

Boston's Chinese Joining the Cry For a Better City

By Alan Lupo
Globe Staff

Boston's Chinese community opened up yesterday and talked about the harsh realities of living in a dirty, crowded city.

An ethnic group often regarded as reticent to air its gripes and problems in public did just that in a two-hour meeting with city officials at the Chinese Merchants Assn. Auditorium at 20 Hudson st.

The public hearing, sponsored by Mayor White's Office of Human Rights and the Consolidated Chinese Benevolent Assn., was a polite affair, free of the angry outbursts heard in other neighborhoods.

Chinatown, however, does have its share of problems. And while the Chinese were once able to solve certain problems among themselves, increased immigration and the difficulty of living in the city have made it necessary to seek help from official sources.

Urban renewal and highways have cut down Chinatown and made an already bad housing situation worse, residents and businessmen complained.

Dear Lynne,

Thanks for writing and sending
you newsletters.

Here's a clipping of the hearing
Ken, Herb, Brad & I attended
yesterday. I understand a group
has gotten started in New Haven
too.

Would send more \$ except
I haven't gotten paid since October.

Peace.

Stephanie

Boston's Chinese are crowded—and angry

★CHINATOWN

Continued from Page 1

Parks and recreation facilities are insufficient, they said. The proximity of the Combat Zone, with its nightclubs, its addicts and prostitutes, has brought crime into the narrow dark streets of Chinatown.

Chinatown, with about 3000 residents, lies in a four-block section of downtown Boston in the area of Kneeland, Harrison, Essex and Kingston streets.

"There are cases of robberies and muggings here," one young lady said. "We have never known this. There are people who are afraid to go out at night."

One of the most poignant descriptions of the changes wrought in the Chinese community was given by Neil Chin, past president of the Chinese American Civic Assn.

"A son does not bring his wife to live with his parents anymore," Chin said, "so the younger families move out. The housing is too crowded already. And the elderly are left alone . . . and those weekly visits by the family to

the parents are very small consolation.

"There's no more room. Some are living two or three to a room. We know the problem. We don't know the solutions. Those, we need from you, the city. Too many times, we received lip service from those who could help but were unwilling to do so."

Daniel Wong, president of the Chinese American Civic Assn., asked: "What can City Hall do about the Combat Zone? How can it help keep derelicts off the streets? How can it provide safety in the parking lots, where cars are broken into, or for restaurant workers who live in fear of being mugged?"

"If you can give us the answer," Wong said, "we will feel much safer."

The questions and complaints were made in English, then translated into Chinese. Nine city officials, each with a nameplate in English and Chinese, listened, took notes, answered when they could and promised help.

The Office of Human Rights plans to form a task force for each problem area. Each task force will

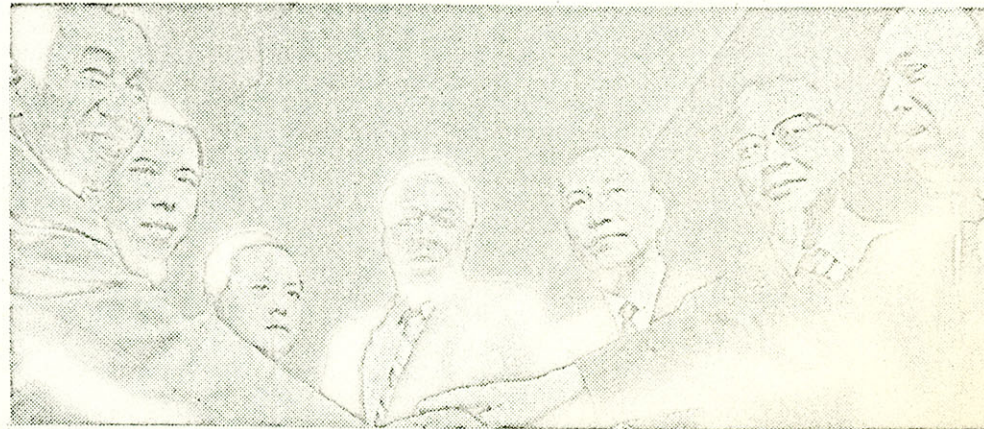
include city officials and members of the Chinese community.

"We did our part to let them hear what's happening," said Stephanie Wong, coordinator of the Quincy School Community Council. Now, she said, it's up to the city.

Unlike San Francisco and New York City, the Chinese community here has seen little militancy among its youth, but some people say there have been signs of it. They suggest this militancy could flourish in a year or so, especially if the city fails to respond.

"Some of the young are beginning to hear the rhetoric and the drumbeats," Dr. Robert Chin, professor of psychology at Boston University, said yesterday. "Whether the squeaky wheel gets the oil, whether we can show that things can happen by dealing with the city this way — that's in the back of some people's minds."

Participants in the discussion yesterday included Barney Frank, executive assistant to Mayor White; A. Reginald Evans, admin-



PROBLEMS DISCUSSED — A. Reginald Eaves, center, of Mayor White's Office of Human Relations talks with Chinatown

leaders, from left, Bob Lee, Arthur Wong, Dr. Stanley Chin, Li Shih-Heng, Dr. Robert Chin and Henry Oi. (Tom Crokr Photo)

istrator of the mayor's Office of Human Rights; Herman Hemingway, deputy administrator of the Boston Housing Authority; John Curtis, commissioner of Parks and Recreation; Wayne Embry, director of recreation; Richard Underwood, Boston Redevelopment Authority; Capt. Maurice Coughlin of division one, Boston Police; Paul McCaffrey, executive director, Council on Aging.

More than 200 persons attended the session.