

A DESIGN ANALYSIS OF THE BROOKLINE
FARM URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT
AND ITS IMPACT ON SOCIAL MIXING

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the impact that the variables of history, physical design, and time have had on the social mixing of three income groups on one site. I analyze the development of the Farm site in terms of (1) its part in Urban Renewal, (2) the overall site plan, (3) spatial relationships on the site, (4) physical boundaries, and (5) common areas, so as to illustrate the negative impact that these variables have had on social mixing. The methodology employed includes 20 structured interviews which were randomly administered to residents in each income level on the site; 4 structured interviews with management and city officials; and the author's own observations.

The study concludes that both the physical design of the Farm Urban Renewal Site and the history of its development have significantly

deterred social mixing of the three income groups. The passing of time, however, has not been a major factor in social mixing on the site.

Thesis Supervisor: Gary Hack

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Introduction.....5
Social Mixing.....7
Background.....11
Analysis of the Design.....16
Public Housing.....27
Cooperative Housing.....30
Brook House.....33
Home Area.....36
Social Mixing on the Farm.....41
Conclusion and Alternatives.....43
Notes.....46
Bibliography.....48

INTRODUCTION

As the housing market grows tighter and the supply of low-income housing becomes scarce, planners and architects are faced with the problem of designing socially mixed housing that really works. Under various Urban Renewal programs, one solution has been to introduce upper middle-class housing into previous low-income urban areas; on a different track, the federal government has advocated a higher percentage of new low-income units in its financially assisted projects. The limited supply of urban land available for development has lead to the juxtaposition of social classes. Additionally, many planners believe that dissolution of inner city ghettos should be effectuated through the creation of low- and moderate-income housing close to the expanding job market

in the suburbs.¹

Planners and architects have a great deal of responsibility for creating an environment that is socially and physically feasible. There has been very little if any research on social mixing in the last ten years. This study will illustrate the impact that the physical design, in conjunction with other variables, has had on the social mixing of the Farm Urban Renewal Site in Brookline, Massachusetts. I will analyze the effect that thirteen years have had on the social mixing of the Farm residents, as well as the impact that the site plan, spatial relationships and the history of the site have had on current residents. I will also illustrate some of the problems that arise when combining three income groups on one site

and suggest some criteria for developing a process by which socially mixed communities can evolve.

In this study, I re-examine some of the same issues studied 13 years ago by Warren Boeschstein, who examined physical barriers, design labeling, social mixing on the site, and the advantages to social mixing. Boeschstein concluded that the use of exclusionary barriers, unnecessary distinctions, and a design that stresses the needs of the upper income group has been a deterrent to social mixing on this site.

The present study is composed of 8 parts: (1) introduction, (2) social mixing, (3) background information on the Farm area, (4) analysis of the site design, (5) analysis of individual housing units, (6) home areas, (7) advantages of social mixing on the Farm site, and (8) conclusion.

Material for the study was gathered from four general sources: (1) interviews with resi-

dents from the various units (structured interviews were held with at least three people from each income group. The respondents were asked to indicate the number of friends they had on the site and the area they felt the most comfortable in ["home area"]), (2) interviews with management officials, (3) interviews with public administrators, and (4) observations. Additional conversations were held with public officials from the Brookline Rent Control Board, Redevelopment Authority, Public Housing Authority and Family Tenant Association. Secondary sources of information include newspaper articles and public hearing reports.

Although the sample of people interviewed is small, the information gathered in conjunction with observation and research is indicative of several pervasive problems that result from mixing three income groups.

SOCIAL MIXING

In general, areas tend to be segregated according to socio-economic status. Incomes tend to increase as one moves away from the central city, and the degree of heterogeneity decreases as the unit studied is reduced.

There are five theories that support the reduction of socio-economic stratification in the urban environment and its surrounding areas.

(1) Racial and Socio-Economic Integration

There have been several studies done on the advantages of social mixing. Theoretically, the objectives of social mixing serve to increase the possibility of racial integration. Because a disproportionate number of the poor are minorities, policies that limit the mobility of the poor effectively limit the opportunities for minorities. However, social integration

does not necessarily result in racial integration, for studies have shown that racial segregation occurs at all economic levels for Blacks. Research by Kain and Persky on the ten largest metropolitan areas shows that existing patterns of residential segregation cannot be explained by socio-economic status alone. In Detroit, one of the cities included in the analysis, the researcher found that 45% of the poor white families lived in the suburbs, whereas only 11% of the poor Blacks lived there.²

(2) Employment and Socio-Economic Integration

Improvement of job opportunities for the poor has been another objective of social mixing. The isolation of the poor has in essence resulted in depriving them from living within a reasonable

distance from their place of employment. This problem has become more acute due to the large number of industries that located their plants in the suburbs. During the 1960s more than 50% of all new jobs created in the Standard Metropolitan Area were outside of the central city.³ Today the trend appears still to be true, especially in the Boston area with a large majority of the computer software industry located around Route 128.

(3) Socializing the Lower Class

Closely related to the theory that socio-economic improvement of lower income residents is based on socio-economic integration is the view that this integration will most likely result in the educational and social upgrading of the lower classes. Frieden asserts that economic segregation in low-income neighborhoods produces social and cultural isolation, an

environment that fosters defeatism and perpetuates poverty. From this standpoint, continued socio-economic segregation can only aggravate social problems; polarization will increase as long as opportunities for contact between different income groups are restricted.⁴ A theory set forth by Downs states that low-income households must be mixed with middle- and high-income households if the life prospects of the lower class are to be improved. Downs proposes that within these mixed areas, low-income neighborhoods should not predominate since that would drive out the upper-income households and diminish the likelihood that a middle-class way of life would prevail.⁵ Such a disproportionate mixing of income groups in conjunction with geographical proximity has resulted in hostility, resentment, and conflict, polarizing such areas into the haves and have-nots. According to Keller, evidence

gathered from new towns and housing estates throughout the world suggests (1) that mixing groups can actually lead to hostility and conflict, rather than to a more interesting and varied communal life, (2) that the better-off, no matter how defined or measured, refuse to live side by side (let alone cooperate in community clubs and projects) with those they consider inferior to them, and (3) that those whose conceptions of privacy and friendship, sociability and neighboring are opposed will soon find themselves either pitted against each other resentfully or withdrawing into loneliness. Social contrasts do not, apparently, automatically foster either creative self- or community-development.⁶

(4) Increased Housing and Integration

Theoretically, the need to increase the supply of low-income housing provides further

support for implementing socially mixed communities. Although the technology is available to produce the needed amounts of low-income housing, the lack of adequate sites within the central city has been a deterrent. Appropriate sites have and can be found in the suburban areas. However, these jurisdictions have traditionally resisted the intrusion of low-income housing and the "city problems" that accompany it. Suburbs have been very successful in deterring the construction of undesirable housing with the use of various zoning ordinances, such as large lot zoning, in conjunction with strong political clout. The town of Brookline was able to use its political clout to reduce the number of low- and moderate-income units on the Farm site.

(5) Improved Relationships and Integration

Social class balance has also been proposed

as a means for improving interpersonal relationships in the society. The physical separation typical of metropolitan areas has supposedly decreased the ability of people from different backgrounds "to communicate with each other about the problems which affect everyone."⁷ In contrast to the theory of social integration which just focuses on improving the conditions of the poor, the objective of social class balance would mutually benefit everyone involved. Gans states that socio-economic heterogeneity is a means of promoting tolerance of social and cultural differences, thus reducing political conflict and encouraging democratic practices.⁸

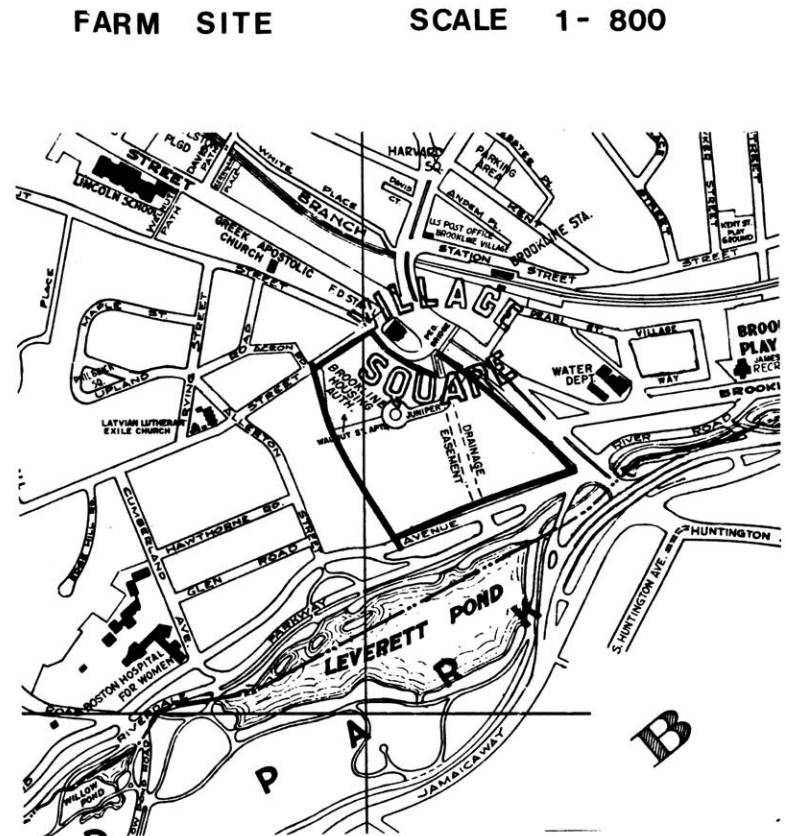
Research has shown that mixed communities are difficult to achieve. Gans states that non-tenant native home purchasers seem to want heterogeneity; but the housing market is not organized to provide it. He reports a partic-

ular instance in which developers were stuck with unsalable homes when there was a 20% differential in the cost of adjacent homes.⁹

Several studies have also indicated that economic strains may likely become evident in mixed communities. In some instances higher income residents are willing to pay more for some facilities and services that lower and moderate income families regard as unnecessary frills. Social strains may also develop due to the different lifestyles and values of the various income groups.

