

Manchester National Register District Update Recommendation

1. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development

Social History-Civil Rights

Transportation

Period of Significance

1939-1979

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Note: This documentation was supplemented by oral history interviews, conducted primarily in the Manchester neighborhood with local residents who were predominantly African American. The members of the Manchester community interviewed lived through much of the urban renewal and highway construction discussed here.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Manchester neighborhood significantly contributed to Civil Rights era resistance to discrimination in planning and policies that impacted their North Side neighborhood in the City of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The Manchester neighborhood's resistance is important locally and part of a larger national Civil Rights movement to protect people and places from discrimination based on race.

Community Planning and Development and Transportation

Community Planning and Development and Transportation are both Areas of Significance during this time period in Manchester's history. During the mid 20th century, the Pittsburgh North Side neighborhood of Manchester underwent a major transformation due to external forces, acting under the auspices of urban renewal and larger transportation interests from the federal, state and local levels of government. Beginning with the redlining of the neighborhood in 1937 by agents of the federal government's Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) as a "lower or undesirable area" of the city, due, in part, to its mix of ethnic whites and African-Americans and continuing in 1939 with the Arterial Traffic Plan of Pittsburgh by Robert Moses, which was the first proposal to bifurcate the neighborhood for a north-south highway, the plight of Manchester was destined to be decided by outside forces for the coming decades.

After WWII, the Allegheny Conference on Community Development (ACCD), a regional planning organization created in 1944, targeted Manchester as "Urban Redevelopment Pilot Study Area #1." This led city and regional planners to focus efforts to clear or modify the neighborhood of Manchester into the 1950s and 1960s, including the Chateau West development, planned in 1960 and carried out during that decade. The planning of Route 65 (Ohio River Boulevard extension) in 1954 by the Pennsylvania Department of Highways also contributed to the destruction of neighborhood cohesion as construction commenced throughout the 1960s. The importance of highway construction on Pittsburgh's North Side was tied to the decision to build a multi-purpose stadium on the edge of Manchester in 1960, which would lead to much of the transportation planning efforts throughout the decade affecting the neighborhood.

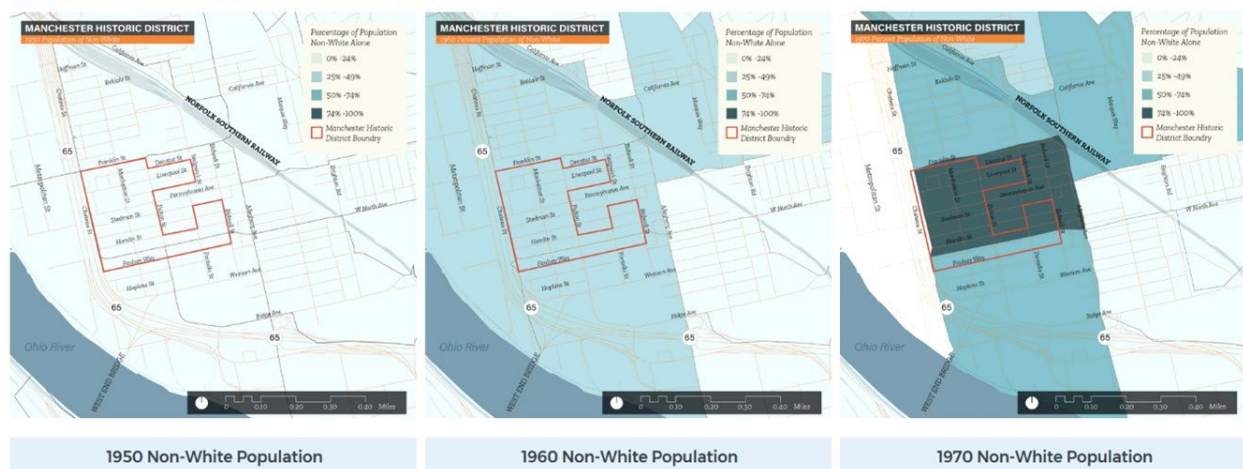
By the late 1960s the construction of PA65 and the Chateau West development effectively removed the Beaver Avenue commercial corridor, which was the heart of the neighborhood and included the Manchester School, theaters, restaurants and nightlife opportunities and essential retail services such as clothing and grocery stores. These events contributed heavily to white flight from this neighborhood and Manchester's population became majority African-American by 1970. The construction of Route 65 greatly destabilized Manchester and the mid-to-late 1960s culminated in a prolonged period of riots and civil unrest in the neighborhood, particularly after the assassination of Martin Luther King in April of 1968.

Social History-Civil Rights

Even during these periods of unrest, local Civil Rights and African-American leaders were empowered within the neighborhood during the late 1960s and early 1970s which manifested itself

in a variety of grassroots organizing on several levels, including: housing rights; community empowerment emanating from religious institutions and neighborhood groups; and workforce development and skill training programs for residents. Coupled with this, Pittsburgh's historic preservation movement began in Manchester due to the large number of intact mid to late Victorian eclectic architectural styles found within the neighborhood, all of which were threatened by the numerous plans of the ACCD and Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) throughout the decades. Remarkably, this movement in Manchester predated the passage of any federal preservation legislation, codified in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1970, making it one of the nation's earliest localized attempts at preservation.

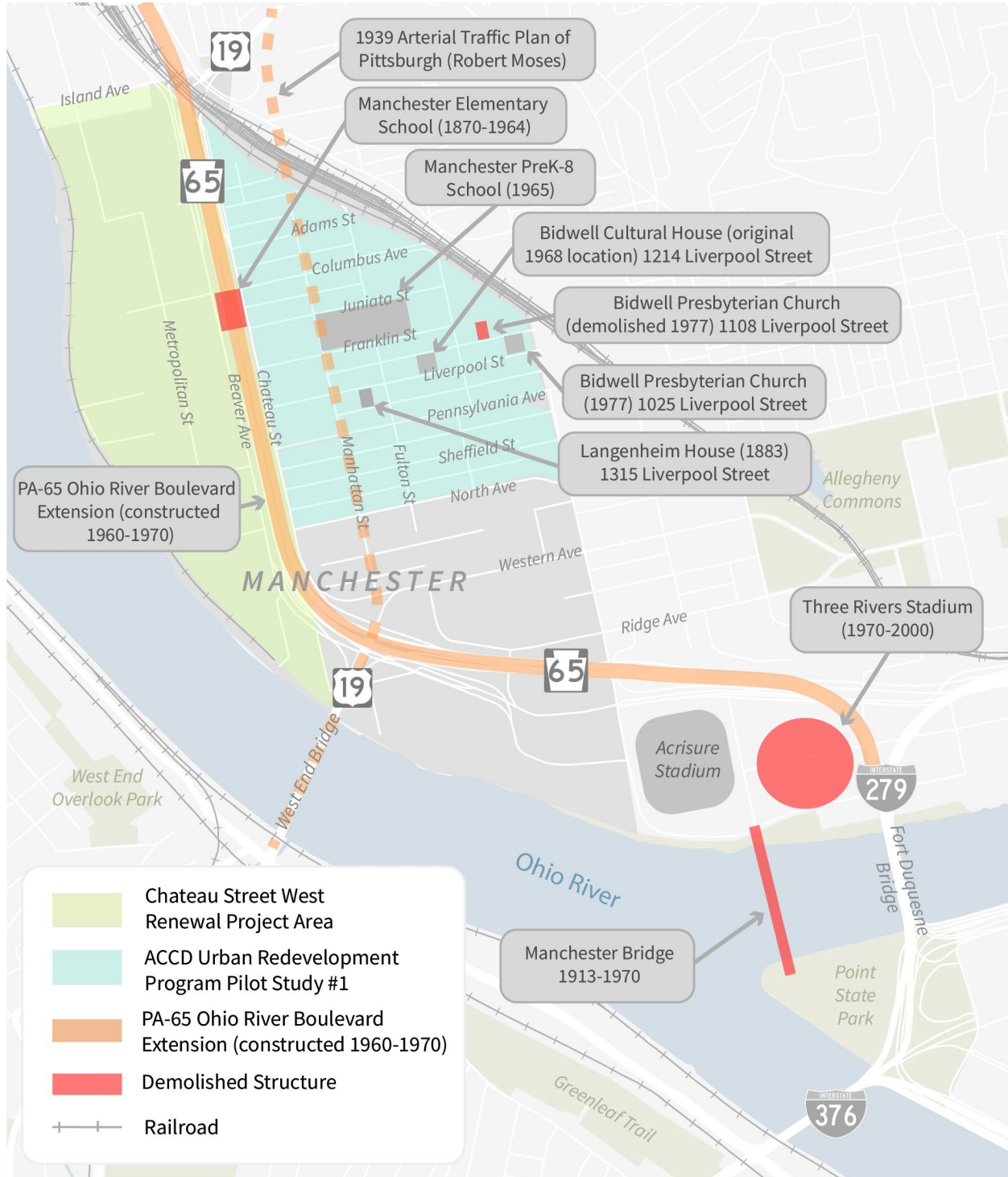
Historical Demographic Overview



Map 1. Census Tract Data: Non-White Population in Manchester (1950, 1960, 1970) with existing National Register Historic District Outlined in red. Note dense concentration of non-white population by 1970 in the heart of the neighborhood. Source: WSP (Historical Census map sources: <https://www.ipums.org/> and <https://www.pasda.psu.edu/>)



Figure 1. “Aerial View Surrounding Downtown,” (detail) ca. 1930. This image shows the densely populated Manchester neighborhood directly across from Pittsburgh’s Point with the now demolished steel Pratt truss Manchester Bridge spanning the Allegheny in the center connecting the heart of Pittsburgh’s Central Business District to Manchester. Manchester is the area west of the bridge and the Ohio River. The steel tied-arch West End Bridge (extant) can also be seen connecting to the west side of Manchester in the foreground. Source: University of Pittsburgh Library System: Historic Pittsburgh (<https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3A886.25464.AP>)



Map 2. Manchester Neighborhood, City of Pittsburgh: Urban Renewal Efforts, Transportation Facilities, Significant Neighborhood Landmarks, Bridges and Stadiums. The original neighborhood boundaries, prior to urban renewal and highway construction was the Ohio River to the west and south, Island Avenue to the north, the Norfolk Southern RR to the northeast, and Allegheny Ave to the east. Source WSP: <https://www.pasda.psu.edu/>

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Historical Context of Manchester

Manchester was originally settled along the banks of the Ohio River and was incorporated as an independent borough in Allegheny County in 1843. In 1867, Allegheny City annexed Manchester and other North Side neighborhoods as it was growing in prominence as a geographic rival to neighboring Pittsburgh. The City of Pittsburgh annexed Allegheny City in 1907 and Manchester essentially kept its original boundaries as a neighborhood, although now it was considered one of the many neighborhoods making up the North Side area of the City of Pittsburgh.



Map 3. Manchester in 1862. Note rail alignment for railroad in northeast corner separating Manchester from Allegheny City. Beaver Avenue is major north-south road. Source: Historic Pittsburgh <http://digital.library.pitt.edu/maps> | Library of Congress <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=63f24d1466f24695bf9dfe5bf6828126>

By the early twentieth century much of Manchester's Victorian housing stock was constructed, including several mansions built for the industrialists and upper management who worked in the nearby factories along the Ohio and Allegheny Rivers or in scattered industrial pockets throughout the neighborhood. These houses were built primarily along the main east-west streets, including Sheffield, Liverpool, Pennsylvania Streets and North Avenue. Worker housing was along alleyways or smaller north-south streets. The Manchester National Register Historic District (1975) has a period of significance of 1860- 1900 when the majority of the original historic built environment was constructed.



Figure 2. 1423 Liverpool Street, Colonel James Anderson House. Circa 1830 with additions in 1905. (photo: Robert Armstrong, March 27, 2023)

By the time of annexation by the City of Pittsburgh in 1907, there were numerous manufacturing interests located along the rivers and Manchester was a thriving area with a commercial corridor, Beaver Avenue, located to the central-west of the neighborhood along a north-south axis.



