HOUSING INTEGRATION: STATE EFFORTS AT
PROMOTING MIXED-INCOME AND MIXED-RACE HOUSING

by

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ABSTRACT

The dominant living pattern of our country is one of segregation, where neighborhoods and towns are separated by race, income and class. The problem with segregated neighborhoods is that this arrangement exacerbates the poor image of inner-city communities, which are most often minority. The separation of people of different backgrounds often leads to groups mistrusting or misunderstanding other groups. And often, conflict and discrimination occurs.

One way to combat this problem is to create environments where people of different backgrounds can interact and learn from each other. The housing integrationist approach envisions an environment that builds greater mutual respect and appreciation among people of different racial, ethnic, income and class backgrounds. This study looks at mixed-income and mixed-ethnicity/race rental (MIMER) residential developments that are financed in part or whole by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a way of reaching this goal.

This thesis is an essay which argues that MIMER developments are a good way of promoting this goal. Two cases in Massachusetts are presented here. While these cases do not prove conclusively that MIMER developments work, they serve to illustrate the factors that make them a success. Finally, the thesis suggests that the State should be more aggressive in pushing for racial integration of the developments for which it provides financing and subsidies by adopting the housing integrationist approach.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Introduction

Housing planners and policymakers continually face issues of income, race and class inequities in developing programs and policies for low and moderate-income households. This difficulty is created in part by the country's living pattern, which is predominantly one of segregation. Many towns and municipalities are segregated by income, race and class. And in large urban settings, neighborhoods are segregated in the same manner. The effect of this polarization of living environments is 1) it denies opportunities for people of different backgrounds to meet and 2) it exacerbates the poor image of inner-city communities, which are most often minority.

In recent years there have been successful government efforts to integrate families of different income, but less so of race and class. Measures such as affirmative action, fair housing and school desegregation have been introduced to protect the rights of all citizens to have access to all housing, education and employment. These measures have not yet reached that goal nor has they significantly reduced the tensions that exist between different groups of people.

In an effort to address this problem, a limited number of states and localities have initiated mixed-income or mixed-income and mixed-ethnicity/race (MIMER) housing. Some areas
have been more successful than others. For the most part, the concept of MIMER housing developments is one that has not been fully embraced by most of the American public, nor by many government agencies at the federal, state and local levels. Nevertheless, planners, policy analysts, social commentators, and others, continue to advocate integrated housing. They see this type of housing as an important way to fix some of the ill-conceived programs to house the poor. More importantly, however, they see integrated housing as a significant step toward building greater mutual understanding and appreciation among people of different backgrounds.

This paper will investigate MIMER rental housing developments as a means of achieving stable racial integration in a community. This is different from an integrated community in which a mixed-income and race development is only one of many elements that makes a successfully integrated community or neighborhood. Integrated communities are the ultimate goal of many policymakers and is that end which this paper advocates. This paper will investigate whether integrated -- mixed-income together with mixed-race -- housing developments are successful and will identify the factors that make them successful.

While there are no established standards to determine the level of success of such projects, various criteria that have been put forth by researchers will be presented here. These measures include the level of satisfaction among the
tenants, the developers and the management, the dissipation of local opposition and the financial stability of the project. Two rental developments in Massachusetts will serve to identify and illustrate additional measures of success.

The following definitions are offered by John Yinger (1986) with some slight modifications to include other people of color:

Racial Prejudice: This occurs when one group has a strong aversion to another group based solely on race.

Racial Discrimination: A type of behavior where sellers and real estate companies refuse to sell to people of color.

Segregation: A situation in which whites, blacks, and other people of color live separately, in distinctly different areas of a town or city. This can apply to income and class as well.

Integration: People of color and whites live together in the same neighborhoods [by government design or by de facto].

Stable Integration: Minorities and whites live in a neighborhood over a prolonged period of time.

This thesis is divided into three sections. Chapter One looks at the meaning of MIMER developments and how they are instrumental in the efforts toward integrated communities.

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Chapter Two looks at two rental developments, one fairly old and one new. These cases serve to illustrate whether there can be MIMER developments that work and have normal degrees of conflict. They also serve to identify the elements that make integrated housing development successful. Chapter Three describes two Massachusetts State measures designed to create affordable housing in towns and cities that are resistant to building new housing opportunities for low and moderate income households. These two measures are Chapter 774 and Executive Order 215. It also analyzes the fundamental conflict between equal opportunity to housing and housing integration. The chapter suggests that the state should place the goal of housing integration higher on the priority list.
Chapter 1:
The Case for Mixed-Income and Mixed-Ethnicity/Race Housing

This chapter will lay out the origins of integrated housing, describe the opposition to such housing, and finally present the reasoning and merits of integrated rental housing as a superior way of housing people of different backgrounds.

The "Place"

Imagine a place where children can play with other children without any preconceptions of what type of person the other child is. Imagine a place where there would be no civil rights violations, where conflict is minimal; a place where everyone respected the many people of different backgrounds. Doesn't the government have the responsibility to bring our society to that place? Can we realistically achieve such an environment? What needs to be done? What should we do reach it? These issues are investigated in this section.

The Origins of Integrated Housing

Integrated housing can be seen as a reinterpretation of
what has been described as utopian living environments dating back as far as the turn of the 19th century in the United States. Early concepts of utopian environments envisioned a harmonious arrangement of people of mixed income and class, but less so of race, which reinforce mutual values and fundamental beliefs. In these utopian concepts racial and ethnic populations were not seriously considered. To some extent, integrated housing seeks to develop some of elements of that ideal environment. Race and ethnicity play a leading role in creating this mixed-environment.

The issues that planners and policymakers face today in pursuing an appropriate housing environment are much more difficult than in the past when the racial population of the country was not as mixed as it is today. There is a great deal more diversity in the country now than there was a hundred years ago. The cultural, racial and ethnic diversity is reflected not only by people of European backgrounds as the country once was, but by significant numbers of people from Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. Like some of the earliest immigrant groups from Europe, many of these people who have come to the United States to escape a life of poverty and political repression. They seek new opportunities for a better life for themselves and their children. Many new immigrants have many things in common with other minorities in this country. Like many people of color, new immigrants often prefer to live in or around the city where there are existing
Issues of Race, Income and Class

While there are sometimes considerable overlaps among race, income and class issues, they are three distinctly different issues. Each one faces problems and complications that are unique unto itself. All too often, local abutters claim that the reason that they oppose a project is because they fear the increased traffic and the heavy burden on the infrastructure. Race is perhaps the one attribute that is most visible, most difficult for people to accept and the most difficult for planners and policymakers to address. This is because local abutters or officials who oppose a development are very adamant and stubborn about why they don't want a certain development. It is because they do not want to see inner-city minorities in their neighborhoods. They feel that inner-city minorities are certain to bring in criminal elements such as drugs and theft. They fear that minorities will lower property values and that minorities will be a burden on service providers.

With regard to low-income, the feeling is that the presence of low-income people in low-income units will lower property values. The class issue is also very difficult because people often equate lower class with lower income. But, there are people who are middle class who are also low
income. These people are typically young individuals or couples from middle class families who are just starting out.

Whereas previous housing policies dealt with class and income differences, the added layers of race and ethnicity resulting from today's truly diverse numbers of people make housing issues more difficult to address. A large number of minorities and new immigrants are also very poor financially and lower class. When people hold all three characteristics least liked by suburbanites, the resistance to accepting these people into suburban communities, even those that are not so affluent, can be overwhelming. Increasingly, state government has put pressure on reluctant local governments to open their communities to minority families.

Obstacles to Mixed Residential Housing

One of the primary obstacles in getting mixed-income and mixed-race housing into a neighborhood is the expectation that this type of housing will lower property values. However several studies have found that the presence of subsidized units in a neighborhood does not positively or negatively affect the property values in the area (Warren 1983, VanOrman 1988).

A greater obstacle is the fear or perceived fear that people of color from the inner city will bring with them undesirable activities that will endanger the quiet and safe
environments of suburban neighborhoods. Many of these perceptions come directly from media portrayals of low-income public housing project tenants.