BACKGROUND

Brookline's Farm Urban Renewal Site is located three miles from downtown Boston, in the lowland of Levertt Pond. Historically it was a neighborhood of Irish immigrants who settled in the area around 1860 and worked as field hands and domestic help for the nearby highland estates. They lived in three-story tenements built by the Brookline Land Company. In the 1950s, many of the immigrant descendents were still living on the Farm, continuing the tradition of a working class community. Many of the Farm residents were employed by the town or engaged in some type of service-oriented work. They still lived in modest triple-decker tenements and paid relatively low rents. Those who owned their homes had all their capital invested in them. Some of the homeowners were



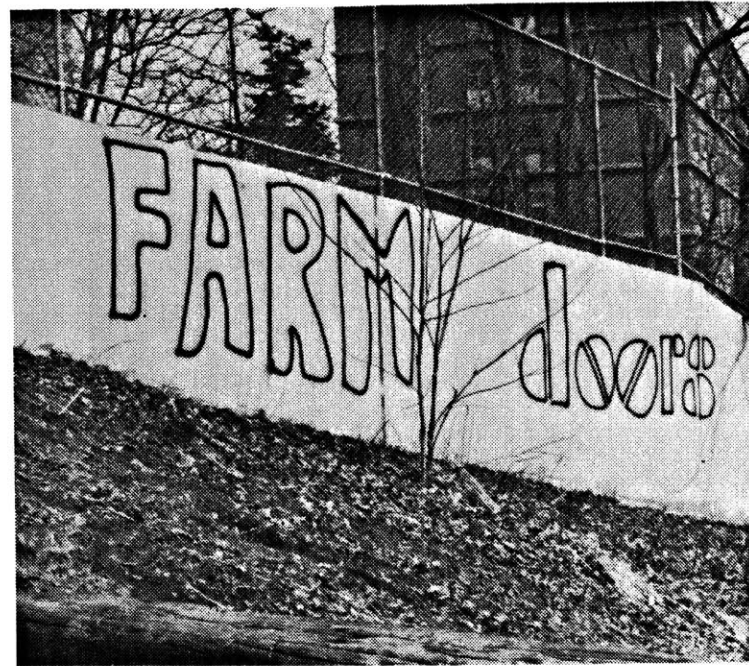
elderly and depended on rental incomes for their subsistence. As a result of sharing the same ethnic background and neighborhood, the Farm was a very close-knit community.

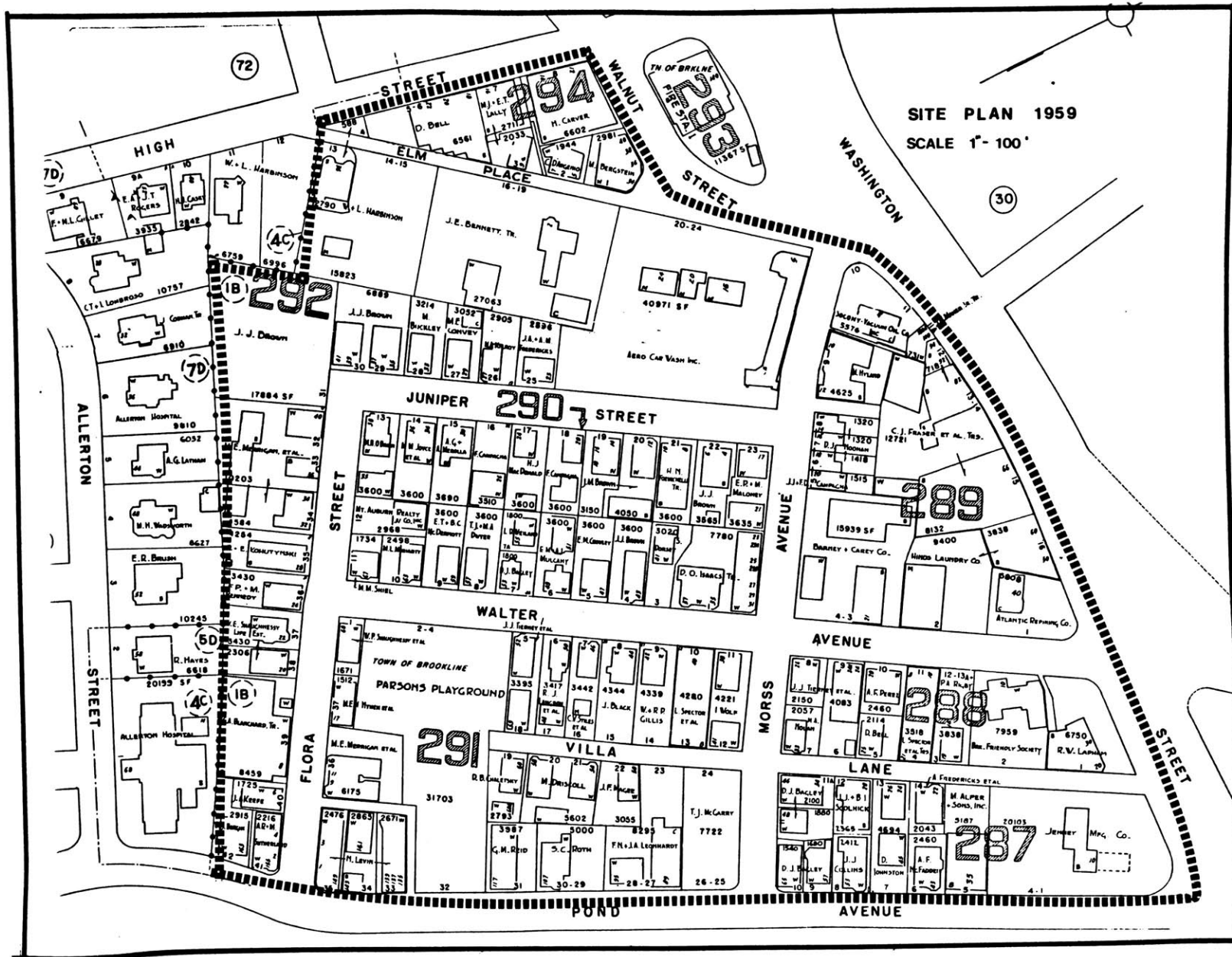
During the Depression and post-war years, the Farm area became an embarrassment for the affluent town of Brookline.¹⁰ The federal Urban Renewal Program offered Brookline the opportunity to eliminate its slums.

When the urban renewal project became a reality in the late 1950s, it was met with much opposition and its merits were hotly debated. Physically the site was composed of 364 dwellings, approximately 235 families of which 100 were eligible for public housing.¹¹ There were also some 45 businesses within the area that had a vested interest in the community. The supporters of the renewal project claimed that (1) the proposed renewal would eliminate a blighted section of the town,

(2) it would reduce the cost of public services by removing the conditions which called for costly fire and health coverage, and (3) the most important aspect in favor of the project was the fact that the Farm was a choice area and the "Gateway" to Brookline from Boston.

The renewal of this area would attract substantial development, and hence increase the





tax base. The estimated tax return for the Brook House luxury apartments was \$225,000 to \$350,000. This would require a taxable valuation of from \$5,000,000 to \$6,000,000 in new construction; this was a substantial increase in taxes, of which the Farm yielded \$57,000.¹²

The main concern of the opponents of the Urban Renewal Project was the welfare of the Farm residents. Approximately 90 families had incomes just above the maximum requirement for Public Housing, thus making it considerably harder to relocate these families in Brookline.

A luxury-type apartment building was proposed for the site with rents in the vicinity of \$200.00 to \$250.00 per month, as well as moderate income apartments with rents between \$100 to \$150 per month. These rental levels effectively excluded many of the Farm residents. This problem was further compounded by the fact that the current homeowners on the Farm would

not be able to replace their homes on the market in Brookline from the monies paid by the Redevelopment Authority.

At the town meeting on June 18, 1959, the Farm project won approval with a vote of 148 to 61. The Redevelopment Authority's plan called for 50 dwelling units per acre with shopping and parking facilities. The housing units would include 150 family and 25 individual units for the Farm residents at reasonable rents.¹³ In addition, the Brookline Housing Authority planned to provide 76 units of Public Housing for eligible families.

