

Contested Space: Design Principles and Regulatory Regimes in Mixed-Income Communities in Chicago

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At the center of Chicago's large-scale public housing transformation is a stated emphasis on economic integration. Based on interviews, field observations, and documentary research in three new, mixed-income communities that were built on the footprint of former public housing developments in Chicago, this article examines how design choices and regulatory regimes militate against the effective integration of public housing residents in these contexts. We find that the strategies used to maintain social order contribute to redirecting the integrationist aims of the development policy toward a kind of *incorporated exclusion*, in which physical integration reproduces marginalization and leads more to withdrawal and alienation than to the engagement and inclusion of relocated public housing residents and other low-income residents.

Keywords: public housing; integration; social exclusion; regulation

Chicago is currently implementing the largest and most ambitious effort in the United States to redevelop inner-city neighborhoods and address the problems of urban poverty through the “transformation” of public housing. Chicago's effort is part of a broader policy trend, nationally and internationally, focused on deconcentrating urban poverty and addressing the problems that have become endemic to many public housing communities over the past half century. At the center of this effort is a stated emphasis on *integration*—on remediating the negative effects of racial and economic segregation that were so starkly exacerbated

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and reproduced by past public housing policy (see Owens, this volume). Using large-scale demolition, redevelopment, and the relocation of thousands of public housing residents, the effort seeks to reshape urban space, remake urban neighborhoods, and reverse the isolation of public housing residents through their integration into new neighborhoods and into the broader contexts, institutions, and opportunities provided by the city as a whole.

Emblematic of neoliberal urban policy, Chicago's Plan for Transformation relies to a large extent on market processes, operating through public-private partnerships to reclaim and rebuild neighborhoods while fundamentally remaking public housing's role in responding to the needs of the urban poor. It also relies on the design principles and theoretical orientations of new urbanism, which assumes that particular aspects of the built environment can support social objectives associated with diversity and community building, as well as maximize the use and informal surveillance of public spaces and promote care and defense of private space. This dual orientation toward community and control contains an inherent tension, however, and generates complex dynamics and significant contention in the new mixed-income communities that are at the center of the transformation.

This article examines the ways in which design choices and regulatory regimes militate against the effective integration of public housing residents in these contexts, contributing instead to new forms of residential inequality, exclusion, and alienation. We find that the strategies used to maintain social order have contributed to the implementation of a kind of *incorporated exclusion*, in which physical integration reproduces marginalization and leads more to withdrawal and alienation than to the engagement and inclusion of relocated public housing residents and other low-income residents.¹

Theoretical Foundations and Expectations

Reshaping neighborhood context through redevelopment responds to concerns about how "neighborhood effects" operate in areas of concentrated disadvantage. A large body of research, for example, finds associations between living in high-poverty neighborhoods and a range of social problems, including high rates of child abuse, teenage and out-of-wedlock births, school dropout rates, crime and delinquency, and adult unemployment (for reviews, see Gephart 1997; Sampson, Morenoff, and Gannon-Rowley 2002). Mixed-income development approaches to public housing reform seek to address the problems created by concentrated disadvantage by changing the composition, structural circumstances, and social

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process dynamics in these communities through the wholesale redevelopment of the built environment; the screening out of problematic residents; the integration of higher-income renters and homeowners; the provision of some services and supports for low-income residents; and the establishment of organizations and processes to establish rules, monitor compliance, and respond to problems as they emerge.

Briefly, arguments for the potential benefits of mixed-income public housing reform fall into four broad categories (Joseph, Chaskin, and Webber 2007). Social capital arguments suggest that integrating public housing residents into economically diverse neighborhoods may connect them to the relational networks of their higher-income neighbors, promoting access to information and opportunity that is not available through their own relatively closed networks. Social control arguments suggest that, since crime is highly correlated with socioeconomic status, residential stability, and homeownership—and higher-income people may be more likely to exert pressure to maintain order and enforce rules—the presence of higher-income residents may promote a context of greater safety and a foundation for more harmonious community dynamics. Middle-class “role model” arguments suggest that the presence of higher-income people may contribute to the modification of aspirations and behavior among those who have been living in isolated poverty toward more prosocial engagement in community and society. And arguments about political and market influence suggest that the presence of higher-income residents can attract greater investment and the provision of higher quality and more responsive services from both public- and private-sector sources, leading to improvements in the physical, service, and organizational infrastructure of local communities.

In addition to these arguments, mixed-income public housing reform draws on new urbanist planning principles, which argue that urban planning and design can play a facilitative role in shaping a built environment—with a focus on scale, walkability, mixed-use, and civic and transitional space—that (among other things) supports diversity, promotes social interaction, and ensures safety and civic engagement (Leccesse and McCormick 2000). Although many of the principles espoused by new urbanism focus on civic space, demographic and functional diversity, and the promotion of pedestrian presence and public activity, in mixed-income public housing redevelopments, relatively more emphasis has been placed on design elements meant to create “defensible space” (Newman 1972) by providing the clear spatial delineation of private and public spheres and facilitating informal surveillance and individual and collective responsibility.