The fear of minorities is illustrated in a 1979 survey. This survey revealed that ninety-three percent of the white families interviewed would stay in their neighborhood if the percentage of blacks was seven percent or less. Only 76 percent would stay if the percentage was 13 percentage less. However, this study assumes that blacks and whites have equal income and education. Thus, even with equal financial and education status, whites still feel threatened by the presence of blacks. One can only wonder what the acceptance rate would be under more realistic conditions.

Problems with Segregated Neighborhoods

Over the years, the dominant pattern of living environments has been the segregation of minority and white neighborhoods, where minorities are concentrated in the inner city and whites in the suburbs. Deliberate policies to limit public services and expenditures in depressed neighborhoods, which often are communities of color, have exacerbated the poor conditions of these areas.

Having recognized this difference in quality of service and living environments, policymakers and advocates have

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2 Ibid. p. 295
called for programs to integrate minority families into white suburban neighborhoods. There have been successful programs in many major urban areas such as Park Forest, Illinois and the Starrett City complex in New York. But critics claim these practices do not result in the desired outcome. According to some critics, what typically happens is that the entry of significant numbers of black families will encourage other black families to move in. Eventually, white families will flee the neighborhood, thereby negating the efforts of the original goals. As many critics have pointed out, if there are substantial public improvements in the community or other factors, whites will not leave the neighborhood.³

Although this is true for the most part, there are many exceptions which would suggest that the white flight phenomenon is more complicated than it appears on the surface.

Whether consciously or unconsciously, people tend to migrate and to socialize with those people who are similar to themselves. They prefer to be with people whose habits, lifestyles and interests they are familiar with. This is the natural tendency of people. Therefore, the fact that the dominant pattern of living environments is racially and economically segregated is of no surprise. It would follow, therefore, that if everyone could chose where they want to locate, they would be content.

³ Ibid., p. 294.
However, segregated neighborhoods can create significant problems of inequity. These neighborhoods have distinct boundaries which separate the well-to-do from the poor neighborhoods. Even where the boundaries are not so clearly defined, it would not be difficult to identify the economic status of neighborhoods. The obvious problem is that not everyone can choose the type of neighborhood they wish to live in. People in one neighborhood may not share equal economic or political status as the people in the next neighborhood.

The problem that arises is when one neighborhood does not welcome other people from entering their neighborhood because residents of that neighborhood fear "unfamiliar" people. When these unfamiliar people are minorities, this would be a case of racial prejudice. When local real estate brokers steer people of color away from white neighborhoods, or when local officials create policies that discourage minorities from entering a particular residential section of town, racial prejudice would be the appropriate description.

Another problem with segregated communities is that often the stronger communities demand and receive superior public services, while the weaker community is overlooked. Even when the weaker community is united, local officials can choose to deny these communities funding for programs, for infrastructure improvements, for schools and other services. From the perspective of the minority household, integrated communities can attract better public services than can a
segregated weak community. Schools and retail outlets are also superior. Minority households in this type of community benefits from the stronger voice of the Caucasian households.

Most importantly, segregated communities are also less likely to have opportunities for people to learn from other people with different backgrounds. In a segregated community, there is virtually no opportunity to learn about the customs of people first-hand. There is little opportunity to meet different people at local meetings, or even on a casual basis.

Given these problems caused by segregated communities, what can be done to desegregate homogenous communities and to eliminate the inequities that exist between different communities? Experience has shown that market forces are not likely to address the inequity. Government policies that have already been initiated include equal opportunity and school desegregation. These measures are direct approaches to balancing racial inequity and can sometimes be quite forceful. Still, people have resisted desegregation. During the early 1970s, white families abandoned Boston's schools as the result of federal efforts to desegregate the public school system.

Integrating neighborhoods is a further measure to address some of these problems. Scattered-site public housing is a one way of integrating minority families into white neighborhoods. The critical question in integrating neighborhoods is how to ensure that the neighborhoods remain integrated over a sufficient period of time and that such a
policy will not lead to the complete racial transition of a neighborhood.

**Equal Opportunity and Housing Integrationist Approaches**

The equal opportunity approach promotes freedom of choice in housing, particularly for minorities. The equal opportunity approach is concerned with the process of the housing search. It seeks to ensure that people of color have equal information and equal choice in their housing search, and that they are treated equally and fairly by real estate brokers. However, this process does not necessarily result in mixed housing developments or communities. The message that this approach sends out is that yes, it is important that people of color are ensured their rights to housing but it fails to advocate the merits of racial awareness. This approach focusses specifically on people of color and other disadvantaged people and often stirs the jealousy or resentment of the majority of the public.

More must be done.

The housing integrationist approach seeks a higher goal. Not only does this approach provide housing opportunities for people of color and low and moderate-income people, but the approach seeks to reach a society where people appreciate the diverse backgrounds of other people. Once people have reached this point, conflict and discrimination will be greatly diminished. This approach seeks actions that will benefit
people from all walks of life.

The Merits of MIMER Housing

Mixed-income and mixed-race housing is an important element in the efforts to integrate neighborhoods. One of the assumptions of mixed-housing is that it creates a socially and culturally enriching environment for its residents. Proponents of this type of housing believe that by placing people with different economic and racial backgrounds together in a residential environment, the potential for people to appreciate and understand different perspectives will greatly increase. The logic that follows is that this will therefore reduce or eliminate some of the negative and inaccurate attitudes some people may have of others. Young children will hopefully enjoy a cosmopolitan environment and will carry their positive experiences into adulthood.

There are other attributes to MIMER housing which include the following and are discussed below:\(^4\)

1. Better chance for low and moderate income households in upward mobility

2. Better quality public schools for disadvantaged children

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A more equitable distribution of the fiscal and financial costs of serving the metropolitan poor

Better access to expanding job opportunities.

There are bound to be incidences of conflict that are based on race, income or class. But if a development is properly managed and well-designed, and if the concerns of the tenants are addressed, these incidences can be minimized. What is more likely to occur are positive interactions that will improve the image of different peoples. Some stereotypes that people hold may evaporate.

One of the underlying arguments for a mix of residents is that the lower class households will benefit from the presence of the middle class through improved sanitary habits, better aesthetic taste, and higher educational attainment. Also, a middle class setting may be more reinforcing of general social values than another setting may be. They further argue that middle income and class residents can serve as role models for the lower income classes in the area of community leadership. (Vischer, 1986; Proponents of Harbor Point, Boston). This notion that middle and upper-middle income classes can serve as role models for the lower classes implies that lower class people are somewhat less capable or do not know how to function properly.

This suggestion is inappropriate because it conveys living standards that represent only a portion of the public. Many low-income and lower class people are rich with cultural
heritages. While the low income are less powerful politically and economically, they nevertheless can be models for the middle and upper income classes in family life and appreciation of one's culture. With regard to class differences, there may be little that middle and upperclass people can learn from lower class people by way of economic or social advancement. But in a mixed and integrated environment, there is the potential to change the belief among middle and upper income groups that poor people are poor people without any hope of advancement. Many poor people are merely financially handicapped. (This is not to say, however, that poor people do not have economic and service needs requiring outside assistance. Most poor people need substantial subsidies for basic necessities, food and housing.)

What the current literature says about what housing integration is and where its heading.

In the landmark study on Massachusetts housing, *All in Together*, researchers conducted a survey of tenants in state-subsidized mixed-income rental developments and tenants in non-state subsidized developments in Massachusetts to determine the factors leading to the success of a mixed-income and mixed-ethnicity/race development. The level of tenant satisfaction was the key criterion in determining the success of the development. It was found that residents of all income groups of MHFA financed mixed-income developments generally
felt a higher sense of satisfaction than residents of private rental units where renters were more homogenous in income.\textsuperscript{5}

This 1974 study also found that superior quality of housing design, construction and management played key roles in the satisfaction of the residents. A report of the Citizen's Housing and Planning Association finds that there is "No significant differences that could be identified along income lines in measuring the lifestyle preferences, values and attitudes of tenants."\textsuperscript{6}

More recent studies report that mixed-income projects are successful because they are financially feasible, do not decrease house values of neighboring properties, and the general level of tenant satisfaction is high. According to these studies, there is relatively little conflict between market rate tenants and subsidized tenants based on race, income or class. Any conflict may be the result of children who are too noisy. The Church Corner study by Jenny Pratt reveals that some market rate tenants were disturbed by the number and loudness of children in the complex. In actuality, it was not the kids living in the development that they were upset about, rather it was friends of the kids who were


creating the disturbances.\footnote{7 Jenny Pratt, "A Look at Mixed-Income Housing Efforts: Church Corner and Chapman Arms, Cambridge, MA, 1988.}

The goals of integrated housing are to foster a greater mutual understanding of people of different backgrounds through a living environment for those people living in the particular environment and also for those in the community. Advocates of integrated housing hope that children will play together and even have occasional squabbles, that kids of different backgrounds work on various community activities, and that the adults do the same.

