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Shadow Expansion in Unit 3

The Redevelopment Authority's annual report of 1960 announced the creation of Unit 3 in West Philadelphia, which ran roughly from Powelton and Lancaster Avenues south to Chestnut Street, between 34th and 39th Streets.[1] Unit 3 properties would be redeveloped in conjunction with the West Philadelphia Corporation (WPC), an institutional coalition that included the University of Pennsylvania, the Drexel Institute of Technology, the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science, and the Presbyterian and Osteopathic hospitals in West Philadelphia. The RDA heralded Unit 3 as "a major step toward the concept of a great university city extending from the Schuylkill River to 44th Street."[2] The orchestration of Unit 3—the RDA demolitions, the construction of the much ballyhooed University City Science Center, and the permanent removal of the unit's predominantly black population—undermined Penn's community relations in West Philadelphia for decades after the clearances, with aftershocks that are still felt today. This chapter provides a detailed account of Unit 3's history. Our analysis also serves as a cautionary tale for urban universities in their dealings with their neighbors—one that Penn president Judith Rodin took to heart thirty years later when she launched the West Philadelphia Initiatives.

North of Market: The African American Diaspora in West Philadelphia

At the outset of the Great Expansion, the University confronted transformations in the demography and economy of the city and West Philadelphia. The burden of these changes fell heaviest on the city's burgeoning African American population. The great migration that was spurred by World War I and continued into the 1920s contributed some 140,000 southern blacks to

Philadelphia's total population, fostering the growth of three sizable black districts in the city: the southern tier of Center City, North Philadelphia, and West Philadelphia (the old 24th Ward, Market Street to Girard Avenue, 32nd to 44th streets). Relegated to the bottom rung of the city's economic ladder, with the exception of a small middle class of African American doctors, lawyers, teachers, and caterers ("Old Philadelphians" like the attorneys Raymond Pace Alexander and his wife, Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander, who held a Penn PhD in economics as well as a Penn law degree), blacks encountered wretched housing conditions in a rent-profiteering market and entrenched hostility, denigration, harassment, and violence at the hands of Philadelphia's Irish, Italian, and "old-stock" Euro-American groups. African American employment gains during World War I, primarily in the railroad and steel industries, dissipated after the war: "domestic service and unskilled labor" were the only jobs available for the large majority of Philadelphia blacks, many of whom were unemployed. In the city's heavily segregated textile industry, blacks could only find jobs as janitors.[2]

Wretched conditions improved incrementally for Philadelphia blacks with the New Deal and the Democratic Party's courting of northern blacks as a voting bloc. A limited breakthrough came in 1944 when the city's black activists, working with the Roosevelt administration's Fair Employment Practices Commission and leaders of the integrationist Transportation Workers Union, forced the Philadelphia Transportation Company to employ African Americans as drivers and motormen on the city's buses and trolley lines. This was a Pyrrhic victory, however, as it marked a realignment of city politics that would disadvantage Philadelphia blacks in the coming years: many race-conscious Irish and Italian Americans left the party of the New Deal for the Republican Party.[3]

World War II set the stage for a second great migration of black southerners to Philadelphia and other major cities outside the South. "The urgent need for soldiers to fight abroad and for wage-earners to forge an 'arsenal of democracy' at home," as one historian puts it, "convinced a flood of African Americans to leave the South. Mechanized cotton pickers shrunk the need for agrarian labor just as the lure of good jobs in war industries sapped the will to stay in the fields."[4] Between 1940 and 1950, Philadelphia's black population grew by 50 percent, from 250,000 to 375,000.[5] But the economic boom was short lived. Tens of thousands of factory jobs were lost after the war. The closing of Cramp's Shipyard; heavy layoffs at Baldwin Locomotive, Midvale Steel, Sun Ship, and the Frankford Arsenal; and starting in the early 1950s, the movement of the city's textile jobs to nonunion southern

cities, signaled the decline of Philadelphia manufacturing, with dire ramifications for blacks and working-class whites with insufficient means to leave their ethnic enclaves.[6]

The southern black influx continued into the 1950s, with in-migration and natural population growth occurring against the backdrop of the city’s diminished industrial base and the metropolitan area’s transition to a service economy.[7] By 1960, Philadelphia’s African American population totaled more than 529,000, a 41 percent increase since 1950, with blacks holding a 26.4 percent share of the city total.[8] In the 1950s, white out-migration to the suburbs accounted for a loss of 69,000, or 3 percent, in the general population, a diminution that was never recouped.[9]

In the postwar decades, the suburbs supplanted the city in population and economic growth.[10] Much of the job outflow was to new landscaped factory sites and industrial parks in the city’s northeast tier, and in Montgomery and Bucks counties.[11] The city’s long-term losses were staggering: 115,000 manufacturing jobs disappeared over four decades, with textiles and apparel accounting for 79 percent of the attrition. Forty-two thousand jobs, “mostly in manufacturing,” disappeared in one eighteen-month period amid the national “stagflation” of the early 1970s.[12]

Discriminatory hiring practices at the new suburban plants combined with segregation in suburban housing markets served to ghettoize blacks in Philadelphia, where they were excluded from the city’s dwindling industrial base. While blacks gained substantial representation in the municipal sector through the “non-partisan, merit-based civil service system” enacted by the 1951 city charter, their jobs were in the low-wage categories. A growing increment of the African American population was poor, marginally employed, and living in segregated neighborhoods abandoned by white ethnics. In 1959, 43 percent of unemployed Philadelphians were black; in 1960, the nonwhite unemployment rate stood at 10.7 percent, compared to the white rate of 5 percent. Segregation in the city’s crafts and building trades unions ensured that blacks in these trades earned about one-third less than their white coworkers.[13]

Housing and public education were also structured to disadvantage blacks. Compounding racial isolation, public housing, such as it was (only fourteen thousand units were built between 1937 and 1963), was segregated.[14] Redlining by lenders contributed to the deterioration of black neighborhoods, and racially motivated school board decisions on site selection and design of new schools relegated black children to the city’s oldest and worst public schools.[15]

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West Philadelphia's census tracts recorded expansive growth in African American settlement, from 18.8 percent of the district's total in 1940 to 52.8 percent by 1960. North of Market Street, the figure for "nonwhites" was 58 percent (compared to 27 percent for the city).[16] Mantua, a racially segmented neighborhood about ten blocks (one mile) north of Penn, comprised two of these tracts. Between 1940 and 1950, blacks increased their share of Mantua's population from 45.7 percent to 78.2 percent. By 1960, they accounted for 94.7 percent of 16,886 residents; by 1970, 97.2 percent of 12,044. Between 1950 and 1960, a tipping effect apparently occurred with a precipitous exodus of whites in Mantua, from 4,208 to 862.