Map 4. Manchester in 1906 was a densely populated neighborhood ringed by industrial usages along the Ohio River. Source: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=63f24d1466f24695bf9dfc5bf6828126>



Map 5. Manchester in 2023. Note Route 65 cutting through neighborhood along the Beaver Ave and Chateau St corridor. Manchester became an area severed by the highway to the west with the railroad corridor boundary to the northeast. The West End Bridge (1932) and Acrisure Stadium border the southern edge of the neighborhood while the Chateau Street West urban renewal area is seen to the west. Source: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=63f24d1466f24695bf9dfe5bf6828126>

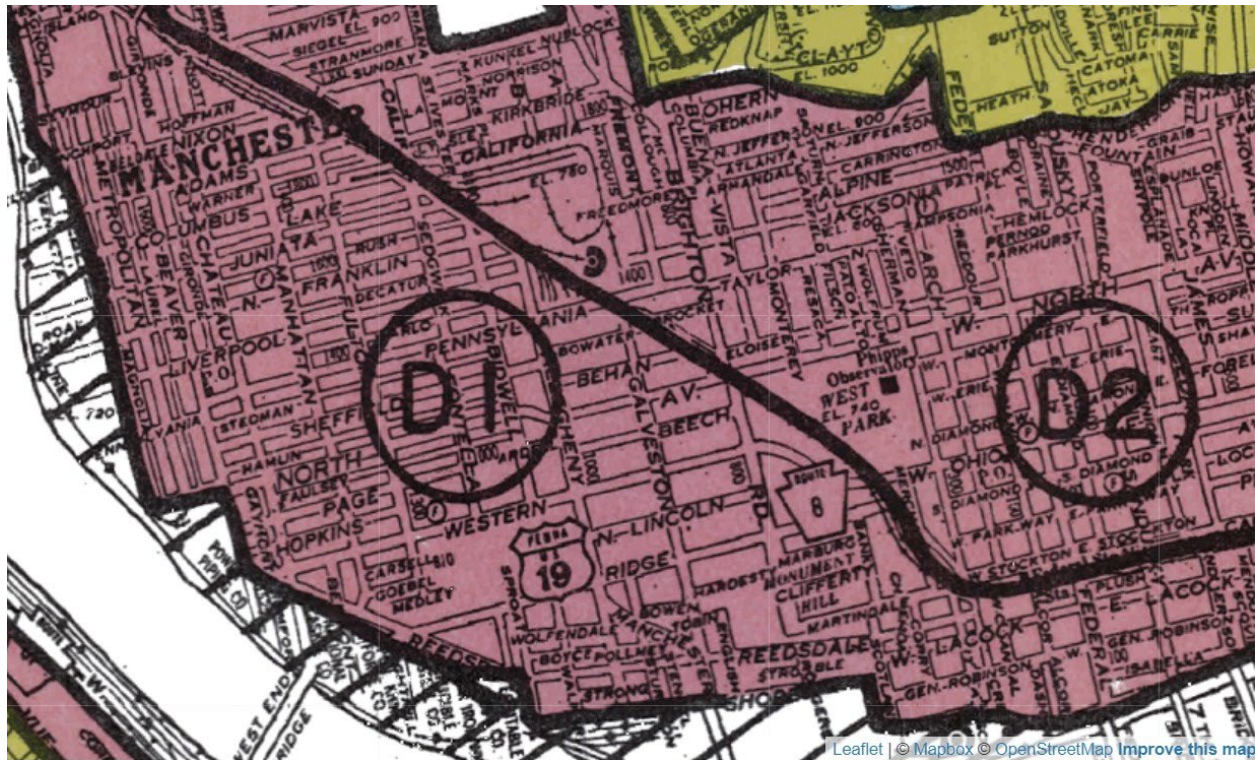


Figure 3. Aerial View of the North Side and Downtown Pittsburgh with Manchester Bridge, 1930. The proximity of Manchester to the downtown and the future redevelopment of this area tied urban renewal efforts, highway construction and stadium development directly into the fate of the neighborhood. The downtown area known as the Point would become known as the Golden Triangle upon clearing and redevelopment in the 1950s-1960s. The area to the east of the Manchester Bridge was redeveloped for Three Rivers Stadium, which opened in 1970. Source: <https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3A886.15605.AP>

Throughout the early twentieth century, Manchester became home to large groups of immigrant communities, including Italian, German and Jewish groups, as well as African-Americans who were re-locating from the South. The diverse community existed together and were primarily employed in industry in the vicinity of the neighborhood.¹ This diversity as well as older housing stock led the agents working for the federal government's Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) to deem Manchester as a "hazardous" or "lower or undesirable" area. In the clarifying remarks section, the HOLC inspector stated: "This is one of the older sections of Pittsburgh which is gradually being taken over for commercial purposes. Some 800 properties are reported condemned by the city. These were damaged by recent flood etc. Generally speaking, this section is classed as the lower or undesirable type. Most of property located there can be purchased for ground value." The inspector also stated it was filled with "Dirt, filth, smoke etc.

¹ William Strickland interview

low type community. One of the toughest sections of Pittsburgh.” In addition, the inspector stated its population was “mixed” with much of the population foreign born and the remaining 20% “negro.”² Therefore, by the time planners began analyzing Manchester in the mid-twentieth century, it was already viewed as an area with little value other than the “ground value” identified in the HOLC report. This viewpoint set the stage for decades of planning to come in Manchester with little regard for the established, diverse residential working class community which called the neighborhood home.



Map 6. 1937 Redline Map showing all of Manchester in red, which is color coded as a “hazardous” area. Source: Robert K. Nelson, LaDale Winling, Richard Marciano, Nathan Connolly, et al., “Mapping Inequality,” *American Panorama*, ed. Robert K. Nelson and Edward L. Ayers, accessed October 18, 2023, <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=15/40.455/-80.027&city=pittsburgh-pa>

Robert Moses and the Arterial Traffic Plan for Pittsburgh, 1939

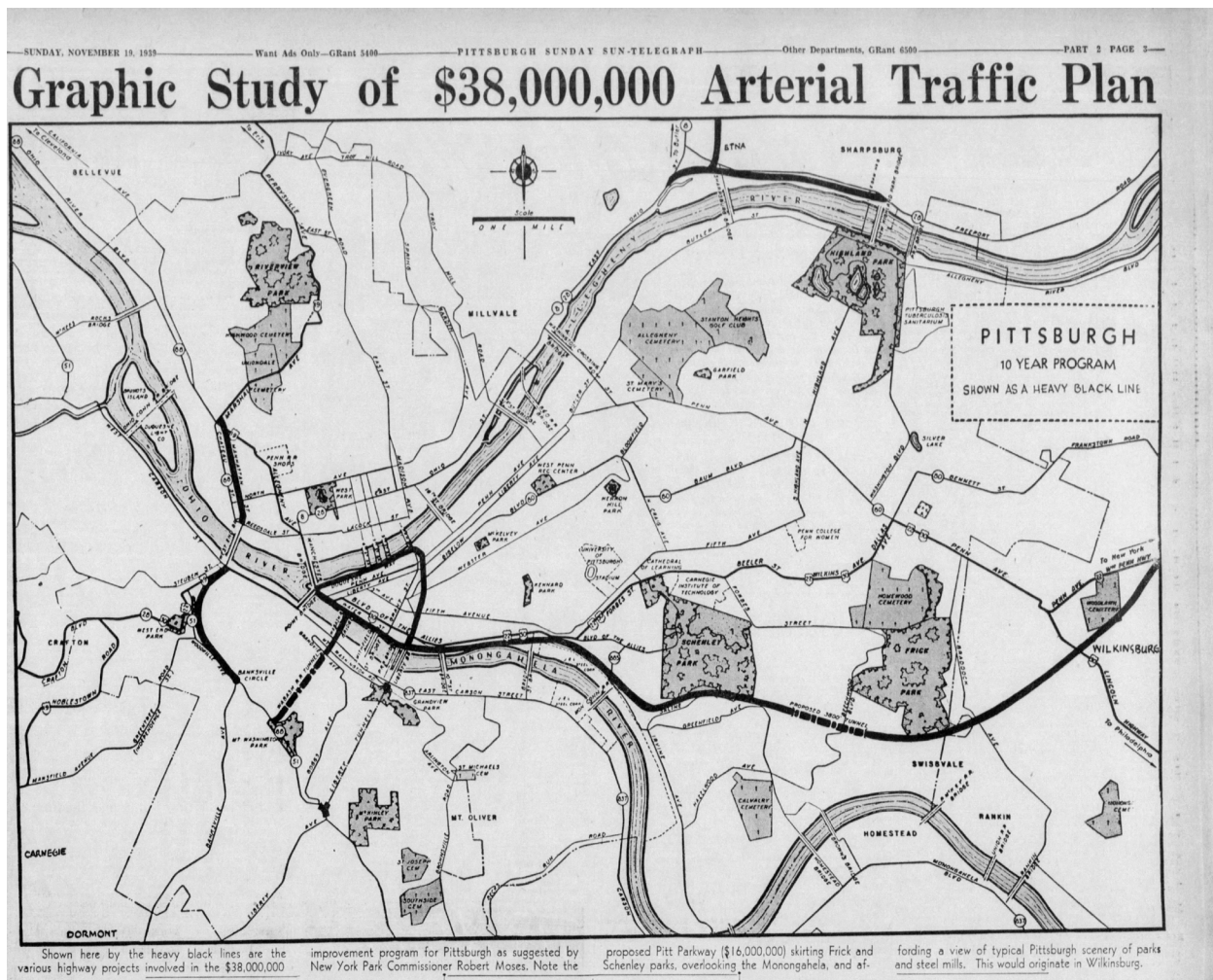
During the 1920s, members of the Citizen’s Committee on the City Plan (CCCP), a volunteer, citizen led planning organization which acted as a de facto planning arm of the City of Pittsburgh, became increasingly concerned with traffic, congestion and the fate of downtown Pittsburgh. The CCCP, founded in 1918, were made up of area business interests, including members of the Armstrong, Mellon, Hailman and Heinz families that essentially “usurped the

² Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=13/40.474/-80.074&city=pittsburgh-pa&area=D1&adview=full&adimage=2/63.564/-132.188>

responsibility for preparing a general physical plan for Pittsburgh” becoming in the process the “chief vehicle through which businessmen attempted to influence the evolution of the physical environment.”³ In 1939, the CCCP, having renamed itself the Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association, employed Robert Moses (1888-1981), who at the time was the Commissioner of New York City’s Department of Parks & Recreation and the de facto urban planner for New York, as a consultant to prepare an arterial traffic plan for Pittsburgh. The report makes clear that all traffic planning and highway improvements were linked to the revitalization of Pittsburgh’s Central Business District, commonly referred to as the Golden Triangle. Key to this, Moses proposed traffic control by elimination of the trolley network (which was prominent in Manchester along key streets), adding parking areas around the downtown and, most important, developing a series of arterial improvements to link downtown Pittsburgh to other districts and the Allegheny County region by allowing through traffic to bypass the downtown and areas adjacent to the downtown, which would include Manchester. One of the key proposals in the Moses Plan was the Manhattan Street Improvement, which would have widened one of the major north-south streets in Manchester by 100 feet on the west side of the street and connected the West End Bridge to the Pennsylvania Railroad at California Avenue, to the north of Manchester.⁴ Manhattan Street paralleled Beaver Avenue and Chateau Street and is important as it was the first attempt at planning a north-south highway connection through densely populated Manchester.

³ Lubove, Roy *Twentieth Century Pittsburgh: Government, Business and Environmental Change* (University of Pittsburgh, 1969), 87.

⁴ *Ibid*, 104.



Map 7. “Graphic Study of \$38,000,000 Arterial Traffic Plan” Pittsburgh Sun Telegraph, November 19, 1939. Plan of Robert Moses which greatly influenced city and highway planners in Pittsburgh for decades.

The Robert Moses Plan for Pittsburgh was a major catalyst for much of the post WWII planning which other local agencies became responsible for. When the Moses Plan was released, Park Martin, Allegheny County’s Planning Engineer, complained that many of the ideas put forward by Moses were already included in the 1936 County Planning improvement program. Martin and others resented the fact that businessmen had spent \$50,000 “getting an outsider to bring in a report which contained nothing we had not already considered.”⁵ Despite this outcry, the Moses Plan was adopted by the City and County Planning Commissions, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Pittsburgh Regional Planning Commission (formerly CCCP) in 1940, giving priority to Duquesne Way, which connected the Manchester Bridge along the Allegheny River east to the Eleventh Street Pennsylvania Bridge as well as the development of the Crosstown Boulevard. The Moses Report paved the way for the Allegheny Conference on Community Development (ACCD), which would work closely with the Pittsburgh Regional Planning Commission. The

⁵ Ibid, 104.