Theoretically, as the result of socializing and working together, the young children will be able to carry positive attitudes into their adult years. And with adults, "residential racial integration may be seen as a long-term method of fostering mutual respect among various racial or ethnic groups."\footnote{8 Wilhelmina A. Leigh and James D. McGhee, "A Minority Perspective of Residential Racial Integration," in Housing Desegregation and Federal Policy, ed. John M. Goering p. 39.} The hope is that little by little, the inhibitions and negative attitudes that people have of another group will be diminished or evaporated. This may sound close to utopian dreams of early philosophers, but given the proper setting, these hopes and expectations can be realistically achieved.

Those advocating integrated housing do not believe that
such housing alone will solve the problem of racial and economic inequity in our society. The inequity of opportunities, the deep-rootedness of attitudes and the social structure in our society are so ingrained that it is unwise to expect dramatic transformations in a short period. For some of the residents, attitudes may change after a short period, for others after a long period. But this should not hold us back from aggressively pushing for integrated housing. Indeed, it will require parallel integration efforts in educational, work and social environments, as well as enforcement of fair housing laws.
CHAPTER 2: The Case Studies

Massachusetts has a considerable number of mixed-income and mixed-race developments that are state-subsidized and have proven to be at the very least financially feasible. The purpose of this chapter is to present two mixed-income and mixed-race rental housing developments to illustrate that this type of housing can be successful, and to identify the elements that make them a success, as well as to look at circumstances in which such housing developments are not as successful. Tenants and management were interviewed for their personal experiences and general feeling of the development.\(^9\) Developments in the heart of Boston were not selected because the comparatively more open and diverse nature of the people in the city presents less serious barriers to the construction of integrated developments. In rural towns, the numbers of people of color in mixed-income developments are too small to make a significant impression on those developments and therefore were not selected. The cases that were selected are in Newton and Malden, two cities that are close to Boston and are predominantly white.

\(^9\) Interviews were conducted February through April, 1989 in person on site and by telephone.
Standards

In determining the factors of success, the present analysis incorporated some of the elements introduced by the studies mentioned in Chapter 1 (MHFA, Pratt, VanOrman). This analysis establishes the following categories and indicators of success to be tested in the developments selected:

Criteria of Success

1. Level of tenant, management and developer satisfaction with living in the development and the operation and profit of the development.

2. Decrease in local opposition from fears of increased traffic, crime and "undesirable" tenants of subsidized units.

3. No serious financial difficulty in keeping development afloat.

Under these three categories, there are several indicators of success:

a. Low vacancy in market rate units

b. Low turnover in market rate units

c. No decrease in dwelling value, i.e. market units rents remain stable and units remain market rate.

d. Stability of racial mix over time

e. Sponsoring agency and developer continues similar developments

f. Abutting property values do not decrease.
There are also several means toward achieving success:

a Strong management of property with regard to upkeeping grounds and units, efficient operation, responsive to the needs and concerns of the tenants

b Good environmental and architectural design of building structures, common facilities, parking, and recreational/open space so that the environment is pleasing and easy to use for the residents.

c All units are indistinguishable from one another. Random integration of subsidized units with market rate units and identical amenities in all units so that it is impossible to identify whether a unit is subsidized or not from the exterior.

Case Study One: The Hamlet, Newton, MA

Town Profile

The Hamlet is located in Newton which is 12 miles west of Boston. Newton has a population of approximately 100,000. While the city is generally considered to be very well-to-do, the city is diverse in income and backgrounds. Politically, it is considered to be liberal, but also has a fair number of traditional conservatives. There are a number of Blacks and Asians in the city, and there are a number of neighborhoods that are entirely Caucasian.
The Hamlet Street Townhouses

The Hamlet was constructed in 1977 after many years of struggle with local opposition. Local residents feared increased traffic, added burden on the infrastructure and increased crime in the neighborhood. The development was originally part of a proposal for 508 low income units scattered over ten sites proposed by the Newton Community Development Foundation in 1970. A difficult political process and considerable local opposition (see below) against this proposal and also a revised proposal on six sites eventually lead the sponsoring organization to concentrate their efforts on only one site -- the Hamlet Street site.

Situated in a quiet neighborhood, the Hamlet is home for 50 families, 30 of whom are subsidized low and moderate-income tenants. The subsidized units are well-integrated with the market units. The development is financed by the 13A interest
reduction program of the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency and has state Chapter 707 family housing certificates administered by the Newton Housing Authority for the subsidized units. According to The March Company, a syndicator of the limited partnerships in subsidized housing developments, the Hamlet is "one of the few subsidized housing complexes that is successful in generating a positive cash flow."\(^{10}\)

The rents for the apartments are competitive with other apartments in the city. Table A shows the breakdown of the typical rents for the development. Residents of the low-income units pay 25% of their income towards the base rent, with the Newton Housing Authority covering any balance with 707 state certificates.

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<td>2 BR</td>
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<td>522</td>
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<td>4 BR</td>
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The vacancy rate for the development has always been at or close to zero. Along with a healthy vacancy rate, the development has not experienced any difficulty in keeping rents stable or increasing the rent yearly. Susan Johnson,

\(^{10}\) NCDF Fact Sheet, August 1988.
executive director of the Newton Community Development Foundation, explains that the location is attractive to market rate tenants and that the rents are realistic. There is, however, a higher turnover rate among the market rate tenants. This should not be interpreted to mean that market rate tenants are unsatisfied with the development. Rather, the market rate tenants have a greater choice of housing opportunities. The development has experienced four turnovers over the last year (1988-89). All four households were white and the reasons for moving out were not the result of any dissatisfaction with the development. Three households relocated to other states and one purchased a house.

The subsidized tenants tend to stay much longer because they fear they may not be able to transfer their subsidy to another development. The question that arises is whether the rent subsidy is somehow keeping subsidized tenants from job opportunities in other parts of the state or country that would advance their economic position. There is not sufficient evidence in this study to provide an indication. However, at least one tenant remained at the Hamlet after her income reached a point where she no longer qualified for the subsidy. She has lived in the development since the beginning and chose to stay at the development even though she can afford to pay market rents elsewhere.

The development can also be characterized by its family atmosphere, as evidenced by the multiple bedrooms units.
Johnson explains that the board of directors firmly believes in creating a permanent family atmosphere. The development does not allow more than three unrelated people in a unit. The belief among board members of the NCDF is that a family structure creates a more stable living environment than transitional households. "Having families means more tolerance of kids," says Johnson.

**Tenant Selection Process and Minority Status**

When the development was first built, all tenants were selected on an equal basis. The subsidized applicant do not go through additional screening except to determine the priority of urgency. The subsidized units were allotted through a lottery process. The minority and subsidized tenants were predominantly families but were not put under additional scrutiny. Minorities make up a considerable percentage of the development. The development has a significant number of blacks (26%), as well as Asians and Hispanics. Minority occupancy at the beginning of the development was set at 40%. Today, that figure is 44%.

According to Ms. Johnson, the NCDF and the staff are committed to maintaining a stable racial balance. The waiting list for the subsidized units has a sufficient number of minorities on it that NCDF is not concerned with the percentage of

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11 For example, fire victims and local preferences.
minorities in the project falling. Should that percentage fall significantly, NCDF will initiate outreach activities.

All tenants are given a handbook which describes the development and the use and care of their units. The management conducts a yearly inspection of each unit to check for any damage to the unit. To date, there have been no terminations of leases.

The balance of race over a period of more than ten years in this development can be interpreted to be an indication of the development's success because the presence of minorities over a long period has been stable. Had the figure been lower or higher, for example 10% or 80%, there would have been cause to worry. A figure of 80% certainly allows greater accommodation of low and moderate-income minority households in the development. However, such a high figure would be clear indication that the development (or the neighborhood) is
no longer attractive to market rate white households. When this happens, it means that the mixed-race goal has failed.