In 1960, 10.8 percent of Mantua's black labor force was unemployed, compared to 2.6 percent of white workers. Among "nonwhites" counted as employed in 1960, only 1.6 percent was in the category of "professional, technical, and kindred workers," compared to 5.8 percent of whites. That 79.5 percent of household incomes fell below $39,018 (constant 2011 dollars) suggests a community that was struggling economically (a poverty index was not reported in the 1960 census). Reported in the 1970 census, Mantua's poverty rate was 37.2 percent, compared to the city rate of 11.2 percent. That 43.6 percent of Mantua's families were headed by females with no husband present, compared to 18.9 percent for the city, suggests a breakdown of the neighborhood's social fabric in the 1960s.[17]

The largest part of Unit 3 was assigned to two census tracts that wrapped around the blocks between 31st and 40th Street, from Market to Spring Garden, Mantua's southern boundary. Tract 24I included the area between 36th and 40th streets. At the start of the decade, blacks dominated tract 24I—though not to the same extent as in Mantua and adjacent neighborhoods to the west—accounting for 78.8 percent of the tract's population. Many of these people experienced grinding poverty: a third of black households earned less than $15,607 (2011 constant dollars). The small white minority fared even worse, with 46.7 percent of households earning less than $15,607.[18] On its eastern flank, Unit 3 extended about two blocks east and three blocks north into tract 24F—Market to Spring Garden between 31st and 36th streets. (Tract 24F included the Drexel Institute and RDA Unit 5, a zone of higher-education-based urban renewal in the East Powelton neighborhood.)[19] Nearer the Penn campus, Unit 3 included a swath of blocks in census tracts 27A and 27B, south from Market to the north side of Chestnut between 34th and 40th streets. The University City Science Center, the raison d'être of Unit 3 and the bête noire of poor and working-class African Americans in these blocks,

would extend one block deep along both sides of Market Street between 34th and 38th streets. The new University City High School, another controversial Unit 3 development, would claim several blocks just northwest of the Science Center complex.

The West Philadelphia Corporation and the University City Science Center

The proximate cause for establishing the West Philadelphia Corporation was a single incident of mayhem. On the rainy night of April 25, 1958, a twenty-six-year-old South Korean graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania was brutally murdered in Powelton Village. In-Ho Oh rented an apartment at 3610 Hamilton Street, a block south of Spring Garden Street, the historical boundary between Powelton and Mantua. Oh had just posted a letter at the mailbox across the street at the corner of 36th and Hamilton streets. As he was about to return to his apartment, he was set upon by eleven black youths. According to one account, "Suddenly they swarmed over him, flailing him with fists, a Blackjack, a piece of pipe, a soda bottle. When he was down they stomped on him in an outburst of savagery."[20] The *Evening Bulletin* reported, "He was horribly beaten about the face and head. A broken bottle lay nearby. It was apparently one of the weapons. There were also indications that a blackjack had been used. Oh's glasses lay closer to the corner, making it appear that it was there that he had been first hit and that he tried to run from his assailants."[21] The motive for the killing, which sent shock waves across the city, was never conclusively determined, though speculation was rife that the youths were on the prowl for ticket money to a dance at a nearby church that evening.

Media reports on the crime and its perpetrators, though accurate as to some of the details of the murder, were sensationalist and prejudicial toward African Americans: descriptions such as "a barbarous killing executed with jungle-like ferocity," "outburst of savagery," and "uncivilized, and bound to be a menace to society" speak for themselves.[22] Describing the youthful suspects as "cowardly savages," a *Philadelphia Inquirer* editorial declaimed that "University of Pennsylvania and Drexel Institute of Technology authorities are understandably concerned because of the continuing wave of hold-ups and attacks in the area near the schools and student residences." Indeed, eight of the eleven youths indicted for the murder listed home addresses in Mantua or just north of that neighborhood; all of them had prior arrest records.[23] The founding of the West Philadelphia Corporation followed the In-Ho Oh tragedy in short order.

The initial recommendation for the creation of such an entity had come from the urban planner Martin Meyerson in 1956, when he was a professor in the School of Fine Arts. Drawing on his experience with the South East Chicago Commission, an entity of the University of Chicago working to stabilize and upgrade the university's boundary community of Hyde Park-Kenwood, Meyerson warned that Penn, like Chicago, could "create a desirable neighborhood, or . . . stand by and see develop a 'sea of residential slums with commercial and institutional islands.'" He called for a "West Philadelphia planning and development corporation led by U.P. [and other local higher education institutions and hospitals]." Meyerson believed that Penn could not create a "community of scholars" without the prerequisite of an attractive neighborhood that included "decent housing, open space, good schools, shopping, safe streets, [and] absence of blight." Citing Columbia University's Morningside Heights, Inc., and the South East Chicago Commission as precedents, he prefigured the West Philadelphia Corporation's adoption of an area-wide strategy.[24]

Here it is relevant to consider the aims, programs, and long-term impacts of these precedents. As at Penn, changing racial demographics were a major factor in urban renewal at both Columbia and the University of Chicago. In both cases, a university-dominated coalition of nonprofit institutions transformed the urban landscape.[25]

To cope with postwar demographic changes affecting neighborhoods northeast and south-southeast of Morningside Heights in Manhattan, and "to promulgate physical change benefitting the middle class constituency of the area's institutional employment group," Columbia University and fourteen other Upper West Side institutions formed Morningside Heights, Inc. (MHI) in 1947.[26] Drawing on urban renewal funds and city and state programs, MHI first built two high-rise housing developments several blocks north of the campus. Morningside Gardens–a middle-income, multitowered, 972-apartment cooperative whose planning dated to 1952–opened in 1960 between LaSalle and West 123rd streets. Built just to the north and east of Morningside Gardens between La Salle and West 125th Street, the 1,950-apartment General Grant Houses–"ten high-rise slabs"–opened to carefully screened low-income residents in 1957. These two projects displaced 1,626 families.[27]

The liberal planners' hope of achieving racial and social class integration within, and between, the neighboring projects was largely vitiated: whites (intellectuals and white-collar workers) constituted 75 percent of the Morningside Gardens residents; low-income African American and Puerto Rican

tenants, whose behavior was “monitored and controlled,” composed 89 percent of the General Grant Houses residents. The General Grant Houses functioned as a cordon sanitaire that separated the middle-class neighborhoods of Morningside Heights from the poor neighborhoods to the north and northeast in Manhattanville and Harlem.[28]

In his analysis of Columbia and MHI, the historian Michael Carriere traces Columbia’s domination of Upper West Side urban renewal to 1957, when Grayson Kirk, Columbia’s president, replaced David Rockefeller as president of MHI; Kirk, in turn, appointed Columbia’s treasurer William Bloor, an expert in property acquisitions, to direct MHI’s urban renewal operations for the benefit of the University; other university officials played operational roles as well, and Kirk controlled the appointment of the nonprofit’s executive director. The University’s major investment was to convert or demolish the area’s low-income, poorly maintained tenant hotels, so-called SROs (single-room-occupancy) hotels that had proliferated in Morningside Heights during the war to house thousands of unmarried defense workers.

The planners viewed the worst SROs as a serious threat to their vision of the Heights as “an American Acropolis.” Led by Columbia– with the city’s complicity– MHI maneuvered around the Morningside General Neighborhood Renewal Plan (GNRP), the city’s federally approved urban renewal plan for the Upper West Side, to exclude SROs from the GNRP. Had the SROs been included in the GNRP, the city would have had to replace them with federally funded public housing– a prospect that was anathema to the University. Accordingly, Columbia enlisted MHI’s real estate subsidiary “to buy up as many SRO buildings in the community as possible.” Even before the GNRP, Columbia was acquiring SROs, and by 1968, with Columbia as “the key actor,” “58 of the 309 residential buildings [34 of which were SROs] were demolished, converted into dormitories, offices, or renovated apartment buildings (for predominately upper-middle class Columbia faculty members, or emptied of tenants),” with a total displacement of as many as 9,500 people.[29] One SRO hotel was converted for the School of Social Work and renamed McVicar Hall; another converted SRO hotel was renamed Armstrong Hall, home of the Goddard Institute of Space Studies.[30] Other buildings were demolished for campus expansion: “Columbia tore down sixteen rowhouses and five apartment buildings for the construction of East Campus, including the law school, School of International Affairs, a residence hall, and a raised platform and bridge over Amsterdam Avenue.”[31] (Notoriously unsuccessful was Columbia’s ill-advised project in 1968 to build an off-campus gymnasium in Morningside Park, a debacle we take up in Chapter 4 in our comparison of student protest at Penn and Columbia.)

