban on real estate
solicitations.98

Most important, EPAC’s wide range of activities helped to link residents of
Eastwick’s disparate neighborhoods into a common community. As Lois
Schaub, EPAC’s first president, explained at a 1973 EPAC board meeting,

the most important and significant accomplishment of the Eastwick PAC is that
seven distinct neighborhoods have come together and formed an organization
committed to the principal that we share in common a desire for the general
improvement and well-being of the greater Eastwick community, above all indi-
vidual and neighborhood interests. Residents of different backgrounds, from
different religious, racial and ethnic heritages, have begun to work together and
to learn to trust and respect each other. . . . One thing we have learned, is that we
can only succeed if we are united. There will always be differences and conflicts
between individuals and different neighborhoods, but the PAC can provide a
framework or mechanism through which we can arrive at constructive solutions
with respect for all points of view.99

Schaub’s statement indicates that, despite its high costs in both human suffering
and public investment, the original liberal vision of an integrated community
had been partially fulfilled in Eastwick. By 1994, the Philadelphia Daily News
portrayed Eastwick as a significant exception to the patterns of racial segregation
that prevailed elsewhere in Philadelphia and described the area, with
perhaps some journalistic exaggeration, as “color-blind, and happy.” Urban renewal had provided the physical infrastructure for the new Eastwick, but the successful development of an integrated community ultimately depended on the emergence of a sense of collective agency and common interest among the area’s residents.

An examination of block-level census data provides statistical evidence regarding the extent, as well as the limitations, of Eastwick’s long-term racial integration. Although variations existed between different sections of Eastwick, such analysis reveals that many of the new neighborhoods eventually attained a relatively high and surprisingly stable level of integration (see Table 1). Among the new neighborhoods, only the relatively small Blue Bell Manor East development, which stood immediately adjacent to the perpetually all-white area along Eastwick’s northwestern edge, remained entirely segregated. In Towne Gardens, the object of the NAACP and CORE protests in 1962 and 1963, African Americans constituted 35 percent of the population in 1970. By 1980, the African American proportion had risen to 52 percent. Ten years later, however, the African American population remained stable at 54 percent, indicating that Towne Gardens avoided the process of “racial tipping” that occurred in many American urban neighborhoods during this period. Integration levels in Penrose Park South and North (completed prior to 1970) remained significantly lower than in Towne Gardens, but the African American percentage increased gradually, and the area avoided rapid turnover. In the newer Penrose Park West area, the block-busting efforts of real estate agents in the early 1980s produced a higher rate of racial turnover than that experienced in other Eastwick neighborhoods, but the area still retained a multiracial population in 1990. Developments in the remainder of Eastwick’s western sections (stages II and IV), built primarily in the 1970s, had a higher African American percentage than the first renewal neighborhoods and some developed pockets with very little integration. Nonetheless, the area experienced only slow changes in racial composition between 1980 and 1990. Although overall figures for an area as large as Eastwick inevitably elide important nuances in racial housing patterns, it is worth noting that in 1990, 35 percent of Eastwick’s population was African American; in 1950, prior to urban renewal, only 24 percent of the population had been African American (see Table 2).

EASTWICK AND POSTWAR URBAN HISTORY

As it had prior to urban renewal, Eastwick by the 1980s constituted a partial but important exception to the prevailing economic, demographic, and racial patterns of both Philadelphia and the urban United States. This observation yields two insights, including one about the nature of postwar urban liberalism and a second about the capacity for interracial cooperation in urban, working-class communities. First, the experience of urban renewal in Eastwick suggests
that, from a policy standpoint, the key to achieving integration in a working-class urban area lay in linking affordable housing to the creation of a neighborhood employment base while also controlling the area’s racial composition through an illicit quota system. This combination of liberal planning provisions and illiberal development practices ultimately defined both the process and the outcome of urban renewal in Eastwick. Its cumulative effect demonstrated not only that an interracial, working-class population could be established in an urban area but also that local public policy could play an important and at least partially successful role in defining the spatial and economic structure of the postindustrial city. The sad irony of this process was that