Moses Report effectively kept planning in the hands of Pittsburgh business leadership for decades to come and paved the way for Pittsburgh's Renaissance I, the city's massive urban renewal program following WWII. According to Arthur Ziegler of Pittsburgh Heritage and Landmarks, the preservation organization which began in Manchester, Moses is responsible for dividing much of the city and much of what he planned was carried out over subsequent decades. In addition, Ziegler believes Moses set the stage for displacing African-Americans under the auspices of city planning in Pittsburgh and was "as ruthless here as he was in Manhattan."⁶

Allegheny Conference on Community Development (ACCD) and Manchester in the 1940s

The importance of the ACCD to Renaissance I, Pittsburgh's post-WWII massive official urban renewal plan, cannot be underestimated. The ACCD had a hand in all major projects associated with urban renewal during this time period, including carrying out elements of the Moses Plan which continued into ensuing decades, culminating in the demolition of the Manchester Bridge and the opening of the Fort Duquesne Bridge and Three Rivers Stadium on the southeastern edge of Manchester in 1970, which effectively ended Renaissance I. According to historian Roy Lubove, the foundation of the entire Renaissance effort was "the use of public powers and resources to preserve the economic vitality of the central business district and, more broadly, the competitive economic position of the Pittsburgh region...this precipitated a dramatic expansion of public enterprise and investment to serve corporate needs; it established a reverse welfare state."⁷ The ACCD was clearly the essential planning arm of this movement. It was established by Richard King Mellon (1899-1970) and others in 1943 to form a "non-profit, non-partisan civic organization, to be devoted to research and planning, to develop an over-all community improvement program."⁸ The power of the ACCD was in sponsorship of concrete, detailed plans prepared by engineers and architects, it acted as more than another policy think-tank and was committed to influencing the entire planning process in Pittsburgh.

Between December 1946 and June 1947, Manchester became an initial target for evaluation by the ACCD. Planners and architects working at the Pittsburgh Chapter, Pennsylvania Society of Architects, Civic Design Committee prepared a report on Manchester for the ACCD, known as "Urban Redevelopment, Pilot Study No. 1, Manchester District, City of Pittsburgh." The origins of the study were to "determine the feasibility of the redevelopment of Manchester into a new light manufacturing area with adequate new housing to accommodate the people now residing there." The report recommended purchasing the land and buildings of the neighborhood at an estimated cost of between \$4,000,000-\$6,000,000 with additional funds needed to clear all structures within the neighborhood upon purchase.

The ACCD was clear in its report on the reasons Manchester was chosen as the pilot study: the "primary purpose of the study was to establish a systematic method, for application to any populated urban area, for the accumulation of the basic data necessary to determine the economic

⁶ Arthur Ziegler interview June 16, 2023.

⁷ Lubove, 106.

⁸ Ibid, 108.

feasibility of its redevelopment for housing, light industrial purposes or a combination of both.”⁹ It is also relevant to point out that the ACCD indicated in their report that the study was initiated prior to the formation of the Urban Redevelopment Authority of the City of Pittsburgh. Therefore, a connection can be made that planning of the wholesale clearing of Manchester would serve as a model for future efforts of the URA as the report is a guide in assessment and planning in the very early stages of Pittsburgh’s urban renewal program.

Although the planners working for the ACCD stated their intent was partially to understand neighborhood clearance in general, they also pointed out specific reasons Manchester was chosen as Pilot Study #1. These include:

- “It’s blighted condition and the fact that it is already zoned as light industrial.”
- “Its proximity to the main line of the RR, main highway routes, and the North Side business section”
- “Its excellent topography and elevation above flood level”
- “Its good mass transit facilities”¹⁰

These reasons would continue to be utilized for essentially two more decades as planners continued to attempt to clear much of Manchester for renewal until the late 1960s when citizens began to organize against these efforts in earnest. In addition, Park Martin, the Allegheny County planning engineer who worked on early highway plans would become the ACCD’s Executive Director between 1945 and 1958 when he left to become Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Highways where he would continue to promote urban renewal and highway development in Pittsburgh and the North Side.

Early urban renewal planning and efforts at redevelopment of older urban areas on a local level, such as within Manchester, secured major support from the Federal government after WWII, especially with the passage of the Federal Housing Act of 1949, which included the following legislation. Of special note is Title I which is the major underpinning for all efforts at clearing Manchester in subsequent decades.

- **Title I - Slum Clearance & Community Development & Redevelopment** *Authorized \$1 Billion in loans to help cities acquire slums and blighted land for public or private redevelopment. It also allotted \$100 million every year for five years for grants to cover two-thirds of the difference between the cost of the slum land and its reuse value.*
- **Title III - Low Rent Public Housing** *Required that public housing authorities demolish or renovate one slum dwelling unit for every public housing apartment they built.*
- **Title IV - Housing Research** *Provided funds and the authority to conduct extensive research into the economics of housing construction, markets, and financing.*¹¹

⁹ ACCD Urban Redevelopment, Pilot Study No. 1, Manchester District, City of Pittsburgh,” page 16 (Heinz History Center, Detre Archive, Box #).

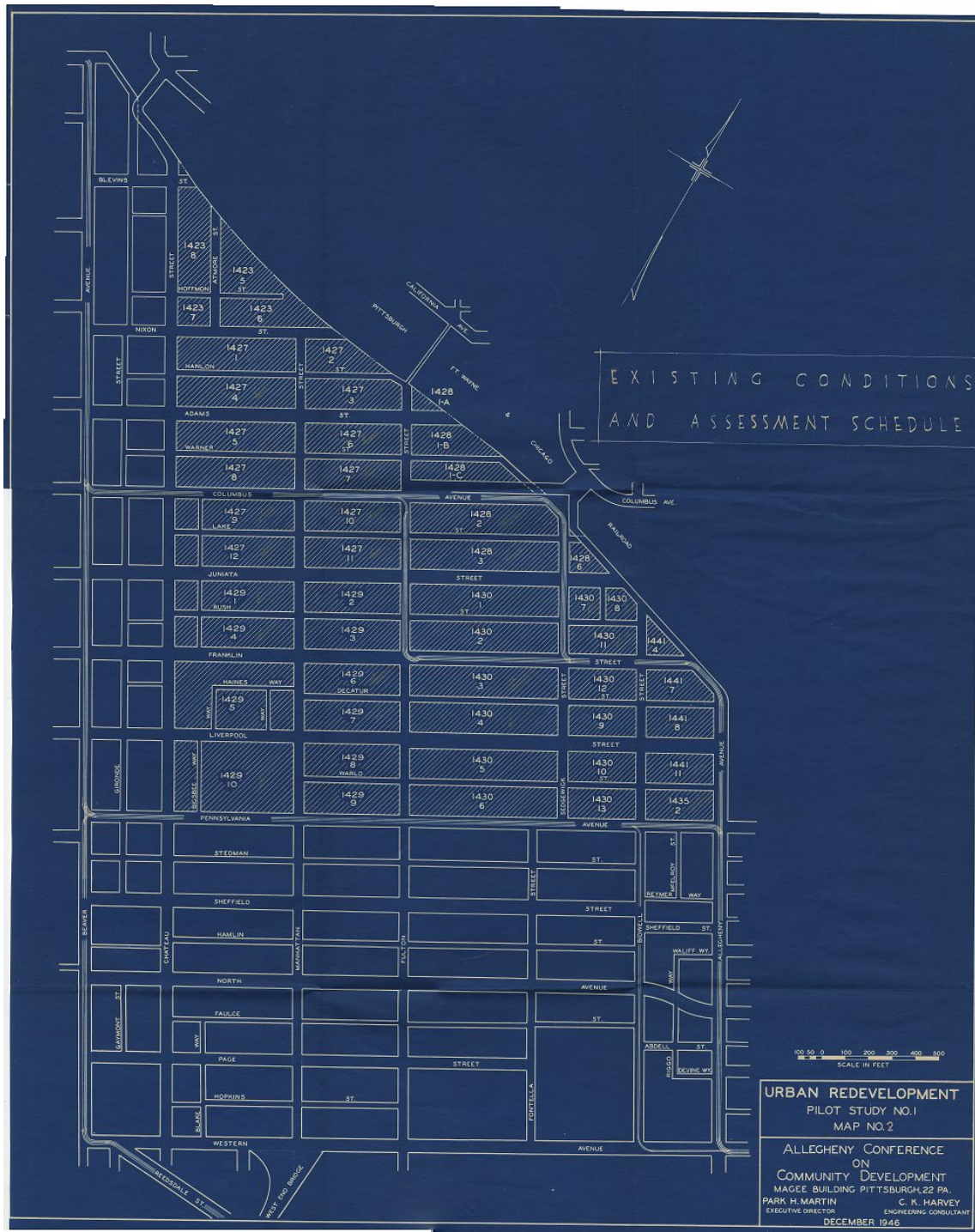
¹⁰ Ibid, 16.

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Housing_Act_of_1949

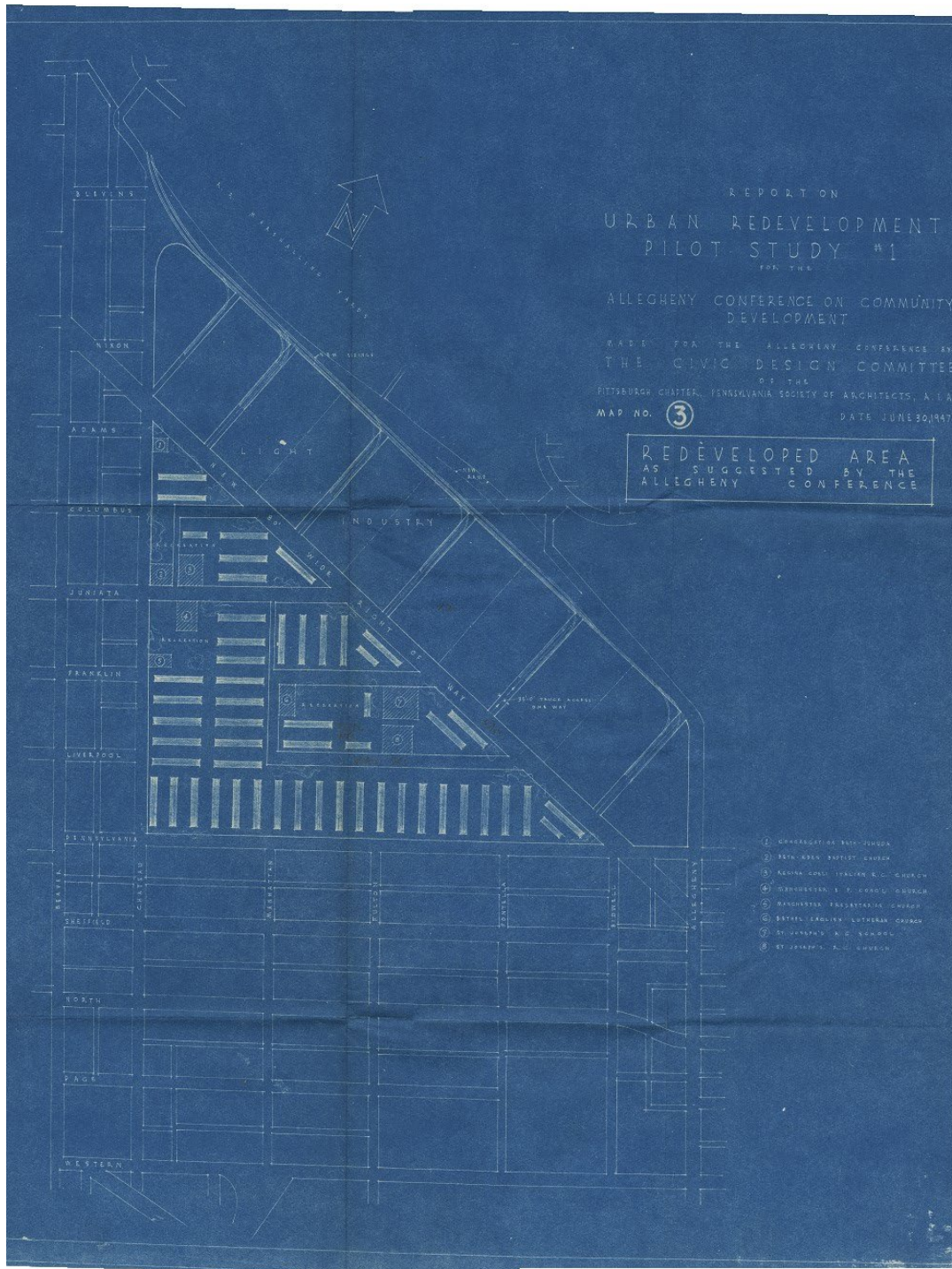
Renaissance I began in the Post WWII era, while the Second Great Migration was increasing Pittsburgh's black population. However, Pittsburgh's industry and economy began declining after WWII, hence the importance corporate leadership put on Renaissance I to revitalize the city. African-Americans moving into the City "confronted the persistence of racially biased employment policies; structural limits on their economic mobility; and enduring barriers to where they could live and educate their children." Many were moving into places which would soon become targeted areas for urban renewal.¹²