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Led by a coalition of Hyde Park professionals and businessmen who hoped to forge an integrated neighborhood suitable for "professional-class" residents,[32] the University of Chicago/South East Chicago Commission (SECC) launched a major planning effort for housing conservation and demolition/replacement housing in Hyde Park-Kenwood, an 856-acre urban renewal area where the nonwhite population grew from 6.1 percent in 1950 to 36.7 percent in 1956—an increase of 23,162— and the white population declined by 19,989 (the percentage decline was not reported). This initiative had grudging support from the liberal Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference, founded in 1949.[33] Created in 1952, the SECC was the mediating structure for the University's "overwhelming presence" in Hyde Park-Kenwood urban renewal. Nominally a coalition of six area-wide agencies, the SECC was in fact "a university creation," one that was "generally regarded as an appendage" of the University. The accelerating in-migration from Chicago's South Side "Black Belt" in no small way motivated the creation of the SECC and the University's urban renewal plan for Hyde Park-Kentwood, the goals of which were "a predominately white and economically upgraded community."[34] Approved by city and federal agencies, the 1958 urban renewal plan, the brainchild of the SECC and its director Julian Levi, forecast the demolition of 21 percent of the area's buildings and 21 percent of the total dwelling units; designated 4,087 families (59 percent nonwhite) for relocation; and projected the construction of more than two thousand new dwelling units by private developers.[35] An occasionally ruthless pragmatist, Levi bluntly expressed a sentiment that would inspirit the West Philadelphia Corporation, though without such frank public language:

> If we are really serious about the needs of our institution, then our problem is not one of compromise; it is rather the establishment of priorities. If we are really serious about the next generation of teachers and scholars, lawyers and doctors, physicists and chemists, then we have got to worry about the adequate housing of the graduate student; about the clearing of land for a new laboratory; about the closing of streets to divert traffic from campuses; about the development of a "compatible environment" including substantial slum clearance. . . . We cannot have it both ways. We are either going to have graduate students, who produce leadership for the next generation . . . or we are not going to achieve these results because we are unwilling to disturb existing owners and populations.[36]

The largest redevelopment initiative spearheaded by the University of Chicago and SECC tandem was labeled "Hyde Park A and B," which proposed to

clear and redevelop a swath of "residential and commercial properties along 55th Street and the Illinois Central tracks."[37] The project area of 47.3 acres featured Hyde Park's largest concentration of substandard buildings. The plan received the necessary city and federal approvals, and the demolitions were under way by the spring of 1955. By the 1960s, the renewed project area, once home to twenty-two bars and taverns, boasted a new shopping district, with expensive new townhouses and moderately priced apartment buildings, the latter especially attractive to University faculty and staff. The social costs included the relocation of more than twelve hundred families and 150 businesses.[38]

While Morningside Heights, Inc. was a precedent for the West Philadelphia Corporation, it was probably only a talking point at Penn. By contrast, the South East Chicago Commission provided an explicit model for organizing the West Philadelphia Corporation.

Rise of the WPC

From the planners' perspective, the murder of In-Ho Oh lent immediate urgency to establishing something like the South East Chicago Commission in West Philadelphia[39]– an idea that Martin Meyerson had broached in 1956. At a meeting on 10 June 1958, the representatives of the five private institutions stated their intent to establish the West Philadelphia Corporation. "While [the situation of] our overall area is perhaps not now so critical as that of institutions in other cities," the collective statement read, "nevertheless we face the potential of an ever increasing and encroaching area of residential slums surrounding our colleges and our hospitals." More cryptically, the representatives stated, "Also we face the alternatives of ignoring the succession of land uses and population changes in this vicinity and suffering from the effects of these or assuming leadership in creating and maintaining a desirable neighborhood in which our institutions can flourish."[40]

Planning for the WPC proceeded throughout the summer and fall of 1958, involving consultation with Julian Levi and Jack Meltzer of the South East Chicago Commission. Penn business vice president John Moore underscored the Commission's contribution: "The [bylaws] committee met with Jack Meltzer for two days and these by-laws and the statement of purposes included in them were drafted with his advice. We have followed very closely the framework of the South East Chicago Commission"; indeed, at this point the institutional planners called their corporate entity the West Philadelphia Commission.[41] The West Philadelphia Corporation was publicly announced on 22 April 1959, and hailed by Mayor Richardson Dilworth as "a splendid step toward improving and rehabilitating a key area of our City"; it was, Dilworth proclaimed, a bulwark "against the inroads of deterioration." On

10 July 1959 the Court of Common Pleas approved the articles of incorporation of the West Philadelphia Corporation.[42]

The historian Margaret Pugh O’Mara aptly observes that a mix of economic and racial considerations played a role in Penn’s construction of a “city of knowledge” in West Philadelphia, whose catalyst was the West Philadelphia Corporation. The planners associated blacks, who—because of market conditions and discrimination—were increasingly poor, with blight.[43] For example, a WPC report ca. 1959 listed five “signs of deterioration,” one of which was “the accelerated in-migration of non-academic lower-income families settling in concentrated groups,”[44] in other words, blacks. As O’Mara notes, “one irony of the Penn community’s distress about a changing West Philadelphia was that some of the ‘blight’ was the result of cheap boarding houses, restaurants, and bars proliferating around the area to serve Penn students.”[45]

Ample evidence exists to support O’Mara’s claim that the WPC “was, for all intents and purposes, a Penn-dominated group.”[46] For example, the general plan appeared in Martin Meyerson’s memorandum at the Graduate School of Fine Arts in 1956. John Moore organized the meetings that planned the WPC, and Harnwell was appointed president and director of the executive board, primus inter pares, in deference to Penn’s stature; Harnwell served as board chair of the Corporation until 1977.[47] Penn’s annual financing of the WPC was more than the total amount paid by the other four institutions.[48] (At $26,400,000, Penn’s total payroll was more than six times that of Drexel, the second largest institutional partner.)

Drawn up by John Moore’s committee, the WPC bylaws gave voting rights to the presidents of the five institutions—designated “active members”—and a board of twenty-one directors, sixteen of whom were officials of the institutions. “Associate members,” for example, representatives of local community associations or other stakeholder groups, did not have voting rights—a glaring omission of democratic process that was not rectified until 1983, when Penn president Sheldon Hackney reorganized the WPC as the West Philadelphia Partnership and put the community associations on an equal footing with the institutions (see Chapter 9 for further discussion).[49]

As perhaps its signature legacy, the WPC established the boundaries of an artificial neighborhood that the city and the “higher eds and meds” in the City Planning Commission’s University Area advertised as “University City,” which, “unlike other West Philadelphia neighborhood titles that emerged more organically . . . was a brand name . . . dreamed up by city planners.”[50] Gaylord Harnwell attributed the name’s provenance to Francis Lammer, executive director of the RDA, calling it “a kind of common law designation” for an “aging neighborhood” marked by “decay, neglect, and misuse.”[51] The

boundaries of the proposed "West Philadelphia Corporation Market Area," which enveloped University City, were Haverford Avenue on the north, the Schuylkill River on the east, the Media line of the Pennsylvania Railroad on the south, and 52nd Street on the west. In 1960 the total population of the market area was 101,362, two-thirds of which was "nonwhite." The borders of University City were Powelton Avenue on the north, 44th Street on the west, and the river and the Media line on the east and south.[52] The WPC aimed to develop "a community which holds and attracts institutional cultural facilities, compatible industrial and commercial uses, standard and marketable residential areas served by adequate schools, parks, churches and shopping, thus providing a supply and range of housing which will appeal to large numbers of the population not now attracted to the area."[53] The *Philadelphia Inquirer* rhapsodized, "University City will transform this area, sprinkled now with dilapidated commercial structures and substandard housing, into a park-like panorama of college campuses, educational and medical buildings, research centers– plus appropriately designed and attractively landscaped business and residential communities. . . . It is a new kind of approach to urban redevelopment whereby the established institutions of higher learning seek to fulfill important roles of good citizenship and civic duty."[54]