The next step in the process was the selection of a developer. After much controversy, the Scheuer Company from New York was selected as the new developer of the Farm site. The contract in which Scheuer entered contained no provision for the moderate-income families on the Farm. Low-income families were to be

provided with a 68-unit highrise and two low-rise buildings containing 24 units were to be provided for the elderly. The Brookline Housing Authority was to build these units on part of the Farm site.

To insure moderate-income housing within the Farm sites, the Village Neighborhood Association rallied. After mobilization and pressure by the Association, Scheuer agreed to provide 115 moderate-income units. Former Farm residents were not required to make the down-payment.

To complete the development of the Farm site, the area of land overlooking Levertt Pond was to be the location of 762 units of luxury housing.

Forty-five percent of the 235 families and 85 individuals displaced from the old Farm site were eventually relocated back on the site in the new low-income units. However, not one

of the 45 businesses that formerly operated on the old Farm area were reopened. Many of the Farm residents who moved into the Coop Housing and Public Housing remember their former homes as having more room and their neighbors as being a "better" class of people who formed a real neighborhood that helped each other in difficult times.¹⁴

ANALYSIS OF THE DESIGN

The Farm Urban Renewal Site is located on the border of Brookline and Boston, overlooking Levertt Pond. It is bounded by Brookline Village and Levertt Pond. The site is composed of three housing groups: (1) the Brook House luxury apartment complex bordering Levertt Pond, (2) Cooperative Housing located on Juniper Street, and (3) the Public Housing complex on High Street.

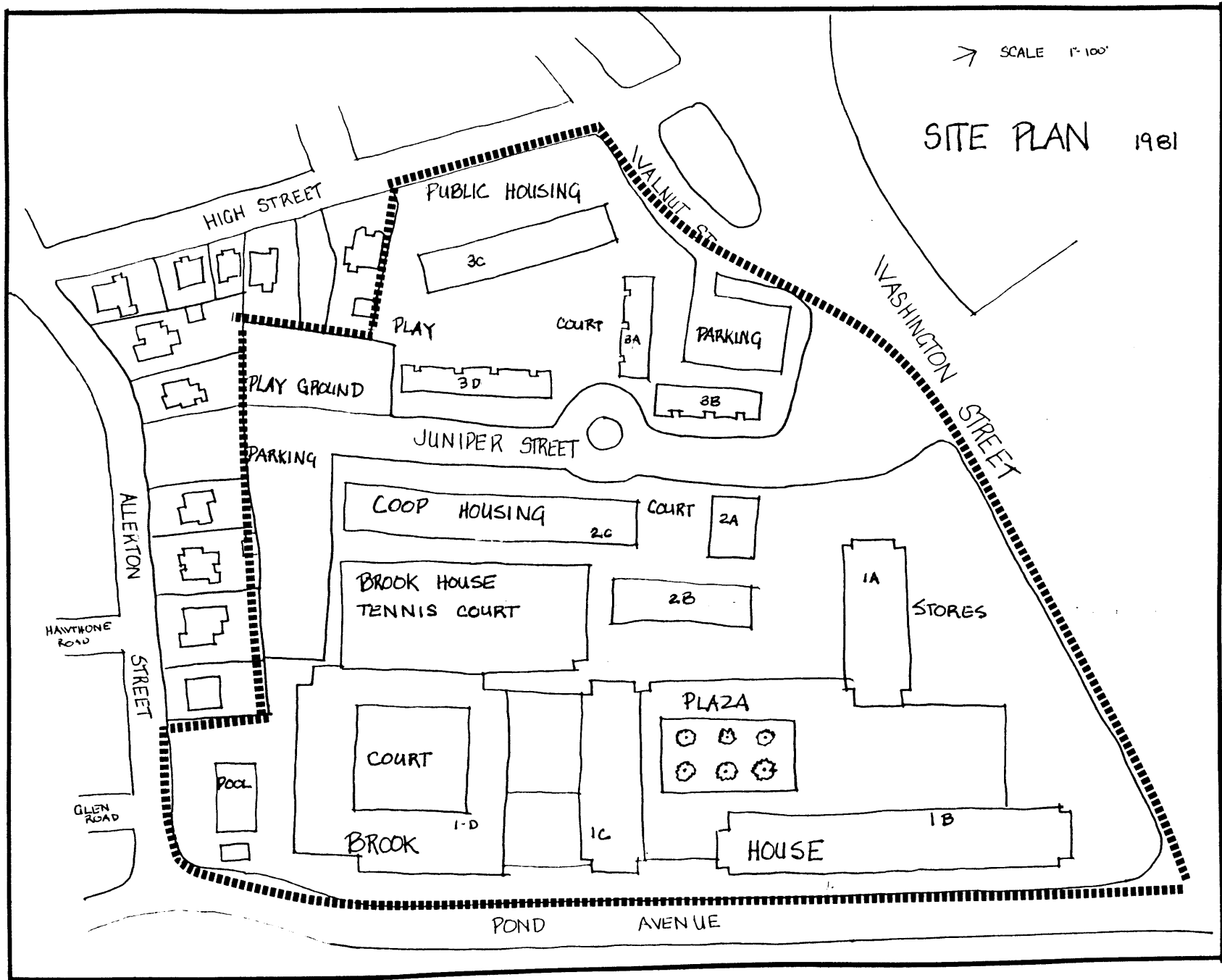
SPATIAL RELATIONSHIP

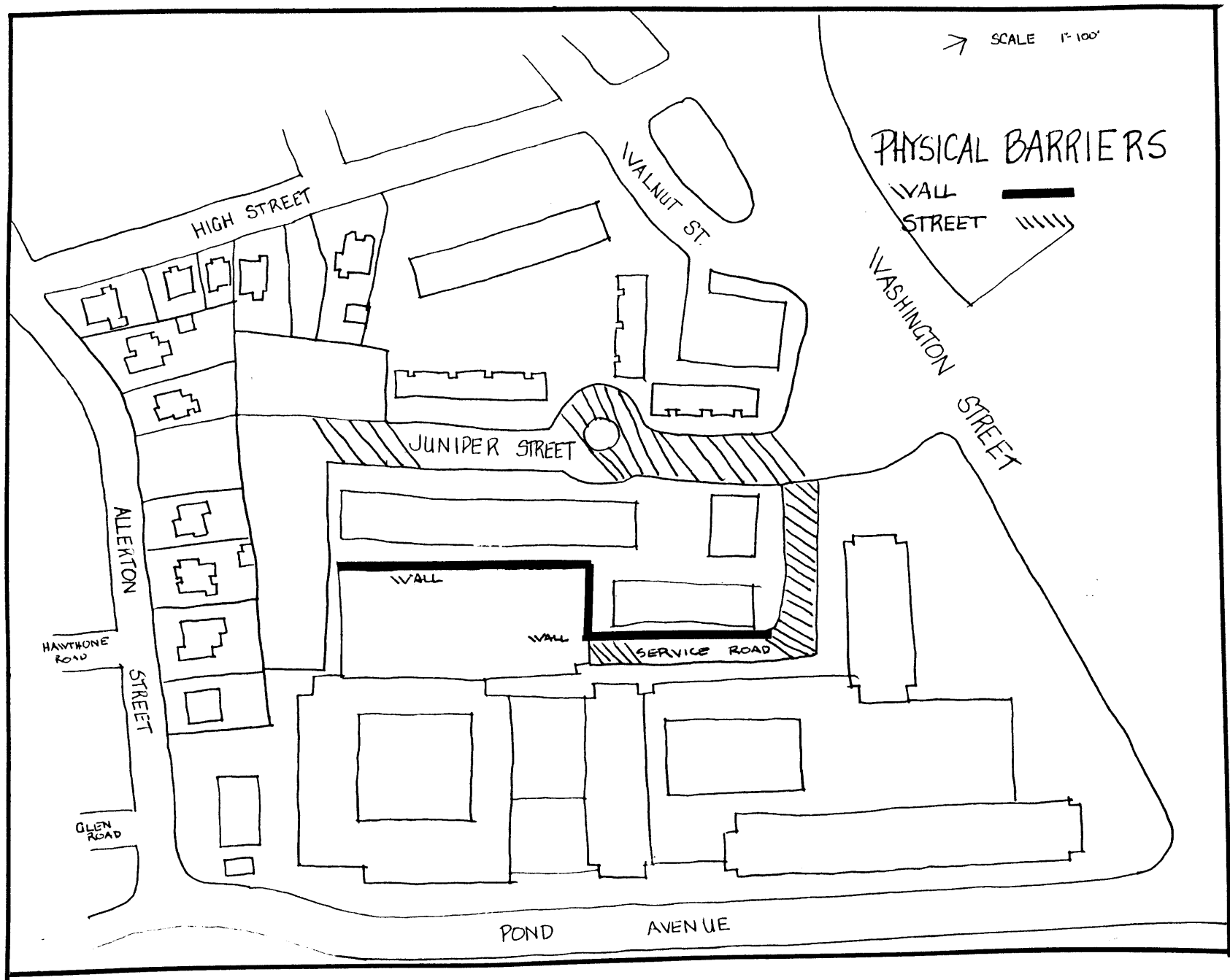
The design of the site is a contributing factor in determining some of the existing relationships between the three economic groups. The triparity of the site was largely the result of the availability of federal financing programs. The physical differences are reflective of the varying standards of the programs, as

well as of the intentions and goals set forth by the developer and architects.¹⁵

PHYSICAL BARRIERS

Physical barriers, such as walls, buildings and roads are the most elementary and successful means of keeping these three groups separate. The most obvious of these barriers on the site is a six-foot-high brick wall paralleled by a service road which runs into the large Brook House parking garage with its tennis courts on top. This barrier divides the site between the Coop and Brook House. Originally, plans called for convenient accessways from the Coop units to Levertt Pond located on the other side of Brook House. However, a wall blocks the path, leaving access at one end only during the day.¹⁶ The noise and trucks