Below are the five maps produced by the ACCD in 1946-47 and are the most early and relevant attempts at urban renewal in Pittsburgh and pre-date the URA and Federal Legislation. Note that all redevelopment areas would be cleared with areas set aside for Industrial purposes. Also note on Map 5 the "Towers in a Park" concept for Manchester which would be used for the Gateway Center in the Golden Triangle, based on the concepts of architect and planner Le Corbusier. (Source: Heinz History Center, Detre Archive)

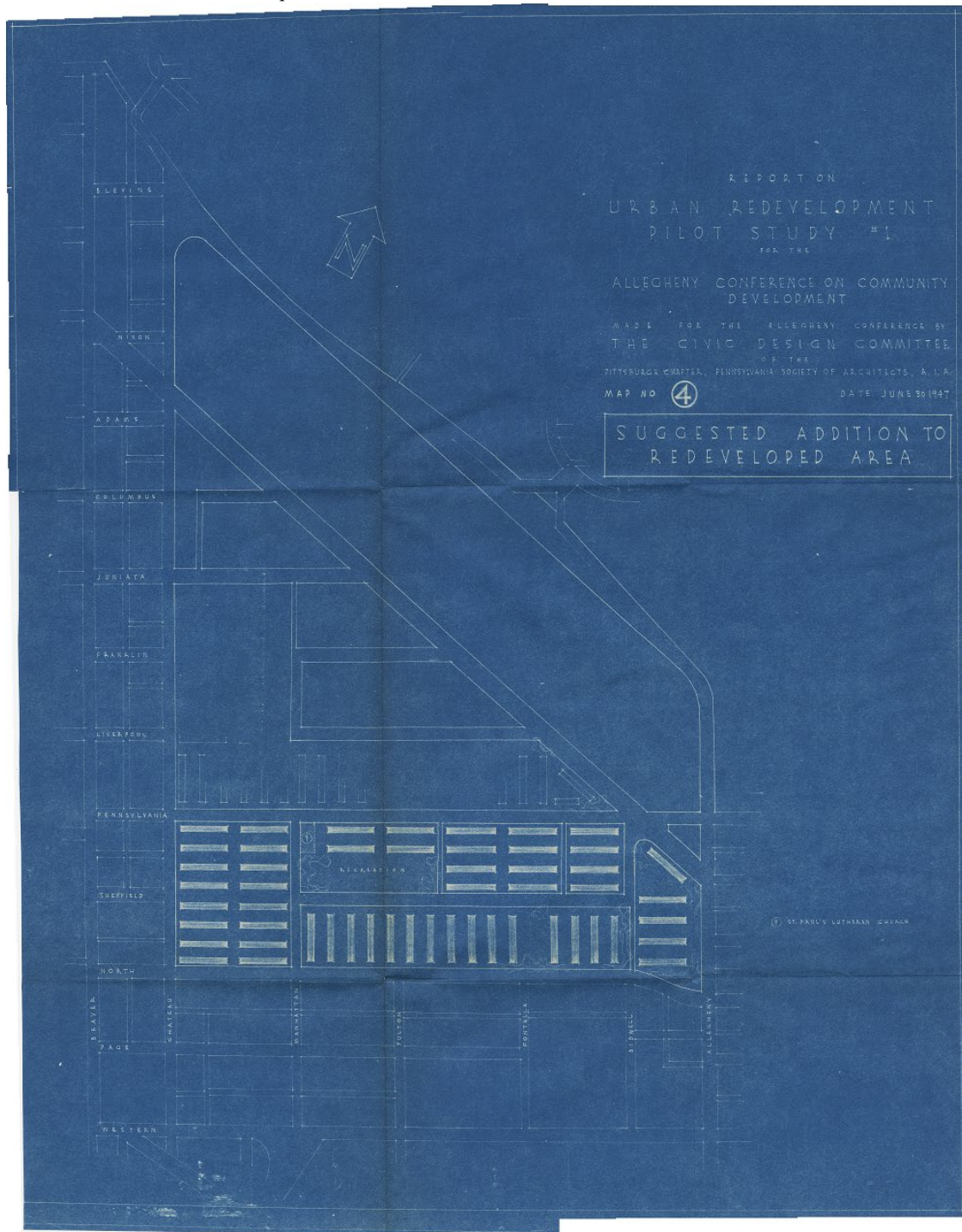
¹² *Race and Renaissance*-Trotter and Day, pg 44



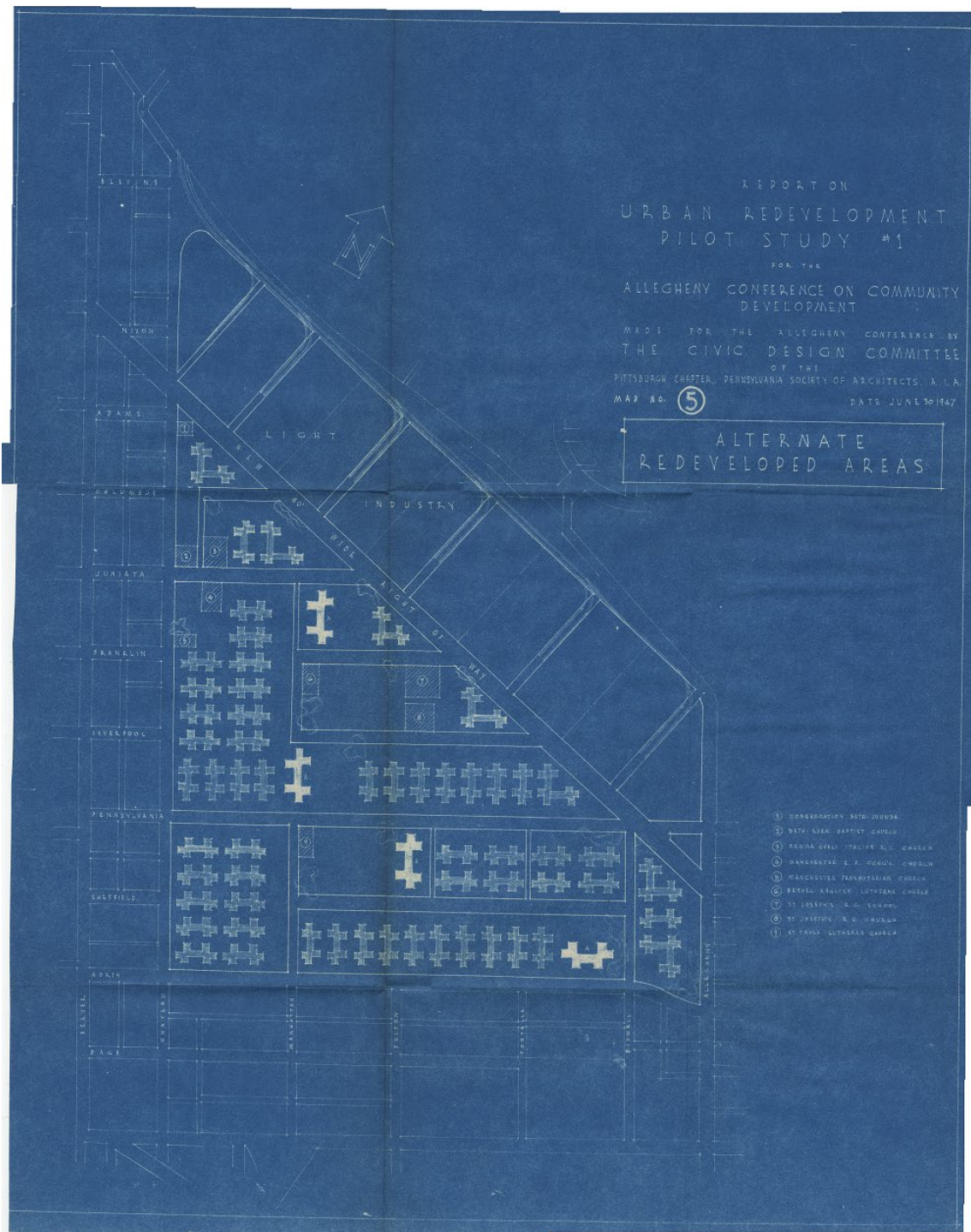
Map 9. ACCD: Urban Redevelopment Pilot Study No. 1 Map No. 2 “Existing Conditions and Assessment Schedule,” December 1946



Map 10. ACCD Urban Redevelopment Pilot Study No. 1, Map 3 "Redeveloped Area as Suggested by the Allegheny Conference," June 1947 Need Captio



Map 11. ACCD Urban Redevelopment Pilot Study No 1, Map 4: "Suggested Additions to the Redeveloped Areas," June 1947



Map 12. ACCD Urban Redevelopment Pilot Study No 1, Map 5: "Alternate Redeveloped Areas," June 1947

Urban Renewal and Highway Planning in Manchester in the 1950s

By the mid-1950s, Manchester residents began to realize that outside planning was taking place which might affect the future of the neighborhood. In 1952, the North Side Civic Promotion Council worked with City Planning Commission of Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association (by now an arm of the ACCD) to unveil a plan for the North Side. A “Community Profile of Manchester” conducted by the American Service Institute (ASI) in 1954 assessed community response to the plan and found that while most residents of the North Side found the plan generally acceptable, opposition was formed mainly in Manchester. While planning was occurring by the ACCD prior to this in late 1940s, it does not appear from sources that any of the findings of Pilot Study No 1 became public. It can be argued that the early 1950s was when most Manchester residents found out about the plans for the neighborhood stoking fear and uncertainty and also leading to the beginnings of neighborhood destabilization due to urban renewal efforts, which were also being felt in other areas such as the Hill District. This uncertainty would remain for years to come. The findings of the ASI clarified the fears within Manchester as the outside forces of urban renewal began to become public. Manchester residents feared what the projected change in the use of land would mean to homes and businesses and what the re-routing of a through highway would mean to business. The opposition within Manchester also centered around “when would all this take place,” something which presumably city planners were not able to answer. In addition, the study found that “there was little to no representation from the Manchester area at all” in any of the planning of the highway or redevelopment areas.¹³ It is worth noting that in 1950, Pittsburgh’s black population was approximately 82,000, or 12% of the total population. Manchester’s population was approximately 50% black in 1950.¹⁴