Put differently, the goal of "Brainsville" (the press moniker for University City) was "to attract as many campus-type families back to the area as possible."[55] O'Mara interprets this approach skeptically as a self-conscious effort to build a "new city of knowledge" populated by a "White, professional community of scholars," and "to replace the disorderly urban landscape with an idealized community of scientific production." Certainly, the fact that "campus-type families" would be overwhelmingly white by virtue of the racial demographics of higher education and the learned professions of the 1960s could not have eluded the planners. Yet it may be speculative overreach for O'Mara, lacking further evidence (which we haven't found either), to assert that the WPC, through the construction of the Science Center, deliberately imposed "a physical barrier between the White, professional community of scholars and working-class, Black West Philadelphia."[56] That said, there is plenty of evidence of hubris and elitism (O'Mara's terms) and insensitivity on the part of the planners. Whether intended or not, one fact remains unaltered: Unit 3 redevelopment effectively formed a cordon sanitaire between Penn and the neighborhoods north of Market Street.

From Stanford to West Philadelphia: The Concept of the Science Center

The WPC planners envisaged the University City Science Center as the catalyst for the economic, cultural, and scholarly efflorescence of University City.

The City Planning Commission hailed the Science Center project as "a substantial research development" involving "a concentration of government- and industry-sponsored basic research that benefits by being able to take advantage of the staff and facilities at the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel Institute of Technology. This group of buildings, together with the existing research facilities at these institutions, will create a major basic research center for the metropolitan area."[57] As recruitment magnets for the Science Center and the "community of scholars," the WPC institutions dedicated dollars and human capital to school-improvement initiatives (Universities-Related Schools– the Lea, Powel, and Drew Schools, the West Philadelphia Free School, the West Philadelphia High School Motivation Program); housing initiatives (demonstration houses and residential planning with five community associations, housing conservation in the 3900ñ3901 block of Pine Street, condominium developments at 45th and Spruce streets and 44th and Osage, and a guaranteed mortgage plan for Penn faculty and staff); historical preservation (the University City Historical Society); arts and culture (the University City Arts League); beautification (the University City Beautification Committee) and recreation (the University City Swim Club); and retail and restaurant development (Unit 4).[58]

The first mention of a WPC-related research park appears in a letter from Harnwell to John Moore, dated 15 June 1959:

> Alfred Williams [chairman of the Penn trustees] called me this morning in regard to an idea which he had over the weekend. This is that in our plans for the West Philadelphia area, we might profitably consider the inviting in of certain desirable neighbors such as corporations desirous of setting up research establishments which would find proximity to University personnel, libraries, and laboratories particularly congenial. He is going to give a little further thought to this matter, but I wanted to keep you informed of the suggestion. There may indeed be groups within the city government with whom the West Philadelphia Corporation should eventually get in touch who are charged with attracting desirable industrial activities to the city. No one seems to have any particular research activity in mind, but it is an interesting idea.[59]

By September 1959, the WPC institutions, the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Philadelphia, and the quasi-public Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) were abuzz with interest in the potential of a research center or "park" that would attract industries to a central R & D site for their labs. Lest there were any doubt about the appropriate location for

such an entity, Allen T. Bonnell, Drexel's vice president, proclaimed, "I should like to place on record our interest in relating any Philadelphia Research Center, both geographically and organizationally, to the West Philadelphia institutions now represented in the Corporation. . . . A Research Center located in West Philadelphia would both benefit from and complement the current research activities, graduate programs, and staffing of these two universities and the other institutions." Championing a site near the campuses, Gaylord Harnwell avowed that "the educational opportunities such institutions offer can be a major inducement to firms employing young scientists. The relatively depressed real estate values in the area can also be an incentive to the location of research laboratories in our neighborhood."[60] Harnwell may well have been mindful that a major R & D center, designed in large part by his leadership team, would offset the stigma of Penn's having forfeited any claim, following the ENIAC debacle, to a leadership role in digital computing.

In January 1960, the WPC hired as its executive vice president Leo Molinaro, a planning consultant with the James Rouse Company, which spearheaded high-profile, avant-garde projects, such as the Fanueil Hall "festival marketplace" in Boston, the Harborplace in Baltimore, and the New Town of Columbia, Maryland. Molinaro had organized 109 metropolitan affiliates of the American Council to Improve Our Neighborhoods (ACTION), whose president was James Rouse. The savvy, ebullient, and highly influential Molinaro cultivated a close personal relationship with Harnwell and the Penn planner Harold Taubin.[61] The protean Martin Meyerson, a colleague of Molinaro's at ACTION, likely had a hand in his hiring, which was the most important WPC appointment of the Harnwell era.

At the outset, the Unit 3 planners had in mind two research complexes, one inside and one outside Unit 3. The latter project appeared on the drawing board first. The plan called for a research tower in the bottomland adjacent to Walnut and 31st streets. Molinaro attributed the idea of the research tower to the PIDC, whose president Richard Graves was enamored with Stanford University's industrial research park, the nucleus of the future Silicon Valley. While the PIDC recognized that Stanford had five thousand acres of rural/suburban property at its disposal for regional economic development, and the pastoral nature of the property factored heavily in the park's success, the organization nonetheless called for a thirty-three-story research tower for densely urban West Philadelphia, a mammoth structure that would accommodate five thousand researchers.[62] Perhaps because they finally realized that two R & D centers in University City were simply not feasible, Molinaro and the PIDC moved the tower plan to a ten-acre site in Unit 3, in the quadrant

of Market Street and Lancaster Avenue between 34th and 36th streets. But the research tower had no traction with the WPC board of directors, who reported in January 1963: "The best evidence would indicate that to compete with suburban locations it would not be advisable to build a tower but to plan several five to six-story buildings with about 10,000 square feet per floor."[63] This board meeting marked the genesis of the University City Science Center (UCSC), in which "both high-tech firms and quasi-independent research departments of Penn and its medical affiliates would have a home . . . it was to be a place where scientific innovation literally existed next door to the commercial application of technology."[64]

Was the Stanford Industrial Park, established in 1951, a model for the UCSC? Molinaro recalls that Stanford was not a model, but rather "a good talking point." "This is an *urban* center," he notes, and unlike the Stanford Industrial Park, which had a single university sponsor, the UCSC started with five institutional sponsors– the WPC members. While the WPC planners did not discount the extraordinary advantage that swaths of pastoral landscape conveyed to Stanford (whose wildly successful R & D partners included, among others, Hewlett-Packard, General Electric, and Lockheed) and to the Research Triangle Park in North Carolina, the University City planners gambled that Penn's brand and the promise of University City amenities would convey a distinctive urban advantage for recruiting high-tech industries.[65]

In the late fall of 1963, the Court of Common Pleas approved articles of incorporation for the University City Science Center and the University City Science Institute (UCSI).[66] The UCSC was the real estate developer for the Science Center complex, designated for that purpose by the RDA with the charge to create "a scientific enclave which will contain in close juxtaposition a compatible arrangement of buildings, open spaces, streets and walkways which will provide a unique environment conducive to scientific creativity in its broadest concept."[67] The purpose of the Science Institute, the Science Center Corporation's "wholly owned non-profit subsidiary," was to recruit scientists, industrial research teams, and technicians; broker "mutually beneficial and stimulating relationships" between these professionals and the faculty of the member institutions; and publish research results and market patented research products. In sum, "the UCSC would acquire land and construct buildings in which the UCSI would enable researchers to develop and sell their ideas."[68] More than the Stanford Industrial Park, the Stanford Research Institute, founded in 1946 as "a locus on campus for research of direct interest to industrial patrons,"[69] provided a repository of ideas for the UCSI. Penn trustee Robert Trescher visited Stanford in the late spring of 1963 to

collect information and advice for developing a Philadelphia version of the Institute; the language of Trescher's in-house memorandum hints at Penn's control of the Science Center; for example, "again it was recommended that Pennsylvania [Penn's moniker at the time] not consider erecting a building until a large volume of contract research is developed."[70] Unlike Stanford's approach, the WPC integrated (and did so in the articles of incorporation) the UCSI as a component of the Science Center— on paper, at least, *not* a component of the University of Pennsylvania.