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American Percentage of Population, by Neighborhood Units, New and Existing Housing, Eastwick Urban Renewal Area, 1970 to 1990 (total population of unit in parentheses)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation area (existing)</td>
<td>67 I</td>
<td>0.2 (1,944)</td>
<td>0 (1,607)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation area (existing)</td>
<td>61 I</td>
<td>0 (1,784)</td>
<td>0.3 (1,489)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation area (existing)</td>
<td>60 I</td>
<td>0.2 (1,620)</td>
<td>0.8 (1,941)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation area (existing)</td>
<td>55 II</td>
<td>1 (2,540)</td>
<td>2 (1,883)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Bell Manor (east)</td>
<td>61 I</td>
<td>0 (700)</td>
<td>0 (751)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towne Gardens</td>
<td>61 I</td>
<td>35 (1,281)</td>
<td>52 (1,306)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Bell Manor (west)</td>
<td>60 I</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>65 (251)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penrose Park (south)</td>
<td>60 I</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>10 (1,553)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unico Village*</td>
<td>60 I</td>
<td>4 (68)</td>
<td>13 (270)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penrose Park (north)</td>
<td>60 I</td>
<td>5 (236)</td>
<td>11 (774)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penrose Park Apts.</td>
<td>55 II</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>44 (1,437)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penrose Park (west)</td>
<td>55 II</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>47 (2,954)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonacquired housing</td>
<td>54 II</td>
<td>76 (452)</td>
<td>78 (719)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindbergh Park</td>
<td>56 II</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>77 (540)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonacquired housing</td>
<td>54 IV</td>
<td>49 (35)</td>
<td>81 (62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobblestone Village</td>
<td>54 IV</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>72 (873)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


a. Unico Village is a senior citizen apartment complex.
the combined effect of the limitations of municipal finance and the constraints of federal urban renewal requirements meant that such liberal ends as racial integration and the preservation of the city’s industrial base were pursued through the illiberal means of destroying Eastwick’s existing interracial community.

Second, the actions of Eastwick residents both before and after urban renewal demonstrated that, to an extent far greater than the existing historical literature would suggest, interracial working-class cooperation and political action did take place in the postwar urban north. In the old Eastwick, the ability of residents to act on an interracial basis when faced with the threat of urban renewal suggests that post-World War II urban race relations did not always operate according to predetermined patterns of inevitable conflict. In the new Eastwick, the construction of housing and nearby factories provided crucial resources but ultimately constituted only the starting point for a successful,
integrated community. Such a community actually emerged when residents recognized that their common interests transcended the divisions of race and neighborhood. Existing historical accounts emphasize only the seemingly insoluble elements of the postwar urban racial crisis, while the extent and the implications of working-class capacities for interracial alliance building remain largely unexplored. As the largest urban renewal project anywhere in the United States, Eastwick’s legacy suggests elements of complexity and ambiguity that have not yet been addressed by scholarship in postwar American urban history.

NOTES


6. The 1950 census reported that in the area’s southern census tracts, 24 percent of dwellings lacked a private bath or were dilapidated, 15 percent lacked running water or were dilapidated, and 16 percent met the census definition of overcrowding. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Population: 1950. Volume III, Census Tract Statistics: Philadelphia and Adjacent Area*, chapter 42, Table 3: Characteristics of Dwelling Units: 1950 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1952), 171. Eastwick census tracts included in these calculations were 40-Q, 40-R, 40-U, 40-V, 40-W, 40-X, 40-Y, 40-Z. Similar calculations for the remaining northern tracts (40-M, 40-N, 40-P, containing 2,856 dwelling units) indicate that 2.42 percent lacked a private bath or were dilapidated, 1.02 percent lacked running water or were dilapidated, and 6.13 percent met the standard for overcrowding. For discussions of specific conditions in Eastwick, including rats and lack of sewers, see Eastwick Planners, *Eastwick Redevelopment Area Report: Report to the Philadelphia City Planning Commission on Recommendations to the Redevelopment Authority to the City of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: City of Philadelphia, October 1953), 1-3; RA annual report for 1950, 24-7; RA, “Application for Preliminary Advance, Eastwick Redevelopment Area,” March 15, 1951, Housing Association of the Delaware Valley, Neighborhood and Urban Renewal Areas Files (HADV NURA), Box 2, Folder 18, Urban Archives, 3-4; CPC, “Eastwick Redevelopment Area Designation of Area,” December 13, 1950, HADV NURA, Box 2, Folder 19, Urban Archives, 1-2.


10. Eisler, “Uprooting a Community,” 2; Moak to Lynes, 1.

11. Seventeen-year-old Eastwick resident Joanna Bazis detailed these attractions in a 1953 essay published in *The Gleam*, the student newspaper of West Philadelphia Catholic Girls High School:

   as far as the eye can reach there are patches of bullrushes looking like displays of giant cigs. . . . Walk through the sour grasses, sweet to taste, to the lush green that banks Bow Creek. . . . Great areas near the river are covered with dainty, slender elderberry bushes. . . . Meadow people pick them from the high tangled brambles. It is impossible to cover the natural beauties of and oddities of our Meadows in one day.


