

Members of the Boston Redevelopment Authority (hereinafter referred to as the Authority) at their meeting today (Friday, September 25th) voted unanimously to file libel suits totalling \$1 million against Maurice Gordon of 400 V. St., N. Boston, Boston Real Estate and Attorney Joseph B. Abrams of 50 Faneuil Square.

The Authority voted to file a suit of \$500,000 against Mr. Gordon and a suit of \$500,000 against Attorney Abrams for libelous, malicious, false, unfounded and derogatory statements directed against the representatives of the Boston Redevelopment Authority and in particular their motives in connection with the selection of a site for a proposed \$27 million Federal Building to be erected as part of the proposed Government Center.

The Redevelopment Authority also voted to direct its General Counsel to engage special counsel to represent the Redevelopment Authority in the actions brought by Mr. Maurice Gordon and Mr. Joseph Abrams and to institute the previously voted action against Mr. Gordon and Mr. Abrams.

Announcement of the selection of the special counsel who will work with General Counsel John C. Gonsky in representing the Boston Redevelopment Authority in the suits will be announced immediately.

Members of the Redevelopment Authority explained that their other duties presently being performed by General Counsel Conroy would not permit him to devote the necessary time to defending the Authority against the suits brought by Mr. Gordon and Mr. Abrams.

The Members of the Boston Redevelopment Authority are:

Joseph W. Lund, Chairman; the Very Reverend Francis J. Jally, Vice Chairman; James G. Colberts, Treasurer; Malvin J. Massucco and Stephen E. McClosky,

**"It is unfortunate that Mr. Gordon for reasons, of his own has endeavored to block the construction of a proposed \$27 million Federal Building in the proposed Government Center area which would mean so much to the future of Boston." The Redevelopment Authority stated, "It should be obvious to everyone that there cannot be a Government Center development, as it has been visualized, unless a new Federal Building, is a part of it."**

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"In the course of his efforts to prevent the erection of a Federal Building which would play a major part in the revitalization of downtown Boston, Mr. Gordon and his attorney, Mr. Abi'ams, have direct set allegations against members of the Redevelopment Authority which are mendacious\* unfounded^ reckless and irresponsible and which can be regarded only as an attempt to smear the members of the Redevelopment Authority who have been endeavoring to follow a course best for Boston and its citizens,

"It would be most unfortunate if the erection of a Federal Building in downtown Boston or the construction of a Government Center itself were to be jeopardized because of the tactics of Mr. Gordon.

"Mr. Gordon is the president of a company which owns an office building at 209 Washington Street which would be torn down if it is finally determined to locate the proposed new \$27 million Federal Building in the old Newspaper Row section of Washington. Street.

"Statements by Mr. Gordon that the property at 209 Washington Street is one of the finest, if not the finest office building in Boston at the present time- are not in accord with other actions which have been instituted by the company headed by Mr. Gordon which owns that property.

"Records of the city assessing department show that from 1950 through 1955 the property at 299 Washington Street was assessed for \$500,000 and that in 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954 and 1955, an abatement of \$125,000 was granted each year-

"The Wentworth Building Corporation of which Mr. Gordon is president acquired ownership of the property in 1955. In 1956 the following year the assessment on the property at 209 Washington Street was reduced on the books of the city assessing department from \$500,000 to \$375,000.

"Despite that reduction of \$125,000 the company headed by Mr. Gordon filed abatement petitions in both 1956 and 1957 alleging that the property at 209 Washington Street; was over-assessed and that its full value was less than the \$375,000 assessment placed on it by the city. The abatement petitions in both 1956 and 1957 were rejected.,

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"The records also show that In 5,957 an attorney representing the company headed by Mr. Gordon filed a statement in the city assessing department under penalties of perjury that the full value of the property at 209 Washington Street was \$340,000 and not \$375,000 as claimed by the city.

"This is the property which Mr. Gordon stated in a petition filed in court was 'one of the finest,, if not the finest office building in Boston at this present time'.

"The Boston Redevelopment Authority- recognizes that Mr. Gordon or any citizen has a right to disagree with its decisions and actions and, if he chooses, to go into court.

"However, neither Mr. Gordon,, Mr. Abrams<sub>3</sub> nor anyone else has a right to indulge in untruthful and irresponsible allegations which impugn the motives of the Redevelopment Authority."

end

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