The University City Science Center was a "regional" conception, "in that the stock subscriptions to the Center Corporation [UCSC] are all held by non-profit institutions of higher learning, hospitals, and medical schools in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey."[71] The Penn trustees made the University's participation in the Science Center contingent on their holding "no less than 51 percent of the stock." Harnwell assured a contentious William Hagerty, president of the Drexel Institute (James Creese's successor), that Penn "would not build any of its own academic buildings north of Market Street or otherwise in the area designated for the Science Center."[72] Hagerty was obviously mindful that Penn not only controlled 51 percent of the stock but also held a vastly disproportionate share vis-à-vis any of the other shareholders, including Drexel; for example, by the spring of 1967, Penn held two thousand shares versus one hundred shares for each of eighteen other Delaware Valley "higher eds and meds" in the Science Center.[73]

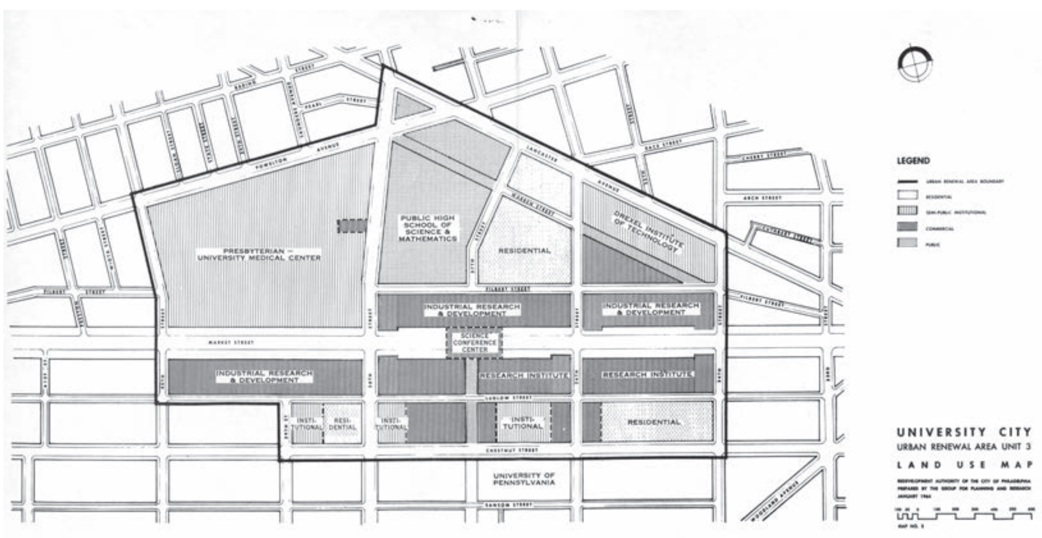
The president of the Science Center was the Penn trustee Paul J. Cupp. Of the nine officers of the Center Corporation, Penn members held four of the appointments; and Leo Molinaro, the vice president for continuing education at UCSC and the executive vice president of the WPC, was a watchdog of Penn's interests. Exemplifying the interlocking directorate that advanced Penn's interests in West Philadelphia, Gustave Amsterdam, chairman of the RDA, and a future Penn trustee, adjured Penn trustee Paul Cupp, "The Redevelopment Authority is very anxious to see the University City Science Center become a physical reality. . . . the Authority and the various City Departments concerned hope to see the development of a unique Science Center which will be a success both aesthetically and in the rate of construction."[74]

In the fall of 1964, the Science Center directors hired Jean Paul Mather, former president of the University of Massachusetts, as executive vice president, "the key administrative officer charged with the institution's development." In light of the parlous times ahead for the Science Center, when black activists and student dissidents from Penn and across the Delaware Valley took up cudgels against Penn and the Science Center on behalf of displaced resi-

dents, Mather's appointment would prove to be fateful and, from Harnwell's perspective, regrettable.

Turmoil in Unit 3

A WPC memorandum from 1963 describes Unit 3 as an 82.3-acre site, with a total population of 3,432 people and 1,203 dwelling units, of which only 241 were owner-occupied; 987 families, of which 444 were white, 543 nonwhite; and 122 businesses. The planning for Unit 3 as an urban renewal site and WPC-related project provoked a groundswell of protest from African American residents who accused Penn and the RDA of conspiring to destroy a viable community. Leo Molinaro angrily denied this charge: "This area has never had any 'neighborhood' identification, or organization. It was from the beginning, marginal in use and occupancy. All of the land from which protests have come (34th to 38th Streets; Market Street to Lancaster Avenue) is currently zoned for industrial and commercial uses. None of it is zoned for residential use. In other words, this is not a fine neighborhood which has been neglected and can now be restored." Molinaro further noted that RDA-commissioned



University City Urban Renewal Area Unit 3, Land Use Map (January 1964). GIS map by J. M Duffin. Collections of the University Archives and Records Center.

studies of Unit 3 “revealed that only 127 of 628 structures had any possibilities for rehabilitation. All homeowners were carefully interviewed. It was found that only a few had the means to undertake the needed repairs and rehabilitation. In other words, if these structures are allowed to remain in the hands of present owners, they can only continue to slide into worse neglect. The more likely possibility is that speculators will buy them on the open market and hold them for later resale at inflated prices.”[75]

The civil rights activist, youth educator, and Penn adjunct professor Walter Palmer, who grew up in this neighborhood from around 1941 to 1955, sharply disputes Molinaro’s claim that this was not an organic community. He recalls his neighborhood as a place where doors and windows were left open, and “anybody could walk in any time they wanted. . . . You could walk on the street [at] 2 o’clock, 3 o’clock in the morning. My mother tells a story of how people would see her coming from Aunt Bea’s speakeasy walking home, the guys on the corner hiding their cigarettes, tipping their hat, and saying ‘Good evening, Mrs. Palmer,’ and [she knew] she was safe.” Palmer, whose extended family of twelve children and two adults lived in two rented rooms in the back of a beauty shop at 3645 Market Street, recalls a “spirit” that bound the residents of the neighborhood communally, especially in the blocks from Market to Lancaster between 34th and 40th streets. Simultaneously, however, Palmer suggests that he was raised in a community governed, in part at least, by fear and violence. “This was a culture— the gangs . . . protected you when you went to school. Nobody messed with anybody from the Black Bottom. You went to any school in West Philadelphia you wanted to, and [if] they knew you came from the Black Bottom, you were protected, you were safe. Nobody messed with you if you went to prison [or] jail, juvenile or adult, if they knew you were from the Black Bottom. That’s how notorious this history was, how strong the history was, how strongly connected they were.”[76] This notoriety dominated outsiders’ perception of the neighborhood.