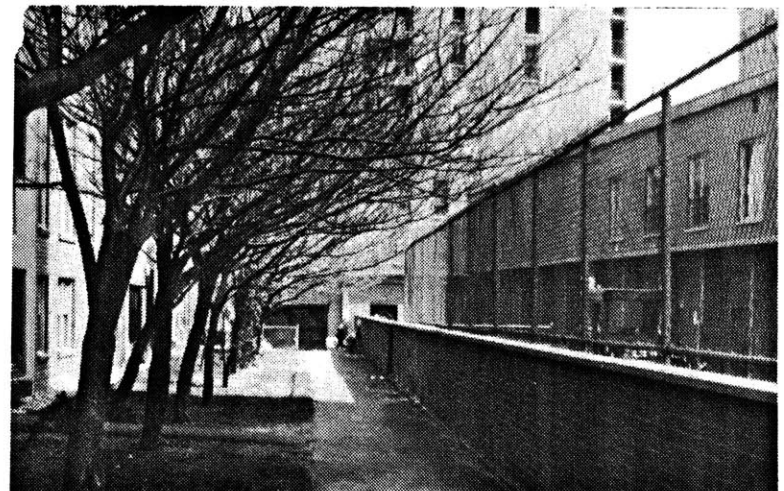
on the service road in conjunction with the tennis courts create a hard impenetrable border which has resulted in aggravated relationships along the boundaries. Further aggravation also occurs due to both the imposing nature of Brook House and the physical distance between the tennis courts and Coop Housing. The Brook House apartment buildings range in height from 7 stories (99 Pond) to 15 stories (77 Pond); in contrast, Coop Housing is a modest 4 stories, and the distance between the tennis courts and the entrances to Coop Housing is 20 feet. The problems created by these imbalances in size and distance are compounded further by the fortress design and overwhelming nature of the Brook House complex as a whole.

Juniper Street runs the length of the site and forms a loose boundary between the Public Housing complex and the Coop area. However, unlike the Brook House/Coop boundary, Juniper

SERVICE ROAD



WALL



Street is shared by the residents of both sections, facilitating some interaction. Individuals from both areas share the parking along this street, though there is an unstated agreement that Coop residents will park on one side of the street while Public Housing tenants will park on the opposite side. There are signs of footpaths that cut across Coop and Public Housing property, which are used by individuals of both complexes when going to Brookline Village or to the Brook House stores.

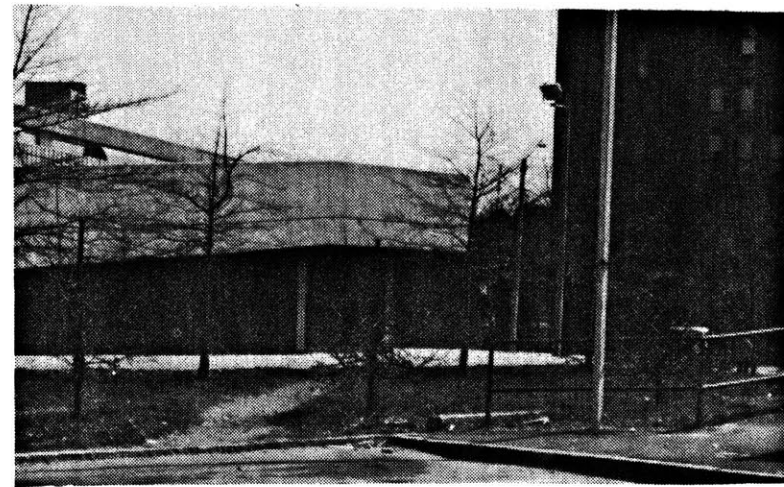
COMMON SPACE

The interior common space in the Public Housing complex is very poorly designed, offering a limited view; thus it is not used. The common outdoor space surrounding the Public Housing units is the only area that provides any type of play facilities for the children who live there. As a result, this area is used quite

TENNIS COURTS



FOOTPATH



frequently (especially during the spring and summer) by the children of all 3 housing complexes.

The Coop no longer has a common room. Its only communal space is a courtyard which is well-designed on a comfortable scale, taking advantage of its location. This courtyard tends to be a place for socializing during the warmer months and is often used by the elderly population of the Coop Housing complex.

In contrast, Brook House has many communal facilities, including places for such sports activities as tennis and a party room which opens up onto a deck overlooking Levertt Pond. There are also several outdoor areas that are used by the residents for communal activities.

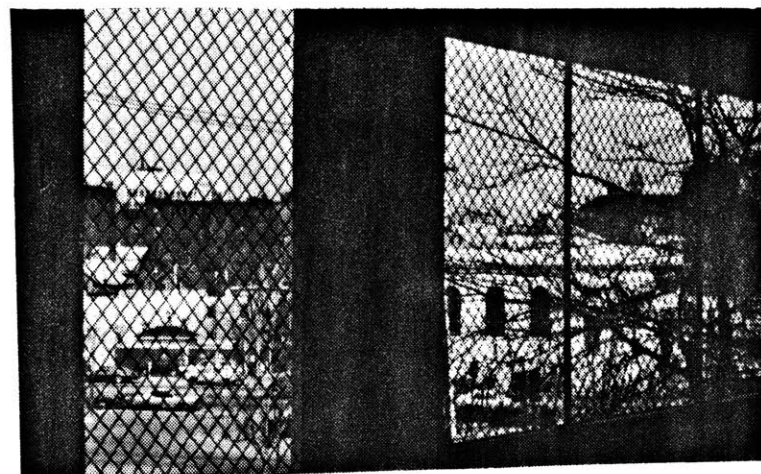
ANALYSIS OF SITE DESIGN

The use of variations in design techniques (such as landscaping or materials used) and

JUNIPER STREET

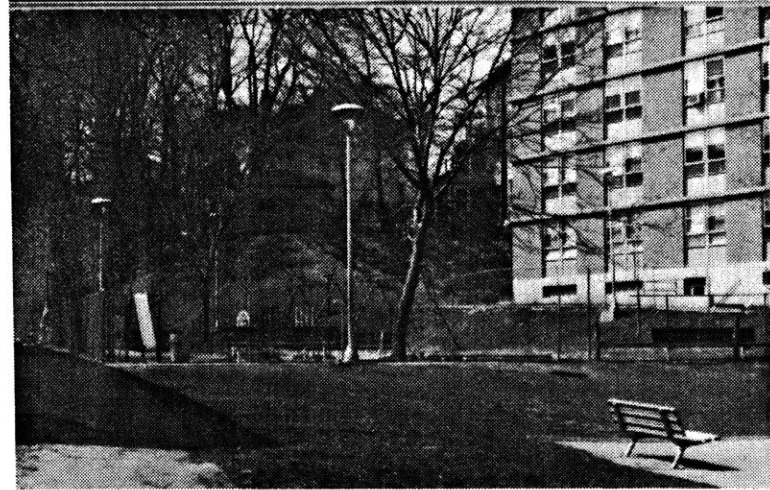


VIEW FROM PUBLIC HOUSING COMMONS



architectural styles to label the different housing groups has served to separate and destroy any link or continuity that might have evolved from the physical form. Different materials and styles used to fulfill similar functions in the three housing categories emphasize social differences rather than functional similarities.¹⁷ The various types of bricks used serve as a color-coding device which clearly separates the units instead of serving as a thread linking them. Public Housing is constructed out of dark red brick, Coop Housing of orange brick, and Brook House is designed with a light buff-colored brick. In this situation, the differences are not resultants of cost since the price of the Coop brick was approximately 2/3 that of Public Housing brick.¹⁸ The distinct differences are also mirrored in the architectural styles which reflect stratification. Brook House is stylishly modern and

PUBLIC HOUSING PLAY AREA



COOP COURT



very individualized, incorporating a small mall of convenience stores/services, an extensively landscaped site, and a chicue waterfall. Inside, the units offer great diversity and can accommodate the needs of a variety of individuals. Coop Housing, designed by the same architect, is more restrained and much less diversified in both the interior and exterior, while Public Housing is strictly functional, leaving no variation. Light paving, and fencing details also reflect changes in materials and downshifts in style that reinforce the separation.¹⁹ The differences between the three sections is further emphasized by the massing and juxtaposition of buildings. Brook House is the only complex that borders on and has a view of Levertt Pond. The mass of its buildings range from 7 stories located at the top of the slope to a 14-story building that runs parallel to Coop Housing. Coop units are somewhat buried within the middle

of the Farm site. Standing only 4 stories high, the units are overshadowed by the awesome massiveness of Brook House. The problem is compounded further by the extreme proximity of the Brook House tennis courts which abut the boundaries of the Coop frontyards, resulting in an insensitive transition from one housing type to another. Public Housing units

