Extending the Physical and Cultural Boundaries of Affordable Housing: A Reconfiguration of the Franklin Field Public Housing Development

by

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Abstract

Public housing is in a state of revision. Changes in attitude and approach to housing low-income people, evident in housing reform, are challenging the standard which public housing has come to represent. After years of disinvestment and concentrations of social problems, the typical public housing development — as it exists in a majority of cities across the United States — is publicly acknowledged to be an unacceptable housing alternative. Large-scale intervention at such developments is an imperative, not in simple terms of superficial or cosmetic remedies but rectification of core problems embedded in the physical and social environment of the development. The evolution of policy driven form and programming of public housing is a necessary component to widespread reform. Of necessity, new policies are reactive to existing conditions but increasingly proactive in outlook.

The final form of public housing developments given new guidelines is in many cases striving for a new ideal in public housing, leaving open to interpretation what is “ideal”. Initiatives such as income mixing and decreasing the total number of units at a project site are as controversial as the physical manifestations of such policy changes. Management issues also come to the forefront as imperative to address for the success of a development.

In a general sense, this thesis examines the institution of public housing for its shortcomings, explanations for its decay and the promise of what it may yet become. Highlighting the impact of policy changes on design is the specific case of the Franklin Field public housing development in Dorchester, MA. The design attempts to address a number of the issues for which public housing is repeatedly criticized, for example lack of integration into the surrounding neighborhood, social isolation and safety issues. This thesis attempts to emphasize the importance of a collaborative effort in housing and demonstrate the potential for public housing to evolve to meet the changing needs of its residents and community. Using a courtyard form within a mixed income environment with supportive services, the reconfiguration of the Franklin Field site makes efforts to address both specific issues related to site and context and more widespread issues of programming and community issues, affecting public housing developments across the United States. The inclusion of such design elements as the woonerf, or pedestrian street, and a linear park through the site hopes to encourage human movement and increased participation in the life of the development, extending the boundaries of the residents' environment and, hopefully, bringing the larger neighborhood within the environs of the development.

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This thesis is dedicated to my grandfathers.

In memory of Kuka, who organized the building of the first school in Mwihila, Kenya.

In memory of grandpa Greenberg, whose dream it was to be an architect.
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I am a firm believer that nothing worthwhile is done in isolation — that we are all the product of our experiences and, especially, our encounters. My journey through my MIT years were enriching because of the people who I encountered and so I’d like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who gave me help and support over the years. From Dean Colbert to Jack Valleli to Stan Anderson and everyone in the architecture department, Marsha Orent, my McCormick “people” — especially Lucy — and all of the many students who have come and gone during my years here, who contributed to numerous intellectual and social experiences. There are also a few people who I would like to thank by name, who undeniably highlight my experiences here at MIT.

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Extending the Physical and Cultural Boundaries of Affordable Housing:
"I can design a house that would make a married couple divorce."

Maurice Smith

"Society may have contributed to the victimization of public housing residents by setting off their dwellings, stigmatizing them with ugliness; saying with every status symbol available in the architectural language of culture, that living here is falling short of the human state."

Oscar Newman
Defensible Space
Background

Public housing has become one of the most identifiable architectural forms in the United States today, whether a series of high rise towers or red-brick “cookie cutter” low rises in a desolate landscape. Stereotypically, it has come to represent the poor and wretched, often minority and increasingly immigrant, members of our society. Over the past sixty-five years, the perception of public housing has evolved from temporary to slums containing the worst of social ills. Common associations with public housing include high levels of crime, large families headed by single parents, and welfare recipients who have no desire or skills to be employed. Given that such stereotypes abound, few Americans today maintain any positive imagery or associations with public housing. In fact, a number of issues play key roles in the current state of public housing and, as such, a historical evaluation of public housing is needed to understand its current state. First and foremost, it is necessary to know the social history and political climate concurrent with the development of low rent/public housing in the United States.