13. Houses in the all-white northwest section were newer and in better condition than other sections of Eastwick, and the RA scheduled most of them for conservation rather than clearance. The total population of the remaining area of Eastwick, which would undergo urban renewal, included 8,175 whites and 4,638 non-whites. Eastwick Planners, *Eastwick Redevelopment Area Report*, 1, 12. For the quoted passage, see George B. Neshitt, special assistant to the director (racial relations), to Howard Wharton, Area I supervisor, Housing and Home Finance Administration Division of Slum Clearance and Urban Redevelopment, “Field Trip, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Eastwick) 5-6 August 1954,” August 19, 1954, Citizens’ Council on City Planning (CCCP) Records, Box 11, URB 10/IV/1, Urban Archives, 3. The index of dissimilarity is a measure that indicates the percentage of a population that would have to move to achieve an even dispersion of two groups through a population. For Eastwick as a whole (including the all-white northwestern section), calculation of the index using 1950 census block data yields a value of 75.8; the index number for the city of Philadelphia as a whole is 89.0. The Eastwick index is the result of the author’s calculations, using block data from the 1950 U.S. Census and following the procedure outlined in Douglas S. Massey and Nancy Cassidy, “Eastwick as It Was,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, November 18, 1957.


15. Moak to Lynes, April 3, 1959, 1.

16. Ibid.


20. David M. Walker to Edmund N. Bacon, August 5, 1949, CPC Records, Folder: Eastwick Correspondence 1948-1952, Record Group 145.2, Box A-2898, City Archives; Walker to Bacon, August 6, 1949, CPC Records, ibid.

21. Sidney Hopkins, “Requiem for a Renaissance,” Greater Philadelphia Magazine, November 1964, 34. Continuing, Hopkins argues that “Eastwick,” in the words of one of the early planners, “was conceived in sin.” Hopkins also quotes a former RA planner who states that “[Eastwick] is a place nobody should live in . . . It would never have been considered suitable for white middle class people but since it was originally to have been a ghetto for displaced Negroes, its obvious physical disadvantages were overlooked.” Ibid., 34, 54. See also Wallace, “Renaissance, Arts,” 160.


23. For a discussion of the relationship between the Eastwick plan (as revised in 1960 by the Greek city planner Constantine Doxiadis) and the Garden City ideal, see CPC, Review of the Eastwick Urban Renewal Plan, 6. For a summary of Ebenezer Howard’s ideas and his influence on both American and European...


27. Ornithological clubs from all over the East Coast lobbied the city to include the bird sanctuary. Francis H. Eaton M.D. to Walter M. Phillips, November 12, 1952, DC-CR, RG 64.6, Box A-4813, Folder 28, City Archives; Phillips to Eaton, December 8, 1952, DC-CR, ibid.; Allston Jenkins to “Fellow-Conservatism,” November 20, 1952, DC-CR, ibid., and additional correspondence in this file.


30. The first official public comment on the integration issue identified by the author occurred on April 27, 1954, when RA Planning Director David Wallace informed a multiracial group of Eastwick residents that “we have every intention of maintaining the bi-racial character of Eastwick and seeing to it that it remains the happy place that it is.” “Eastwick Council Group Expresses Views on Redevelopment Proposal,” *Philadelphia Tribune*, May 1, 1954, “misc clippings and charts, Comm. of 30,” CCCP Records, Box 11, URB 10/IV/7, Urban Archives, 1. Both Nesbitt’s report on Eastwick (see note 13) and the Housing Market Survey described below indicate that the decision predated not only this statement but also the release of the Churchill Plan.
31. In a May 1955 speech in Chicago, Joseph Clark outlined his position on integration:

Discrimination exists without any regard to economic status. Private housing, finance and real estate practices, as well as continued prejudices, severely limit areas where Negro families may live. Unless we can break through some of these barriers at a much more rapid rate than heretofore, the unsolved minority shelter problem will remain an ominous cloud over the whole urban renewal concept.


32. Nesbitt, “Field Trip, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Eastwick),” 1. Nesbitt also commented that in Eastwick, “the city does seem intent on providing housing which is in fact neither ‘Negro housing’ marketed as ‘unrestricted’ nor housing subject to Negro occupancy but beyond reach of substantial numbers of such families.”