Palmer does not contest that some form of blight existed in the area he recalls as the Black Bottom. His own use of the term “tenements” to describe the Market Street dwellings behind or above the businesses on that corridor makes that point. Photographs of dilapidated houses, junk dealerships, and service loading zones on arterial streets in Unit 3 are also revealing.[77] According to 1960 census block data, 44 percent of the area’s housing stock was “deteriorating” or “dilapidated”; only 55 percent was reported “sound.”[78] And according to the RDA’s 1964 application for a federal loan and grant, “of a total of 807 structures in the Clearance Section, 378 or 47% are structurally substandard to a point warranting clearance and 181 or 22% warrant clearance to remove . . . blighting influences.”[79] Ironically, one of these “blighting in-

fluences” was the construction of the Market Street subway tunnel, which rattled houses and threw up debris from 1948 to 1955. “That construction helped to make it look like it was run-down,” says Palmer. “You can imagine what that would do to houses and to properties, great big holes in the middle of the street . . . tons of brick and mortar all over the place.”[80]

Palmer and other members of the Black Bottom Association, a cross-generational group he helped found in 1976, were embittered by the Unit 3 planners’ assumption that “this neighborhood never had any identification” and by Penn’s motives in Unit 3; the continuing hue and cry for reparations—admissions and scholarships for the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the displaced residents—has always been directed at Penn, not Drexel or any other Science Center partner from the 1960s. In a similar vein, Michael Zuckerman, a Penn history professor and an observer of the 1969 College Hall sit-in (described in Chapter 4), calls Penn’s role in Unit 3 “the invincible rallying point.”

> That is what really sticks in the craw; that is the thing that’s usable as a weapon against Penn forever. And no matter how much it recedes into ancient history, it is what stokes the fire of skepticism about Penn and its intentions, certainty that Penn looks after Penn and anything else is window-dressing at best. I think that there is an inevitably wary relationship between Penn and the neighborhood.[81]

In 1974, Walt Palmer organized the first Black Bottom reunion. The first Black Bottom picnic was held in Fairmount Park in 1976, and it has been annual event ever since; according to Palmer, it is “the oldest and largest neighborhood community picnic in the history of Philadelphia.”[82] In Philadelphia newspapers’ reports on the annual picnic, former residents recall the “neighborliness” that Palmer describes:

> They talk about the Liberty Baptist Church on 37th Street, the place to hear the best gospel music—the Dixie Hummingbirds, the Four Blind Boys. The club Zal-Mar on Market Street was the best nightspot in the neighborhood, and it provided uniforms for the baseball team. On Sundays the neighborhood kids parked cars for fans going to the Eagles games at Franklin Field. On Tuesday free meals were available at Father Divine’s Mission on Mantua Avenue. . . . “You didn’t have to leave [the neighborhood] for nothing. We had three barbers, Jack Goldstein’s grocery store at 37th and Warren. We had a poolroom, the Fans movie theater on Market Street.[83]

Sensationalist newspaper accounts, not to mention the “halo-effect” dialogue of an oral history play produced on the Black Bottom of the 1940s and 1950s, give the impression of highly selective memories that mute the harsher aspects of that world. The painful memory of displacement and the bitterness these former residents harbor is no doubt part, and perhaps the primary component, of their identification with the community they recall as the Black Bottom. The absence of any mention of this term in any existing West Philadelphia Corporation or Penn planning document or student newspaper account of the 1950s and 1960s, and only one mention of it in the *Evening Bulletin* (an allusion to the “Black Bottom Gang”), prior to the clearances suggests one of two possibilities: that the concept of the “Black Bottom” was an African American cultural construction to which white elites, prior to the clearances, were not privy, *or* that the concept acquired inflated significance after the removals as an identifier and rallying point for Unit 3’s black diaspora.[84]

There is no denying the psychological harm that “Negro removal” inflicted on many of these displaced people. Mike Roepel, an African American pensioner who had spent his career at the City Planning Commission, relates a case in point. Roepel recalls that his grandmother Hattie Hunter was a pillar of the blocks around 36th and Market streets. Hattie owned her own three-story house on 36th Street between Market and Filbert streets, which she and her late husband had received as a gift, in 1936, from Quakers who employed her as a housekeeper. To make ends meet, Hattie sold corn liquor to her neighbors, hooch that was smuggled in from her hometown of Edenton, North Carolina, on Albemarle Sound. Mike lived in Hattie’s house from 1948, his birth year, to 1960. Then Mike’s brother, Joe Hunter, nineteen years older, took Mike to live with him in the Cobbs Creek neighborhood at 58th and Hazel streets. “The Bottom was getting kind of rough,” Roepel says. “People started getting locked up.” Penn students walking between Powelton Village and the campus were targets for robberies. The murder of In-Ho Oh in 1958 “was the beginning of . . . opportunity crimes.” In fact, Roepel recalls a time when “half of my Boy Scout troop was in the Youth Study Center for snatching pocketbooks.”

Hattie sold her house to the RDA in the mid-1960s, and moved to 53rd Street and Pentridge Street, in Southwest Philadelphia. “Thirty-sixth and Market reconstituted itself in that whole area,” a four- or five-block swath south of Baltimore Avenue around 54th Street and Florence Avenue, in the Kingsessing neighborhood, about two miles from Unit 3. Hattie kept her old status as a wise community leader at her new address on Pentridge. But other displaced residents lost their roles in the shakeup. Says Roepel, “I can remember where some older folks deteriorated quicker because that’s what kept them alive . . . because they were *it*, as you say.”[85] Such were the markers

of an authentic communal life that planners like Molinaro and his colleagues failed to understand.

From the planners' perspective, there was nothing salvageable about such businesses as Club Zal-Mar, Walker's Billiards, Bucket of Blood Tavern, or the tenements Palmer describes. It was "rock bottom in many ways," Molinaro avers. Palmer does not deny that the neighborhood was "rough and tough," or that an underground economy—a numbers racket and speakeasies, for example—thrived on the blocks; indeed, these are points of pride for him. Palmer himself was a gang leader; he told Matthew Countryman, the author of *Up South*, that "his first arrest came at the age of twelve for burglary of a University of Pennsylvania dormitory. During frequent run-ins with rival gangs as well as the police, Palmer survived a couple of stabbings, one gunshot wound, and repeated arrests."[86]

University City High School Gone Awry

Embracing a Cold War trend of national interest in science education,[87] the WPC proposed a new "science high school" for University City in 1963, with the Bronx High School of Science and the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute considered as models.[88] Gaylord Harnwell envisaged the proposed "Public High School for Science and Technology" as a logical extension of the Science Center's operations that would provide "an opportunity to create a most productive relationship among secondary education, higher education, and practicing scientists in research and development industries."[89] Integrationists on the West Philadelphia Schools Committee, however, feared that such a high school "would channel many of the White students around University City into it and therefore would narrow the possibility of integration *and quality education* in other West Philadelphia high schools" (original emphasis).[90] The WPC advocated building the science high school in the blocks from Filbert (one block north of Market) to Lancaster between 36th and 37th streets—in the immediate area of the Science Center complex in Unit 3.