The idea for a public housing program began in the 1930’s, in the shadow of The Great Depression. Part of Roosevelt’s New Deal “package,” the use of federal funds for a housing program would simultaneously provide jobs for the unemployed and fulfill the government’s responsibility to provide decent, affordable homes for the poor – to some, it was intended to embody planners’ views of “ideal cities” and was an architectural “experimentation” of sorts in the building of communities. Initially considered low-rent housing, public housing went through a number of phases and attitude changes before it reached the state in which we know it today. By 1935, courts challenged the right of the federal government to undertake slum clearance for the development of low-cost
housing, limiting the rights to states and municipalities.\(^1\) With the Wagner-Steagall Act of 1937, local housing authorities became responsible for deciding where to situate housing and deciding whom to house.

The residents of this early government housing were never the poorest of the poor, but the “deserving poor” – lower middle class families hurt by the Depression. These first developments were built under tight public scrutiny and were well designed and built and often included ample “public” space in which to encourage the growth of “community.”\(^2\) At this time, the United States Housing Authority (USHA) was put in the position of providing guidelines and lending money to local authorities in the form of low-interest, 60-year mortgage loans and lump sum payments to individual projects to make up the difference between operating costs and 20% of tenants’ income. Three hundred fifty USHA projects were in various states of completion by the end of 1940 and, by then, strict cost limits were applied to the construction of each.\(^3\) At that point in history, public housing was described as “sturdy and functional, designed to last through the government’s 60-year mortgage. It was also purposefully cheap and austere.”\(^4\)

One need only consider the general atmosphere of conformism and sense of need for surveillance of and by citizens in the United States during the late 1940s and 1950s, exemplified by the McCarthy investigations. Architecturally, the popular design element of the “picture window” was applied in suburban neighborhoods; in public

\(^1\) Such legislation was undoubtedly influenced by lobbyists for the real estate industry, who had no interest in seeing any part of their market swallowed by government subsidized housing.

\(^2\) Because the American public was skeptical of government subsidization of housing, efforts were made so that these projects would be viewed as “successful.”

\(^3\) Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia sponsored a cost-limitation provision that prohibited any kind of “extravagance on government-built housing.” Gwendolyn Wright, \textit{Building the Dream, A Social History of Housing in America}. p.229

\(^4\) Wright, p. 229.
housing the addition of exterior walkways were later used as a means for surveillance.\(^5\) Management was also utilized to monitor behaviors, exercising a great deal of control over the selection of tenants for their public housing developments and once housed, tenant life was strictly regulated. "Management controlled every aspect of residents' lives — the keeping of pets, the policy of overnight guests, the color of the paint on the walls, the schedules for using the washing machines — but it adopted the attitude that spending too much on safety or maintenance or public facilities was wasteful, since the fundamental problems were too extreme. The tenants recognized the combination of disdain and high-minded belief that public housing could elevate residents, make them more orderly. The buildings themselves, and the tenants' derogatory names for them...revealed the contradictory values of the planners and tenants."\(^6\) By the 1950's, "the high cost of the Korean War and growing antagonism towards special services for the poor reduced the number of public housing units built and made them even more spartan."\(^7\) The rooms were smaller, the site densities higher and playgrounds and social areas inside buildings, fewer.

Since then, many attempts have been made to improve the quality of existing public housing and, indeed, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines for renovation of public housing projects have evolved since HUD was created in 1965, a contemporary of the Fair Housing Act. Since HUD's inception, economic and social conditions in the United States have changed dramatically. Urban areas throughout the nation have deteriorated. Many communities suffer from an aging infrastructure, loss of business, increasing violence, and dilapidated housing.

\(^5\) The picture window is an architectural element that puts people on display. Traditionally, this room would be kept immaculate and was reserved for entertaining visitors. The people showcased in the window had to be on his/her best behavior and, vice-versa, people on the street knew that their behaviors were being observed.
\(^6\) Wright, p.237.
Unfortunately, there is an overabundance of examples of public housing “failures” in the United States. As such, few would sanction the building of more public housing as we know it today. The large, multi-storied “tower in the park” model has been identified as unsuitable for housing low-income people in the United States.  