Increasing the proportion of higher-income residents, promoting homeownership and residential stability, and shaping defensible space may counteract the effects of social isolation and contribute to higher levels of social control and reductions in crime, but they may also generate conflict, particularly in light of how issues of race, class, and other dimensions of difference inform social interaction in the context of rapid neighborhood change (Chaskin and Joseph 2013; Freeman 2006; Hyra 2008; Pattillo 2007). Indeed, the social dynamics and organizational responses that have been generated as a consequence of redevelopment and demographic change have also produced a set of fundamental

tensions that contribute to serious contestation about the nature of community in these contexts and the rights, privileges, and responsibilities that are shared or differentially enjoyed by community members within them.

Contexts and Methods

The analysis presented here is based on in-depth interviews, field observation, and a review of documentary data over the course of six years of field work focused on Oakwood Shores, Park Boulevard, and Westhaven Park, three mixed-income developments that have been built on the footprint of public housing complexes demolished as part of Chicago's Plan for Transformation (see Table 1 for a summary comparison of the three developments).

Multiple in-depth interviews were conducted with a panel of eighty-five residents living in the mixed-income developments, and focus groups were conducted with an additional sample of 102 residents. Resident interviewees were randomly selected from developer occupancy lists in each development, and respondents included residents across income levels and housing tenures. Interviews were also conducted with a panel of eighty-four development professionals (private developers, property managers, service providers, leaders of community organizations, and other civic stakeholders) over the course of three waves of data collection. In addition to interview data, field observations of approximately 500 community meetings, programs, and events were used to contextualize interview and focus group data within the specific dynamics of each site and provide both a check on and new insight into the dynamics described by the sample of respondents. Interviews and focus groups were recorded digitally, and transcripts and field notes were coded for analysis based on a set of deductively derived thematic codes and refined based on inductive interim analysis. Coding and analysis were done using NVivo qualitative analysis software.

Shaping Regulatory Regimes: Rationales and Motivating Considerations

In thinking about their desire for neighborhood order and the need for standards, rules, and mechanisms to ensure its maintenance, both residents and development professionals expressed a number of different concerns that motivated their support for regulation and enforcement. These fall principally into three broad categories.

The first was concern about crime, safety, and disorder. Concerns about violent crime and criminal activity that bring with them the threat of violence, such as drug trafficking and gang activity, were shared by development professionals and residents across sites regardless of income, race, or housing tenure. As salient as they were, however, these concerns were far from overriding. More prevalent were complaints about property crimes and, especially, about a broad range of

TABLE 1
Mixed-Income Developments

	Oakwood Shores	Park Boulevard	Westhaven Park
Former public housing site	Ida B. Wells, Madden Park	Stateway Gardens	Henry Horner Homes
Developers	National nonprofit (rental); local for-profit (for sale)	Four local for-profits	Two regional and national for-profits
Social service providers	Nonprofit, delivered by developer and later contracted out to local	Nonprofit, created by developer	Nonprofit, contracted out to local
Total projected units	3,000	1,316	1,317
Units built to date:	806	367	1,060
Relocated public housing units (%)	263 (33)	127 ^a (34)	766 ^b (72)
Affordable rental units (%)	289 ^c (36)	106 ^d (29)	80 (8)
Market-rate rental units (%)	188 (23)	29 (8)	75 (7)
Homeownership units (%)	66 (8)	105 (29)	139 (13)
Initial occupancy dates	Renters: 2005 Homeowners: 2006	Renters: 2007 Homeowners: 2007	Renters: 2003 Homeowners: 2006
Select site specific criteria	30 hours per week work requirement; 5-year criminal background check; credit screening; residential history check; annual drug test	30 hours per week work requirement; 5-year criminal background check; credit screening; residential history check	20 hours per week engagement requirement; criminal background check; credit screening; residential history check
Guiding legal authority for returning residents	Relocation rights contract	Relocation rights contract	Consent decree
Neighborhood	Bronzeville/North Kenwood Oakland, Southside Chicago	Bronzeville, Southside Chicago	Near West Side, Westside Chicago
Neighborhood amenities and institutions	Near Lake Michigan, public parks, Hyde Park, and University of Chicago	Near public transit corridor, Illinois Institute of Technology, White Sox stadium, major highway	Near downtown central business district, public transit stop, United Center stadium

a. Includes twenty-seven public housing replacement units in an off-site rental building, The Pershing.

b. Includes the Villages, a 200-unit "superblock" of 100 percent public housing units located in the middle of the mixed-income development; the Annex, a 90-unit rehabilitated public housing building nearby; and 261 scattered-site public housing units in the surrounding neighborhood.

c. Includes seventy-five units of affordable senior rental housing.

d. Includes fifty-three units of affordable rental housing in The Pershing.