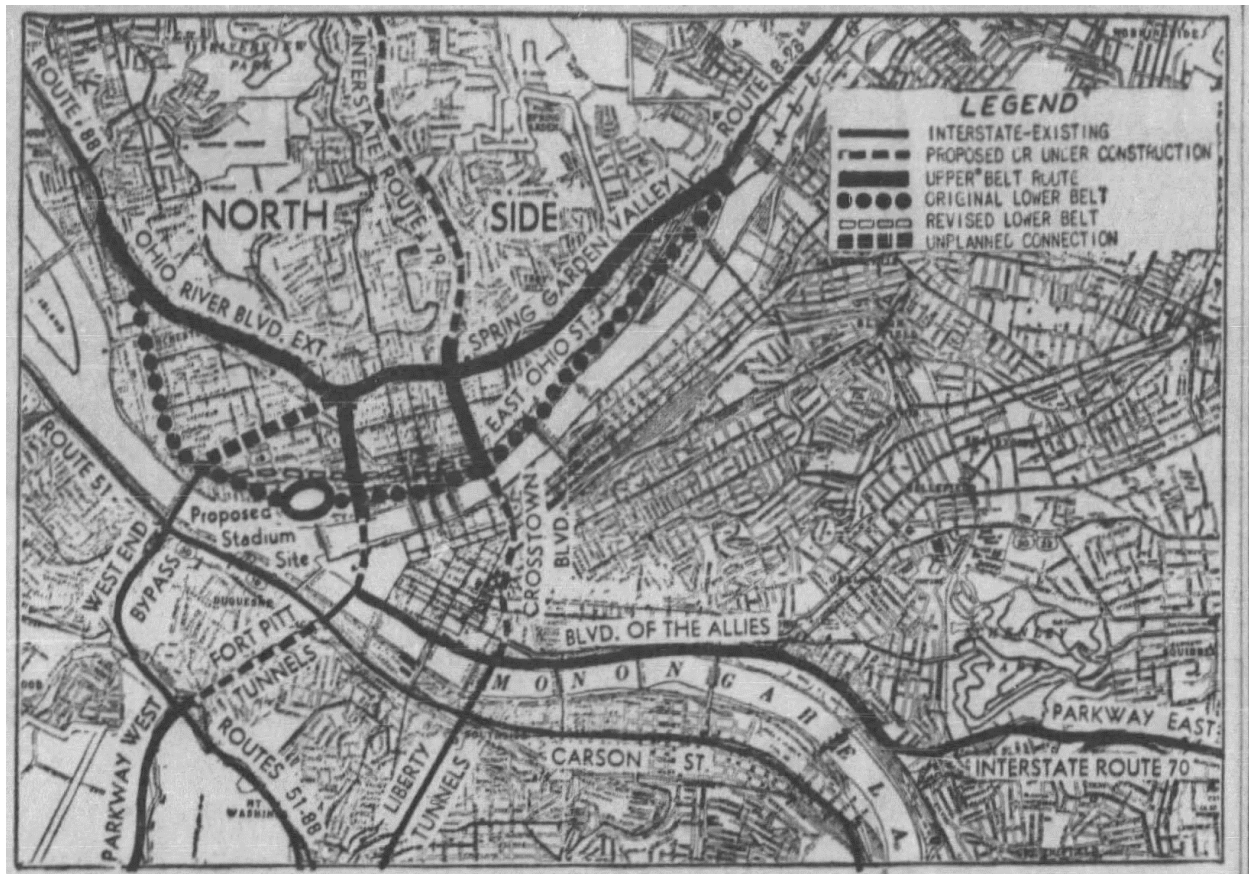
The planning of the Ohio River Boulevard (Route 65) extension began in 1954 by the Pennsylvania Department of Highways as part of an expansion of highways connecting the entire Allegheny County region. Pennsylvania Route 65 followed US Route 19 through Pittsburgh and was part of a larger plan of a beltway system of highways running through the North Side with connections into the CBD and downtown, now known as the Golden Triangle. By 1960, city planners in Pittsburgh were arguing to the Pennsylvania Department of Highways that the so-called Lower Belt was the preferred option for the North Side as the Lower Belt, along Chateau Street would permit a “proper redevelopment of the North Side.” The reasons planners preferred the Lower Belt alignment include a) “designed to be compatible with the planning of the new stadium and the total redevelopment program for the north side; lower belt acts as a buffer between the Manchester Industrial development and the residential future of east Manchester; c) upper belt would encourage expansion of industry into all of Manchester, destroying any possibility of residential renewal and rehabilitation.”¹⁵ This plan was finally approved in January of 1962 and the North Side Lower Belt project would include the Ohio River Boulevard extension which cut through the Manchester neighborhood and extended the highway from Sheffield Street north to the Allegheny County line. In 1963, the highway plans were widened from four lanes to six lanes as the Chateau West development was underway. Clearing began in

¹³ Community Profile: Manchester, American Service Institute, 1954 (p 7) PGH City Archives (need citation from Nick Hartley).

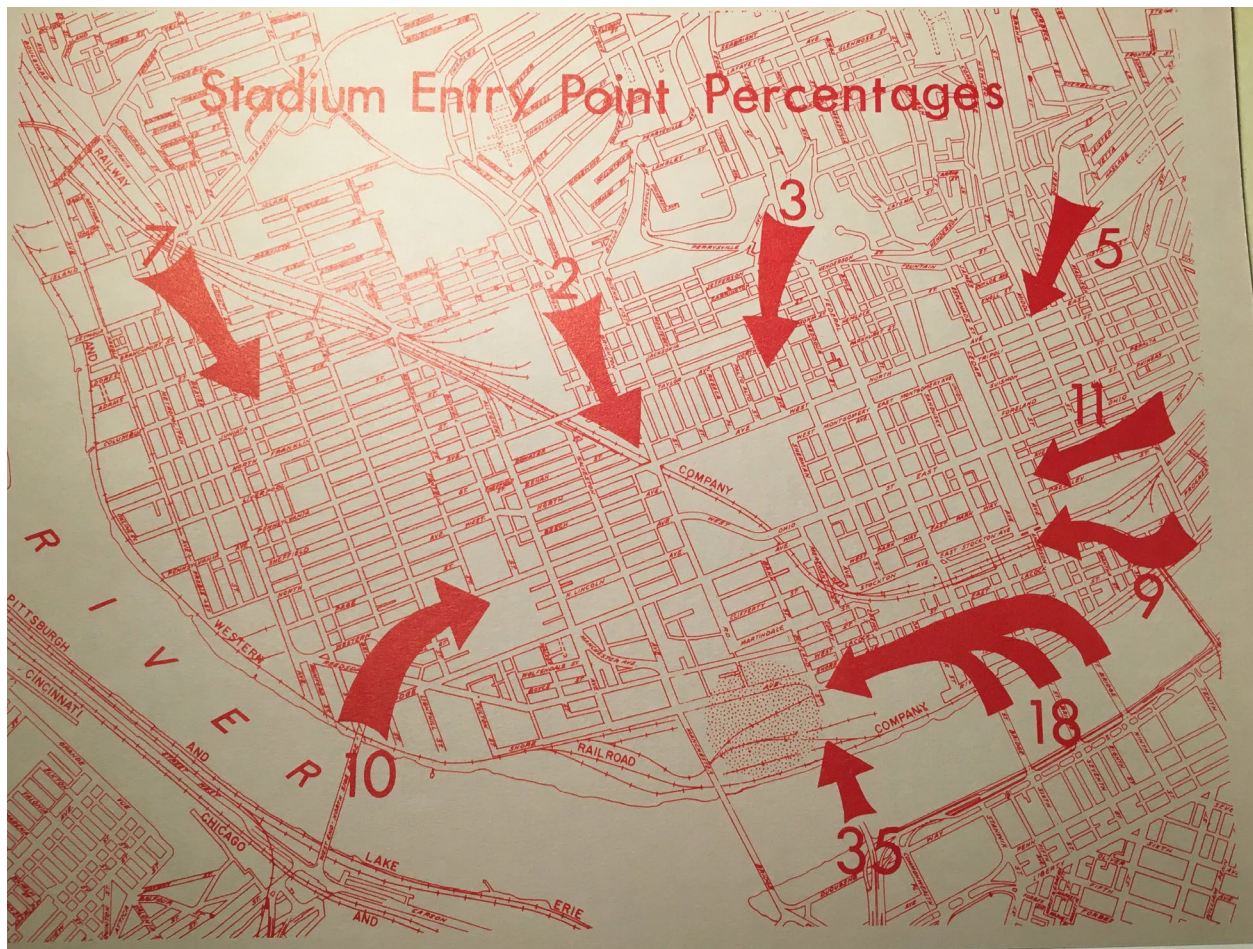
¹⁴ Trotter and Day, page 203

¹⁵ “Lower Belt Route Drawing New Fire” Pittsburgh Press June 2, 1960.

1965 of the Beaver Avenue and Chateau Street corridor and construction commenced in 1966 and extended to 1970.



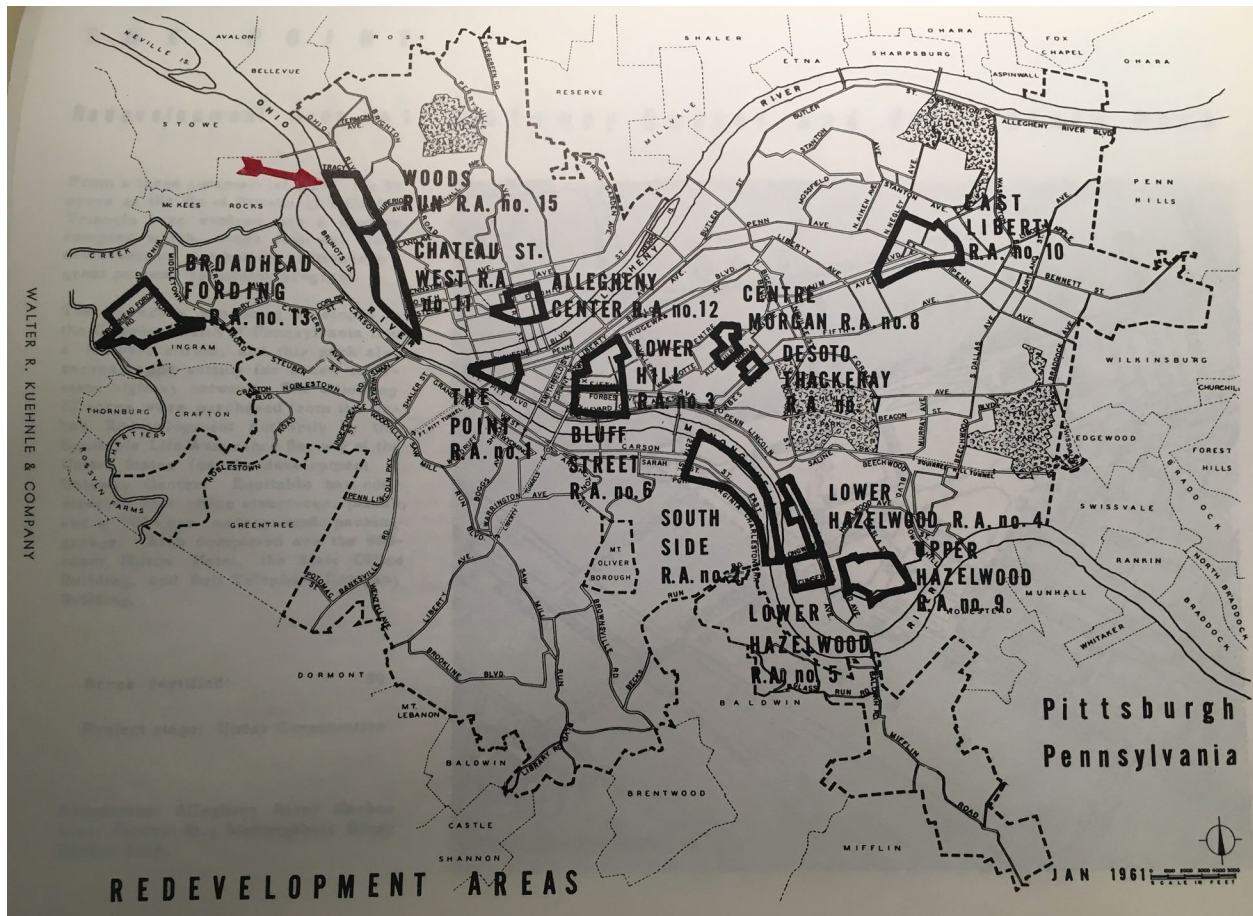
Map 13. By 1960 the potential stadium site (later Three Rivers Stadium) was approved by council and was planned near the northern approach of the Manchester Bridge. Highway development on the North Side, while proposed from the later 1930s through the 1950s, began in earnest during the 1960s due to the stadium location which dictated the alignment. The stadium was a major project of the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA). (Source: Pittsburgh Post Gazette, 12 June 1960)



Map 14. The Planning of the Stadium during the 1960s necessitated numerous traffic studies. The importance of the stadium's location to highway development in the North Side cannot be understated. (Source: Heinz History Center: Detre Archive)