IMPOSING NATURE



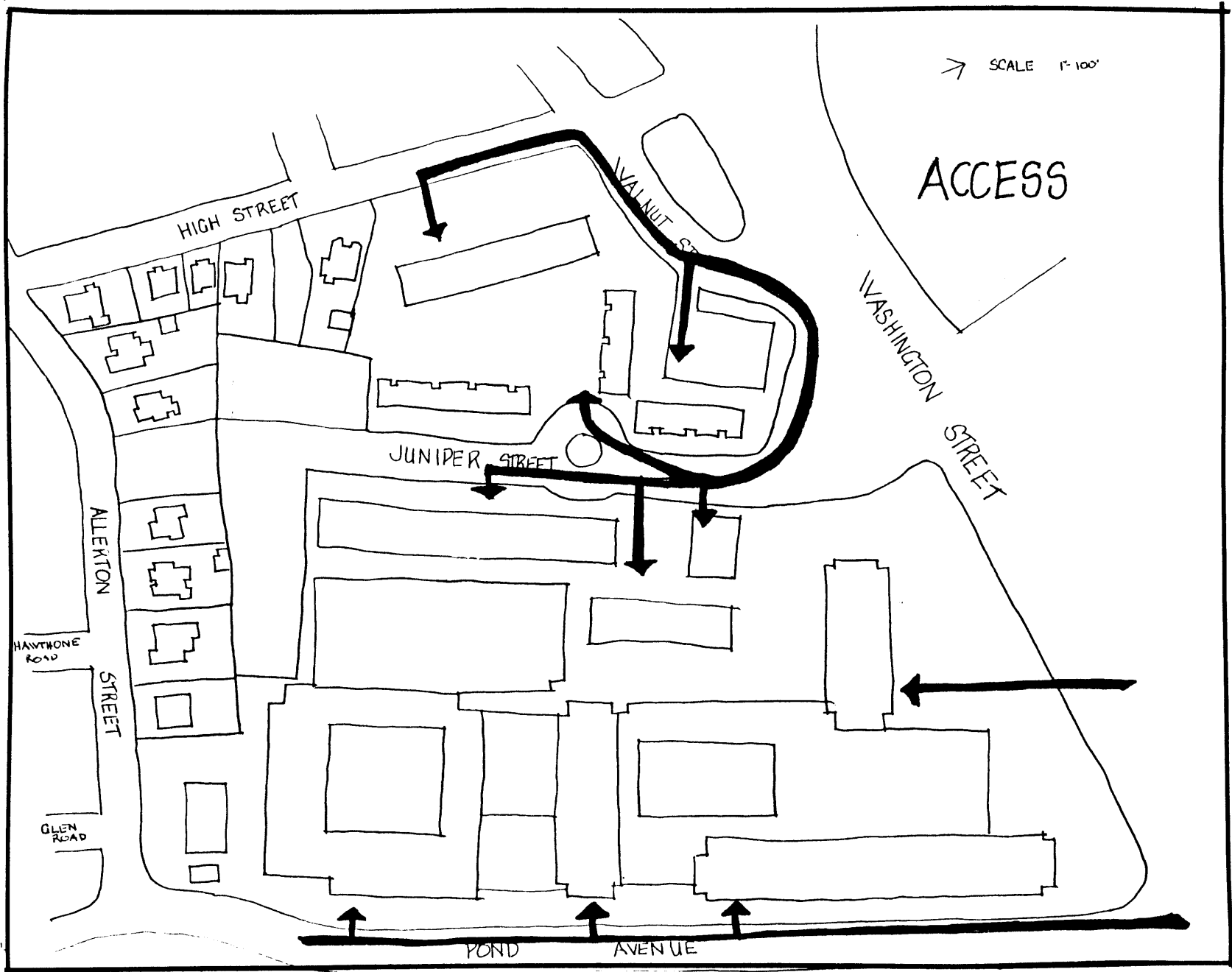
are located on the opposite end of the Farm site, physically separated from the other two complexes by Juniper Street. Public Housing is composed of a highrise slab (7 stories) and 2 lowrise apartments (2 stories) that encircle a very plain open field, creating an almost self-contained community of its own.

ACCESS

Automobile access to each housing group is from a different bordering street, resulting in separate parking areas and street addresses. The main entrance to the Public Housing units can be gained off of High Street, with a parking lot in front; there are secondary entrances on Walnut and Juniper Streets which serve the lowrise apartments. Coop Housing can only be accessed from Juniper Street. A parking lot is located at both ends and there is on-street parking as well. The service road for Brook

House is also accessed from Juniper Street and runs parallel to Coop Housing. Brook House has one entrance on Washington Street and 3 entrances on Pond Avenue. All entrances to Brook House are heavily guarded. Pedestrian access to each complex is identical to the automobile access to that complex.

The importance attached to each housing group corresponds to its access to the common resources of the site. All 16,000 square feet of commercial and office spaces are included within the Brook House complex.²⁰ While the stores are publicly advertised, with a large sign on Washington Street appealing to all three classes, in reality they tend to cater directly to the needs of the Brook House residents. The location of the stores within the Brook House complex (44 Washington Street) makes them very difficult to find and requires penetration of the many social and psychological



barriers. Several of the residents interviewed from the Coop and Public Housing indicated that the stores were too expensive and really did not serve their needs. Currently there are several doctor's offices, a men's salon, a beauty salon, a dry cleaners, a photography studio, Brigham's Ice Cream, Christy's Market and a travel agency. Christy's Market and Brigham's Ice Cream are the only shops that receive patronage from the Coop and Public Housing residents.

BROOK HOUSE STORES



PUBLIC HOUSING

The first phase of construction consisted of the four Public Housing buildings which received the bulk of the Farm relocatees: 95 of the 100 units were initially occupied by Farm families. Eight years later the Farm residents still constituted a majority of the population, with a vacancy rate of 6%.²¹ Today the Farm residents are still in the majority and the vacancy rate is approximately 3%; this is largely the result of residential deaths rather than turnover.

The 100 units of Public Housing are located on approximately 3 acres of the site, with a density of 34 units per acre, compared to 21 units per acre for Coop Housing and only 16 units per acre for Brook House.²²

Originally most of the larger Public Housing

PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS



units were occupied by workers employed by the town. About 15% of the households were headed by females and approximately 3% of the population was black.²³ Today 63% of the units

are female-headed households and the minority population has increased to 13% (2 Asian, 5 Black, 6 Hispanic), with 48% of the units inhabited by the elderly. The maximum income limits established by the Brookline Housing Authority range from \$11,000 per year for one person to \$19,650 per year for a household of 8 or more.

The Public Housing complex is organized into three groups. Twenty-four units of elderly housing are located in the two lowrise buildings (3A and 3B), and share a common yard to the rear. A collection of 64 family-type units is located in a highrise slab in building 3C. Finally 8 large family 4-bedroom units form a block of row houses with private backyards (3D). The majority of the original Farm residents live in the row houses, and of the original residents over 1/2 of them still remain in Public Housing.

PRIVATE YARDS

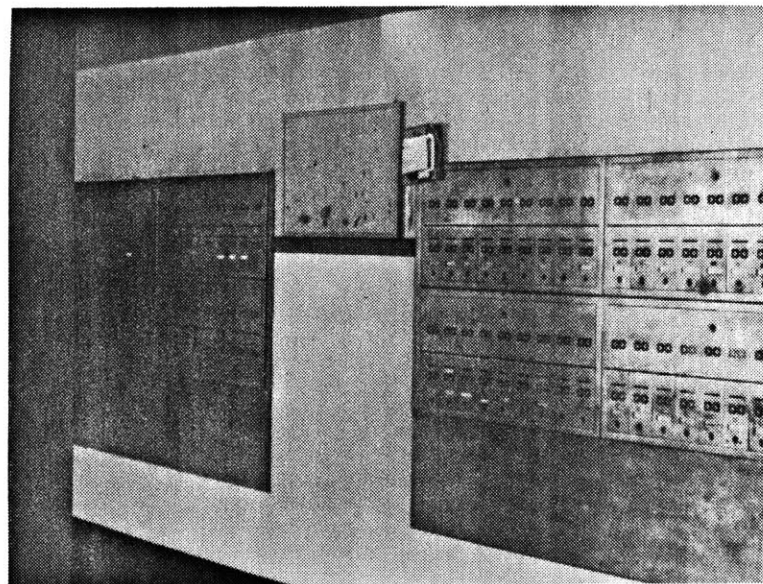


While the Farm Public Housing people fondly recall the neighborliness of the pre-development days, many appear reluctant to assist in social integration with unfamiliar neighbors. Although many of the Farm residents have moved away, the history of the Farm redevelopment is still very much alive in the minds of those who remain. Even the new residents quickly become acquainted with the Farm history. One of the Public Housing residents interviewed stated that when she moved in 8 years ago, the first question she was asked was, "'Are you from the Farm?' All I heard was the Farm, the Farm."

Informal community spaces such as the mail area, laundry room, and outdoor yard provide appropriate areas for discretionary socializing. For many tenants these are the only areas in which interaction with others in the apartment complex takes place.

