

YU Urban Renewal Plan Gets Public Approval

Officials Voice Support; Project to Begin Soon

"We are at the crossroads to determine whether Youngstown University can progress." These are the words of Jack Meltzer of Meltzer Associates, the engineering firm that is handling Project I, at a public hearing in City Council Chambers Wednesday.

Meltzer told the 50 people gathered at the hearing that "if the city approves this undertaking, it will be only 35 to 60 days before we can get into the operational stage."

Meltzer commented that his firm is particularly delighted to handle the YU program. "Youngstown University has grown beyond its time," Metzler said. "The University has been serving students beyond its physical capacity and these renewal plans will relieve that situation," he added.

Caiser Joseph voiced the only objection to the redevelopment program. Joseph, the owner of a wine carry-out store and a dry cleaning establishment on Elm Street, told the assembly that he has spent 44 years building up his business.

Whatever they offer me it won't be enough to compensate me for my loss of business," Joseph said. Council president Joseph O'Neil assured Joseph that he would be relocated as best possible and that every effort would be made to see that he is satisfied.

Mayor Anthony B. Flask reminded Joseph that this was the price of progress. Mayor Flask said that everyone sympathized with the plight of Joseph but the University has no other choice but to move into the area now occupied by his business.

Prof. Harold Crites of the Sociology Department and an owner of property in the redevelopment area commented that urban renewal is of great importance in making the University area a vast cultural center.

"With the art museum, stately churches, the Cathedral, city library and the new Arms Museum, this area will become a dynamic focal point," Crites said.

Jerry Knight, executive secretary of the Youngstown Metropolitan Area Development Citizens

Committee, Inc., told the hearing that "the renewal plan is adequate in all respects to guide the clearance in the University district and to provide the desperately needed space for an expansion of classroom, laboratory, housing and parking facilities so vital to the

continued growth and stability of this valued institution of higher learning."

Knight called the project "the first blossom of the fruits anticipated from the plan to cultivate the major rebirth of the Youngstown Area."

Third Ward Councilman James Pastore questioned the
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loss of tax revenue in the first ward caused by the demolition of so many houses and buildings. Pastore was concerned with the possibility that taxes might increase for residents of that ward to make up the deficit.

Mayor Flask pointed out that a first class educational institution such as Youngstown with all the facilities for a fine education would attract additional industries to the Youngstown area making up for any loss of tax revenue.

"Youngstown University means so much to Youngstown and to the area," Flask stated. "All the citizens of Youngstown will benefit economically, educationally and morally with this urban renewal project."

University President Howard W. Jones emphasized that the University operates on a three to four million dollar budget.

"The renewal project will make possible the enrollment of 14 to 15 thousand students which will bring additional money into Youngstown," Dr.

Jones said.

President Jones also told the assembly that this renewal project would make work for many people. "Twenty-four million dollars will be spent on the hill, and the result will be that many thousands of students will be educated that wouldn't have had the opportunity otherwise."

"We've turned away many students this year because we just didn't have the room. We have \$5,000,000 for one building and \$4,000,000 for another waiting but we have no place to put them," Dr. Jones said.