35. The study projected that in the city of Philadelphia, the total supply of houses in the $10,000 range would exceed demand by 31,000. Chester Rapkin and William G. Grigsby, The Demand for Housing in Eastwick (Philadelphia: Institute for Urban Studies, 1960), 7, 54-5, 60-78. This volume summarizes the study and its conclusions. Commissioned to undertake the project in 1954, the institute released the study’s first report, The Demand for Housing in the Eastwick Redevelopment Area: An Interim Report, in June 1956. For a detailed discussion of the University of Pennsylvania study, see RA, “Conference on Eastwick Redevelopment,” April 26, 1957, General Pamphlet Collection (GPC), Box 70-17, Folder: Eastwick, Urban Archives, 20-4. The final report projected an African American demand of 2,000 units. Rapkin and Grigsby, The Demand for Housing in Eastwick, 65.

36. The Eastwick housing market study suggested that integration could be sustained if blacks made up no more than 11 percent of the new Eastwick’s population (it assumed that this would cause a 30 percent decline in white demand). It also suggested that the first new houses should be in the upper half of the price range to avoid a public perception that Eastwick would be a black area. Rapkin and Grigsby, The Demand for Housing in Eastwick, 5-8, 60-78; see also Joseph M. Guess, “Integration of Families in Eastwick Is Biggest Problem, Report Says,” Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, March 19, 1958, EPAC Records, Acc. 870, Box 21: Newspaper Clippings, Urban Archives. For a controversy arising from the implications of the city’s paradoxical position, see “Philadelphia’s New Problem,“ Time, February 24, 1958, 18-9; “Segregation: Inside Story of Philadelphia’s Racial Housing Problem, as Told by the Mayor,” House and Home, March 1958, 67-8; “Time Magazine Says Mayor Favors Housing Segregation; Not True, Says Dilworth,” Philadelphia Tribune, February 25, 1958, EPAC Records, Acc. 870, Box 20: Newspaper Clippings, Urban Archives; “Mayor Dilworth Claims Price Range Will Bar Negroes from Buying Property in Eastwick,” Philadelphia Tribune, March 1958, ibid.
42. A self-described “average housewife” made this point in a letter to the Evening Bulletin in 1957: “It was said that the people out here do not want improvements. I, as a taxpayer, would enjoy improvements. Give us pavements, sewerage, playgrounds and schools, but don’t demolish. There is plenty of open ground for building.” Mrs. Alexander J. Young, “’Average Housewife’s’ View of Eastwick [letter to editor],” Philadelphia Inquirer, August 29, 1957, clipping in EPAC Records, Acc. 870, Box 19, Urban Archives. See also Art Peters, “Elmwood Is My Beat,” Philadelphia Tribune, August 17, 1957, clipping in EPAC Records, Acc. 870, Box 19, Urban Archives, 8.
46. “Red Influence in Eastwick Plan Charges by Foes,” Philadelphia Inquirer, August 13, 1957, 5. Although the woman was released from Philadelphia General a week later, she also lost her job at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. The Tribune reported that “her friends say that she was NOT mentally unbalanced, only frustrated and angered because she was not the focus of her friends and relatives were losing their homes as a result of the Redevelopment Authority’s plan.” Peters, “Elmwood Is My Beat,” Philadelphia Tribune, August 31, 1957, clipping in EPAC Records, Acc. 870, Box 21, Urban Archives; Peters, “Elmwood Is My Beat,” Philadelphia Tribune, September 10, 1957, 8.
Organization Vows Intent to Hold Out against Redevelopment,” *Pittsburgh Courier* (Philadelphia section), June 14, 1958, EPAC Records, Acc. 870, Box 20; Newspaper Clippings, Urban Archives, 1, which features comments from members of the multiracial group Eastwick Residents against Redevelopment. A photograph shows a black man (D. Carver Clinkscale) and white woman (Mrs. Rose Sharkey) holding a sign that reads, “Only Americans Live in Eastwick.”