Under the terms of the landmark Housing Act of 1949, Congress decreed that people on welfare could not be barred from public housing, thus ending the reign of public housing as housing for the working poor. Where the success of a project depends on operating income derived from rents, decreasing this income will necessarily affect the long-term quality of the project and necessitate further government intervention. Because the private market is economically driven, it gains no benefits from the development of affordable housing without incentives, so affordable units made possible by federal, state and city subsidies in the form of development subsidies (e.g. tax breaks) and rental subsidies (e.g. tenant- and place-based Section 8 vouchers), are the most plausible solutions for developing housing for the poor. With the passage of the Brooke Amendment in 1969, public housing residents were required to pay 25% of their income for rent – now 30%, but many receive Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), bringing in less than $10,000 per year. The result of this is federally sanctioned minimum rents of, for example, $25/month in Boston Public Housing properties. The first operating subsidy was authorized in 1961. As project rental receipts declined, inflation worsened and fuel costs increased in the late 1960s and 70s housing authorities were unable to support the day-to-day operations of the project,

7 Wright, p.233.
8 Idealized by the noted architect Le Corbusier, the “tower in the park” model was to serve as an antidote to the overcrowding of cities, freeing up the space around buildings for resident enjoyment and leisure, instead these areas became wastelands which were seldom maintained and for which no one felt a sense of ownership.
10 Formerly, Aid to Families with Dependent Children – changed under Welfare reform of 1996.
causing increasing need for federal intervention in the form of operating subsidies and periodic grants for “modernization” of these developments. Government subsidization has increased from approximately $6.5 million in 1969 to $2.6 billion in 1994. Today these conditions persist and public housing is wholly dependent on the government for its survival.

Examining the evolution of public housing and various political acts provides some understanding of its negative stereotypes. Public housing was never meant for the poorest, but the lower middle class, so the depth of need for social and supportive services was not anticipated. The changing needs of its population were likely never considered because its populations had historically reflected the racial and/or ethnic balance of the community at large and public housing was never expected to become the “housing of last resort.” This, of course, changed with HUD’s decision in the late 1960s to reserve eighty-five percent of public housing for those under 50% of area median income (AMI), ultimately causing a turnover of residents of from lower middle class to low and very low income with a resulting large drop in rent revenue for most housing authorities. Thus, aside from the substandard quality of public housing as a result of the use of increasingly cheaper materials and deferred maintenance, a final indicator of the impending demise of public housing as it currently exists might be seen in the fact that time has shown that it is an option dependent on continued funding from the federal government. In short, the ideals in which public housing were rooted no longer exist and the conditions that it must satisfy today call for an evolution in theory and in form.

The Thesis

The idea of providing a "type"\textsuperscript{13} of public housing with an isolationist approach, without proximity to needed social services and daily needs, has been found unsuccessful time and again. Isolation that began as a siting practice of locating public housing on the most undesirable land evolved into programmatic isolation, as the residents became more likely to be part of a minority underclass or newly arrived immigrants with less access to education and employment, necessitating social services for which there was no budget. Certain ethnic traditions and shared resources by extended family are suppressed or discouraged by apartment size and layout and lack of communal facilities. Fortunately, many of these issues are being redressed today by HUD, and by architects, sociologists and planners, although it will take time, experience, and an open mind to fine tune the changes. This thesis supports the evolution of public housing into a concept of "affordable" housing incorporating social services that will have a stronger, more positive impact on housing low income populations in the US.

Affordable housing is defined in this context as housing that meets the income requirements of a specified range of individuals, especially low income individuals, and satisfying their need for a sense of well being and security in a clean, well maintained and productive\textsuperscript{14} environment.

The programmatic and formal reconfiguration of the site produces a mixed income project with supportive services in a courtyard type of housing. The courtyard has special significance here as a style that is desirable to a number of different income

\textsuperscript{13} Using the definition of Stefan Polyzoides, "type" refers both to the image and to the organizational devices that embody the essential or salient characteristics of a certain set of forms. \textit{Courtyard Housing in Los Angeles}, p.1.
groups, in addition to being a housing type known to a variety of different ethnic groups. Courtyard housing is also acknowledged as a high density housing type, thus is suitable for apartments and, under certain circumstances, may be an opportunity to create continuity between the density of the adjacent neighborhoods and the public housing development.

This proposal calls for a redesign of a redesign, that is, the situation faced by public housing authorities (PHAs) where they find themselves spending more and more money on cosmetic renovations of their properties that don’t yield the anticipated results of a long term increase in the quality of life or even the physical appearance. The difference in this redesign, or more appropriately, reconfiguration, lies in the change in public policy regarding housing over the last twelve years and the change in attitude about what can and/or should be done about the squalid or dangerous conditions into which poor people are forced to live because of a lack of options. Perhaps the observation that successful revitalizations are few has led to a re-working of HUD’s views and guidelines.