The WPC planners claimed that their aim was a "planning partnership" to redevelop Unit 3, asserting in their 1961 annual report, for example, that "citizen participation will be sought at every step of the process"; this report cited fifty previous meetings "with citizen organizations and their representatives."[91] The fact that Unit 3 redevelopment on the WPC's terms was in large part a fait accompli, however, belied the rhetoric of citizen participation. While the residents who would be displaced by urban renewal were given the opportunity to receive information, ask questions, and vent frustration at community meetings on Unit 3 redevelopment, they were excluded from the decisions that determined the fate of their homes. In February 1962, some three

Community meeting held by the RDA on Unit 3 redevelopment, at Drew School, Warren and DeKalb streets. Photograph by the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, n.d. Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries, Philadelphia.

hundred residents turned out at the Drew School, at Warren and DeKalb streets, for a meeting with Richard Watson, the RDA's director of public relations. Here an outraged resident spoke for herself and her neighbors: "We have a lot of widowed women here. What will happen when they are displaced? Are you going to stack us up like cattle? Before you tear down our homes build us some new ones. We don't want any project houses." Another participant told the *Evening Bulletin*, "It seems like one race always gets uprooted by redevelopment."[92]

Ironically, a black-controlled citizens' initiative for housing conservation in Unit 3 thwarted itself, though not without delaying the Unit 3 removals for several years. In May 1963, John H. Clay, a black attorney qua developer in West Philadelphia, and fourteen members of a group called the Citizens'

Committee of University City Unit 3, inserted themselves physically in the Unit 3 planning process, staging a sit-in outside Mayor James Tate's office at which they demanded to be recognized by the city as "consultants for Unit 3," a designation the Redevelopment Authority was willing to make.[93] Problematically for the WPC, the Citizens' Committee wanted housing conservation in the same blocks that Harnwell and Molinaro were targeting for the new science high school. Ostensibly to avoid a charge of racism— Clay was "the only Negro speculator in West Philadelphia"— Mayor Tate, Gustave Amsterdam of the RDA, and G. Holmes Perkins of the Planning Commission acceded to the Clay group's demands for housing conservation, notwithstanding these officials' conviction that "there wasn't the economic capacity to pay for the rehabilitation."[94] Perhaps they were also persuaded that "efforts to retain sound housing would permit some of the present residents to share in the planning and development of the renewal area."[95] In any event, Clay organized the nonprofit University City Citizens' Development Corporation (UCCDC), with himself as executive director, to negotiate housing conservation with the RDA, which designated the UCCDC as the redeveloper for 6.8 acres in the earmarked blocks. The contract with the UCCDC, which was effective until June 1965, required that the nonprofit submit "a plan to include rehabilitation of about of about 78 homes and construction of new houses."[96]

An observer of the events that led John Clay down the road to repudiation by the RDA and the Planning Commission wrote, "He hired a Baltimore architect to come up with a restoration plan for the section of Unit 3 under his trusteeship. Using a dressy model, Clay showed the Redevelopment Authority that he would build a few high rises and some town houses. When pressed about the original commitment to the about-to-be-evicted residents, Clay admitted few of them could afford his dream."[97]

Presented in May 1965 to the RDA, Clay's so-called restoration plan undermined his group's claim to represent Unit 3 residents. "Much to everyone's surprise, all pretence at rehabilitation was abandoned," Leo Molinaro reported. "Instead, the proposal called for total clearance and all new construction— two ten story buildings, 75 garden apartment units and 50 townhouses. The Redevelopment Authority told Clay that this was completely inconsistent with the plan for rehabilitation which his group approved fourteen months before."[98] "[Clay] is dead wrong when he says the Redevelopment Authority wants demolition of the area," Molinaro wrote. "*He* wants it and the Authority is telling him to rehabilitate or get out of the picture."[99] An RDA informant told the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, "[The UCCDC] has presented to the authority a plan calling for total clearance and construction of high-rise apartments and town houses. This would result in dislocation of everyone in the

area. In presenting this new concept, Mr. Clay insisted [the] costs of rehabilitating present homes makes the course impossible."[100]

Clay explained that he could find no willing lenders for rehabilitation who would not "require the expenditure of at least $10,000 on each particular house," an amount "not affordable by current residents even with federal help." He claimed that his new plan, with rent subsidies, would be affordable, and the project would be "a planned integrated community." Clay vowed that the Citizens' Committee of University City Unit 3 would continue the fight for citizen-controlled redevelopment, citing pledges of support from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and the 400 Ministers Association: "The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Philadelphia now wants to go into total demolition in this area and the Negro people in this particular community are absolutely tired and sick of being pushed out of the proposed new communities only to wind up in another slum area."[101]

In September 1965, having granted the Clay group a ninety-day extension to present an acceptable plan and hearing nothing by the deadline, the RDA withdrew its contract with the UCCDC, and the City Planning Commission reauthorized inclusion of the seven-acre tract in the proposed high school site. Firing off a vitriolic letter to Mayor Tate and copying President Lyndon Johnson, Franny Robinson of the UCCDC charged the Unit 3 planners with racism. "We know that the land is a valuable piece of land and that the institutions want this for the wives of professors and other business people; we know that the White people feel that this land is too valuable for Negroes to live on," she wrote. "You, Mr. Mayor, the Redevelopment Authority, the West Philadelphia Corporation never intended to let the Negroes live in this area. The Redevelopment Authority . . . lied time after time hoping we would leave." Alluding to the lethal race riot in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles, the previous month, Robinson declared, "If we do not hear from you, and there has been no action on no ones [*sic*] part, we will call people together to determine what action should be taken. We would not like this to be another Los Angeles."[102]

In high dudgeon, Leo Molinaro replied to Robinson. "It is totally inaccurate and unfair for you to accuse me and our program of any racial discrimination," he wrote. "The seven acres in the area you are concerned with are by your admission substandard. We believe the area is better suited for public school buildings which will benefit thousands of children, Negro and White, rather than a handful of residents. We stand ready to demonstrate our good faith by helping to find better housing within University City for all persons who are being displaced by public action." In a letter to the Housing and Home Finance Agency, Molinaro declared the WPC's goal of a racially integrated

high school: "University City is one of the few areas left in the city where a new school can hope to have an integrated enrollment. Our Corporation supports the Board of Public Education in this proposal, and we pledge ourselves to take every step necessary to make certain the enrollment is integrated."[103]

In November 1965, the UCCDC filed a civil rights lawsuit against the RDA, City Planning Commission, and WPC, among other defendants, with Clay charging that "the only basis the [RDA] had to cancel the agreement was that it wanted to get rid of all the present Negro residents in the area . . . to make way for White professors from Penn, Drexel, and the Science Center and their wives."[104] In July 1966, the same month the School District announced its claim to the disputed seven-acre tract, the U.S. District Court in Philadelphia dismissed Clay's lawsuit—a decision that drew the ire of civil rights organizations. Raising the specter of racial violence in Unit 3, representatives of CORE, the NAACP, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) persuaded the Department of Housing and Urban Development to suspend the $12.8 million allocated to the RDA for Unit 3 redevelopment, pending an equitable settlement of the conflict. After the RDA finally promised to set aside 7.6 acres in Unit 3 for rehousing displaced residents, HUD reactivated the funding in the late fall of 1966.[105] (Perhaps currying favor, Penn had awarded Robert C. Weaver, secretary of HUD, an honorary doctor of laws [LLD] degree the previous spring; Weaver was also the 1966 commencement speaker.)[106] Molinaro lamented bitterly "a total of two full years of delays and frustrations . . . caused by Mr. Clay and a handful of associates as they tried to impose their plans upon the residents, the City, and the federal government."[107] The two years of delay seem less significant when considering that it took more than fifteen years for the promise of low-income housing to be fulfilled. In the 1980s, townhouses were finally built on reclaimed Science Center land on the south side of Market west of 39th Street.