The more consciously programmed community activities are usually not successful. Except for the weekly mass for the elderly and monthly card parties, the community room is closed at all times. Tuesday night Bingo, sponsored by the Family Tenant Association, is sparsely attended by a few avid patrons. The common areas located on each floor are unattractive, unused spaces.

LOBBY



COOP HOUSING

The 115 units of Cooperative Housing were built under the federal government's 221(d)(3) program. When first built, the rent for these units ranged from \$92.00 per month for an efficiency to \$125.00 for a three-bedroom unit, with a spread in maximum allowable income from \$6,700 to \$12,500.²⁴ Today the rental levels range from \$190.00 for an efficiency to \$285.00 for a three-bedroom unit, with a maximum income spread of \$19,300 to \$34,450. The income level of Coop residents is evaluated every two years and is allowed to increase up to 10%; if income increases more than 10% their rental level is increased by 20%. No Coop resident is ever evicted due to increased income.

The original Coop residents qualified for income tax deductions because of the interest

COOP UNITS



and real estate tax they paid, effectively reducing their rent by approximately 10%. The attractiveness of the low-payment schedule in conjunction with no downpayment requirement

for Farm residents resulted in a high demand for these units and thus a very low vacancy rate--1% in 1969.²⁵ Today the vacancy rate for Coop Housing is still very low--approximately 2%. This is due to the reasonable rents and the sale price or transfer value residents receive. According to the By-Laws of the Coop, the transfer value which a resident is entitled to is the return of the downpayment plus the value for any improvement at his expense as determined by the Board of Directors.

In 1970, approximately 35% of the units were occupied by public servants, in particular police and firemen. Today the housing is composed of residents primarily employed by the town of Brookline. Over 50% of the residents are elderly and have very few children under 18. The average age of the children of the nonelderly ranges between 13-17 years. Almost all of the residents are former residents of Brookline;

this is partly the result of the eligibility requirements set forth in the By-Laws which state that "any person approved by the Board of Directors is eligible for stock ownership subject to the provisions of the Regulatory Agreement between the Coop and the Federal Housing Commission. Priority is given to:

- (1) Persons displaced by the Farm Redevelopment Project who were living in the Farm area at the time the site was developed.
 - a) persons now living in the Farm site who have not been permanently relocated
 - b) persons formerly living on the site who are not residing elsewhere
 - c) persons now living in Public Housing owned by the Brookline Housing Authority
- (2) Brookline residents displaced by urban renewal projects in Brookline
- (3) Town of Brookline employees
- (4) Brookline residents displaced by eminent domain proceedings.

Currently there are no minorities living in the Coop.

Coop Housing was built in the second phase

of redevelopment after the site had been cleared and residents relocated; consequently only 30 of the 115 units were preempted for the Farm residents who would receive a subsidy from the Brook House development for 12 years.

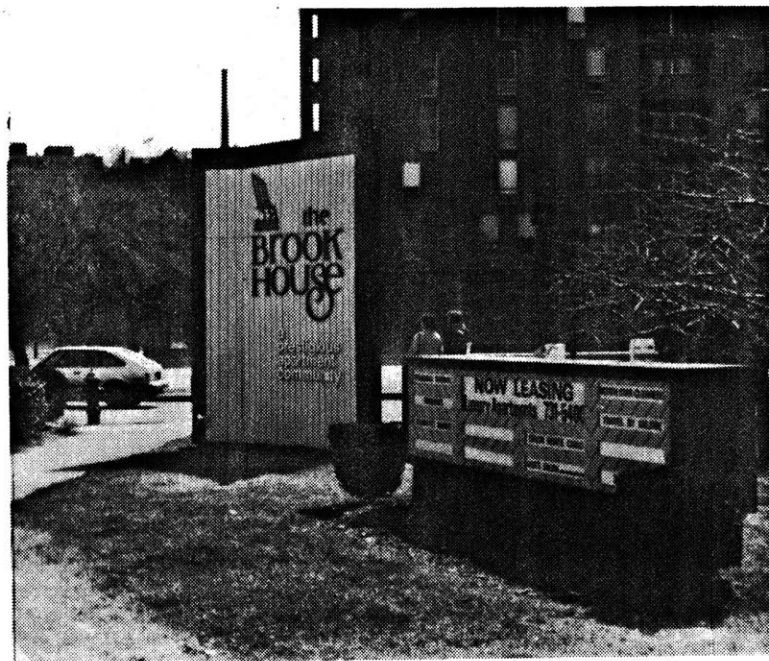
The majority of the original Farm residents settled in the units located in Buildings 2A and 2B and still remain there today. The majority of the larger units are also located in these buildings.

The Coop is governed by a five-man, non-salaried Board of Directors elected on staggered terms. The Board establishes policy and allocates expenditures ranging from accepting or rejecting applications for membership to prescribing additional monthly carrying charges for families whose income exceeds the limitations for continuing occupancy.²⁶ The Coop has been professionally managed by Alcourt Management for 5 years and appears to be content with the services provided.

BROOK HOUSE

The final stage of the plan called for four highrise apartment buildings with a total of 762 units. The site would include convenience stores, tennis courts, indoor and outdoor swimming pools and a 900-car parking garage. Rents for the luxury apartments ranged from \$170 to \$900 per month for a duplex penthouse apartment. Capitalizing income at four times yearly rents would indicate an income of \$8,200 to \$43,000 per year for these people. Brook House management estimated that in 1970, 30 to 40 percent of the residents were new to Boston, while approximately 10 percent of the tenants previously lived in Brookline. The most common reasons given at that time for moving to Brook House were its convenient location, the type of people and facilities antici-

BROOK HOUSE UNITS



pated there, and the immediate availability of housing.²⁷ Today average rents for apartments

range from \$400 for a studio apartment to \$851.42 for a three-bedroom unit, with the duplex pent-house renting for \$1,200.* Capitalizing today's income at four times yearly rents would indicate an income range of \$19,176 to \$57,600. The turnover rate for Brook House for the calendar year 1980-81 was approximately 40%. The most frequent reasons given for the turnovers were moving to another region or buying a house or condo.**²⁸

The developers of Brook House designed this complex for a market of predominantly

*August rent computed from a study done by the firm of Collins and Ereolini for the Brook House Association June 30, 1981, pp. 16-17, Town of Brookline Before the Housing Conversion Board.

**Method employed to determine residential turnover rate was defined as the quotient of the fraction, the denominator of which is the total number of units contained in each of the buildings, and the numerator of which is the number of residential apartments which were occupied and subsequently vacated during those calendar years which we have tested.

childless couples and single people, with 72% of the units composed of one-bedroom and efficiency apartments. In comparison, only 36% of both the Coop and Public Housing units are allocated for this use.

Each of the four Brook House buildings was designed to contain a particular population type. 44 Washington Street (building 1A) contains almost all of the studio units (143), while 191 of the 264 units at 33 Pond Avenue (building 1B) are one-bedroom apartments. The largest concentration of three-bedroom units can be found at 77 Pond Avenue (building 1C).²⁹

In the early '70s, the residents of 44 Washington and 33 Pond were characterized as young swingers, while the occupants of 77 Pond were considered businessmen, and those who lived at 99 Pond were labeled eggheads or Ivy Leaguers.³⁰

Today these stereotypes no longer exist.

The majority of residents are still people who are new to Boston and plan to live in Brook House for a limited period of time only. There has also been a significant increase in the number of foreign residents. The majority of the Brook House residents interviewed are associated with the hospitals located on Boylston Street.

HOME AREA

At least 3 residents from each housing unit were interviewed and questioned about (a) their length of residency in the particular unit as well as in the Brookline/Boston area, (b) the number of friends they have on the site, and (c) where they socialize. The attachment of the residents to their dwelling is illustrated in the Home Area Maps.

In comparison to the other two housing complexes on the site, the residents of Brook House have the largest home area, which includes most of the Brook House complex and the Pond area. This may be the result of the variety of communal facilities that balance the privacy of their individual units. In the 1970s, the most visible communal world centered around the bar-restaurant which, although open to the

public, attracted most of its clientele from the younger adults of Brook House.³¹ Today the bar and restaurant no longer exist; however, the sports facilities, which are only open to the tenants at a per season charge, appear to be a source of communal socialization.