“incivilities” that stop short of criminality but contribute to residents’ assessment of neighborhood quality of life. (Indeed, total reported crime—especially violent crime—has declined significantly over the course of the transformation across sites.) Concerns along these lines, primarily expressed by homeowners and higher-income renters, focused on a broad range of what they often described as “ghetto” behaviors, such as hanging out in groups, playing loud music on the street and in cars, yelling and arguing in public, and littering. Although not in themselves criminal, these behaviors are often conflated with concerns about crime and seen as issues to be confronted in the name of safety and security.

The second motivating orientation that drove the development of regulatory regimes in these contexts, shared principally by development professionals and homeowners, concerned the market viability of the communities and the need to protect investment and exchange values. The concern here focused on maintaining a community that is well ordered, well maintained, and stable, where the resources a homeowner invests are likely to increase in value over time and where market-rate renters will feel they are getting comfort and value for their money. These concerns tie directly to calls for rules, surveillance, and enforcement that can contribute to the maintenance of order and the protection of investment. As a development professional noted:

If there isn't some consistent enforcement, then the property values will go down, the appearance of the property will be degraded, the desirability of living there, the comfort of people living there will diminish.

Seen in this light, evidence of “disorder” provides negative cues for potential investors and higher-income renters, and these concerns were often mentioned in both development and homeowner association meetings and at a range of public forums in the broader neighborhood. Often, the issues raised focused on objections to “loitering” and the very presence of people, especially black men and unsupervised youth, on the street. The comments of a homeowner in the neighborhood surrounding Westhaven Park illustrate this point:

Last night there were seventeen guys down at this place just hanging, seventeen people in front of two of the CHA homes, just hanging around talking and so forth. If anyone drives through this neighborhood and they see that, they're not going to buy a home next door to that. It's not gonna happen.

But while exchange-value orientations were clearly operative and contributed to homeowners’ and development professionals’ orientations toward social control expectations and responses, even more salient—particularly emphasized by homeowners and market-rate renters—were expectations regarding *use value*.

This leads to the third motivation, which concerned the need for clear community norms and standards of behavior. Like concerns about safety, there was wide embrace of the need for neighborly norms among development professionals and across residents of different backgrounds, but also some disagreement about what those norms should be, how they should be enforced, and what processes should be used to establish them. The range of (noncriminal) behaviors to

be changed in this regard (and in response to which rules and sanctions are developed) ranged from generally agreed upon incivilities such as those noted above to activities that are far more innocuous, such as storing personal items or hanging laundry in plain view on balconies, washing or repairing cars in the street, and barbequing in public (cf. Freeman 2006; Hyra 2008; Pattillo 2007).

Market norms and broken windows

Acting on these considerations, development professionals at each site have embraced particular design principles and established specific rules and processes to establish and maintain regulatory regimes oriented toward safety, security, and the controlled use of public space. These are driven by the dominance of “market norms” and “broken windows” orientations that frame such responses and lead to a range of rules and sanctions and the establishment of specific mechanisms and processes to monitor behavior and compel compliance.

The focus on market norms was driven both by the need to attract and retain higher-income residents and by the effort to acclimate relocated public housing residents to the expectations of behavior and engagement required of them in the market and civil society, outside the institutional framework and exceptional, isolated circumstances provided by the “projects” from which they came. As a development professional explained:

We can set certain rules that are basic management rules, but they have to be market-norm management rules. ... The point of this is you're making, for public housing families you're transitioning into the market.

This market orientation was coupled with an embrace of the “broken windows” theory of crime and disorder (Kelling and Wilson 1982), in which outward signs of disorder (litter, broken windows, graffiti) and expressions of incivility (loitering, panhandling, cursing, unruly behavior, public drinking) are seen to indicate more fundamental problems with safety and crime, leading residents to assume that they are at greater risk of victimization and providing “cues” to youth and others inclined to crime and antisocial behavior that such action will be tolerated. While visual cues certainly matter,² the empirical basis for the causal link between disorder and crime rates proposed by the broken windows thesis has been challenged (Sampson and Raudenbush 1999). Further, in the new mixed-income communities replacing public housing complexes, there is some clear disagreement about what “counts” as disorder and what should be viewed as normative enjoyment of community space. As a public housing resident at Westhaven Park argues:

They're acting like we're the problem when our community has been like this. They have a problem with us standing on the corner. We're colored. That's what we do. We gather in groups. We don't have to be no drug activity or nothing like that for us to gather around.

Broken-windows orientations to preserving order in the name of safety and security are generally embraced by development professionals and higher-income residents in these contexts and receive renewed emphasis in times of heightened conflict or perceived threat. But beyond energized responses to particular spikes in concern over crime and antisocial behavior, much of the focus has been on routinely curtailing access to public space and proscribing daily activities that are deemed unsafe in some way, or that are seen as potentially generative of more serious problems down the road. Further, the conflation of a broad range of incivilities with more serious concerns about crime creates a kind of gray area in which the one is linked, seamlessly, to the other. The comments of a renter of a market-rate unit make this point unselfconsciously:

The security is very, very important to [property management]. They take that very seriously. Just—you can't do this. You can't hang clothes outside. You can't barbeque in those common areas and then things like that.

