

Urban Renewal, Vinegar Hill, *Charlottesville Daily Progress* Articles, 1960 (page 1 of 4)

Bank Presidents Support Redevelopment Program

The presidents of the three local banks have endorsed the proposed redevelopment and public housing program in a radio interview recorded for broadcast today.

W. Wright Harrison of the Peoples National Bank, Henry A. Haden of the National Bank and Trust Company, and William B. Trevillian of the Citizens Bank and Trust Company all recommend that the program be adopted.

The statements were made in answer to questions by Ray Niblack, news director of Station WINA.

"The future of our community is dependent upon the passage of this legislation," Harrison said.

Haden said he favors the pro-

posal and will vote for it next Tuesday. A referendum on redevelopment and public housing will be held at the same time as Tuesday's City Council election.

Trevillian said he favors the program and urged support of it "to the fullest."

Asked his opinion on the feeling of some downtown merchants that urban renewal of Vinegar Hill would draw competition that would be detrimental to merchants already in the downtown area, Harrison replied:

"I certainly disagree with this feeling.

"New business will come to the community as the buying power of the community increases. They won't come simply because a piece of land is available.

"When new businesses decide to move to Charlottesville, they will either select a site in the downtown business area, or be forced to go to the outskirts of the city, perhaps to a shopping center.

"If there is available good land within three or four blocks of the center of the downtown business area, they will go there, which will mean a further development of our downtown area rather than a further development of the more remote shopping centers."

Harrison said this would give downtown merchants "assurance that the downtown area will have space to grow and that new business will join with present mer-

chants in building up the downtown section."

"Certainly a merchant would rather have a competitor within four blocks than have that same competitor move out to the shopping center, miles away, and thus draw traffic away from the downtown area," he said.

Asked his prediction of what would happen if urban renewal is voted down, Harrison said:

"I believe the effect would be rather serious in that the present downtown area is limited as far as possible expansion is concerned. There is nowhere that new store buildings can be erected in what is considered the downtown section.

"This means further expansion would have to be at a more remote location than in the present urban renewal site. I cannot say that this would be the end of downtown Charlottesville," said Harrison. "If we do not pass this legislation, however, I do feel it would curtail the future growth and possibly in the long run result in a depreciation of the values of downtown real estate."

Citation: "Bank Presidents Support Redevelopment Program," *Charlottesville Daily Progress*, June 9, 1960

Urban Renewal, Vinegar Hill, *Charlottesville Daily Progress* Articles, 1960 (page 2 of 4)

Asked what he thought the effect would be if the program were defeated, Haden said:

"I suppose we would be in the same position we have been in for the past 100 years as far as the business area of the town is concerned, and new business will continue to move to the suburbs."

Asked if he thought the program was important to the economic health of the community, Haden replied:

"Very important."

Trevillian said: "I certainly do favor the adoption of the urban renewal plan.

"Public housing and urban renewal for any city is essential if that city is to grow and prosper. Blighted areas are certainly to occur through age and growth and lack of repairs, and usually wind up in the very heart of the city itself.

"Improper housing bring to a locality disease, crime, structural fires and juvenile delinquency. Bad housing is extremely costly — large sums are expended for fire and police protection, health and sanitary service, and administration — yet, they return very little in taxes. Its depreciating effect, and that of hindering logical growth, represents an intangible cost for greater than direct cost, as shown by Harland Bartholomew and Associates in this report on the city's masterplan.

port on the city's masterplan.

"All cities are faced with the problem of obsolescence which, if ignored, leads progressively to blight and slum conditions. We must eliminate this condition if it is present by encouraging the rehabilitation of good housing and provide protection and regulation to see that it is maintained.

