

# Fairfield presents case for residential zoning

By FRED BARBASH

Residents of the small South Baltimore neighborhood of Fairfield pleaded with City Council members yesterday to help make the area "livable" by rezoning it residential, but they ran into organized opposition from the industry that surrounds them.

Members of the Council Judiciary Committee and about 75 residents of the black neighborhood heard industry representatives claim that the rezoning from heavy industrial to residential would injure the city economically by limiting industrial expansion into the long-established neighborhood.

And a lawyer for a Fair-

field junkyard attempted to convince the residents that the area was not worth living in anyway.

"I can sympathize with you as residents," Mrs. Anne Kramer, a lawyer for the Brooklyn Salvage and Waste Company, said. "But the noise and the noxious fumes emitted from various industries do not make good neighbors."

About 1,400 people, mostly with low incomes, live on about 46 acres in Fairfield. The neighborhood—parts of which do not have sewers, sidewalks, curbs or drainage—is surrounded by chemical and petroleum tanks and the Brooklyn Salvage and Waste Company.

Led by the Fairfield Improvement Association, the residents have made a cause of rezoning, contending that it would facilitate the provision of utilities and other services for the 46 acres of homes.

"We're here today to petition you, gentlemen of the City Council and the Mayor of Baltimore city, to rezone, to help, Fairfield, our home," Mrs. Jenny Fincher, the head of the improvement association, said.

"We are citizens of this city and we have paid the tax that you have recommended and when the taxes are raised, we pay them.

"We are due the services that all other citizens are due. We have lived there for years, for a long time. We have asked for years.

"We are still asking," she said.

"I've lived there for 27 years," Waverly A. Rawles said. "We've decided we want to live in the community. If we make it better, the young people will stay."

Mr. Rawles, who is also a landlord in Fairfield, said

that the industrial zoning has prevented him and others from constructing new housing.

Representatives of the FMC Corporation, Western Maryland Transfer, Inc., Minerec Corporation, the Park Circle Holding Company and the Brooklyn Salvage and Waste Company appeared in opposition to the new zoning. Only Maryland Transfer is located within the 46-acre area.

Others said the rezoning would prevent them from expanding and would thereby hurt the city's tax base.

Only one of the industries indicated that they had made any effort to acquire land in the residential area, however.

Mrs. Kramer said it would drive industry out "if you curtail expansion. I truly believe that the highest and best use of that area is heavy industrial," she said.

She said that she "suspects that many of these people are elderly . . . old people growing older cannot keep a place residential," she said.

When Mrs. Kramer made the remark about "noise and noxious fumes" making the area uninhabitable, she drew a sharp retort from the committee vice chairman Councilwoman Barbara Mikulski (D., 1st).

"My question," she said, "is what are the industries going to do to clean up the area."

Committee members and state Senator Harry J. McGuirk (D., 6th) raised questions as to whether the rezoning was necessary to obtain the services and whether the rezoning would reduce the value of the residents' land if they did decide to sell.

Mr. McGuirk owns a small lot in Fairfield.

Many of the Fairfield residents are homeowners who



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have lived there for generations. The area was once farmland, but was engulfed by industry before World War II.

Councilman Frank X. Gallagher (D., 3d), the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, called for detailed information from the Planning Department and the Department of Public Works on the advantages and disadvantages of rezoning before the committee can make a decision.

The city Planning Commission has already approved the rezoning.



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