These concerns about maintaining order and the orientations that guide strategies for doing so were reflected in specific rules and sanctions and codified in specific instruments—perhaps most instrumentally the rental lease agreement—that establish the foundation for organized responses to residents' infractions when they occur.

Rules, Regulations, and Mechanisms of Enforcement

Many of the rules developed within the context of these mixed-income public housing redevelopments were no different from those that govern any rental community or condominium: on-time payment of rent and fees, keeping noise down after a certain hour at night, and maintaining property upkeep, for example. For homeowners, condominium associations were responsible for establishing rules and regulations for their members. These extended as well to renters living in buildings that included homeownership and, in many cases, to common areas both in and around the building. Homeowner associations thus held wide discretion and responsibility for setting rules by which all residents must abide.

For renters, rules and regulations were codified in rental leases and associated "house rules" that elaborated expectations for residents' conduct. These were meant (at least formally) to extend to all renters, although there were some exceptions that applied only to relocated public housing residents. These included reporting requirements regarding changes to household composition, employment, or income; community service or "self-sufficiency" requirements for all adult residents in the household (at Westhaven Park and Oakwood Shores);³ and "zero tolerance" responses to criminal activity—the definition of which includes both specific criminal activity (such as the use or distribution of illegal substances) and more general infractions (such as parole violations and the "abuse or pattern of abuse of alcohol")—by the leaseholder or, importantly, any member of the household or their guests.

The list of rules across sites was substantial—“they have a dictionary-sized Rules and Regulations,” as one relocated public housing resident put it. These rules were cited by both development professionals and residents—particularly relocated public housing residents and other low-income renters—as tools for ensuring compliance and triggering penalties. While formally applicable to all renters (if not to homeowners), and despite development professionals’ insistence that enforcement was equitable—“a complaint is a complaint, a violation is a violation, the rules and regulations are the same” as one put it—the lion’s share of concern regarding rule adherence and responding to infractions focused on low-income renters, especially relocated public housing residents. Indeed, low-income renters were seen as likely to cause fundamentally different kinds of problems than were homeowners and other higher-income residents. As a development stakeholder put it:

There’s a huge distinction between owners and renters. So from in this building, what the owners do that is annoying to other owners are things that you’d expect in a condo building. ... The renters on the other hand ... listen, it happens all the time; you know that the tax, you can get a tax-credit renter that’s selling drugs out of their unit.

Monitoring and enforcement of these rules was accomplished through a number of mechanisms, both formal and informal. “When you put all these rules in place,” a homeowner noted, “you really needed to bring an army to enforce it.”

Formal monitoring and enforcement was largely the domain of development team members, especially property management staff. Monitoring and enforcement occurred in part through collective engagement with renters at tenant meetings, almost exclusively attended by relocated public housing and other low-income renters. It also occurred through more individualized engagement, such as walking the streets during the day and driving around the site at night, talking to residents about how things were going, calling residents into the office for meetings, sending notices about expected behavior or reported violations, and documenting offenses. And it occurred, increasingly, through formal surrogates (such as private security personnel) and electronic surveillance. Indeed, beginning in 2010, all three sites deployed closed-circuit television cameras as both a deterrent and a tool to facilitate prosecution.⁴ By far the most extensive system is at Oakwood Shores, where perceived increases in crime and youth antisocial behavior have led to particularly vigorous efforts to address resident concerns about security. A total of 150 cameras have been installed, focused on all rental buildings, parking lots, alleyways, open spaces (with the exception of the public parks, where the city has installed cameras), and the perimeter of the development site. In addition, cameras are designed to be able to respond to certain behaviors—such as groups of people standing around for certain periods of time—with recorded messages to warn people away.

Formal mechanisms also included the police, who were often sought out by development professionals at each site to increase their presence on the streets and in the parks and, in keeping with the broken windows orientation described above, to be more vigilant in responding to both serious crime and a broad range of incivilities. Discussion at CAPS⁵ meetings also frequently turned into requests

for more active and aggressive policing, additional patrols, asking for youth to be stopped and checked for identification (one resident suggested issuing armbands to identify resident youth versus outsiders), and adhering to a “zero-tolerance policy” toward loitering. Describing a police detail that would provide extra patrols in the neighborhood surrounding Westhaven Park,⁶ for example, a police officer noted that its primary focus would be on these kinds of concerns about incivilities—drinking, hanging-out—“the kind of crap you see every day.”

Beyond formal mechanisms, residents were also encouraged by both property management and the police to engage in informal surveillance and to report infractions. Police, for example, routinely emphasized the importance of calling 911, creating phone trees, and becoming involved in volunteer patrols. Property management communicated systematically with residents to enlist their help in monitoring infractions (such as leaving notes in mailboxes or posting notices to call management if residents notice anything problematic) and worked through relationships with specific residents around specific issues. As a development professional explained:

According to my visual inspection, I can look at a building and look at it and say I need to go visit that person on the second floor, just by seeing—I mean for me personally, I can look at the outside sidewalk and see if there’s been too much traffic inside of the building going on, and when I start noticing, hey, this property has a pickup on traffic, I know there’s something wrong, and I need to find out.

