

RENEWERS FAVOR PLAN BY U.S.F.&G.

Proposal Is For Building In Inner Harbor Area

By **JANE L. KEIDEL**

The United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company received a favorable reaction from the urban renewal commission yesterday to its request to build a 30 to 35-story headquarters in the Inner Harbor I project area.

The Baltimore-based firm's new office building, to be located at the northwest corner of Pratt and Light streets, was described to commission members as "45 per cent larger than 1 Charles Center," the first office building built in Charles Center.

Eugene M. Feinblatt, the re-

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newal commission chairman, praised U.S.F.&G.'s request to build its new headquarters in the waterfront renewal area as a "perfectly spectacular way of starting Inner Harbor I."

To Serve As "Bridge" ..

He said the building will serve as a "bridge" between Charles Center and the Inner Harbor, Baltimore's two downtown renewal projects.

In presenting the firm's proposal to the commission, Martin L. Millspaugh, Jr., president of Charles Center-Inner Harbor Management, Inc., noted that U.S.F.&G. has "been in the downtown area for more than 70 years and is one of the largest companies based in Baltimore."

He asked that the portion of the commission's standard land disposition policy which requires competitive bidding for sites be dispensed with in the case of U.S.F.&G.

Fits Into Clause

The company fits into another clause in the commission's policy which states that bidding can be foregone when "another method would better serve the best interest of the city," Mr. Millspaugh said.

He explained that the company's new headquarters would not conflict with other office construction in either of the renewal projects, because the U.S.F.&G. building would be used solely by the company and would not lease space to other firms.

The headquarters building would also represent a "substantial addition" to the city's assessable tax base "years earlier" than if other developers were sought through competitive bidding, he said.

In agreeing to consider dispensing with competitive bidding, Mr. Feinblatt noted that the commission had "very sound precedent" for its action.

The Sun Life Insurance Company of America, he said, was given the same dispensation for

its headquarters in Charles Center, and the company's new building has proved to be of "such significance to the city" that the precedent should be followed for U.S.F. & G.