Assuming that the racial composition of the neighborhood or town remains relatively stable over a period of time, if the percentage of minorities drops significantly, it would suggest that the minority families no longer like the environment, or they are encouraged to move elsewhere. The management company may also not seek minority families to fill vacant units. This will also mean that the mixed-race goal has failed.

The Degree of Local Opposition

From all accounts, the degree of opposition to the original NCDF proposal in 1970 for 508 low- and moderate-income units on ten scattered sites was immense. Over 200 phonecalls were received by the aldermen in one week after the proposal was announced. Two days later, the Newton Civic and Land Association was formed to fight the proposal. This group did not feel that the Newton Community Development Foundation should be "creating an opportunity for urban ghetto blacks to get out of the ghetto."\(^\text{12}\) Other citizens were concerned about the increased traffic.\(^\text{13}\)


\(^\text{13}\) Ibid. p. 80.
According to Johnson, there remains a small degree of neighborhood opposition from those people who hold onto their memories of the struggle fifteen years ago, "when NCDF was so much in the news, the center of controversy." But a longtime resident reports that the opposition is no longer an intrusive factor. "We've grown on them," says one resident. There's no longer "a feeling that people from Boston are invading Newton" among nearby residents. "The people on [adjoining] Langley Road are very nice," says another resident.

**Tenant Comments**

Market rate and subsidized tenants feel very positive about the development. "Everyone minds their own business and gets along fine," says Lula Hunter who lives in a four bedroom subsidized unit. Ms. Hunter says that when she and her family first moved into the development in 1978, it would have taken a "crowbar to get me out of here." Ms. Hunter reports that the management has been very responsive about maintenance problems.

The Hamlet is "talked about in a good way." There's a good feeling about the development not only from the residents but also from friends and acquaintances of Ms. Hunter, some of whom are on the development's waiting list. If she had to look for housing again, Ms. Hunter would most certainly seek mixed-income and mixed-race developments. She "didn't want my kids to think that they had to live in Roxbury or Dorchester."
The Hamlet was a good opportunity to improve the living conditions for her family and schools for her children are much better in the area than in Boston or Roxbury, where she most likely would have ended up.

For the most part, the minority kids and the white kids do not interact extensively within the development. They tend to stay within their own groups and sometimes they have arguments and fights. But fighting among youngsters is typical behavior of the young. "The kids don't play together [significantly]" says Ms. Getman, a longtime resident of the Hamlet.
Lyneishia, a 12-year-old black girl, enjoys living in the development. She and her family had recently moved to the Hamlet. While Lyneishia likes the apartment and the outdoor environment, she wishes she could be closer to her cousins and friends in Roxbury. She and her younger siblings have not been at the development long enough to establish any friendships. Some of the white kids always want to pick a fight with her, she says.

The limited quality social interaction brings into question one of the proposed merits of a mixed-race environment. Does a mixed-income environment encourage greater mutual understanding and respect of people with different backgrounds? From the adults in the development, the answer appears to be yes. The hope among housing integrationist is that a mixed-environment will improve the relationships between different races, and perhaps, but not necessarily, create longstanding friendships.

However, the fact that the different groups of kids do not interact to a great extent does not dash the hopes of Ms. Getman. Given the choice, Ms. Getman would definitely seek a mixed-income and mixed-race environment in her housing search. She firmly believes that kids should grow up in a mixed-environment. "Kids need to be involved with other kids with different backgrounds," says Ms. Getman.

There are incidences where children of different backgrounds do play together at the Hamlet. Some of the
children play basketball together on the court (located on the site). In fact, they want to form a team to play against other kids in the neighborhood.

The benefits of a mixed-environment for children may be seen as more longlasting than public housing or full market developments. In both types of housing, the tenant population is likely to be very homogeneous either in race, income, or race and income. The hope with MIMER developments is that perhaps later in life, the white children will be less likely to have any reservations or negative attitudes of minorities. And perhaps the minority children will have a brighter picture ahead of them than they would have had in an all-minority development. The fact that the children do play with each other, although not to the degree one would hope at the Hamlet, suggest that race and income are not determining factors. This limited evidence lends support to the notion that young children are color blind and, if not under undue influence from their parents or other influences, would have no hesitation playing with each other. These are questions that need to be investigated more fully as more and more mixed-income and mixed-race developments reach a mature age.

Property Values

There has been no decrease in the value of the abutting properties as some of the local residents have feared. According to Ms. Johnson, an informal survey conducted by the
former executive director of the NCDF several years ago found that there was no decrease in property values. In fact, the values of these properties may have increased at a higher rate than houses in other neighborhoods of Newton. Ms. Johnson says that this higher rate occurred because the abutting properties were undervalued a decade or so ago, when this section of the city was not considered to be well-to-do a neighborhood. This neighborhood followed the housing boom throughout eastern Massachusetts in the mid-1980s. According to the city's assessing department, the average cost of a single family home in Newton is around $300,000. A rough figure of the property values in the immediate area around the Hamlet is $250,000.14

Further efforts at MIMER developments by developer

The members of The Newton Community Development Foundation is very happy with their experience in The Hamlet Townhouses and remain committed to the concept of MIMER developments. The organization has undertaken two other mixed developments. The Casselman, a 43-unit elderly and handicapped development was built in 1981 in the Newton Centre shopping center area. The project is mixed racially -- fourteen percent minorities -- but the units are all market rate.

The organization's third development is The John W. Weeks House, a renovation of a junior high school. The development features 75 mixed-income units for senior citizens and families and is fifteen percent minority. The unique feature of the development is that it qualified as a Certified Historic Rehabilitation, which attracted syndication proceeds. Additional project financing was provided by the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency. While city officials were supportive of the project, the people of the neighborhood were not. The people in the neighborhood were concerned about the traffic impacts and the property values of their homes. The waiting list for this development and the Casselman, as it is for The Hamlet, is very extensive.
Town Profile

Malden Gardens is a 140-unit high-rise development located in Malden, a city about eight miles north of Boston. In the heart of the City's commercial district, it is easily accessible to mass transportation and other services. Malden is generally considered to be a working-class city of approximately 53,300 residents. There are no recent data which would indicate the racial composition of the city, according to City officials. Malden remains predominantly white and in the last few years has experienced an influx of people of color, particularly recent immigrants from Southeast Asia. The residents in the immediate area of the development are also predominantly white.
Degree of Local Opposition

According to Linda DiGregorio, the manager of the development, opposition to the development from local abutters was not significant. Malden has a number of highrise developments and the people are used to this type of housing. The developers chose this location for their mixed-income development because they realized that the new tenants, both subsidized and market, would like to be close to the central business district where most of the local services are located and also to be closely accessible to public transportation. The only concern was that the development would add traffic to an already busy area. The fact that the development would bring in low and moderate income people and people of different races was not of significant concern.

Although this project did not have significant local opposition, so would not get high marks for success in having overcome it, the development nevertheless exhibits outstanding elements of success. Malden Gardens is mixed in many ways. There are 34 subsidized units including several for the mentally handicapped. The subsidized units are integrated with the market units. In a contract with the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency, the developers agreed to target minorities for at least 10% of the development. The development now has 15 minority households. The minority

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15 See Chapter 3 for further description.
population at Malden Gardens include Black, Hispanic, Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Indian nationalities.

Because the project is fairly new, the long-term stability of the racial mix is difficult to determine. However, according to DiGregorio, early indications of the racial balance are that the minority ratio has increased slightly since the beginning of the development. This is the result of both an increase in the number of minorities applying for the subsidized units and also for the market units.

The development features several amenities typical of all-market-rate developments. These facilities include a swimming pool and an exercise room with weight equipment, and are heavily used.

As with The Hamlet, the turnover rate among the market rate units is greater than for the subsidized units. Residents who pay the market rents in the Garden tend to be young couples or professionals and students, making those units transitional in nature. Some of the reasons cited for the leaving of the market tenants is that they may want to buy a house, move on to a new job, or may want to have more children.

