

# Novi Residents Fear New Town Ghetto

NOVI Charges that "you are killing this community" and that "you are bringing the ghetto out to Novi" greeted representatives of MDCDA in their presentation of plans for the proposed 15,000-resident "new community" development in west Novi at a packed meeting last week in Novi High School.

MDCDA is the Metropolitan Detroit Citizens Development Authority, a non-profit outfit backed by Detroit's business and labor establishment.

Mayor Joseph Crupi, as chairman, called the Novi Council into session during the meeting, with the Novi Planning Commission and superintendents of the Novi and Northville school districts also in attendance.

Two motions were approved ordering early dates for MDCDA's formal appearance before the planning body and for the council to parley with MDCDA's executive committee.

The meeting drew a crowd of more than 750. Mayor Crupi at the start emphasized that the meeting was merely for informational purposes and appealed for tolerance and respect for MDCDA representatives.

But before it was over, he invited the motions and repeated hot words which councilmen applied to the proposal.

The meeting was the first presentation of the what is loosely called a "new town" since newspaper disclosure of it on Feb. 22. Present for

MDCDA were its executive secretary, Edward Robinson, of Dearborn, former Democratic state senator, and Allen Turner, of Loken-Turner Co., New York, planning and architectural consultants.

Robinson said that Walter

Reuther, chairman of MDCDA and president of UAW, and Walker Ciesler, chairman of Detroit Edison Co. and co-coordinator of the "new community" development, were out of town and unable to appear.

The project area is bounded by 10 Mile on the north, Nine Mile on the south, Beck Road on the west and a line a half-mile east of Taft Road on the east. The project cost is initially estimated at \$102 million.

MDCDA is a non-profit organization formed under New Detroit Inc. auspices housing problems. It has developed and carried out a score of Detroit urban renewal projects.

Primary premise of the Novi project, according to MDCDA, is to provide housing for some inner-city workers who presently have to commute long distances to jobs in plants nearer Novi.

Robinson disclosed that purchase of 555 acres of the proposed 1,000-acre development had been made in November 1969 from George Haggerty, long-time large Northville Township landholder and sportsman.

He said that articles of incorporation for "8th of Michigan Corp.", which will handle finalization of the plans and carry out development, were awaiting signature of MDCDA officials.

He agreed to provide all members of the Novi council and the Planning Board with copies of a "confidential report" on the development. A "peek" at the report prompted Mayor Crupi to demand, in a letter dated Feb. 23, Robinson's appearance at the meeting.

TURNER, in a slide-film presentation, offered pictures of six planned communities and towns in England, Finland and the United States. Their principles would be followed in the new Novi development, he said.

When the meeting was opened to questions, first from councilmen and then from the audience in written form, five councilmen leaped to their feet to term Robinson and Turner's presentation "inept, inadequate and disgraceful." Crupi declared that he was disappointed.

Robinson pleaded that he was "sorry for his inadequacy." He said that MDCDA would inform all Novi residents by mail of progress on plans for the development and would meet with public bodies and owners' associations.

Council questions bore on the divergence of the plan from the 1967 Novi master plan, on failure of the plan to qualify for federal funds under the HUD administration, on social, economic and racial balance which had been stated as a basic premise of the plan, and on the developers' ability to obtain sanitary-sewer facilities "that we haven't been able to get for ourselves."

Councilmen Dennis Berry, William Dewey and David Harrison led the attack. Dewey asserted that MDCDA had created the "blight now hanging over our city."

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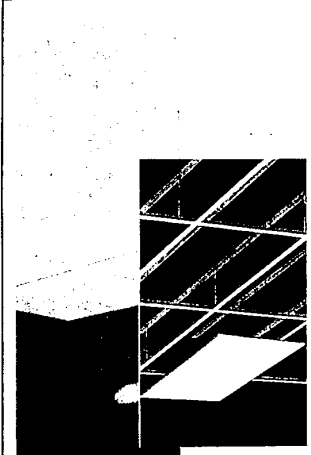
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