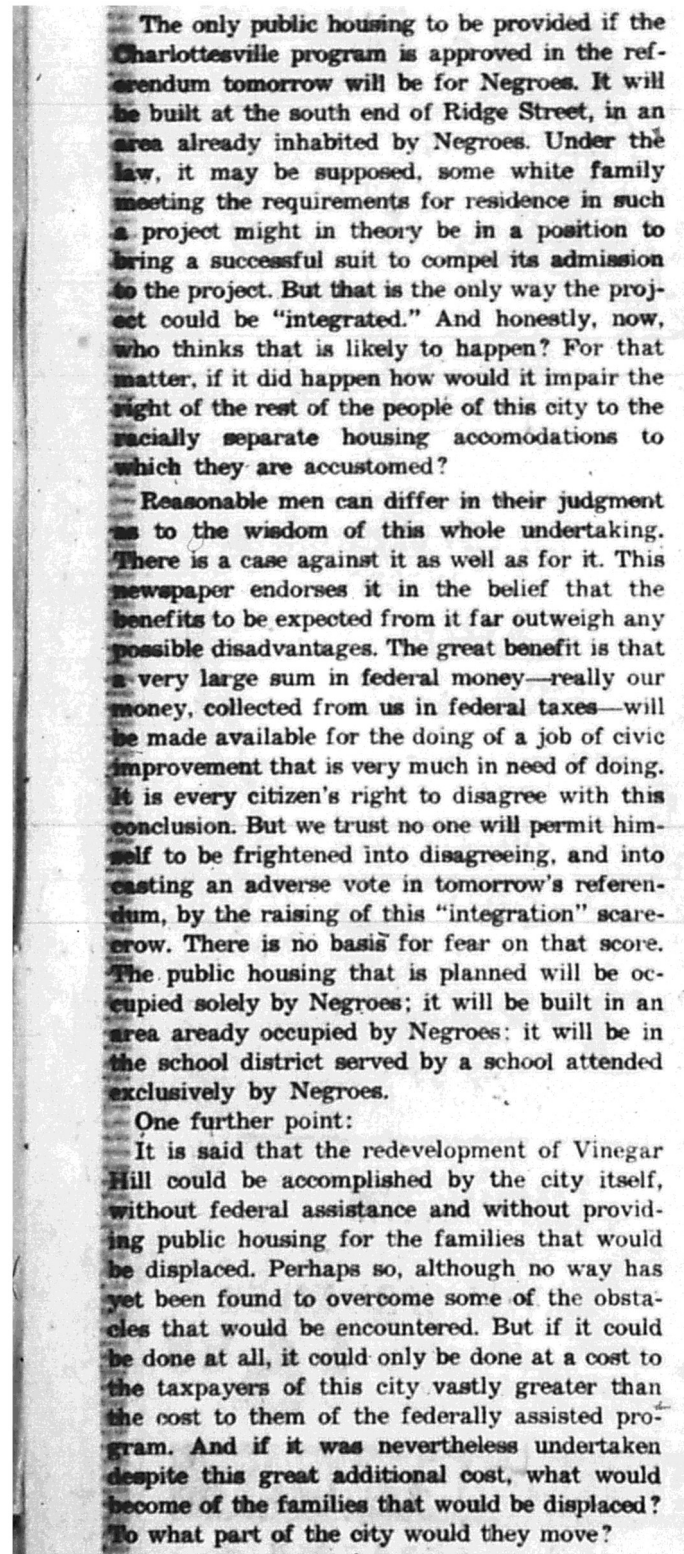
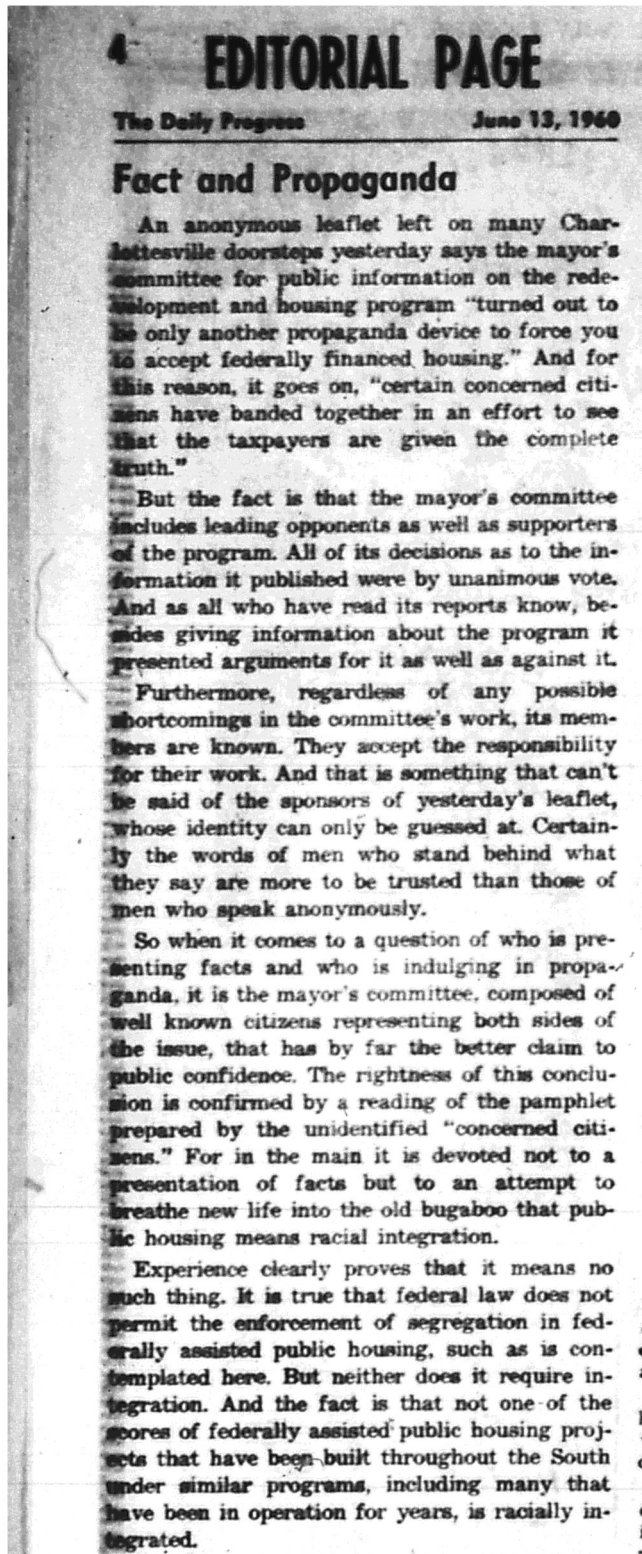
"Congress years ago recognized the necessity of slum clearance in many of our growing cities, and realized that localities could not finance a project of such size. Due to this fact, they appropriated certain sums of money to be used for this specific purpose — cities that could qualify would be included in this program.