For many relocated public housing residents, these processes had a kind of Panopticon quality, and they expressed discomfort at the level and pervasiveness of surveillance in place in these contexts and at the sense that their behavior was under constant scrutiny. As one relocated public housing resident put it: “it’s like everything you do, they know about it.”

Targets, Impacts, and Responses

It should be noted that most people in these communities—development professionals and residents both—recognized that the issues of concern, whether clearly criminal or more focused on incivilities, were likely generated by a relatively few “problem households” and their guests, or (particularly in the case of crime) by low-income residents in the surrounding neighborhood who may or may not be connected to current residents. That said, relocated public housing residents and other low-income renters (the distinction between which is virtually never made by higher-income residents)⁷ were the principal focus of the regulatory regimes put in place in these contexts. The leader of a community organization explained:

The target becomes people in public housing; it’s just easier to lump them in as a group. ... It’s a clash unlike anything I’ve seen, and to get anywhere remotely close to that, you’d have to go back to when blacks were trying to integrate communities back in the

60s, to get that kind of venom and rabid anger that comes out when people are talking about the neighborhood.

Relocated public housing residents themselves expressed some ambivalence about rules and rule enforcement. On one hand, many recognized their importance generally (as noted above) and credited their enforcement with contributing to improvements in these communities (safety, sanitation, quality of the built environment) as compared to the circumstances in public housing, especially to the extent they reined in the behavior of disruptive youth or led to the removal of the tenants they recognized as problematic. For some, the more restrictive regime was a fair trade for the improvement in living standards provided by the new development. As one resident noted:

The rules are what is expected. I mean what can you say? You come from the projects and you get blessed with a brand new apartment that's built from the ground. What more can you ask for? You come out of the projects where there's rats, roaches, floods, no heat half the time, no lights half the time. So I'm grateful. I have no complaints.

Most, however, found the nature and extent of surveillance and regulation highly invasive, often excessive, and a significant source of stress. Indeed, while the majority of homeowners and market-rate renters with whom we spoke advocated more stringent rules and more rigorous enforcement, virtually no relocated public housing residents shared this view. Beyond some basic disagreements about the appropriateness of some rules—restricted access to what they viewed as public space, injunctions against “congregating,” prohibitions against barbecuing—there was general concern about the extent to which certain rules singled them out as likely transgressors, were differentially enforced, and had more significant—and potentially detrimental—impacts on both their rights to community enjoyment and their ultimate housing stability. These concerns were noted, sometimes with resignation, sometimes with rancor, with regard to both private behavior and public space.

Policing private behavior

Rules governing aspects of private behavior and the mechanisms put in place to enforce them often overlapped with concerns about the use of public space, but were also oriented toward specific aspects of self-sufficiency, self-control, and lifestyle behaviors—from employment (or, in the absence of employment, training and community service) to drug use to personal hygiene to housekeeping. At one condominium association meeting, for example, contention around the smell of cigarette smoke emanating from people's apartments—the source of which was explicitly presumed to be relocated public housing residents—led to discussion about the possibility of prohibiting smoking in apartment units by declaring the building a no-smoking zone. At a tenants meeting at another site, development professionals shared with relocated public housing residents homeowner complaints about residents stepping outside their units “not looking acceptable

for public presentation” (uncombed, barefoot, in pajamas), and encouraged them to “take away [homeowner’s] ammunition” by thinking beyond the specific rules codified in their lease. Instead, they should remember that “people are watching” and avoid behaviors that would be perceived as negative by their higher-income neighbors.

One way in which these expectations for resident behavior were monitored was through periodic unit inspections. Formally, all renters regardless of income or nature of subsidy were required to allow inspection of their units at least annually. In practice, however, as interviews with both residents and development professionals made clear, unit inspections were disproportionately focused on low-income residents and often took place far more frequently than the annual requirement.⁸

The weight of surveillance and the rigor with which infractions of rules were sought out and enforced led many relocated public housing residents to feel both overly confined and under constant threat—“walking on eggshells” as one put it—as well as ultimately demeaned. As one relocated public housing resident put it, “believe me, you are being watched. The cameras, the cameras. And if anything goes wrong they pull you in the office, they’re gonna tell you every detail.”

The pressure of neighbor complaints and the responses of property management to them were often seen by relocated public housing residents in contrast to the more flexible, tolerant stance that they believed they took to living with neighbors in these contexts. “We’re adaptable to noise, to people walking when we can hear it at 4:00 in the morning,” noted a public housing resident leader. “We should tell each other. Maybe we should complain, but we figure it’s their business.”

