

RELOCATION SUMMARY

PARCEL NO: 22-5

OCCUPANTS: Herbert and Russa Lewis

NEW ADDRESS: 3106 N. E. Seventh Avenue

Herbert and Russa Lewis purchased their home at 3935 N. Haight Avenue in 1943, and lived there continually until their property was sold to the Portland Development Commission. Herbert favored the ANIP Park from its inception, acted as a block leader in the early phases of the Project, and appeared in favor of the Park and Project at the Portland City Council public hearing on April 8, 1964. The following excerpts from that hearing summarize his position:

"Since 1948 during the flood, it seemed that another group of people moved in. That group of people, some may say, . . . would destroy the area; so we had a little confusion to see where the group of people would live. Yet there were good people there, because the good would overcome the bad. After the flood, the people began to buy property and began to want to improve their property.

"As a block leader, I have been asked by the people in the area, 'Why can't we improve our property? If property out on 82nd . . . is worth \$15,000 or \$20,000, why can't we improve our property in the Central Albina district, (so) that if we want to sell, we can get a little more than \$3,000, \$4,000 or \$5,000 for it? I will admit that the upkeep of the property has run down, and some people say, 'I can sell and get out.' Lots of our folks say, 'Where can we get the money to fix up the property?' . . . So, the people that I have been around and talked to . . . have expressed a desire to see if we can improve our area. We would like to live in our area, and one thing in particular they have stressed: that if you improve, the people will improve, so that you will get a different neighborhood of people. I think it is a wonderful thing, be-

cause sometimes insurance companies -- I have known this to happen -- have said, 'We cannot insure the homes because they have deteriorated in the area.' Some people in the area have had a hard time getting car insurance because they live in that area. . . .

"We banded together after all the trees were taken down in the neighborhood, and we got the people to just spend a little money to beautify their homes by putting out curb trees. So

we are trying to improve the neighborhood. If we make an improvement ourselves, we don't look for the Council to go all out, but what can we do to help our Council keep on improving our neighborhood? . . .

"I live in the park site . . . that district is growing with younger people every day. And I have seen on the corner of Failing and Haight . . . at least ten kids who have been run over. They play in the street, and people run them off the back lots: they will not allow them to play there. Where are the kids going to play? . . . Sure, we may have a few people that are opposed to it, but I think you will find as a rule that everybody will agree that the park would be a benefit to the community, and to the younger mothers and the younger generation that is coming up."

In anticipation of the PDC's purchase of Lewis' property, Mr. James Frazier of the PDC relocation staff visited with them and found that they were already preparing to buy another home. On November 1, 1965, the PDC obtained title to Lewis' property, and Mr. Frazier inspected Lewis' new home the same day.

Herbert and Russa moved to their new home on December 3, 1965, and within a week the PDC paid their moving expenses of \$111.00. The Lewis' proved to be eligible for a Relocation Adjustment Payment of \$500.00, and after clearing up some difficulties in making payments, the PDC paid them on October 3, 1966.

Mr. Lawrence Monk of the PDC relocation staff visited with them on May 16, 1966, in order to evaluate their relocation. He found that the Lewis' are glad that they moved, now that it is over. They have a newer home than their former one. While they did not like to give up a home that was completely paid for, they are pleased that they did move. They knew some of their present neighbors before the move, and are closer to other friends and relatives than they were in the park site. Their former neighbors, the Emanuel Warrens (22-6), are now just over three blocks away, as are the Newborne's (22-11), who were nearly across the back alley in the park site.

Herbert felt that the PDC was not as helpful as they could be to those who had to find new housing. He was critical of the PDC policy of referring relocatees to real estate agents and asking people to "go out and look on their own", but had no alternative suggestions. He felt that the PDC had steered people towards housing slightly to the north of the Project area, in no better condition but at a much higher price than that purchased by the PDC. The realtors know these people have to move someplace, he held, and so they put the price squeeze on them. Herbert is apprehensive lest Urban Renewal force people into higher-priced housing than they can afford, and thus force former home-owners to rent.

However, in evaluating the need for the park, Herbert said: "They needed a park there for the children that lived in that area, because they were just congregating in the streets. They didn't have nowhere to go. When we moved there, there were only three children in the neighborhood; now there were 32. The closest park was Peninsula . . ." He remembers that he favored the Improvement Project from the very first: "Urban Renewal is progress . . . I was for anything that was improvement."