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Racial politics formed a citywide backdrop for the struggle over University City High School. A "war" for control of the city's public schools pitted a reform-minded school board led by Richardson Dilworth, who was the board's president after 1963, and Mark Shedd, the district's reform-minded superintendent, against a powerful antireform coalition that included the city's demagogic police commissioner, Frank Rizzo. In 1967, Rizzo infamously turned a nonviolent, "festive" march on the school board building by thirty-five hundred black high school students into a police riot—and then spurred a "white backlash against Black Power" that would lead to Rizzo's election as mayor in 1971 and the end of the Dilworth-Shedd reform era.[108]

Aerial view south, 1968, showing RDA Unit 3 demolition sites for the Science Center (along Market Street) and University City High School (bounded by the trapezoidal fence in foreground), with the University Quad in the background. Photograph by the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 18 August 1968. Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries, Philadelphia.

Construction began on what was now a fourteen-acre high school site in the fall of 1968. Another four years would pass before the beleaguered edifice would finally open, by which time the conception of a Bronx Science-style high school was off the drawing board. In 1969, a burgeoning fiscal crisis in the school district, paralleled by Penn's own mounting financial instability and institutional fatigue, boded poorly for continued support from any quarter for a specialized high school. Reasoned speculation suggests two reasons for Penn's dissociation from the high school project. First, the WPC's proposal for a science high school was viewed by West Philadelphia blacks and their liberal white supporters as privileging the neighborhoods of University City, leaving the University open to "charges of unfairness and racial bias," a political problem that was aggravated by Penn's role in the Science Center. Second, Harnwell's leadership team worried that the school district's financial problems would leave the University holding the bag at a time when Penn's own resources were diminished. With Jessica Oliff, who wrote a scholarly paper on University City High School, we would also conjecture that the University's role in the West Philadelphia Free School presented an honorable and relatively inexpensive way out of this dilemma. A radically innovative public high school housed

(Top) View north from Filbert Street to a Unit 3 site leveled for the University City High School. Two groups of houses stand in the 3600 block of Filbert Street, pending the relocation of two families. "Family Can't Find New Home, Stays in University City Rubble," says the accompanying headline for this photo. Photograph by the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 5 May 1968. Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries, Philadelphia.

(Bottom) Contemporary view shows a Science Center parking lot facing the 3600 block of Filbert, with the brick-and-mortar fortress of University City High School in the background. Parking lots west of 36th Street dominated the north side of Market Street into the 2000s. Photograph by Michael M. Koehler. Collections of the University Archives and Records Center.

at scattered sites around University City, the Free School opened in the fall of 1970 with a $60,000 contribution from Penn and the promise of relieving overcrowding at West Philadelphia High School. The Free School "required substantially less capital and did not require major cooperation with the school district. For this reason perhaps Penn felt the Free School offered a 'safe' way to fulfill its responsibilities to the community and education, without forcing the University to expend huge amounts of its own money."[109]

The opening of University City High School in the fall of 1972 as a predominantly African American, comprehensive high school coincided with the mayoral election of Rizzo and, in the aftermath of Rizzo's victory, the resignation of Superintendent Shedd, the firing of school board president Dilworth, and the school district's abandonment of progressive education reform. Located some three hundred yards from the University City Science Center, the new high school arose as an immense, monolithic brick-and-mortar fortress. George Thomas writes sardonically that the building "took the form of a giant square surrounding a roofed-over interior courtyard—itself a telling image of an outside world that had lost its bearings. Like a Renaissance palazzo or John Haviland's Eastern State Penitentiary, it appeared to be designed to defy urban insurrection. When the education staffers added grilles over the windows, the building looked even more prison-like. There was much of the urban prison in its internal demeanor of cinder-block corridors with metal doors as well."[110] Within a year of opening, University City High School was torn apart by gang violence and assaults on teachers—violence made easy by the building's Minoan labyrinth of interior and exterior hallways[111]—an irony in light of the WPC's vision of a magnet high school that would attract University City's white middle class.

Unit 3 Farewell

In January 1965, the UCSC purchased a headquarters building for the Science Center, formerly the home of the Stephen Greene Company, a printing firm, at 3401 Market Street. The die was cast: the city proceeded apace with preparations for Unit 3 removals. In April 1965, the RDA reported that the Authority's property acquisitions in Unit 3 would displace an estimated total of 574 families, of whom 107 were white and 467 nonwhite; 353 nonwhite families (more than three-fourths) were listed as tenants, 114 as owners; 83 white families (71 percent) were listed as tenants, 24 as owners. Suggesting a high rate of black poverty, 329 (more than 70 percent) of a total of 467 black families in Unit 3 were eligible for federally subsidized public housing.[112]

In 1967, the WPC announced that all the city and federal approvals had finally been granted to allow the completion of urban renewal in University

Demolition of a building near the southwest corner of 34th and Market streets, 1967. In background, the Science Center headquarters building on the north side of Market. In January 1965 the Science Center Corporation acquired the building from the Stephen Greene Company, a printing firm. Collections of the University Archives and Records Center.

City: "After five years of planning sessions and public hearings, involving at least a thousand participants, University City Urban Renewal Units #3, #4, and #5 were accorded final approval by the City Planning Commission, the Redevelopment Authority, City Council and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development."[113] The RDA's use of eminent domain, which involved a total of *seven* developers in Unit 3 (the Science Center, the School District, and the Presbyterian-University Medical Center[114] were the unit's major developers), was completed by the fall of 1968.[115] Citing data confirmed by Jean Paul Mather of the Science Center and Charles Kuper of the RDA, Karen Gaines of the Penn News Bureau reported that 2,653 people were "known to have been displaced" in Unit 3. Of this number roughly 2,070 were black– here the calculation is imprecise, as "the exact breakdown by race" of 580 single people was not available; Gaines reported a conservative estimate of 290 single African Americans. For the twenty-six acres of the Science Center complex, Gaines reported 115 families and 137 single individuals; calculating "an average of 4.6 members per family (based on the totals given earlier

(Top) Before urban renewal: the Market Street corrider in Unit 3. The view is east from 38th Street toward Center City, ca. 1965. Courtesy of Charles Dilks, University City Science Center.

(Bottom) Urban renewal: University City Science Center along Market Street. The view is east from 38th Street, ca. 1980. Courtesy of Charles Dilks, University City Science Center.

for the overall Unit), she concluded that the total number of individuals displaced by the Science Center complex was 666. Including the 806 people calculated from census block data as living on the University City High School site in 1960, as many as or perhaps more than 1,472 residents were displaced by the Penn/WPC "science city" strategy.[116]

Few data exist on the final disposition of the Unit 3 residents. Some Unit 3 African American families and individuals, as noted previously, moved to Southwest Philadelphia; others moved further west into Wynnefield, formerly a Jewish neighborhood.[117] A 1968 survey of about 15 percent of the displaced people conducted by the Volunteer Community Resources Council, an affiliate of the Tabernacle Church in Unit 3, reported that fourteen of the sample families had moved to Mantua.[118] Census block data show that Unit 3 lost 3,934 people in the 1960s: the population fell from 4,603 in 1960 to 654 in 1970. All of the ten remaining owner-occupied buildings in Unit 3 in 1970 were on one block, from Warren to Lancaster between 36th and 37th streets, across the street from the rising fortress of University City High School; eight of the ten, the only conserved houses in Unit 3, were "Negro-owned."[119] Renewal Housing, Inc., a black nonprofit redeveloper in Unit 3, rehabilitated the Warren Street houses.[120]

By the fall of 1968, with the Unit 3 removals a fait accompli, the Science Center was under siege as student demonstrations protested the insensitivities of urban renewal and the Science Center's alleged role in chemical-biological warfare. Although it was a largely rearguard action with respect to the fate of Unit 3, this protest activity, which culminated in February 1969 with the demonstrators' seizure of College Hall, set the terms for future incursions by Penn in West Philadelphia.