These concerns about overzealous and unfair enforcement extended beyond the stigma of the scrutinized behavior of leaseholders to the feeling that their children were a focal concern, unwelcome in the community and unfairly targeted by efforts to enforce rules, especially by those who controlled access to public space. Even more problematic was the extent to which they might be held responsible for the actions—indeed, even the presence—of visitors and nonresident relatives. As the leader of a local community organization in one neighborhood noted, “We’re programmed that when we see a group of young people, particularly teens just hanging out somewhere, it’s a cause for concern.” This led, as noted above, to blanket calls for a “zero tolerance” policy toward loitering, with a particular emphasis on eliminating the presence of young people in public spaces and, more recently, on efforts to enlist residents to police their presence. In some cases, this occurred through service-oriented efforts to build and engage local resident leadership. In Park Boulevard, for example, development professionals sought, as one explained, to organize “leadership teams” of resident young people to intervene, “get[ting] the teens to say [to other teenagers congregating in public], ‘hey, it’s not cool to hang out.’” In others, policing such activity took a more punitive turn, making clear the consequences of inaction. At one neighborhood meeting, for example, a CHA staff member shared with the participants that as he was walking up to the meeting location he noticed two young men sitting on the front steps of a house. On discovering they did not live there, he

spoke with the leaseholder and told her that “you can’t have young black guys hanging out in front of your house,” and that she would be held responsible for their behavior and could be evicted if they did something wrong. This kind of message was increasingly sent to relocated public housing residents by property management staff and other development professionals across sites.

Privatizing the public

As this last example suggests, the focus on policing individual behavior was often connected with concerns about maintaining order in public spaces. These concerns informed a range of responses, most of which hinge on different approaches to privatization. On one hand, as noted with reference to the tenets of new urbanism, the importance of public and transitional space was generally recognized by development professionals and residents both. On the other hand, monetary considerations, concerns about safety, homeowner preferences for privacy, and disagreements regarding normative expectations for behavior in public space have led to both design and management choices that for the most part limit the amount of public space available, separate it from the main concentrations of residential living, and regulate access to these spaces and the kinds of use to which they can be put.

Regarding design, the principal focus was on the provision of housing for individuals and families, and the vast majority of space was set aside for the development of private rental or for-sale units. In part this was driven by financial considerations and desires for density, and by preferences, especially those of homeowners. But it was also, importantly, driven by concerns about safety. The design implications of this draw on the seminal arguments regarding “defensible space” put forth by Oscar Newman in the 1970s, which were adopted by new urbanists promoting “traditional neighborhood design” and, in turn, informed thinking about HOPE VI public housing redevelopment nationally. The emphasis here is on promoting a sense of territoriality, ownership and responsibility, the demarcation of “safe zones,” and increasing the likelihood of informal surveillance (Leccesse and McCormick 2000; Newman 1972). Thus, design across these sites has, for the most part, privileged private (and privately controlled) space over common areas, including a preference for individual entrances and private balconies as well as the demarcation of common spaces that can be effectively monitored and managed.

Such privatization incorporates both design choices and management strategies. In some cases, privatization is explicit, by creating civic space (such as “community meeting” rooms) that are privately managed and staffed, or by designating particular common spaces as private that, to the general observer, might reasonably be seen as public space. Regarding the former, both Oakwood Shores and Westhaven Park have created such spaces, access to which is provided through formal request, approval, and scheduling and the use of which is regulated by development staff. The benefits of such spaces in terms of social control are noted by a development professional:

The indoor public spaces are easy because the indoor public spaces we can monitor and we staff and we maintain. The outdoor public spaces are more challenging just because they require the police to do their job.

Regarding the second, Park Boulevard, provides a case in point. Here, designers created a kind of town square area, with green space and a playground, around which townhouses (along the long sides of the park) and multiunit dwellings (at the corners of these blocks) are located. Access to and use of this park, and particularly the playground within it, has been the site of some contention, including a dramatic event early in the development's history in which several young people (each 10 or 11 years old) were actually arrested by an "overzealous security guard," in the words of one development professional there, for being too old to play on the equipment and for playing too loudly. The incident raised issues about the nature of public space and who could use it and about appropriate responses to policing such space. It led to both the clear designation—through signage explicitly stating rules of access and use—of the park as for the enjoyment of Park Boulevard residents only ("the reality is that it is a private park," noted another development professional there, "it's a private park for 150 residents"), and to more measured responses to addressing concerns about youth presence and public activities.

As suggested by the foregoing example, the privatization of space in the name of security is as much a function of regulation as it is of formal privatization (Ruppert 2006). Across sites, regulations have sought to essentially redefine public space by limiting resident access to common areas not explicitly designated for social uses and prohibiting their use for such purposes. Thus, prohibitions have been put in place across sites that seek to keep people off the streets and sidewalks and away from the fronts of buildings and to control the use of parking lots, boulevards, and parks to limit disturbances and curtail visible "hanging out." Relocated public housing residents and other low-income renters frequently commented on the draconian nature of these prohibitions and their explicit focus on controlling the behavior of low-income renters. As one relocated public housing resident stated:

They must have been sitting out on their porch or sitting outside on the crate or something but they put notices in all their mailboxes telling them that was very ghetto. You know: "You're not allowed to congregate in front of the property." Well, where do you want me to go? Where do you want me to go?