Figure 4. View of Manchester from Mount Washington, 1963. Manchester with West End Bridge shown just before construction of the Chateau Street West Redevelopment Area and Route 65 commenced in the mid-1960s. Beaver Avenue and Chateau Street are major North-South Streets seen beyond the main bridge span. Source: ACCD Records, Heinz History Center, Detre Archive: <https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3AMSP285.B033.F02.I03>



Map 15. This January 1961 map from the URA identifies all of the major Redevelopment Areas in the City of Pittsburgh. The Point is Redevelopment Area No. 1 and the Lower Hill is Redevelopment Area No. 3. Chateau Street West (part of Manchester being redeveloped for industry) is Redevelopment Area No. 11 while Woods Run to the north of Manchester (another industrial redevelopment area) is Redevelopment Area No. 15. According to interviews with local Manchester residents, many African-Americans who were displaced by the redevelopment of the Lower Hill moved to Manchester, especially as white residents of Manchester left the City after the planning of Route 65 began in the early 1960s. Source: Heinz History Center: Detre Archive

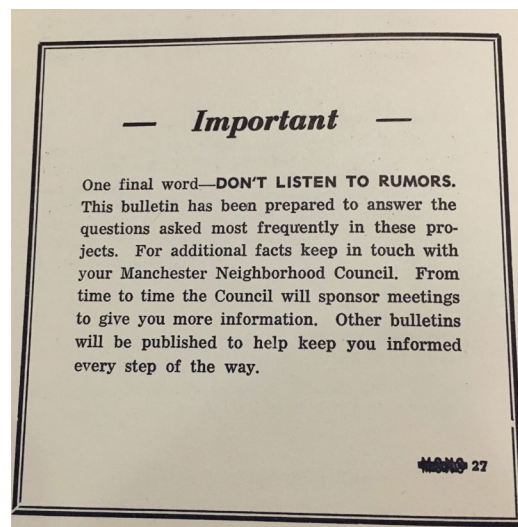
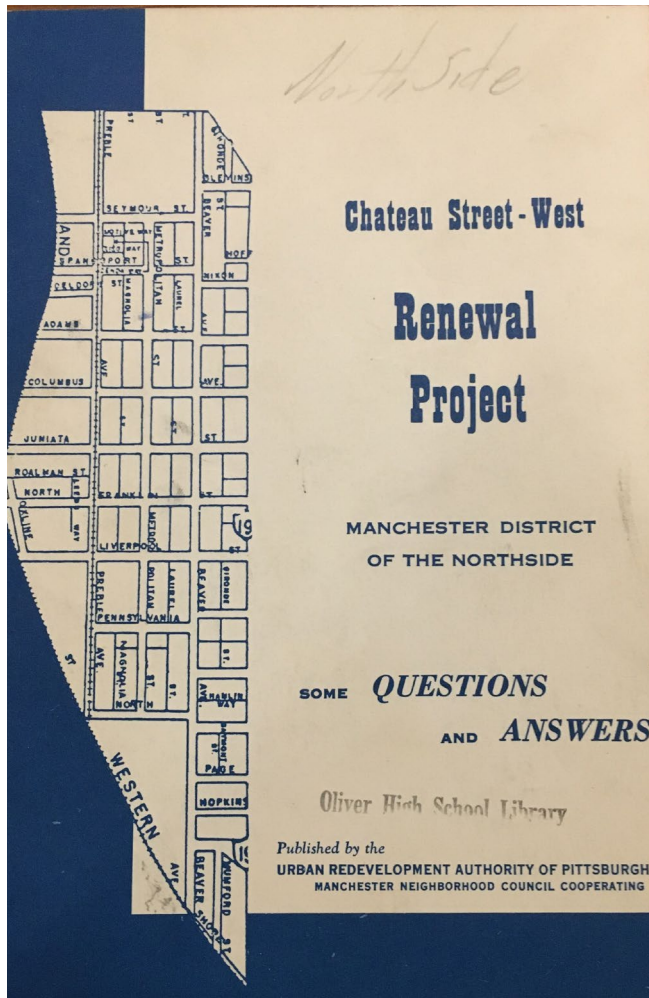


Figure 5. Chateau Street West Renewal Project, 1960. Handout produced by the URA and provided to Manchester residents. Back cover of Q & A brochure implores residents “Don’t Listen to Rumors” about urban renewal. (Source: Heinz History Center, Detre Archives)

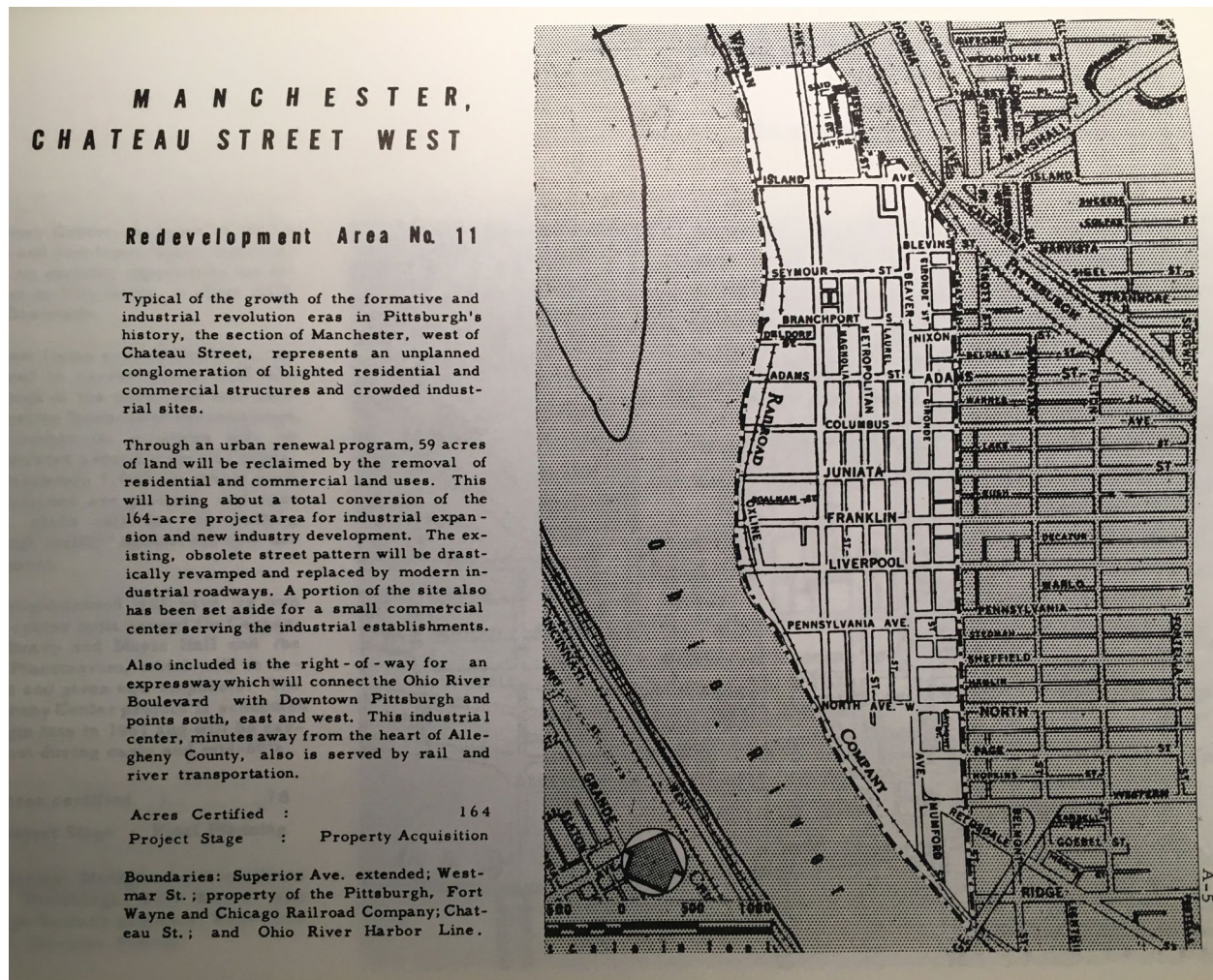


Figure 6. The URA produced informational bulletins to communicate urban renewal to the public. Note the third paragraph mentioning the Ohio River Boulevard. (Source: Heinz History Center: Detre Archive)

The Effects of Highway Construction on the Manchester Neighborhood

During the planning of the Route 65 corridor and Lower Belt highway in Pittsburgh's North Side between 1954 and 1964, there were numerous rumors circulating throughout the neighborhood about when the planned highway route would finally be decided upon which greatly destabilized the neighborhood. However, once demolition of the Beaver Avenue corridor commenced in 1964-65, the neighborhood was faced with a complete change in their way of life at the hands of city planners, the URA and the Pennsylvania Department of Highways. According to area resident Judge Joseph Williams, "the wall (of Route 65) is so symbolic because it divides Manchester from Beaver Avenue but when I was a kid Beaver Avenue was where most people went for everything, food, the Hippodrome (theater), everything you could think of—a booming business corridor for a diverse community—Italians, Jews, Germans, an ethnic hodgepodge." Williams recalls that the building of Route 65 led to the demolition of his elementary school as

well, which was in the path of the highway.¹⁶ Between 1966 and 1969, Williams recalls there was a “mass exodus of white people” and the area between West North Avenue all the way to the railroad tracks became “predominantly black.”



Map 16. 1923 Sanborn Map showing the Beaver Avenue and Chateau Street commercial corridor in Manchester. Neighborhood landmarks such as the Manchester Public School and Hippodrome Theater as well as the entire commercial corridor was demolished to make way for Route 65 highway construction. Note the Baptist Church (extant) to the east of the Manchester School, shown in Figure 8. Source: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=63f24d1466f24695bf9dfc5bf6828126>

¹⁶ Judge Joseph Williams and Bruce Williams interview, August 14, 2023.



Figure 7. The corner of Juniata Street and Beaver Avenue, 1954 showing the Hippodrome Theater. According to local resident Jean Lewis, the Hippodrome Theater was segregated in the 1950s and African-American patrons were relegated to balcony seating only.¹⁷ This theater and all adjacent blocks were demolished for Route 65. Source: <https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3A715.5492230.CP>



Figure 8. Manchester School, 1959. The school, opened in 1870, was located on the west side of Chateau Street. It was demolished for Route 65 construction after it closed in 1964. The school was a focal point of the community, and its demolition symbolized the losing of local landmarks for urban renewal and highway construction in the 1960s. (source: City Planning Library Department Collection, RG-04-002, Box 161, Pittsburgh City Archives)

¹⁷ Jean Lewis interview, August 15, 2023.



Figure 9. Chateau Street at Juniata Street in Manchester with Route 65 to the west, site of the demolished Manchester School. The Pilgrim (Beth-Eden) Baptist Church as shown on the 1923 map above still stands. (photo: Robert Armstrong, September 27, 2023)



Figure 10. The wall of Route 65 along Chateau Street looking south to the West End Bridge and the only underpass out of Manchester at Juniata Street. During the planning of the highway the District Engineer of State Highway Department stated the Ohio River Boulevard “will either be elevated or depressed so that present street patterns will remain intact.”¹⁸ Instead, present major east-west streets terminated at the wall and the neighborhood was divided on a north-south axis. (photo: Robert Armstrong, September 27, 2023)

¹⁸ ASI Report, 1954, 14.



Figure 11. Route 65 bifurcating Manchester in 2023 with Chateau Street West Redevelopment Area to the west and Manchester residential neighborhood to the east. Despite the main streets in Manchester being on an east-west axis, highway planners and engineers only allowed for one street to traverse the long highway wall, at Juniata Street just north of this location, circled in red. The rest of the highway is elevated through the neighborhood on structure which cut the neighborhood in half. (source: Google Earth)

The building of Route 65 is equated in the mind of Judge Joseph Williams with death and the growth of the heroin epidemic in the community which coincided with the building of the highway. “It was just a sad time, you could tell it was choking off the community and making the community a food desert. It wiped out the economic base and the lifeline with respect to food and provisions that a community could walk to and walk back (referring to the Beaver Avenue commercial corridor)...when they cut off Chateau corridor from Beaver Avenue it was almost like they created a moat it just changed the whole composition and chemistry and self-image and sustainability of the people of Manchester.”¹⁹ Local resident and president of Manchester Bidwell Corporation, William Strickland, agrees stating: “the elevated highway allowed white people to go not through Manchester but over Manchester.” He continued stating: “it was egregious, and it was obvious because anybody that lived there you had an elevated highway that literally cut off an economic thriving community on one side of the highway and residents on the

¹⁹ Judge Williams interview.

other. I can't think of anything more dramatic and in a way more contemptuous to the history of the people who lived there than to cut it in half." Strickland continued stating the construction of the Route 65 wall and demolition of the spine of the community were based on the twin factors of "race and economics that drove the change because when a community goes from employed to unemployed and a cancer began to spread which is as much spiritual cancer as it is economic cancer. And it is virulent and out of control and once the cancer gets ahold it spreads very quickly...and it is ubiquitous and very inclusive. This also accelerated what is now called white flight and property values declined. This becomes a system of common deterioration. A number of community groups were formed like Manchester Citizens Corporation (MCC) were formed to try and reestablish a trajectory of growth rather than a trajectory of failure."