With a vacancy rate of approximately 10%, Carabetta Enterprises, the developer and the management company, reports that rents have been stable since the project's completion. Because the development is still somewhat new, the vacancy...
rate is slightly higher than what is considered to be healthy. The development is not in any serious financial trouble, however. Table B shows the rent breakdowns for the units. As with The Hamlet, the low-income tenants dedicate twenty-five percent of their income toward rent with the Malden Housing Authority covering the difference.

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The building is an attractive structure but somewhat typical of high-rise apartment buildings. The subsidized units and the market units are identical in amenities and size, and each unit features a balcony. Aesthetically speaking, the lobby, the hallways and service areas of the Garden are very attractive, modern, comfortable and well-kept by the maintenance staff. The carpeting, marble tile floors and luxurious furniture in the lobby are details that make the area inviting. There is no evidence of vandalism or littering on the premises. The management office is easily accessible on the first floor lobby area. Four elevators serve the residents of the building.
In all cases, the tenants that were interviewed spoke highly of the management and the upkeep of their apartments and the common areas. They feel that the building manager is especially responsive and approachable. They liked the convenience of the laundry facilities and feel that their units have all the appropriate amenities (such as carpeting, balcony and various kitchen appliances). One tenant expressed some displeasure with the frustration in getting cable television service, as promised in the marketing.
Malden Garden's Tenant Selection Process

According to Ms. DiGregorio, all potential tenants, whether subsidized or market, are treated in the same manner in the application process. A check of the applicant's credit history is conducted and a reference from the previous landlord or management is solicited. When the development was first completed, qualified subsidized applicants were selected by lottery. As subsidized units become available, the management takes the next applicant from a waiting list. All tenants are given a manual which explains various housekeeping procedures to ensure that sanitary conditions are maintained and that there is no misuse of the units.

A few market applicants turned down the Gardens when they learned that the project will have integrated subsidized units. But according to Ms. DiGregorio, this happens with no more than five percent of the applicants. The management company expects that this will happen and it has not been a significant problem.

Resident Comments

Mable Flibotte has lived in her subsidized apartment for two years and is very happy with the place. She finds that everybody gets along fine. She enjoys the mix of people of different race, and finds that other residents are not concerned with the level of income of any of the residents. The people on her floor are quiet and are "there if somebody
needs help on anything." She also likes the convenience of having a laundry room on her floor and being close to Malden Square and the post office.

Janet, who has lived in the apartment building since the opening, is a unique member of the apartment building. She lives in one of the handicapped units and pays the market rent. Her home is a busy place in the afternoon when she returns from her work as an art teacher at a nearby high school. Several tenants of the building stop by her apartment after work to catch up on each other's day. According to Janet, this group of people are mixed in income and in race. She is not aware of any problems or tensions resulting from the presence of minority tenants.

Another subsidized tenant, who is Chinese and the single parent of a young 4-year-old boy, feels that the living environment at the Malden Gardens is very safe and secure.
Having lived in her two-bedroom unit since the opening of the building, she feels the same way that the other tenants feel about the management of the development and the conveniences of living in Malden Center. She feels that "income [difference] has no effect on my making friends," and is equally likely to make friends with people who are subsidized as with those who are not subsidized. She has experienced no prejudice or racial remarks.

However, she points out that some of the subsidized tenants are highly visible because they have a certain "toughness" in their manner and attitude. This toughness may be the result of having previously lived in public housing projects where residents are constantly in fear of crime. Because of this experience, these residents have not yet developed a sense of trust of the other residents at the Gardens. In this development, the residents who feel that way are more likely than not to be people of color. The fact that they are mostly people of color does not bother this particular tenant (the single parent).

This tenant's major complaint, however, is that neither the building nor the area has any facilities for her son to play in. There is no playground, no fields, no playroom for the kids in the development to get together to play. She feels that this is a major barrier for her son in meeting other kids. Despite the barriers, her son knows most of the other small children in the building.
One market rate tenant felt that subsidized tenants are an asset to the development. This tenant works as a head nurse recruiter in a hospital. She gets along fine with those people who she knows are subsidized and feels that the government should provide the rental assistance. She gets along with people of color equally as well as Caucasians. However, she is concerned about some of the other children, seven years old or younger, whose parents often leave them unattended. She also suspects that the kids are not fed properly. These kids "have already started a step backwards," she says.

She, like the other tenants, feels that somehow space should be provided in the building for the kids to play and that the parents should arrange for caretakers while they are away. However, there is no space in the building or the grounds to dedicate to a play area for young children. And, says one tenant, "Even if the management wanted to do something about it, they can't because there's no room." The tenant management is aware of this concern and acknowledges that there is currently no space for such a service.

Clearly, there is some concern about the quality of life for young children at this development. Is this a healthy environment for children, where children can play with each other? The answer appears to be no. But as one Chinese

16 This tenant wished to remain anonymous.
tenant says, "Kids are funny; they get used to it." The kids manage to find some way of playing together, whether it is in someone's apartment or occasionally in the hallway.

For the subsidized children, the critical question is whether this environment is better for them than their former residences. Some of these subsidized families formerly lived in improperly maintained public housing projects or in neighborhoods where there was significant crime and danger to their lives. One tenant relates the story of another tenant with a young daughter. This place is the first place the mother and daughter have been where they did not fear stepping out of their door or even staying in their own apartment. For some of these tenants, the most important concern is that they are able to live their lives safely.

Further Efforts at MIMER Developments by Developer

Carabetta has found their mixed-income experience at Malden Gardens to be positive. They have continued to develop mixed-income projects in Revere and in Malden. One such project, Pleasant Plaza in Malden, will be opening this spring.

COMMENTS ON ISSUES FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

The studies of these two cases do not necessarily prove that all MIMER developments are completely successful. What these two cases do show is that this type of development can
work and is well-liked by its residents and management. The following are issues that deserve further discussion.

**On Building Design and Environmental Context**

According to researchers, the design of a mixed residential development is a critical factor in determining how the residents interact. The best environments are those that are designed so that all residents, subsidized and market, will have equal access to all amenities. A recent survey of residents in a cluster development\(^\text{17}\) found that the people were very aware of the distinction between the subsidized and market residents.\(^\text{18}\) In this development, the subsidized units were located in the less desirable places and the market rate in the front with waterfront views.

This separation of the two types of housing units accentuates the differences in values and lifestyles of the people.\(^\text{19}\) The danger of this arrangement is that the subsidized housing may not receive the same attention to maintenance that the market housing would. When this occurs,

\(^{17}\) Cluster developments are typically multi-family developments in suburban settings where the units are built physically abutting each other. This is in contrast to units that are built unattached where there are plots of land surround individual units.


\(^{19}\) Vischer, p. 322.
market residents may equate the subsidized tenants with the troubled "public housing" residents. Buildings that are income-separated within a development are not likely to promote positive social interaction among people of different backgrounds.

However, market pressures can be such that it would be impossible for a development to attract sufficient market renters to sustain a mixed-income development financially. If this were the case, the demands of "blind" integration of subsidized and market units may have to be reconsidered. Perhaps the prime units -- those with the best views, or on the top floor -- should not be dedicated to subsidized tenants. Perhaps the subsidized units can do without a garbage disposal or dishwasher or have less fancy kitchen tiles. The most important point is the availability of subsidized units to low and moderate-income households is not lost.

On the Tenant Selection Process

Neither the Hamlet nor Malden Gardens made any special efforts to screen low-income or minority tenants to secure "better" tenants. There were no efforts at a "creaming" process of selecting tenants and the results of the tenants. But the question that has arisen or will arise with other MIMER developments is how to reduce the fears and biases of a local officials or citizen group? Will we only accept
minority families but not single mothers? Will we accept only young families and not families with teenage children so as to calm the concerns of the townspeople? Can these practices be considered discriminatory and unconstitutional? Other questions that arise concern the appropriateness of placing recent immigrants in developments in areas that do not have sufficient support services.

On the Importance of Good Management

Clearly, one of the most important factors that make these two developments successful is good management. In both developments, residents report that the management is quick to respond to the maintenance needs of the building, the maintenance of the apartments, and any other needs that they may have. The management can be described as caring for their residents, whether the tenants are minority or White. They are demanding but are sufficiently flexible to ensure that tenants abide by their lease agreements. Also, they are quick to offer referral suggestions of public or private service agencies that would help tenants with any problems they may have.