More fundamentally, these preferences reflect a profoundly different orientation, and different expectations of neighborhood space as places of sociability, than those shared by most relocated public housing residents and other low-income renters. As one explained:

They want us to sit in the back because they thought it's unsightly to have us out here, but we don't see anybody in the back. In the front you can see people coming and going. ... People drive by and they stop and they talk, but in the back you not going to get that.

They are also in stark contrast to the orientations toward public space that relocated public housing residents had experienced in public housing. There, public space was seen as providing essential sites for socialization and building community, contributing to the building of social networks and enduring relationships, despite the important concerns about safety that they often also discussed. “You knew the whole—everybody’s body, mamas, cousins,” as one relocated public housing resident noted, “their second generations, their third generations.”

The privatization of space and the enforcement of rules to support it, while partially effective at curtailing some of the behaviors development professionals and higher-income residents wished to limit, also led to a countervailing process in which such privatized space was reappropriated for social interaction, recreation, and leisure. Often, this manifested as individuals or small-group gatherings, standing together in front of buildings or on street corners, sitting on front stoops, or pulling up chairs to socialize outside. In other cases, the appropriation of space was more active—kids running up and down the street and between cars in the parking lots or playing in the alleys; parties being held on the street to eat, drink, and listen to music. Particularly in the warmer months, homeowners across sites complained of these activities; one homeowner, for example, complained of “mobs of people” setting up a late-night party behind her building, “totally invad[ing] the parking area.”

While some relocated public housing residents responded by pushing back against what they saw as unfair restrictions in this way, most responded to these regulatory regimes instead by withdrawing, seeking to minimize the possibility of punitive action and choosing instead to “keep their head down” and stay out of trouble. As one relocated public housing resident explained:

I say it’s best to just mind your own business and just speak to people hi and bye and not socialize or fraternize with them, then that way you won’t be one of the ones that they calling into the office on.

Such a response was reflective of the differential impact that rule infractions have on relocated public housing residents and other low-income renters compared with their higher-income neighbors.

Differential impact

In addition to a general sense of being targeted by these kinds of regulations and complaints about the appropriateness of some of them, relocated public housing residents and other low-income renters complained as well about the ways in which they were unfairly enforced and about the lack of recourse available to act on complaints about their higher-income neighbors. “The only people that have to abide by the rules is us as the low-income people,” as one relocated public housing resident complained, “[homeowners] don’t have rules.”

But perhaps more important is the extent to which enforcement had a fundamentally different impact on relocated public housing residents and other

low-income renters. This was particularly the case in the context of the adoption of “three strike” rules across sites and the effort to step up evictions in response to complaints. Low-income people, after all, have significantly fewer housing options available to them in the market than those with greater financial resources, and since relocated public housing residents had taken up residence in these communities as their “permanent” housing choice, eviction from their current unit could mean losing their right to public housing subsidy entirely. Thus, in addition to the perceived leniency with which their higher-income neighbors were treated and the broader array of rights they were seen to enjoy, the dangers presented by enforcement were palpable.

Indeed, enforcement of three-strike provisions and efforts to move quickly to eviction have become more common across sites over time. This is a shift from earlier in the history of these developments when, on one hand, the desire to keep apartments rented contributed to development professionals’ willingness to work through some challenges with residents not presenting serious problems or causing complaints from neighbors and, on the other, the barriers to moving forward with eviction proceedings for relocated public housing residents were particularly stringent in an effort to protect their rights under the Relocation Rights Contract. More recently, efforts have been made to enlist CHA’s help in addressing the barriers to evicting problematic tenants, and more vigorous enforcement of three-strike provisions that could move to eviction has been adopted. “We have to rack up the lease violations,” a development professional noted at a local CAPS meeting, “if you breathe hard, that’s a lease violation.”

Most evictions have been for nonpayment of rent and these, in the context of the Great Recession, have included a number of market-rate renters. But other eviction proceedings, especially when involving relocated public housing residents and tax-credit renters, were more likely to be in response to rule violations and problematic behavior. Some of this has included criminal convictions, an explicitly evictionable offense (though not without contention depending on the offender’s relationship to the household, as noted above). Many, however, focus on more generally problematic behavior, from positive drug tests (not a crime, but a lease violation) to unauthorized guests to multiple complaints about noise or other incivilities. “I’m cracking down on residents who allow people that don’t live here to come and mess up what you have,” a development professional noted, “if your guest causes problems, you will reap the repercussions of it.” Similarly, at a management meeting at another site, discussion about pending eviction proceedings focused on the importance of targeting households that were responsible for causing a range of “disturbances”—from substance abuse to loud music to a large number of visitors to dropping cigarette butts off the balcony. Thus, when seeking to respond to complaints about incivilities, a link was made between a broad range of behaviors and actionable lease violations, and residents were enlisted in the effort to make the case.

