

representatives Melvin L. Stukes, the Rev. Norman A. Handy Sr. and Edward L. Reisinger, and the 3rd District's Martin O'Malley -- agreed to push a bill authorizing eminent domain through the council tonight.

The bill wouldn't take effect until April 1, giving residents a three-week window to talk with the city about its appraisals. State and federal officials, who have pledged to help fund residents' relocation and purchase of homes for them, have said this window would give them time to put together a relocation package and allay any confusion.

Friday night, residents said they were relieved to see progress. Some have signed contingency contracts on homes, mostly in Anne Arundel County or West Virginia, and are eager to leave.

"Our hope is that this will allay a lot of fears the residents have," said O'Malley. "They'll be able to talk with the city. It won't be as scary or confusing."



During the meeting, Thompson assured that several families in Fairfield and a nearby section called the Heights would be relocated, though not as part of the City Council legislation, said three of the councilmen.

Thompson confirmed that the Wagner's Point rowhouses were being appraised at \$35,000 to \$62,000, the councilmen said.

Thompson and Schmoke have demanded that the city use its established eminent domain procedures to avoid setting precedent for future land takings, to assuage bondholders, and to keep holdout residents from torpedoing the relocation. At least one woman in Wagner's Point has promised to remain in her house and put her body in front of any wrecking ball.

Thompson declined to discuss details, but added: "We think we're going to have the legislation we need very soon."

Originally published on Mar 8 1999

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Ryan
Homes

Residents, city near solution on relocation

Council expected to OK plan for Wagner's Point appraisals, condemnations

By Joe Mathews
Sun Staff

Tiny Wagner's Point could be condemned as early as April 1 under a compromise proposal expected to be passed by the City Council tonight.

During a 25-minute meeting Friday morning -- hastily organized by the Schموke administration's council liaison -- City Solicitor Otho M. Thompson and four City Council members reached agreement on how to buy out residents of the heavily industrial, southern Baltimore neighborhood.

Residents and city government want to relocate the neighborhood, which has been troubled by foul-smelling air and suspicions over cancer deaths. The two sides have quarreled for months over whether to take the homes by eminent domain, as the city wanted, or to have a negotiated settlement, as Wagner's Point residents prefer.

Under the compromise, the city councilmen -- 6th District

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