There is a positive and healthy relationship between the manager of the complex and the residents. In both cases, the managers are very approachable to the residents. Their operation of the developments are efficient and timely. They are friendly, flexible and are able to convey a strong sense
of trust that the residents appreciate greatly. From the experience with these two developments, it appears that the most important characteristic that a manager should possess is a concern for the welfare for all residents to the extent possible.
Chapter Three

The Role of the State in Promoting MIMER Housing

The basic goal that the integrationist approach to housing seeks is to develop mutual understanding and respect among people of different backgrounds by increasing the occasions for them to interact positively and through increased exposure. The hope is that conflict and discrimination based on race, income or class will be significantly reduced or eliminated. Elitist and racist attitudes can come from individuals, citizen groups, town officials or institutions. Mixed residential developments present key opportunities toward reaching that goal that the State should capture fully. This chapter looks at how the state addresses these inequities and offers a discussion of the fundamental conflict between the equal opportunity in housing and the housing integrationist approach.

State Measures to Increase Affordable Housing

Massachusetts is one of a handful of states in the country that are aggressively addressing the need for decent and affordable housing for low and moderate-income people.20 With some of the highest housing costs in the nation,

20 Other states include California, Maryland and New Jersey.
Massachusetts has had considerable success at promoting and constructing many units, including market rate units as well. For example, one program, the State Housing Assistance for Rental Production program (SHARP), has financed 77 mixed-income developments that have provided nearly 9,000 units.\textsuperscript{21}

Two state measures, Chapter 774 and Executive Order 215, have mandated that towns and municipalities build affordable housing. State subsidies for the construction of affordable units have been put forth as incentive. Under pressure to meet state-established goals for affordable housing, some municipalities have taken advantage of these subsidies. Some of these subsidies require that the units be in mixed-income developments. The following sections describe the two measures in detail.

\textbf{Chapter 774: The "Anti-snob" Law}

In an effort to encourage more suburban towns to do their fair share in the provision of affordable housing, the state Legislature passed the Chapter 774 landmark "anti-snob zoning law" in 1969. This law enables the State to override decisions of local zoning boards against a comprehensive permit for affordable housing are through an appeal by developers in the State Housing Appeals Court. The goal of the law is to have at least 10\% affordability of the housing

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{21} MHFA Annual Report, 1988, p. 5.}
stock in each municipality. The intent of the law was to lessen the wide difference in income makeup between the cities and the suburbs. The state did not want any further segregation of the different income groups to continue, whether it was by market forces or by government design.

The law has drawn considerable criticism from local officials and citizens who fear mostly the change in their idyllic environments. They fear that the crime rate will increase, the negative impacts on traffic and local infrastructure system, and that town services will be overburdened. Often, local citizens will claim that a historic structure is at risk or that a endangered species of animal or marine life is threatened.

Chapter 774 surfaced about the time the City of Boston was facing the school desegregation issue in the early 1970s. At that time, the feeling among State and Boston officials was that towns and municipalities throughout the state should carry some of the burden of housing some of the City's poor. While the goal of racial integration was never publicly addressed with Chapter 774, it clearly was a "hidden agenda" of the state, says Clark Zeigler, deputy director of the Massachusetts Housing Partnership, and forced the suburbs to confront their exclusionary attitudes.

Some have questioned whether this law has had any substantial effect on increasing the commitment to providing affordable units among the state's cities and towns. Twenty
years after the law's inception, only 1.43% of the suburban housing stock is subsidized. Only twenty-eight of 351 cities and towns have met the state's target of ten percent. Most of the affordable housing units are concentrated in and around cities, where there is already a mix of people with different racial backgrounds.

However, a recent study of the law by Cynthia Lacasse concluded that the law "appears to be effective in filling a real need in the Commonwealth today." The study found that between 1969 and 1986, 91% of the projects that were granted a comprehensive permit by the Housing Appeals court resulted in those projects being built, and 67% for those granted with condition.

Executive Order 215

Executive Order 215 is another state measure to promote affordable housing. In order to qualify for state discretionary funds (for example, infrastructure improvements), cities and towns must show that they do not have "local practices, policies or regulations that unreasonably exclude the development of housing for low and moderate income

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24 Ibid. p. 10.
Adopted in 1982, the intent of the executive order is also to further encourage each town and city to do its fair share to provide affordable housing in its community. If a review by the Executive Office of Communities and Development of a town's policies and practices determines local policies to be discriminatory, the town must commit to several actions before it can qualify for future funds. These requirements include the creation of a local housing policy, zoning revisions to provide incentives for affordable housing and efforts to work with developers to produce mixed-income housing.

Recognizing that cities and towns cannot develop affordable housing without some assistance, the state has committed substantial funding to serve the purpose. State expenditures on housing programs over the last five years exceeded $1 billion. As the indirect result of these two policies and other state efforts and programs, local governments have generally accepted the responsibility to plan or develop affordable housing. Another indication of the success of state efforts is the 160 towns out of 351 that now have state-sponsored low income family housing projects.

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While the number of towns that have met their 10% obligation remains low, the feeling among state officials and many housing specialists is that without these two measures, "there would be virtually no affordable housing built in the suburbs. Even with the laws, there is a lot of pressure bought on local boards to avoid introducing affordable housing." Zeigler, feels that the feeling among local officials has changed dramatically over the last few years. Affordable housing needs are now recognized as legitimate by local officials and has reached the point where it requires some local action.

In many towns where housing prices have skyrocketed in the housing boom of the 1980's, the salaries of many long-time residents and local employees have not kept pace with housing costs. This has forced many people to live outside of the town in which they grew up or work. Many towns in the state report that firemen, teachers and administrators cannot afford to live in their communities (Lincoln, Lexington, Attleboro). These are people who may be poor but not low class.

Some town leaders view this problem as extremely urgent. In negotiations with developers and the state in the creation of affordable housing projects. The towns require that a certain percentage of the affordable units in a mixed-income project be set aside for local preference. The percentage of

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units set aside may be as high as 60-70% of the total number of affordable units. Zeigler comments that this high percentage is a source of some tension between the state and the towns because it limits the number of low income and minority families from other parts of the state from being accommodated by the development. However, when local needs are addressed, towns are more receptive to broader goals, says Zeigler.

Towns that have successfully met the criteria set forth in Chapter 774 and Executive Order 215 often have housing developments that are funded in part through some of the state's housing programs. In order to qualify for the subsidies of these programs, developers must work with the town to insure that a certain percentage of the units are affordable and also another percentage serving people of color. According to Zeigler, both measures have had a positive effect on increasing the housing opportunities for minorities. Since 1969, Chapter 774 has permitted 20,000 units of which 15,000 are built. Executive Order 215 has not been as productive. Only a few hundred units have been built in the few years since its inception. But, according to Zeigler, the greater affect of this measure is that it has been more successful at making communities acknowledge the need for affordable housing in their communities. Many communities aggressively seek aid from the State through its
housing programs. Since these programs require affordability set-asides and minority occupancy goals, it is likely that there will be more positive results in the numbers of minority units in the future.

The State was among the first in the country to advocate and build mixed-income rental housing. Beginning as early as the late 1960's, the state realized that the mixed-income approach to rental housing had specific merits that would benefit a wide range of people. Zeigler says that mixed-income housing is a way of producing affordable units while at the same time producing market units where the subsidized units would be cheaper for the state to administer than public housing units. The mixed-income approach also encourages the private sector to work with the public sector to create more housing units and opportunities for all people. In a housing policy statement (1978), the state recognized that efforts should be made to encourage the construction of new housing by the private market.²⁸

Many of the state's programs encourages the development of mixed-income projects. The state views the primary benefits of this approach to developing housing in the desegregation of low income households from traditional

ghettos or pockets of blighted low income housing. Also, the state and the federal government can no longer provide the funds and the subsidies to develop large developments. Increasingly, the state looks to the private sector to develop residential developments where market rate units support the affordable units.

One of the concerns that mixed-income developments presents is the financial feasibility of the developments. What is the likelihood that these developments will encounter financial difficulty? The MHFA "Watch List" for March 1989 indicates that there are presently 20 developments in some stage of financial difficulty ranging from dipping into the replacement reserve to refinancing the mortgage payments. This number represents 5.4% of the MHFA portfolio of mixed-income and all-subsidized developments. There have been only two foreclosures in the last eight years.