"Charlottesville has qualified, and the citizens have already paid their fair shares in establishing these funds — it is now our right to participate in the program without further cost. If we fail to take advantage of this — some other cities will — and our only salvation is to do it ourselves. This we know cannot be done without raising taxes completely beyond our citizens' ability to pay.

"We must proceed — let's be sensible — let's vote for public housing and urban renewal to our fullest."

Citation: "Bank Presidents Support Redevelopment Program," *Charlottesville Daily Progress*, June 9, 1960

Urban Renewal, Vinegar Hill, *Charlottesville Daily Progress* Articles, 1960
(page 3 of 4)



Citation: "Fact and Propaganda," editorial, *Charlottesville Daily Progress*, June 13, 1960

**Urban Renewal, Vinegar Hill, Charlottesville Daily Progress Articles, 1960
(page 4 of 4)**

City Council Approves Vinegar Hill Project

City Council approved a specific plan for redevelopment of Vinegar Hill yesterday and signed an agreement to contribute about \$400,000 in street construction and utility installations and in land.

The action was taken after a quiet public hearing on the Redevelopment and Housing Authority's application for a federal loan and grant from the Urban Renewal Administration.

Council then gave notice that at its July 18 meeting, it will consider the long-postponed minimum housing standards ordinance. Action on this ordinance, which would permit condemnation of dwellings for health reasons and safety reasons broader than those currently permitted under the City Building Code, has been deferred because, until public housing was approved in the July 14 referendum, city officials felt persons whose dwellings were condemned would have no place to move.

David J. Wood Jr., attorney for the Authority and its acting director, gave negative answers to the only two controversial questions that were asked at the public hearing. He said no special provision could be made to relocate Negro businesses in the redevelopment area, and that every effort would be made to avoid any controversial placement of displaced families when new homes are found for them outside the Vinegar Hill area.

In response to a letter from W. R. Bingle Jr. asking that surveys be made now and again five years after the area is redeveloped so the true economic effect of redevelopment could be determined, Council voted to have a survey made of gross income, taxes paid and similar data from businesses now located in the redevelopment area.

Questions from the floor were from Lionel S. Key, who asked if there would be any "block-busting" in relocation of Negro families whose homes will be demolished in redeveloping Vinegar Hill, and from Mrs. Arthur M. Smith, who asked if part of the redevelopment area could be set aside for Negro businesses displaced from their present quarters during the project.

Wood gave negative answers to both questions.

He said relocation would be handled by two full-time employes of the Authority, and that "every effort will be made to avoid" controversial placements of families with whom this agency carries out its work. Most of the

Negro families relocated from the Vinegar Hill area will go into public housing units when they are completed, but some families will not qualify for public housing because their incomes are above the maximum set for eligibility.

Wood said the Authority is prohibited from discriminating on the grounds of race in disposing of property after Vinegar Hill is redeveloped, and that this would prohibit restriction of any one section to Negro businesses. He said Negro business is envisioned developing along Fourth Street NW north of Inge's market, as this land will be less expensive than that along Main Street and other principal streets, but that
(See Redevelopment, Page 8)

Redevelopment

(Continued From Page 1)

none of the land can be sold at less than a reasonable cost.

Mrs. Smith had suggested some land be reserved especially for Negro businesses displaced from their present locations, and asked if arrangements could be made to assure those affected that sites would be available in the area after redevelopment.

Citation: "City Council Approves Vinegar Hill Project," (excerpt) Charlottesville Daily Progress, June 28, 1960