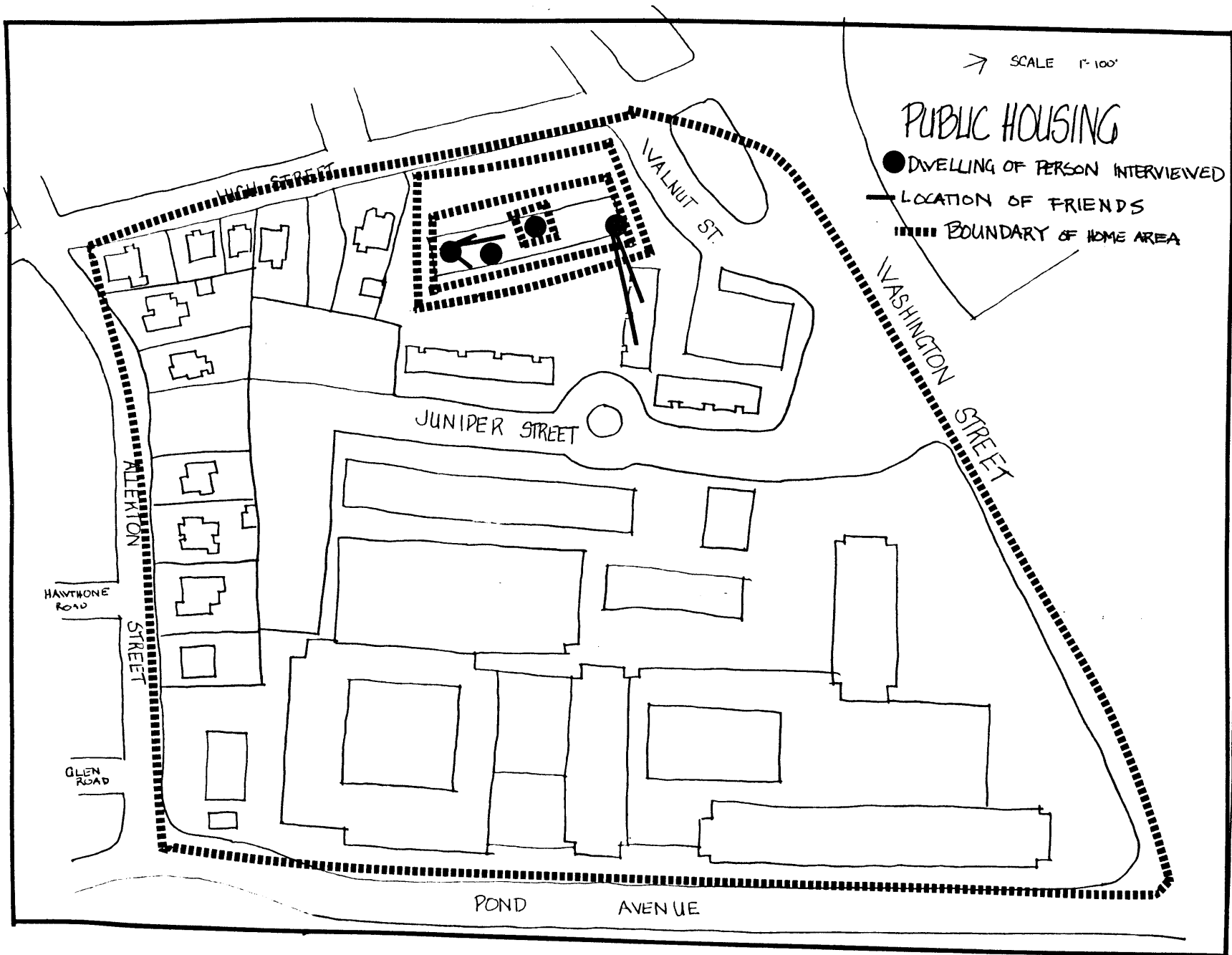
On the other hand, the Coop and Public Housing residents are much more restricted. In general most Coop residents regard their home area as being the whole Coop, and sometimes Levertt Pond. However, the Public Housing residents interviewed confine their home area to their individual units and each views his unit as a retreat from the public environment within which he has very little control. Almost all of the residents interviewed in the Public Housing and several from the Coop

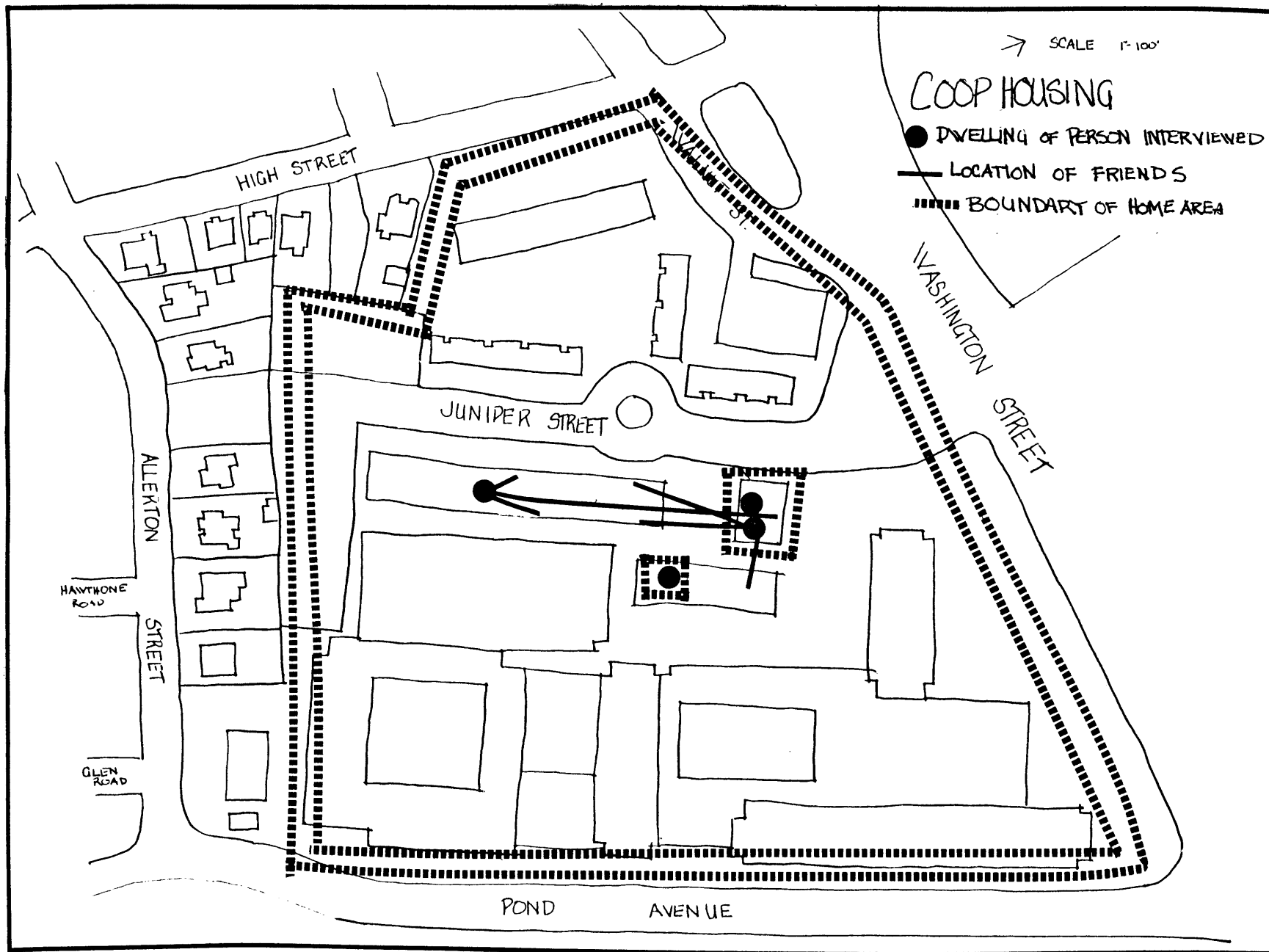
Housing identify more strongly with the Brookline Village areas as opposed to the other parts of the site. This may in part be the result of the location of the two units in relationship to Brookline Village. However many people stated that the Village serves their needs much better and indicated that they use the Stop and Shop on Harvard Street. They also use the BayBank, movie theater and Riverside T-Stop located in Heartston Plaza.