Williams pointed out that women played a large part in the Manchester community, including Betty Jane Ralph, a prominent leader in Manchester and part of the leadership of MCC. Ralph stated in an interview in 1980, "we call it the Chinese Wall...they separated us from Beaver Avenue and put a wall between the community. The local school had to go for the wall and then they had to move people out of their houses to build the new school. The people were running like rats. When they built the Civic Arena (around 1965), blacks from the Hill District were moving here where housing was already a problem."²⁰ Long time neighborhood resident Anita Perry described the building of Route 65 as creating a "stressed neighborhood," stating "when they built the wall and were tearing down all the buildings and destroying the neighborhood, it gave us an in in the Civil Rights movement." Ms. Perry describes the situation after the neighborhood was changed that many whites left what was once a diverse, working class neighborhood and many of the properties became rentals and the area became known for "slumlords" renting out properties that were once owner occupied and people became "stuck in the neighborhood."²¹

²⁰ "Manchester Makes a Comeback" Pittsburgh Press 17 August 1980.

²¹ Anita Perry interview, July 31, 2023.

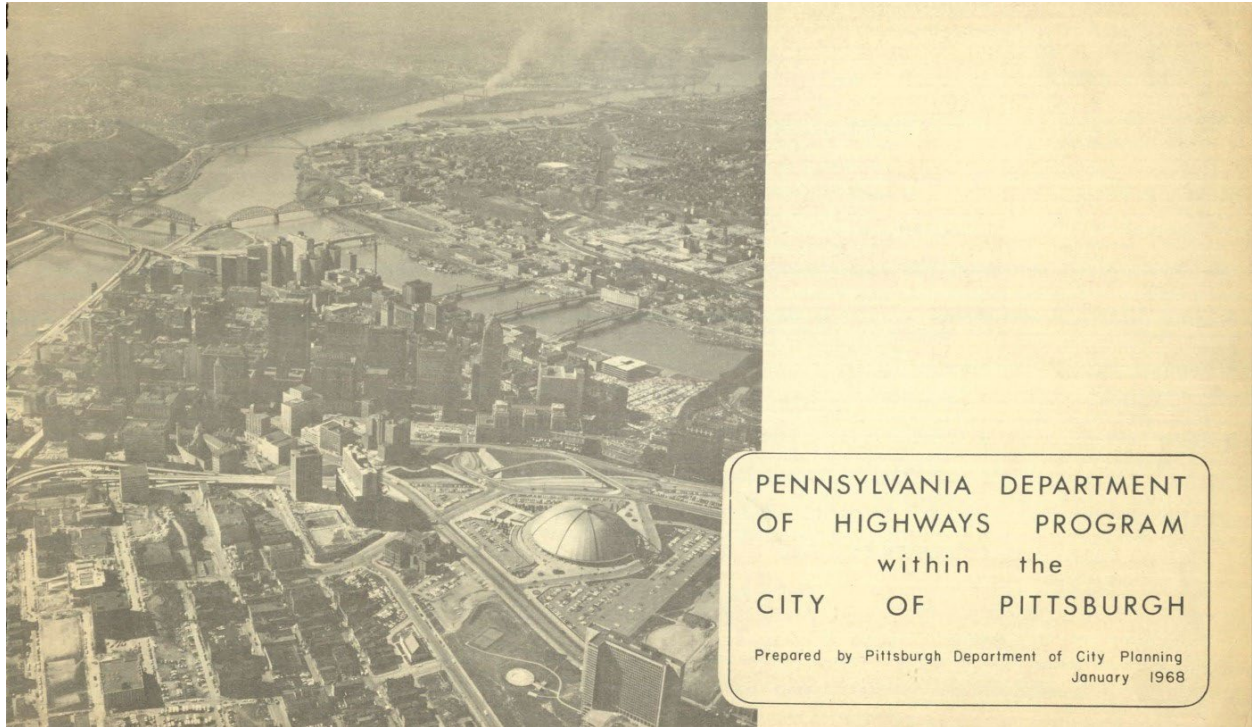


Figure 12: "Pennsylvania Department of Highways Program within the City of Pittsburgh," January 1968. Much of the Golden Triangle Area (Central Business District) was developed. Manchester can be seen in the upper center-right with Route 65 construction underway. The Lower Hill District, shown here with the prominent dome of the completed Civic Arena, had been cleared by 1968 of residential housing and many African-Americans were moving into Manchester at the time due to displacement.



Figure 13: “The Golden Triangle,” Pittsburgh’s Central Business District in the Renaissance I urban renewal period. The pressures on Manchester and the construction of Route 65 were due to urban renewal interests in the CBD and the proximity of Manchester to the downtown. Note similarities between Gateway Towers and Allegheny Towers and 1946 ACCD plans for Manchester, based on Swiss-French architect and planner Le Corbusier’s “Towers in the Park” ideal. Source: Roy Lubove Twentieth Century Pittsburgh.

Resistance in Manchester: Localized Civil Rights Leadership and Historic Preservation

The beginnings of Manchester’s revival were intertwined with the Urban Renewal efforts of the ACCD, URA, and the City of Pittsburgh as well as the highway planning of the Pennsylvania Department of Highways. Rather than leave, many Manchester residents fought back and organized at a grassroots level from the mid-1960s through the late 1970s to save their neighborhood which created a consciousness because of the effects of urban renewal. This organization manifested in a variety of overlapping ways, all of which contributed to the survival of Manchester in the face of powerful, external interests. The residents of Manchester were assisted by several key factors contributing to this success, including Civil Rights leadership, especially from such figures as Reverend James J. Robinson of Bidwell Presbyterian Church. Robinson marched with Martin Luther King in Selma and was a seasoned Civil Rights veteran by the time he became minister of Bidwell in 1966.²² In addition, according to Judge Joseph Williams, the Civil Rights movement came to Manchester as many of the residents of the neighborhood had migrated from Southern states such as South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama and “someone in almost every household had a connection with people in the South so that what

²² Interview with James Robinson, Jr. July 31, 2023.

was going on in the South had a connection with people in Manchester as that was where people had migrated from.”²³



REV. JAMES J. ROBINSON
Pittsburgh Press, September 28, 1967
Figure 14 and 15



Bidwell United Presebyterian Church (second building built 1977)
(Photo: Robert Armstrong, September 27, 2023)

Reverend Robinson warned the Allegheny Conference on Civil Rights in 1967 that “there isn’t a black voice in the City now to determine any of its policies and future,” continuing “The City’s on probation now. I’m angry when I walk the streets of Manchester, but I’m not a racist, I am just pro-black.” Robinson warned that if something was not done soon, the City would not escape the “sparks which could catch fire in the Summer of ’68,” due to unemployment and little hope for black residents to become part of the middle class.²⁴

Robinson and other Civil Rights leadership were correct and when the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. occurred on April 4, 1968, Manchester erupted in rioting as did other

²³ Judge Williams interview

²⁴ “Lift Negro Hope Now, City Told” in Pittsburgh Press, September 28, 1967

predominantly African-American sections of the City, including Homewood-Brushton and the Lower Hill District. Many whites that remained in Manchester left following the aftermath of the riots and the remaining commercial corridor in Manchester along Pennsylvania Avenue was also greatly affected by the riots as many existing stores closed following looting and arson which occurred throughout the neighborhood.

According to local resident Bruce Williams the escalation in the change in the neighborhood from the 1968 riots associated with the death of Dr. King continued from the late 1960s into the early 1970s as “every store changed from white to black between 1968 and 1970.” The “catalyst” according to Williams for the frustrations of African-American Manchester residents into a black consciousness or black power movement was the killing of Ernest Keith Caldwell, a 12 year old boy who lived at 1414 Liverpool St in June of 1970 by an 82 year-old white woman who killed Caldwell at her home on 1406 Pennsylvania Avenue with a shotgun as the boy was playing around her back yard. This event, and the riots that ensued after it, were the “most significant thing that happened in the Black Power” movement according to Williams.



Figure 16: Pittsburgh Post Gazette, June 21, 1970. The headline reads “Manchester Area Sealed Off” due to the riots but in many ways the Manchester area was also “sealed off” prior to the rioting due to the construction of the Route 65 wall to the west and the planning of the Lower Belt Highway for access to the soon to open Three Rivers Stadium later in the Summer of 1970.

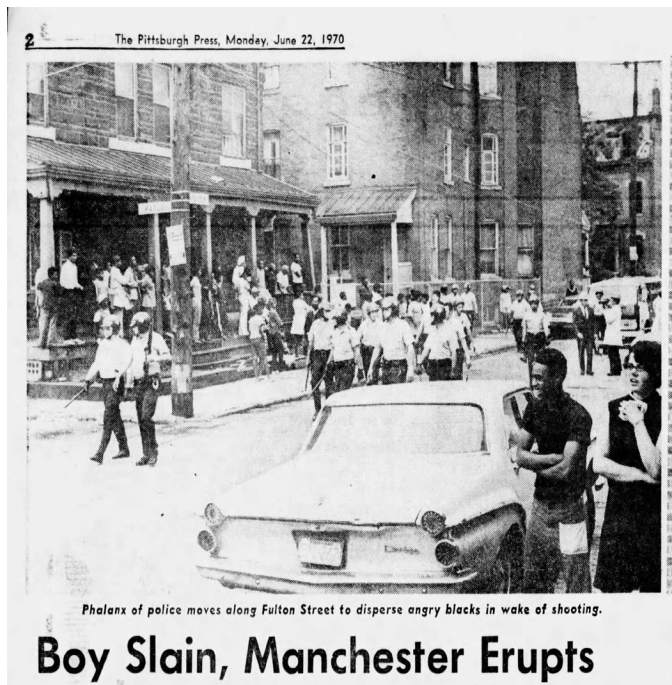


Figure 17 Pittsburgh Press, June 22, 1970.



