

Aldermen decide to raze dilapidated building

By GREG BROWN
Chronicle Staff Writer

Winston-Salem's Board of Aldermen took a get-tough stance against dilapidated housing Monday night when it voted unanimously to demolish an Attucks Street building described as a blight on the neighborhood.

The aldermen passed an ordinance authorizing the city's Community Development Department to raze a house at 1530 Attucks St. which hadn't been livable for 15 years.

The owner of the house, Silas W. Settle Jr., a black R.J. Reynolds employee and part-time junkman, had brought a contractor to the meeting and pleaded for time to bring the structure up to acceptable standards, triggering some blunt comments about the house and Settles' failure to properly maintain it and other property.

"That house has been a disgrace to that neighborhood," North Ward Alderman Larry Little told Settles. "The house has been that way for the last 10 years. I don't have a lot of sympathy for that situation."

Bob Bowles, Settles' contractor, said it would take between six and eight weeks to repair structural damage to the house, but said it would take several months of steady work to make the house livable again. Bowles said Settles had signed a contract for the initial repair work and that a more detailed contract for more work would be signed upon its completion.

Settles told the aldermen that a city inspector had recommended a contractor to him and that he had paid the contractor \$6,000 to work on the house. When the contractor quit working, Settles said, he himself worked on the house for about a year, but had to stop. Since then, he said, he had hired a new contractor, Bowles.

But city officials said the first contractor had quit more than 10 years ago and that the house had been vacant since 1969. They said that whenever 50 percent or more of a structure requires rebuilding, the structure has to meet the state building code, which requires the use of new building materials. Most of the work on Settles' house had been done with second-hand materials, they said.

"I do think you have been given time to clean up the structure," said East Ward Alderman Virginia Newell, "and for the last few years the neighborhood has borne the brunt of a situation you enjoy."

"I don't think they should have to tolerate someone who flagrantly violates the health code."

ESR

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That has been done, said Wilson, despite some state and federal administrations that have been unsympathetic to the needs of the poor. The Nixon administration threatened to eliminate the program altogether, former North Carolina Gov. James Holshouser Jr. similarly threatened to close down all the Community Action Associations, of which ESR is a part, and the Reagan administration has dealt almost "fatal" blows to social service agencies, Wilson said.

Under President Reagan, the federal government has eliminated separate funding for social service agencies and groups all funding for social programs into community service block grants, from which all agencies have to vie for money.

"I've heard it for so long and I've had to deal with it," said Wilson, when asked if she feared that funding for ESR and other programs like it will someday be eliminated. "It gives me incentive to go forth and prove them wrong."

"We aren't worried about Reagan; ESR will be here."

But Northeast Ward Alderman Martha Wood offered a motion, seconded by Southeast Ward Alderman Larry Womble, to give Settles 90 days to rebuild the house. If the house isn't repaired by that time, the city should tear it down with no further discussion, she said.

"I don't see how another 90 days is going to hurt us," Wood said.

Little, however, bristled at the suggestion. "I think if we do that, we ought to throw these ordinances off the books," he said. "If there ever was an instance when we needed to act, this is it."

After the aldermen defeated Wood's motion, the board voted unanimously to demolish the house, used to store building materials and junk.

In a related issue, the aldermen approved a plan to spend half a million dollars in city community development funds for rehabilitating 40 single-family homes for low-income tenants in the East Winston neighborhood.

Under the plan, developers David Shannon and Brice Shearburn will provide an additional \$685,000 in private funds for the rehabilitation, averaging \$29,625 per house.

The tenants will continue to pay rent for the houses for a five-year period. At the end of the five years, the tenants will be given titles to the homes and may finance loans to continue buying

the property.

But Northeast Ward Alderman Vivian Burke questioned whether the plan would work.

"My concern is that some of the area is very substandard," she said. "I am concerned about the substandard streets, and also, some of the vacant lots are cleaned off, but aren't very clean. I have reported this on various occasions. What are we going to do to make people want to buy these houses?"

Joe Berrier, of the city's Community Development Department, told Burke that pride in ownership should be an incentive for the buyers to maintain the area properly and that steps will be taken to teach the homeowners how to keep the houses in good condition.

The plan was approved without opposition.

In other action, the aldermen:

- Authorized \$12,378 to fund a

staff position for the East Winston Restoration Association. The association has been active in neighborhood restoration for several years and has depended on private funding in the past. But that funding will be exhausted by the end of the month.

- Reappointed Southwest Ward Alderman Lynne Harpe and travel agent Mary Jane Williams to three-year terms on the Forsyth County Tourism Development Authority. Williams is black.

- Approved selection of The Webb Companies of Lexington, Ky., to develop the city's downtown "Superblock" project.

- Agreed to share in the cost of a feasibility study for establishing a business and technology center in Winston-Salem. The study will be a joint venture with the city, the University of North Carolina and the Control Data Corp.

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**ATTENTION OWNERS AND DEVELOPERS OF
STRUCTURES WHICH CAN BE CONVERTED
FOR RESIDENTIAL USE**

The Community Development Department of the City of Winston-Salem and the Housing Authority of Winston-Salem seek proposals for the use of up to 72 Section-8 Certificates for the rehabilitation of housing units or the conversion of one or more structures into housing which have not been used for residential purposes for at least one year prior to the date of this proposal. The Moderate Rehabilitation Program is a federally subsidized housing program for very low and lower income households. Through the program, a fifteen-year subsidy is provided through Section-8 Certificates.

The units must consist of up to eleven (11) one-bedroom units; and/or up to fifty-eight (58) two-bedroom units; up to three (3) three-bedroom units or a mixture of all three sizes.


The rehabilitated or converted structures may be located anywhere within the boundaries of the Winston-Salem city limits. The Community Development Department will make available up to \$350,000 in loan funds to owners or prospective owners selected pursuant to this request for proposals. Interest rates for these loans will be negotiated at rates of up to five percent (5%) to match non-Community Development financing. Interest rates for loans, to the extent they are not matched by non-Community Development financing, will be negotiated at rates of up to nine percent (9%). All loans will be amortized for a period not to exceed 15 years. The Community Development Department desires to make projects financially feasible and will consider creative financial arrangements. Assistance will be available to help Developers secure tax-exempt financing.

Each proposal must include a fifteen (15) year cash flow analysis and documentation of financial feasibility. Information contained in proposals is not confidential and may be reviewed for comment by certain Community organizations.

Owner/Developers will be responsible for compliance with all local and state ordinances and laws such as zoning and parking requirements.

Proposals shall be received by the Community Development Department no later than 5:00 p.m., November 30, 1984. For information and proposal forms, please contact:

Florence Creque, Assistant Director
Community Development Department
 Suite 1300, First Union Building
 Winston-Salem, NC
 Telephone Number - 727-8595
 Hours - 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
 or
David L. Thompkins
 Executive Director
 Housing Authority of the
 City of Winston-Salem
 901 Cleveland Avenue
 Winston-Salem, NC
 Telephone Number - 727-8501
 Hours - 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



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