Occasionally, developments will run into some temporary cash flow problems and are late in their debt service and tax escrow payments or set asides into the replacement reserve. The development may experience a rent revenue that was less than expected or the capital expenses were in excess of the available replacement reserve. But the MHFA do not consider the lateness to be a major problem so long as it is not a

29 Information regarding the specific figures for mixed-income developments were not readily accessible from the MHFA.

30 Joanne Burke
continuing problem and if the amount is not too large.  

The general availability of market rate units throughout the state combined with poor siting of some developments have lead to higher vacancy rates that result in those developments having financial difficulty. Developments that are in locations that have easy access to public transportation, and sufficient public road systems are less likely to have financial problems.

The State's Position on Racial Integration and Equal Opportunity

When the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency was first introduced in 1966 (and in 1968 found to be constitutional), the guiding policy of the agency "strove for socio-economic mixture of tenants in the same developments." The MHFA required that "a minimum of 25% of all units that it finances be made available through subsidy programs to low-income tenants, as well as insisting upon active recruitment of minority tenants so as to insure a substantial degree of racial integration." 

The 1975 Housing Policy Statement for Massachusetts states the following goal: "The seventh goal of the

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31 Bob Carter and Joanne Burke, MHFA
33 Ibid., p. 3.
Department [Executive Office of Communities and Development] is equal opportunity throughout the Commonwealth, including private as well as federal and state-aided housing." The State has a broad set of programs and initiatives to ensure that people of color and people of different ethnic backgrounds are provided with equal opportunity in their housing search. The MHFA is strongly committed to equal opportunity for minorities. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination has the responsibility of enforcing the discrimination and fair housing laws, monitors activities in cities and towns, and responds to individual complaints and incidences.

The state's official policy on housing for minorities is equal opportunity. The policy statement states that EOCD will seek to eliminate local zoning controls that have "the demonstrable or potential effect of excluding persons of particular social, economic, racial or ethnic groups." This policy is reflected in the various programs of the state for housing and employment.

With regard to housing, each program requires that a goal for minorities occupancy be established. Under the State Housing Assistance Rental Program (SHARP), the percentage goal of a development is negotiated between the equal opportunity

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34 Housing Policy Statement for Massachusetts, Executive Office of Communities and Development, 1975, p. 32.
35 Housing Element for the Commonwealth, p. 32-33.
office of the MHFA, the developer and the town. Using a formula based on the proportion of minorities in the region, the percentage goal ranges from 5% to 50%. Under the HOP program at least 25% of the units must be affordable and like the SHARP program, the percentage goal targeted toward minorities is determined by negotiation.

The MHFA monitors its developments on minority figures on a quarterly basis. The quarterly report for the equal opportunity occupancy goal reports that 373 mixed-income and mixed-race developments financed in part by MHFA have an overall minority rate of twenty-five percent. This figure is considerably higher than the actual contracted rate between the towns, the state and the developers which averaged 17 percent. This higher figure is the result of a number of developments exceeding their minority goal, in some cases more than doubling the contracted goal. About twelve developments have no minorities. These developments are in the rural parts of Massachusetts where there are very few or no minorities that would qualify for the subsidies. According to Ms. McClure, about three of these non-racially mixed developments are mixed-income. The vacancy rate average for all developments is four percent.36

The state programs require that the developers develop a resident location plan to clearly indicate the number of

affordable units, the number of minorities and local residents and the marketing strategy to reach minorities. The developers must advertise the affordable housing opportunities in the several minority newspapers and with minority professional groups. According to Charlotte McClure, MHFA Equal Opportunity Coordinator, if the developer has shown a "best faith effort" by following all the requirements set forth by MHFA and has worked closely with the equal opportunity coordinator to locate qualified applicants, but still does not meet the goal, the state allows the developers to fill the these units with other applicants. This is more likely to happen in the western part of the state where there are fewer minorities. With SHARP projects, about 75 percent of the developments are able to meet the contracted goal during rent up. The remaining 25 percent of the developments reach their goal over time.

As mentioned earlier, there is a great deal of negotiation between the towns and the state with regard to how these affordable HOP units are allocated. Certainly, it is in the towns' interest to secure a higher number of units for local townspeople. From the state's point of view, that very interest conflicts with the need to provide more opportunities for minorities. According to Zeigler, it is very important to avoid a situation where local officials and townspeople feel that local needs are unreasonably compromised for affirmative action goals. It is important to maintain the distinct
separation between the two needs.

Another issue that the State is concerned with is whether the units are reaching households that are truly low-income or young couples who just starting off and may no longer be low-income in a few years as couples advance in their careers. If the later situation is the case, the mixed-income character of the development is at risk. The mechanism that is put in place to ensure the affordability of the unit in perpetuity is a restriction on the percentage of the sale price the household may take when the household moves out.

The question that remains is how to reach the targeted household more effectively and whether the subsidies could have been put to a more efficient use. Should the program target low-income couples that are somewhat older and perhaps more established but who need that extra push? Should there be increased outreach to people of color with multilingual literature so that more people would be aware of the programs?

A Matter of Respect

Throughout state literature on policies and programs, it is clear that the state supports equal opportunity and affirmative action. However, one would get the distinct feeling that efforts by developers at reaching a minority goal are simply to meet that goal set out by the state in order to receive the subsidies. The state does not clearly indicate or lay out that they believe that minority individuals and
families have a unique perspective or culture that can contribute to a housing development.

It seems the only thing the state recognizes is that minorities have some needs and those needs can be met through affirmative action. And this means that the state will determine a goal of a specified percentage of units targeted specifically for minorities and that the management will look for minorities to meet that goal and may stop once it has reached that goal. Rather than creating an environment where developers, building managers or local town officials are encouraged to welcome people of color, these parties may feel that they have a burden which they must carry out.

This is an unhealthy approach to providing housing opportunities for people of color. From the minority perspective, such placing of minorities is only a reflection that a family is being placed to meet a goal, not because the family may be an asset to the community based on its unique perspective. The feeling is similar in the job environment and in education, where a minority person is sometimes accused of being accepted to a school only because he is a minority and the school has to fill a certain number of minority slots. This view does not give any respect to the individual's ethnic background nor does it allow any faith in the intellectual capability of the person.

However, it makes a significant difference whether the state commits to writing in its policies a declaration that it
supports and firmly believes in the role of different ethnic and racial individuals and groups to add to the diversity of living environments. This declaration will serve two purposes: It will show that the state greatly respects and values ethnic and racial diversity, thereby helping to remove some of the negative attitudes people may have about affirmative action goals.

The second purpose is directed specifically at people of color. Oftentimes, the administration, faculty or students in an academic setting create an atmosphere, whether intentionally or not, where minorities feel that they are admitted into a program only to fill a goal. They fail to recognize or to acknowledge fully that people of color can add a different or broader perspective to an environment. Minorities and recent immigrants have rich heritage and cultural backgrounds that should be shared.

Local town officials see their responsibility as primarily serving the needs of their own towns. They are appointed or elected officials who represent the citizens of the town and therefore hold their concerns highest. In towns where the predominant characteristic of the people is white and middle or uppermiddle class, and where there is a local need for affordable housing, the town officials are reluctant to consider any provisions for "outsiders." However, given the clear declaration by the state, perhaps stubborn local
officials, abutters and others will relent and possibly begin to see the merits of a diverse environment.

Perhaps the lack of attention or sensitivity to people of color is an indication that the state does not place the housing integration high in the priority list. Certainly, towns and municipalities do not see diverse environments or the provision of housing for people of color as a priority. Often, they are not even concerned with that goal. The state must act more aggressively to push for towns and cities not only to increase the development of affordable housing, but that that housing be ethnically diverse housing.