Figure 18: Black Power Wall Mural in Manchester, August 1970. Liverpool Street near Fulton. (Source: City Planning Library Department Collection: URA 11_001_Box 35_F_009_S_002_019 City Planning Library Department Collection)

At the same time that African-American consciousness was growing within the neighborhood, Manchester's historic preservation movement was also producing results. In 1964, Arthur Ziegler and James van Trump were driving through the neighborhood when they happened upon many of the architectural gems along Liverpool Street. Ziegler recalls getting out of his car when a neighborhood man approached him, stating "you better look fast as the City is going to demolish this street and all of Manchester." Ziegler recalls going to the City and getting a map which indicated that all of the North Side would be demolished from the "Ohio River to the Heinz Plant." Ziegler and van Trump would go on to form the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation (PHLF) after meeting with the URA, who Ziegler recounts was "determined to take it all down" in the name of urban renewal. Ziegler asked the URA about the source of funds and was told the URA was using money from HUD for demolition. Ziegler then met with Helen Clay Frick and Frick gave PHLF their first grant to study a house on Liverpool Street.²⁵

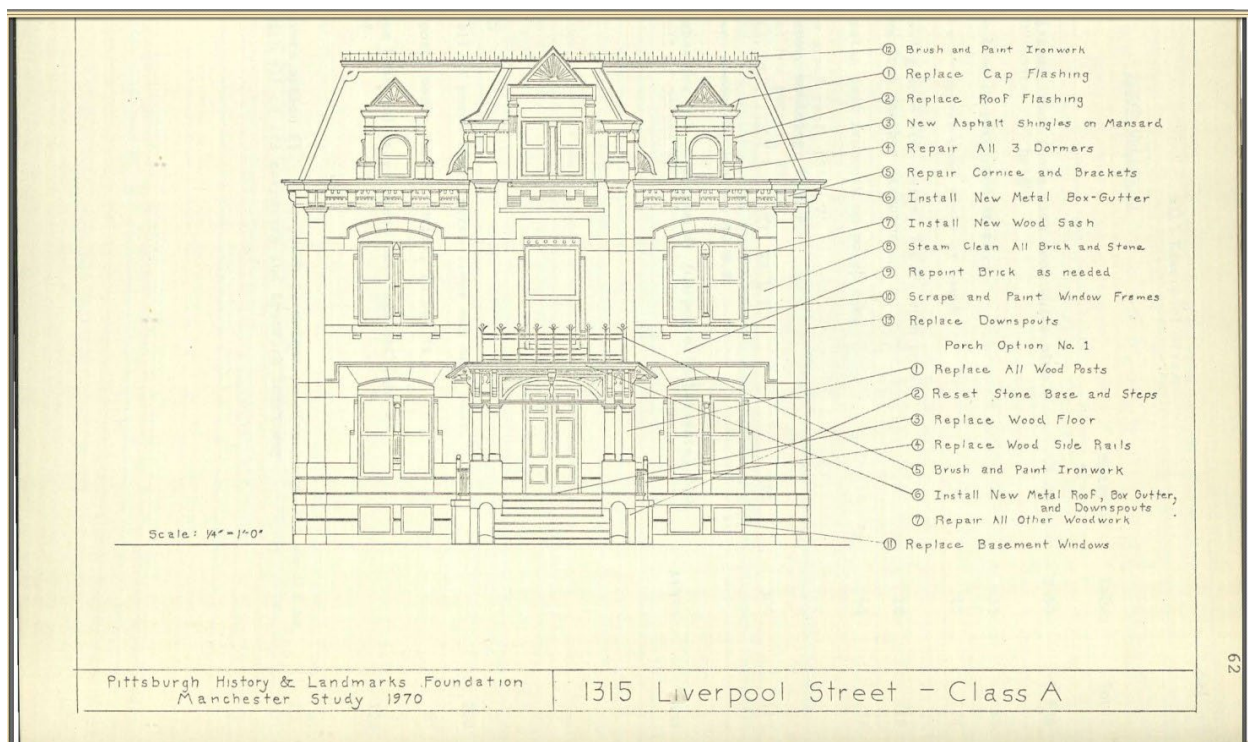


Figure 19: Langenheim House at 1315 Liverpool Street, Study by PHLF. Source: Pittsburgh City Archive.

Ziegler recalls that PHLF's efforts in Preservation wanted to accomplish two things in Manchester: 1) do not want PHLF efforts to dislocate anyone and "don't want use gentrification to fund rehabilitation" and 2) want to "work with the City to get them to agree to not demolish Manchester." Ziegler wanted to get the heart of Manchester on the National Register of Historic Places. This would complicate the usage of federal funds to be used for demolition and clearing

²⁵ Arthur Ziegler interview June 16, 2023.

of the neighborhood, after the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act and Section 106 compliance in 1966.²⁶

Manchester Citizens Corporation

The importance of the Manchester Citizens Corporation to the neighborhood and the resistance against external factors cannot be underestimated. Beginning in 1965 as the Manchester Community Development Corporation and then known as the United Manchester Redevelopment Committee in 1967 before changing its name to Manchester Citizens Corporation (MCC) in 1978, its core leadership during the late 1960s and 1970s were neighborhood residents who worked at a grassroots level and with the PHLF to begin working with the URA and the City of Pittsburgh to make decisions on their own about the future of the neighborhood.²⁷ Leadership during the 1970s included Betty Jane Ralph, who lived on Fulton Street in Manchester, who worked tirelessly on behalf of Manchester and Stanley Lowe, who became director of MCC (then called UMRC) in 1972.

The early work of the organization revolved around defending the neighborhood from the onslaught of urban renewal, new housing for the neighborhood in 1970, which was funded by the Bidwell Cultural Center, and most importantly, utilizing the Title I HUD funding from an Urban Renewal Grant that was applied for and awarded to the URA and the City in 1970-72. MCC and the URA forged this partnership during this time period which was a radical departure from the position the URA took in the past. In 1970, at a City Council hearing which included Manchester residents, William Farkas, the URA's Executive Director laid out the following priorities for Manchester:

- "To conserve as much housing as possible. There are too many rumors that Manchester will be wiped out for a commercial area. This is not true."
- "To expand the amount of low and moderate housing in Manchester."
- "To support and promote to the fullest extent possible the concept of community control over the ultimate disposition and development of land within Manchester."²⁸

MCC and the URA began a relationship due to this funding that would continue into the 1970s that would be the basis of major tide turning within the neighborhood. According to Stanley Lowe in a 1980 interview: "The citizens decided they would map the destiny of the community. For too long outside influences were making the decisions. But we took the power into our hands."²⁹ Even after President Nixon declared a moratorium on all Federal Housing programs in 1973, the MCC continued to work to bring affordable housing to Manchester through the Neighborhood Housing Program.³⁰

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ See Dan Holland: "Forging a Consistent Vision: The People Who Shaped Manchester's Renewal: 1964-2014" in *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*, Vol. 86, No. 2, 2019.

²⁸ "Manchester Residents Ask Renewal Okay" *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, October 1, 1970

²⁹ "Manchester Makes a Comeback" *Pittsburgh Press* 17 August 1980.

³⁰ "Nixon's Housing Program," *New York Times* 29 September 1973 and *ibid*.

The use of federal funds encouraged the leaders at PHLF and MCC to work together to designate the Manchester Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 as by this time both the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Section 106) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1970 would trigger reviews if federal funds were used to demolish properties listed on the National Register. Arthur Ziegler stated the “the central core of Manchester is the historic district...our interest was to preserve Manchester. We stressed that Preservation was the key to the future of Manchester. If it were demolished it would never be rebuilt.”³¹



Figure 20: Historic houses on Sheffield Street with the Pennsylvania Bidwell House, a project of the Pittsburgh Housing Authority built in 1970 as senior housing, in the background. The mixture of historic homes preserved through a partnership between the PHLF, MCC and the URA in the late 1960s and 1970s with newer construction for affordable housing constructed in the 1970s and 1980s is common throughout Manchester (photo: Robert Armstrong, August 6, 2023)

In addition to the efforts of Civil Rights leadership such as Reverend Robinson, the PHLF and the MCC, the work of the Manchester Craftsman’s Guild and the Manchester Bidwell Corporation also stabilized much of Manchester during the 1970s. William Strickland founded

³¹ *ibid*

the Manchester Craftsmans Guild after being encouraged to utilize his artistic skills and arts knowledge to work with kids on the street. Strickland recalls that in the late 1960s and early 1970s, he was asked to take over the Bidwell Training Center so people leaving the declining steel industry could undergo some re-training from a vocational standpoint. Strickland recalls that the twin forces of unemployment and urban renewal in the neighborhood created trauma and “when you suffer that kind of trauma, you don’t recover quickly.”³² Strickland created a space within the community for workforce development, skill training, as well as place for the arts. His Manchester Bidwell Corporation became a model for numerous other skill-training, arts education and workforce development programming throughout the United States and internationally.



— Press Photo by Robert J. Pavuchak

William Strickland, Pittsburgh Press, August 18, 1969



³² Strickland Interview



Figure 12. "Manchester Makes a Comeback" Pittsburgh Press, August 17, 1980

Summary: By the mid-to-late 1970s, the grassroots organizing within Manchester created a partnership with the very agencies that originally planned the neighborhood's demise. Partnerships between neighborhood organizations and preservationists and the URA and the City of Pittsburgh formed which prevented further demolition of the neighborhood. Ultimately, the City of Pittsburgh designated Manchester as a City Historic District on July 30th, 1979, thereby protecting what remained of the built environment after decades of both demolitions resulting from highway development and urban renewal and threats from the ACCD, city planners and the URA.³³

The context for the Civil Rights Movement and overlapping Historic Preservation Movement in the North Side neighborhood of Manchester in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania began due to pressures on the neighborhood from external forces of highway development and urban renewal. The neighborhood of Manchester worked to organize against these forces especially after the construction of the Ohio River Boulevard Extension (PA Route 65) which was planned as early as 1954 and was designed and constructed between 1960 and 1970. The limited access highway was constructed through Manchester as a single wall with only one underpass, therefore the main east-west streets in Manchester ended at the highway wall removing the commercial heart of the community. The completion of the Ohio River Boulevard extension was important to the URA

³³ Prior to being designated as a City of Pittsburgh historic district, the Manchester National Register Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. The boundary of the National Register District is considerably smaller than the locally designated district.

as it was tied to the completion of Three Rivers Stadium on the southern border of Manchester and the Lower Belt Highway which connected to the stadium and the parking areas around the stadium, home to both the Pittsburgh Pirates of Major League Baseball and the Pittsburgh Steelers of the National Football League from 1970 until 2000. As pointed out in National Park Service's bulletin: *Civil Rights in America: Racial Discrimination in Housing* federal urban renewal overwhelmingly subsidized corporate interests and upscale gentrification through high-end residential projects, downtown skyscrapers, and entertainment centers such as museums and sports arenas.

The redevelopment of these areas also led to the demolition of the Manchester Bridge, which had provided area residents with a direct connection to the downtown. By the time the highway and stadium were completed, Manchester became an increasingly insular community and despair, unemployment, riots, civil unrest and crime became normalized. As white business and residents fled to the suburbs the area became increasingly African American by the early 1970s. Despite the pressures on the neighborhood, area residents worked at a grassroots level to resist further decisions without their consent and began community and church-led organizations and skill training to regain control over the fate of their neighborhood. Beginning in the early 1970s, groups such as MCC worked with the URA in the decision-making process and decisions, especially around real estate, shifted to the leadership within the community with assistance from the PHLF.

According to the *Civil Rights in America: Racial Discrimination in Housing*:

The Federal Highway Act of 1956, which included provisions for 5,300 miles of expressways inside American cities, led to the demolition of 330,000 urban housing units in the US during its first decade alone. Largely completed by the early 1970s, the interstate highway network represented a massive public works project that subsidized suburban growth and downtown redevelopment, remaking urban centers primarily for the benefit of metropolitan commuters and corporate interests. In addition to the transportation agenda, highway developers and city planners promoted the freeway system as a method of slum clearance for intown neighborhoods. "Almost everywhere," observes historian Raymond Mohl, "the new urban expressways destroyed wide swaths of existing housing and dislocated people by the tens of thousands, uprooting entire communities in the name of progress." As with urban renewal, the areas targeted for expressway development were primarily home to Black and/or low-income populations, and only a small percentage of the displaced residents received adequate relocation assistance or units in public housing projects. The construction of the Interstate Highway System provided another pillar of the postwar system of metropolitan segregation that resulted from the convergence of federal funding and municipal planning. Evidence from numerous cities reveals that White officials targeted Black neighborhoods for removal in order to sanitize downtown business districts, while city planners

often deliberately located expressways as racial buffers between Black and White residential areas.³⁴

According to *Civil Rights in America: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites* the Fair Housing Act of 1968 shifted the center of the civil rights movement from the rural South to the urban North, allowing for the resistance within Manchester to become a model for self-determination, even after so much of the damage of urban renewal and highway alignment decisions had already occurred.³⁵ Manchester is a significant urban neighborhood that underwent a major transformation from the earliest efforts at urban renewal in Pittsburgh into the power of grassroots organizing affecting change on a local level leading to neighborhood residents gaining power over decisions affecting their future during the 1970s, ending decades of planning decisions which would have completely eradicated their neighborhood.

³⁴ https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/upload/Civil_Rights_Housing_NHL_Theme_Study_revisedfinal.pdf

³⁵ <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/upload/Civil-Rights-Framework-2018.pdf>

2. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

X previously listed in the National Register (Manchester Historic District, 1975)

___ previously determined eligible by the National Register

___ designated a National Historic Landmark

___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

___ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

___ State Historic Preservation Office

___ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☒ Local government

☐ University

☒ Other

Name of repository: Heinz History Center-Detre Library & Archives

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

3. Form Prepared By

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organization: _____

street & number: _____

city or town: _____ state: _____ zip code: _____

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date: _____