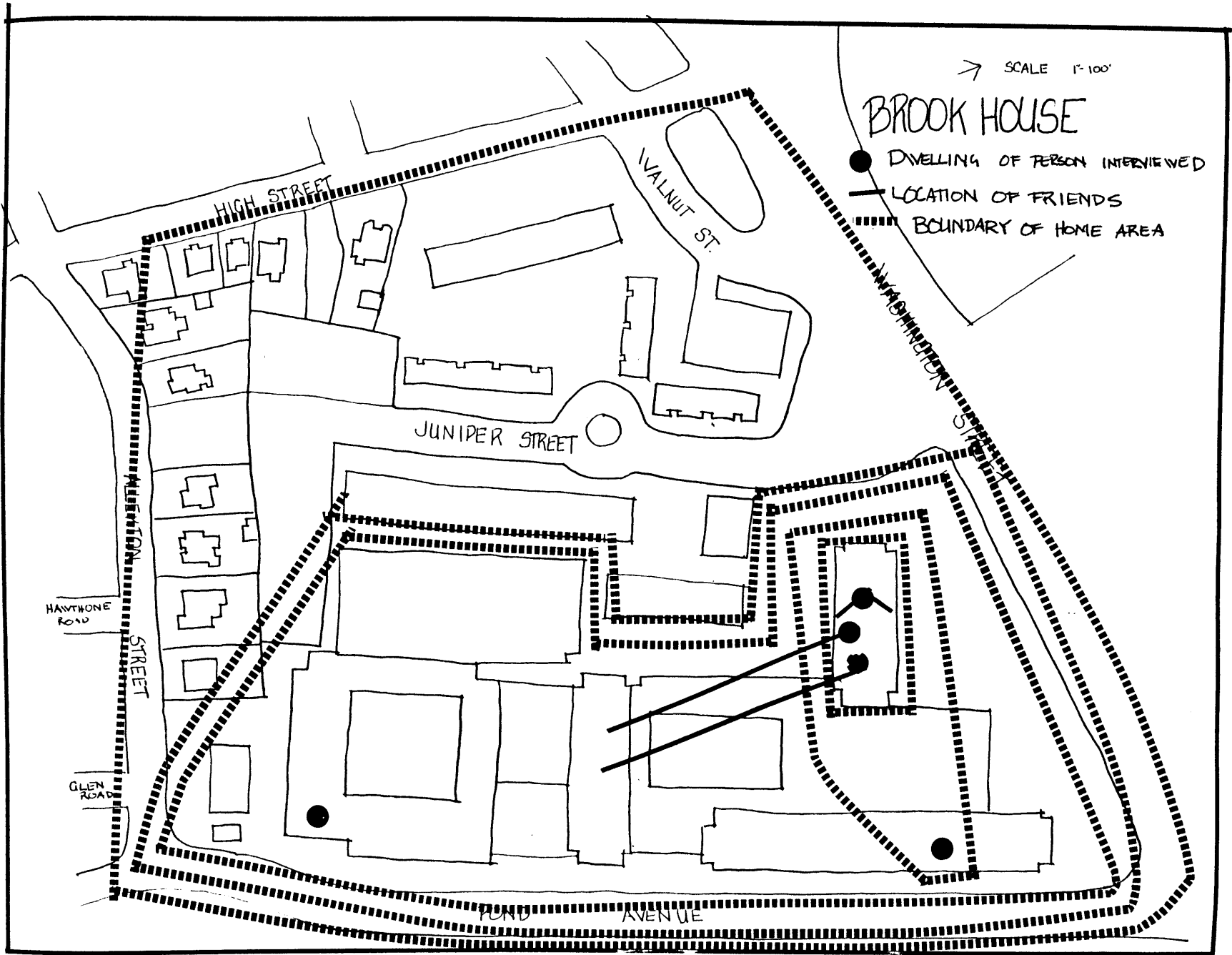
Of the three groups interviewed, the Coop residents have the largest number of friends and relatives on the site. Many of their friends include relatives that live in Public Housing. Most of the Public Housing residents stated that they have several friends on the site, the majority of them located within the same complex.

The residents of Brook House have the least number of friends on the site and stated that

almost all of their socializing takes place off of the site and is often job-related. As in the Public Housing, much of the Coop's socializing revolves around the children. In warmer months the Coop courtyard serves as a center for community socialization. The courtyard is pleasantly scaled and well-located in an area of cross-circulation allowing easy access for most of the residents.







SOCIAL MIXING ON THE FARM

Although the Farm Urban Renewal Project was unsuccessful, it does illustrate several advantages to socio-economic mixed communities. Theoretically, such an organization provides the structure for a family to move up or down the socio-economic ladder without shifting neighborhoods.³² However, since the beginning of the Farm development, only three families have moved from Public Housing to the Coop. But it is possible that the lack of turnover and available units in Coop Housing may have deterred more Public Housing families from moving in.

Combining several income levels may allow the lower income levels to be subsidized by the higher income groups. For example, the Coop not only received the usual government

subsidies under the 221(d)(3) program, but also it received assistance from the Brook House developer, which lowered the payments of the original Farm residents by another 10% for 12 years. Furthermore, the Brook House developer was obligated to cover two-thirds of any increased charges for Farm residents for the same 12-year period.³³

Mixing also enhances the opportunity for sharing facilities which may not normally be accessible to a particular group. There is a feeble attempt by Brook House to provide access to its pool for Coop and Public Housing residents. However, this sharing of facilities appears merely to be a token gesture, for Coop and Public Housing residents are only allowed to use the pool during the off-hours (2 mornings

a week between 8 a.m. and noon). Conversely, at times it is the rich who are actually subsidized by the poor. For example, Brook House children use the lower-income play facility quite frequently.

SOCIAL MIXING: ON THE FARM SITE

In 1970 the most extensive mixing occurred between the children. Of the estimated 25 elementary school-aged children in Brook House, approximately 60% attended public schools where they became friends with some of their lower-income neighbors.³⁴ Since Brook House provides no play facilities, these children have to share the facilities located in the Public Housing section.

It appears that most social mixing is still done by the children and that the adults of the project tend to socialize with a limited number of people within their own complex or

from other sources outside the site. Several people interviewed from the Public Housing units stated that most of their socializing is through the local school or church, while those interviewed from Brook House stated that the majority of their socializing is through work or other means.

CONCLUSION AND ALTERNATIVES

Although the concept of socially mixed communities may be a goal worth striving for, the reality and mechanics of achieving this goal are questionable and must be handled with considerable care. The Farm Urban Renewal Site illustrates examples of what not to do, and lends insights into what components are necessary so as to produce a viable socially mixed neighborhood.

Two factors significantly affecting the lack of social mixing on the Farm site are (1) the history associated with the site development, and (2) the physical design of the site. The original Farm residents still have strong ties to the area. Almost all of the Public Housing and Coop residents recall the pre-development days when the area was a close-knit community. They also remember the long, bitter political battle over

the development of the site. Even newcomers to the Public Housing and Coop complexes are quickly informed of the history that accompanied the development of the site. The problem is compounded by a building style that stresses the needs of the upper income group with extensive use made of barriers and individual designs (both interior and exterior). It appears that time has not faded the memories of the original residents, and the physical design is a constant reminder of what happened.

As a result of the Farm Urban Renewal experience, a set of design criteria has been established:

- (1) All Groups Should Be Equally Considered and Have Equal Access in Design Process and Operation of the Community

There should be equal representation for

all interests involved, with explicit procedures for resolving conflicts that may develop. It is essential that there be equal access to any common resources which may be located on the site. Common facilities used by different groups may be located on the boundaries between the groups, allowing for a transition from one group to another. Activities characteristic of one group could be located within the confines of that group. This type of organization may well be achieved through the use of centralized or radial networks with individual nodes serving the particular needs of a group.

(2) Continuity of Design

It is extremely important that the design of the site imply some type of overall continuity. This is important for several reasons, one being that it will affect the way in which the residents view their home and, more importantly,

the image that is portrayed to the public-at-large. The building materials should be similar, if not the same, allowing some thread of continuity to tie the groups together. The site plan should be sympathetic to the needs of all and not assign a disproportionate amount of space to one particular group. The transitions from one group of units and/or activities should be sensitive to both. And finally no one building should oppress other buildings by the use of its design or massing.

(3) Continuum of Housing Types

In the Farm Urban Renewal Project the tripartite division of housing harshly oversimplifies the social and physical needs. Additionally the gap between the upper income and the middle income groups, given the site plan, is too wide, resulting in envy and frustration. Warren Boeschstein suggests a "gradient

model" that would offer a wide range of sizes, types, densities, and tenure arrangements which could more successfully satisfy people's needs and facilitate social mobility as their resources and preferences change. Within the model, mixing of income groups could be controlled through the use of income grants and housing subsidies.³⁵

(4) Opportunity for Social Mixing

While many of the original Farm residents emotionally identify primarily with their respective classes, there are also needs and concerns that cut across class lines. Unfortunately group interests that cut across income barriers such as ethnicity, religion and recreational preferences are for the most part untapped. Facilities should be provided for these nonincome-related activities to foster voluntary activity-related socialization opportunities.

By facilitating social interaction in this manner, some of the antagonism and social groups formed on the basis of class stratification will hopefully be defused.

While the concept of socio-economic integration was not the main objective of the Farm Project, it is a result. Although it is not a successful example of social mixing, it does illustrate and suggest criteria as well as processes which can benefit other socially mixed communities.

ENDNOTES

1. "Suburban Action: Advocate Planning for an Open Society," American Planning Journal January 19 , p. 15.
2. "Segregation in Residential Areas," National Academy of Science, p. 177.
3. Ibid., p. 178.
4. Ibid., p. 179.
5. Ibid., p. 180.
6. Ibid., p. 181.
7. Ibid., p. 182.
8. Ibid., p. 183.
9. Ibid., p. 183.
10. "Design of Socially Mixed Housing," American Planning Journal, September 1971, p. 312.
11. Brookline Citizen, November 21, 1957.
12. "Brookline to Develop Farm," Christian Science Monitor, February 3, 1958, p. 1.
13. "State Board Clears Farm Project Plans," Brookline Citizen, July 3, 1958, p. 11.
14. "Design of Socially Mixed Housing," American Planning Journal, September 1971, p. 312.
15. "Design of Socially Mixed Housing," American Planning Journal, September 1971, p. 315.
16. Ibid., p. 315.
17. Ibid., p. 316.
18. Ibid., p. 316.
19. Ibid., p. 316.
20. Ibid., p. 316.
21. Ibid., p. 312.
22. Ibid., p. 312.
23. Ibid., p. 313.
24. Ibid., p. 313.
25. Ibid., p. 313.
26. By-Laws of Brookline Cooperative Housing, Inc., p. 5.

27. "Design of Socially Mixed Housing," American Planning Journal, September 1971, p. 314.
28. Town of Brookline Before the Housing Conversion Board, Brook Housing Associates, p. 58.
29. Ibid., p. 17.
30. "Design of Socially Mixed Housing," American Planning Journal, p. 314.
31. Ibid., p. 314.
32. Ibid., p. 317.
33. Ibid., p. 317.
34. Ibid., p. 317.
35. Ibid., p. 318.

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