**Fundamental Conflict Between Equal Opportunity and Housing Integration.**

While most housing advocates and policy analysts support mixed communities and neighborhoods, there are two approaches which appear to be in conflict in methods and the final goals. Housing integrationist seek the ultimate goal of a stable racial environment in which there is no excessive outmigration of one group for fear of another group or a neighborhood that is not resistant to a minority family. Advocates of this school of thought would employ a wide range of measures to reach this goal including encouragement or steering of white migration into a black neighborhood and visa-versa, and even the use of quotas.
On the other hand, equal opportunity supporters seek to ensure that minority homeseekers have a fair and equal choice of housing. They do not endorse racial steering and would pursue the elimination of restrictions on minority housing search. They seek to improve the dissemination of marketing information to reach minority households more effectively.

The resulting effect of either approach in the mix of communities and neighborhoods may or may not be distinctly different. Under the choice approach, there is the potential for mixed environment. There is also the potential for no mix in the environment. At the very least, the choice was up to the individual homeseekers.

Under the integrationist approach, minority families may be denied access to a particular housing development because they would jeopardize the carefully designed balance of racial groups. In order to maintain a racial balance there may be racial quotas, which are typically used in areas where there exist a large number of minorities. A quota system will undoubtedly deny housing opportunities for many minorities. It will be especially difficult in situations where the minority waiting list may be disproportionately longer than for whites.

The use of racial quotas is a controversial way of maintaining racial balance. The courts have not yet provided any clear clarification on this issue. A pending case in Brooklyn, New York show how complex the issues of racial
quotas can be. In *Mario v. Starrett City* (1979), a class action suit was brought against the development by a group of black families who claimed that they there were denied housing in the complex because they were black.\(^{37}\) A witness for the defendant argued that without the quota, racial tipping of the complex will most certainly occur and will continue the polarization of black and white neighborhoods. In 1984, the U.S. Department of Justice brought suit against Starrett City claiming that the quota constituted a violation of the federal fair housing law. The justice department argued that denying housing opportunities for minorities is a discriminatory practice and cannot be justified by the desire for racial integration. This case is also pending.\(^{38}\)

Certainly, this is a difficult dilemma. However, because the long-term goal of MIMER developments is to foster a greater appreciation of people with different backgrounds and thereby reducing conflict, some short-term needs may have to be sacrificed.

In Massachusetts, state housing agencies have firmly advocated a policy of equal opportunity in their programs. This process requires that developers undergo a good faith effort to publicize housing opportunities in minority newspapers. The most important concern here is that minorities are

\(^{37}\) Goering, p. 13.

not denied opportunities in the application process. However, theoretically and in practice this has resulted in some housing developments that have no minority families. According to this approach, if there are no minorities who are interested in applying for a development, so be it. And if it turns out that only whites are interested in one development and minorities are interested in another, so be it.

Response to housing integration efforts from the black and white communities.

Several studies have looked into the feelings of whites and minorities toward racially integrated residential environments. The 1978 HUD Survey on the Quality of Community Life found that 57 percent of its black respondents and fifteen percent of the white respondents would like the composition of their neighborhoods to be half white and half black. According to the survey, blacks were less satisfied with services and amenities in their neighborhood than whites were. For example, 59% of blacks "felt schools [are] excellent or pretty good"; 63% of whites felt the same way about their schools. 69% of blacks felt that crime was a serious problem, compared to 29% of whites.39

39 Wilhelmina Leigh and James McGhee, pp. 34-36.
The results of this particular study suggest that the dominant reason that blacks would prefer a mixed neighborhood is that they believe white neighborhoods provided superior services and amenities. Another researcher writes, "Whereas most integrationist believe that racial integration is a very important end in itself in a multiracial society, most minority families [do so] on a more pragmatic basis -- the conviction that white decision makers will channel more real resources...to institutions and communities serving significant numbers of influential whites as well as blacks and Latinos." 40

Thus, if the objective of blacks and other people of color are to seek a better living environment, and if a mixed environment was able to provide that, blacks would seek a mixed environment. If blacks and low-income households sought to live in mixed environments, where they are welcomed by white people, and if the low-income are provided with some economic assistance and are welcomed by middle and upper-middle income people, then the seeds have been planted and the potential for a healthy and enriching garden is all the more likely to occur.

The State is in a strategic position to advance the goals of integrated housing. The state's source of subsidies

for financing developments is substantial, and it holds permits that must be granted. The few sites that remain in the state that are suitable for housing development should serve broader income and racial groups.
CONCLUSION: Stable Housing Integration as the Only Answer

The ultimate goal that housing integrationist seek to reach is a society that recognizes and appreciates people of different backgrounds; a society where one's race, beliefs, and income are not the basis for discriminatory or prejudicial practices. We as a nation are a long way from that goal. We have to take a big step. One of the ways towards reaching this goal is integrated communities, where people experience and value the diverse backgrounds of other people. Mixed residential housing is one of many elements that makes a community integrated.

It may be too ambitious to hope that mixed-income and mixed-race housing helps to foster significantly greater social interaction among people with various racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds. Or, it may still be too early to tell. Nevertheless our intuition suggests that the potential is there. Because government-subsidized mixed-housing developments are recent, we can only look to recent examples of such housing and our experience with other mixed-environments, such as education. Early indications are that this form of housing has been very satisfactory to the residents, management, developers, town and state agencies. Mixed-income and mixed-race housing should be reinforced and
strengthened with a redirected commitment on *mutual benefit through a diverse environment.*

In order to reach this goal of a diverse residential environment, some short-term needs may have to be sacrificed. Specifically, a development may have to limit the number of a certain segment of the population, i.e. Blacks, whites, Asians or Hispanics so as to maintain a good balance of racial and ethnic mix within the development. This will necessarily close out many qualified applicants based on their race. However, as with most policies, the costs come along with the merits.

One of the questions that remains is how to determine what the appropriate cutoff level is. How high a percentage of a development should be people of color before the racial mix of the development is threatened? Some studies suggest that no more than ten percent of a development should be minority (VanOrman, 1988). But can such a low percentage realistically make an impact on the experiences of the residents? It may be too easy for minority households to be ignored, dismissed or overlooked. A more successful percentage that would more likely ensure a level of social mixing and interaction would be in the range of twenty to 30 percent. But why can't we twist things around and say that there should be 75 percent minority and 25 percent white? This breakdown would still be considered mixed-race.

A number of factors would have to be considered,
including the racial group with the most pressing need, the existing racial composition of the neighborhood and the available pool of minority applicants in the region. Other factors include the level of acceptance and support by the community and the emphasis on families or young couples. Are there sufficient services and support in the area that would help the incoming minority or immigrant families individuals adjust? If there are not, perhaps families should be discouraged from applying to a particular development. This would be very appropriate advice and made easier if there were other housing options that can be directed toward these families. It may be appropriate to encourage those minority or immigrant families whose foundations are somewhat more established and secure and do not need to rely on extensive services.

Should we be satisfied that a development meets the negotiated minority goal, but all the minority families are also subsidized tenants? What are the expectations of marketing to affluent minorities that we should expect from developers? It is also important to have a mix of market tenants so that market tenants do not automatically link being under a subsidy with being a person of color.

It is important to consider the perspective of the minority household and one that may also be low-income. Are mixed residential housing developments the best option for these families? This depends on the alternatives. One of
those alternatives is large public housing projects where there may be tremendous undesirable activities that would threaten a child's development.

Or it may be scattered site housing. But scattered site housing units may not be in locations where services are conveniently located. An Asian or Hispanic family may feel isolated, being one of a very few minority families in a neighborhood. The social support of people of their own kind may be lacking. If this is the case, can we expect that low-income minorities will be happy in the development or the neighborhood? What if English is not their primary language or if they speak no English? Would they feel even more isolated? Perhaps the better approach would be to identify those families or individuals who are least likely to require support services.

Does the government have the right to impose its beliefs onto towns that are happy just the way they are? How can the government ensure that all people are treated fairly? The answers are that without the State guiding the towns and municipalities, little affordable housing would be built, few housing opportunities for people of color would be created, and the polarization of different racial, income and class groups are likely to continue.

It is unrealistic to expect that integrated housing by itself will solve the social ills of racism and elitism.
Furthermore these attitudes are so ingrained in the institutions, habits and social structures of our society that reaching the ultimate goal will most likely require a great deal of time. It may be a slow process, but the State must push forward on this agenda. We cannot be content to move in small incremental steps where the benefits are marginal and benefit too few people. The State must be more aggressive in creating positive and enriching living environments that will lead to the benefit of all people.
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