Conclusion

From the standpoint of improved safety, order, and the quality of the built environment, the communities that have emerged on the footprint of public housing complexes under the Plan for Transformation show considerable success compared with what they have replaced. While relocated public housing residents and other low-income renters acknowledge these improvements and appreciate, in particular, the relative safety of the neighborhood and quality of the housing in which they now live, homeowners and newly arrived market-rate renters are not entirely satisfied, and their concerns about safety, disorder, and neighborhood quality of life are largely grounded in complaints about their low-income neighbors, especially relocated public housing residents. This has led to significant contention about both place and space—both the kind of communities each of these neighborhoods will become and the ways in which the space each provides can be shared equally or is to be differentially enjoyed by different community members based on income or housing tenure. Responding to this contention, regulatory regimes have been put in place that disproportionately impact relocated public housing residents and other low-income renters in these contexts, and that are grounded in the logic of contemporary “poverty governance” (Soss, Fording, and Schram 2011). This orientation privileges market norms and paternalistic orientations to managing the poor, linking eligibility of benefit receipt with evidence of individual responsibility and adherence to societal expectations for particular kinds of (positive) behavior, as well as to a range of punitive responses for noncompliance.

Rather than promoting effective integration of the poor into well-functioning, mixed-income neighborhoods, the mechanisms put in place to implement these regimes—both formal and informal, individual and organizational—and the perceived differential targeting and inequitable enforcement of rules in their service have instead produced what we term *incorporated exclusion*, in which spatial integration is accompanied by new forms of inequality and marginalization and, in the case of many relocated public housing residents in particular, withdrawal.

Given the policy goals of inclusion and integration at the center of the transformation, is it possible to reorient the regulatory regimes in these communities in ways that protect the desire for order, safety, and sound investment without overly constraining individual freedom and access to public space or inequitably targeting the poor within them? Rethinking governance in these contexts away from regulatory paternalism and toward more participatory and inclusive engagement is one potential avenue (Chaskin, Khare, and Joseph 2012). A second is refocusing design to promote the integration of and access to public “civic” space and providing opportunities for more inclusive deliberation to establish collective norms about the use of such space (Chaskin and Joseph 2013). A third potential direction would focus greater attention on shaping the organizational infrastructure of these neighborhoods, moving beyond the overarching focus on housing to include attention to building and connecting residents to commercial, institutional, and organizational resources, such as stores, coffee shops, recreational facilities, and schools (Chaskin and Joseph 2013). Finally, more robust services

and supports (education, training, job-placement assistance, case management) to help position relocated public housing and other low-income residents to participate more fully and effectively in these new communities and gain broader access to economic and social opportunities in the city are needed, but they are also limited in the broader context of shifting economic opportunity and other structural constraints that low-income people face and that policies like the transformation are fundamentally not designed to address. Local efforts focusing on human capital need to be promoted, along with a broader policy focus on structural barriers and inequality and on economic development, infrastructure, and institutional investment in education, technology access, and other foundational resources that are often either of inferior quality or out of reach for many low-income people (Chaskin 2013; Chaskin and Joseph, forthcoming).

Notes

1. A more extensive analysis of these dynamics can be found in Chaskin and Joseph (forthcoming).
2. On the relationship between disorder and perceptions of crime, see Lewis and Maxfield (1980), Skogan (1990), Taylor and Covington (1993), Perkins et al. (1993), and LaGrange, Ferraro, and Supancic (1992).
3. There are exemptions to this rule, for example, for those who are employed, disabled, or elderly.
4. The CHA provided federal stimulus dollars to all mixed-income and traditional public housing developments for camera installation at this time. Developer owner entities at Oakwood Shores, Park Boulevard, and Westhaven Park contributed additional funds, and homeowners and business owners paid a special assessment fee for exterior cameras at Park Boulevard.
5. Community Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) meetings are specifically designed to foster collaborative crime-reduction responses between the community and the police.
6. These extra patrols, in response to pressure from organized homeowner groups, were funded in part by the CHA.
7. Similarly, although development professionals clearly recognize the difference between relocated public housing residents and other subsidized renters (in large part because they have different responsibilities toward each), the work of property management staff in monitoring rule compliance and responding to infractions, including through the tenants meetings described above, focused on both categories of resident. In stark contrast, there was a strong tendency on the part of tax-credit renters to distance themselves from relocated public housing residents. They were often as vociferous in complaining about public housing residents as higher-income residents, and were quick to dissociate themselves from the values and behaviors of former public housing residents. In part this may be a response to shared stigma and an effort to manage that stigma through distancing strategies. See, for example, Goffman (1963), Link and Phelan (2001), and McCormick, Joseph, and Chaskin (2012).
8. One reason for this is that there are a number of institutions providing financing to subsidize units (e.g., the CHA, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and banks and state agencies holding low-income housing tax credits), each of which claims oversight privileges to frequently check on their investment; it is thus more than just property managers who are targeting relocated public housing residents for inspection.

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