

and Light Company's dandy "Do-It-Yourself Home Insulation Guide," available through this author for \$1.00.)

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THESIS ABSTRACT:

CITIZEN ACTION IN HOUSING ISSUES: A CASE STUDY

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(Thesis Advisor: Betty Jo White)

An exploratory case study sought to examine the means by which a neighborhood action group in a metropolitan area dealt with its housing problems. The primary goal was to identify forces bearing on the effectiveness of the group in meeting its housing need. Data were gathered from many sources that previously had reported on the housing conditions of the neighborhood and the related activities of a group known as the Coalition. To acquire greater depth of

understanding about these housing problems and activities, interviews were conducted with representatives of agencies and organizations which had engaged in activities affecting housing in the area. It was found that the neighborhood exhibited many characteristics of a declining area, including: property deterioration; overcrowding; traffic problems; obsolescence of community facilities; shortage of educational, recreational, parking and other facilities; and exodus of higher income, better educated families. Although there was no empirical evidence to support suspicions of exploitation by absentee landlords, or financial declining of the area respondents suggested that these phenomena were present. The Coalition, as a citizens action group, began in 1969 to deal with some of the above problems. There were many factors that affected goal achievement, including: initial lack of expertise in housing and planning; lack of economic and political power; competition from other neighborhoods; little active citizen support; and lack of funding. Despite these problems the Coalition was successful in the area of rehabilitation of homes, had formed a homeownership financing program, and had been awarded a one million dollar housing grant by the city. Within the Coalition, itself, there was disagreement between factions on how best to achieve community development — a difference of opinion that had not led to serious problems, but that must not be overlooked.