50. Certain issues had greater salience for African Americans than for other groups. In 1957, rumors circulated that the RA would select William Levitt as the exclusive developer for Eastwick. The all-white composition of the existing Levittown developments sparked fears among Philadelphia blacks that if Levitt took over the project, the new Eastwick would have a similar character. Despite denials by city officials, the *Tribune* maintained that “there was serious reason to believe . . . that Levitt is being given every consideration as a prospective builder” and reported that most Eastwick residents “expected the new housing project to be rigidly segregated once it is completed.” Art Peters, “Levittown Builder Reportedly Trying to Take Over; Residents Furious as Levitt Seeks City Contract to Build,” *Philadelphia Tribune*, September 17, 1957, clipping in EPAC Records, Acc. 870, Box 21: Newspaper Clippings, Urban Archives. In fact, the RA’s Board rejected Levitt’s proposal in part because its members questioned the sincerity of the developer’s claim that he saw Eastwick as an opportunity “to redeem his position and make a name for himself” as an advocate of housing integration. CHR Director George Schermer summarized these doubts about the seriousness of Levitt’s interest in integration:

I hear [RA Executive Director] Frank Lammer say that Mr. Levitt was hoping to find redemption. I don’t carry a union card in the soul-saving business, but I will risk that if it is salvation [he wants], it is to be found in Levittown, and not in Eastwick.


51. Rubillo based her charges on the rather tenuous observation that Lewis Mumford, who during the Senate McCarthy hearings had been falsely accused of being a Communist, had held a visiting appointment in the University of Pennsylvania’s City Planning Department during the time that Eastwick had been planned. “Red Influence in Eastwick Plan Charged by Foes,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (clipping), August 13, 1957; “Mayor Rips Tale of ‘Red’ Eastwick,” *Philadelphia Daily News* (clipping), August 14, 1957, AMG Papers, Box 414, Folder 5, HSP.


54. “Eastwick—Philadelphia, Penna., U.S.A.” Reprinted from *Pittsburgh Courier* (Philadelphia section), September 28, 1957, AMG Papers, Box 271, Folder 15, HSP. The ad was placed by a Mr. Clinkscale, who may be the same man mentioned in note 47 above. “Memorandum,” Anthony DeAngelo to John J. O’Shea, January 14, 1958, AMG Papers, Box 271, Folder 15, HSP.


Downloaded from http://juh.sagepub.com at DREXEL UNIV LIBRARIES on June 2, 2009
58. The Central Urban Renewal Area (CURA) report recognized that slum clearance was not only prohibitively expensive but that it also led to overcrowding and accelerated decline in adjoining neighborhoods because of the resulting residential displacement. The new policy did not completely abandon clearance but called for its use on a “spot” basis within declining but survivable areas. It should be noted that the boundary for new renewal work included an area far larger than the central business district alone. For the CURA report itself, see RA, Summary Report on the Central Urban Renewal Area (C.U.R.A.) (Philadelphia: City of Philadelphia, March 1956); for its announcement, see Office of the Development Coordinator, “A New Approach to Urban Renewal for Philadelphia,” March 1957, Petshek Papers, Acc. 202, Box 2, Folder: Urban Renewal, Urban Archives.


64. Saul Schraga, “1000 Residents Defy Eastwick Plan at Hearing,” Philadelphia Inquirer, March 20, 1958, AMG Papers, Box 414, Folder 5, HSP.


73. The CHR’s acceptance of the tactic was premised on “the understanding that this will be an integrated community.” “Memo to File: Notes on Meeting Called by Commission on Human Relations Regarding the Sale of Houses in Eastwick,” April 10, 1962, HADV-OF, 1951-70, URB 3, Series V, Box 118, Folder 580: September 1961 to June 1962, 1-2. In the same week, the CHR’s report to the mayor provided further details about the window-shopping initiative:

> It is evident that the brokers and salesmen in competing developments are telling their prospects that Towne Gardens is likely to be an all Negro development while their own projects will end up being restricted to whites. The important antidote to such sales tactics is to encourage Negroes to shop around for houses at new developments so that white buyers will be impressed with the fact that Negroes are shopping around everywhere. Several groups will seek to recruit white buyers who will volunteer to purchase “the house next door” to Negro occupied dwellers in Eastwick so as to give encouragement to other more cautious buyers.


74. Goulden, “Eastwick: More Promises Than Progress in First Years,” 6. The quotations are from an unnamed source “close to the Eastwick project.”

75. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Philadelphia, “Memorandum to: Mr. and Mrs. William C. Morris—Re: Lot No. 46; Mr. and Mrs. Earl Williams—Re: Lot No. 48; Mr. and Mrs. George C. Draper—Re: Lot No. 45; Mr. and Mrs. Hamlin Parks—Re Lot No. 62,” June 6, 1962, PBMC, Folder: Eastwick (section) Towne Gardens Misc., Urban Archives, 1; CHR, “Weekly Report to the Mayor,” May 11 and 25, 1962, Mayor’s Files—1962 (James H. J. Tate), RG 60-2.5, Box A-6350, Folder Weekly Reports—Comm. Human Relations, City Archives; ODC, “Summary of Activities,” May 3, 18, and 24, 1962, Mayor Files—1962, RG 60-2.5, Box A-6350, Folder Weekly Reports—Development Coordinator, City Archives.


77. ODC, “Summary of Activities,” April 10 and 24, 1963, Mayor Tate Files, RG 60-2.5, Box A-6378, Folder Weekly Reports—Development Coordinator, City Archives.

78. CHR, “Weekly Report to Mayor James H. J. Tate,” September 20, 1963, Mayor Tate Files, RG 60-2.5, Box A-6378, Folder Weekly Reports—Human Relations, City Archives, 1-2; Dyke, “Oversold and Underbuilt.” In October 1963, NEC President Albert Cole told the *Bulletin* that “we knew what we were getting into in New Eastwick. We knew it would take a lot of courage to do. We are doing it. We shall continue to do it.” Sales agent Frank McClatchy added that “he took the job . . . because he thought ‘a sincere job of building an integrated community had to be done, and the developers were out to do it. I won’t quit. I’m that bullheaded. They may fire me but I won’t quit.” McCord, “The New Eastwick,” 6.


hall, and the South Philadelphia Auto Mall, which established a concentration of auto dealerships along a forty-five acre tract on Essington Avenue.


89. CPC, Issue Paper—*Industrial Philadelphia: A Study of Industrial Land Use* (Philadelphia: City of Philadelphia, 1990), 16-7. The southwest industrial district, consisting of Eastwick, the airport, and the Penrose Industrial Park, experienced an increase of 153 percent, from 902 jobs to 2,278 jobs. South Philadelphia was the only other industrial district in which manufacturing employment increased.


92. “Jobs and Training,” *Pacwick Papers* XIX:IX (1989), EPAC Records, Acc. 870, Box 1, Folder: PAC Info, Urban Archives, 1. Data on Eastwick employment and number of firms is compiled from CPC, *Review of the Eastwick Urban Renewal Plan*, 14; “Joseph M. Egan, Jr. to Chip Bassett,” August 13, 1982, EPAC Records, Acc. 870, Box 5, Folder: Industrial; EPAC, “New Industrial Development,” n.d. [prob. 1983-1984], EPAC Records, Acc. 870, Box 6, Folder: Area Industry Contributors. In cases in which the completion of a land transaction could not be confirmed, the firm involved was not included in this count; as a result, the estimate may underestimate the actual total by as much as five firms. The estimate of employment at the airport and in the Penrose Industrial Park is based on a list of company addresses and employment compiled from 1980 *Dalton’s Directory; Business and Industry* (Haverford, PA; Dalton’s Directory, 1980), and 1990 *Dalton’s Philadelphia Metropolitan Directory; Business/Industry; Philadelphia/Suburbs; South Jersey Delaware* (Haverford, PA; Dalton’s Directory, 1990), cross checked against EPAC, untitled list of area industry contributors, n.d. [prob. 1983-1984], EPAC Records, Acc. 870, Box 6, Folder: Area Industry Contributors, 1-10, and PIDC, *Annual Report* 1975, 4. For the share of total employment held by Eastwick residents, see PIDC, “Philadelphia Interport Business Complex; PIDC Transactions,” August 13, 1982; Charles Andrews, “Memo to Eastwick Coordinating Committee; Subject: Record of Discussion Eastwick URA (D.13),” September 13, 1982, EPAC Records, Acc. 870, Box 10, Folder: E.C.C., 2.


101. For the “racial tipping” model, see Thomas C. Schelling, “Dynamic Models of Segregation,” Journal of Mathematical Sociology 1 (1971): 143-86; Schelling, Micromotives and Macrobehavior (New York: Norton, 1978); Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton, American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 95-7. Massey and Denton suggest that if the black population of a neighborhood rose to 50 percent, 64 percent of whites would attempt to leave, while few or none would move in; Towne Gardens’ stability between 1980 and 1990 is thus quite notable. Ibid., 96. See Table 1 for an explanation of the derivation of these statistics.

102. Despite a 1980 population that was 72 percent African American, the number of whites in the Cobblestone Village area (the fastest growing section of western Eastwick during this period) increased from 248 in 1980 to 390 in 1990.