This thesis will discuss how, at a minimum, both physical and social considerations and programming must come together to support and effect change given the current state of public housing. The needs of public housing residents are considered for the ultimate result of how they might become productive citizens and how policy changes are instrumental to that end. Various examples of this more comprehensive approach have existed for a while and serve as food for thought.

14 “Productive” includes all of those elements that can serve as a benefit or resource to residents rather than a detriment to the success of the residents ranging from a relatively crime free environment with no shooting to an environment where supportive services are provided.
regarding housing reform. The argument considers societal attitudes and the changes necessary to recondition attitudes towards public housing.

The proposal to transform public housing with a concept of affordable housing is rooted in ameliorating the perception of the physical project by both residents and non-residents. Under the new concept, the value of both the housing and the inhabitants is not lessened or stigmatized by stereotypical shortcomings or differences in the physical environment of the development. Because the problem seems more comprehensive than first realized, there is also an awareness of the need for better economic and social integration of neighborhoods and communities. Today's conventional public housing houses, almost entirely, only low and very low income people, defined by HUD as those below 80% of area median income (AMI) and 50% of AMI, respectively. Nationwide, the average resident of public housing receives only 17% of AMI. It is imperative to differentiate between cause and effect when considering the physical environment of public housing. Physically, public housing today is in poor condition not because poor people make it that way by their very presence, but because of the lack of operating income – which provides for maintenance and modernization – due to the low rents that are being collected. The concept of affordable housing suggests a potential which is not readily evident in public housing, especially as public housing's image has grown increasingly negative, as seen by both residents and the public at large, due to high crime rates, effects of concentrations of joblessness and sometimes less than sanitary conditions. In his classic book, Defensible Space, Oscar Newman writes that “feelings of insecurity about one's residential environment often lead to the adoption of a negative or defeatist view of oneself, to ambivalence about job finding and to expressions of
general impotence in the capacity to cope with the outside world," (p. 13) the result of which may be anti-social behavior. Negativity towards the residents of public housing occurs in the form of blatant discrimination or a change in attitude when one is identified as being a resident of public housing.

This thesis proposes a mixed income approach to affordable housing, an emerging but controversial idea in the context of public housing reform. Articles expressing opinions and citing examples of mixed income housing show a mixed reaction, seemingly more positive than negative, all of which conclude with words of advice and multiple caveats.\(^{16}\) Mixed income is supported here for its higher physical standards of housing and maintenance due to the need to attract residents with more housing options. Slums serve a market niche that is generally below fair market value for an area and, indeed, those who are able to afford market rate units can "vote with their feet" and exercise a choice that most residents of public housing do not have. An affordable type of housing that could sustain a mixed income population with fewer and fewer operating subsidies alleviates the long term burden on the public housing authority. Socially, affordable housing can be positive in a number of ways. The argument has been made that a mixed income project can provide positive role models for children who see people going off to work everyday, a phenomenon that is missing in public housing developments where the majority of families are receiving some type of public assistance or those in minimum wage jobs do not wear their profession with pride. As noted earlier, the level of maintenance and care for the physical environment will also be higher in a housing situation where market rate vacancies would be to the financial

\(^{15}\) Although there are psychological problems that arise within concentrations of very low income people over time, which will be discussed later in this section and elaborated upon in the debate about mixing income in projects.

\(^{16}\) The evidence regarding the success of mixed income has been deemed inconclusive given the difficulty of isolating other factors that may have been instrumental in the success of the projects.
detriment of the developer. In turn, a more pleasant environment would likely lead to higher demand and thus provide the potential to institute a strict screening process of residents (a process on which public housing has lapsed over the years) in which case, potential candidates – market rate, moderate and low income – would be forced into habits which would allow them to enter and continue living in an affordable development. The inclusion of communal spaces for on-site social services would support the needs and interests of residents of all incomes and, for those who had previously been life-long residents of public housing, perhaps will "get them back on their feet."17

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17 Because of the extreme case of disinvestment common to public housing, it is not necessarily common for any significant number of people remain in public housing after they have achieved financial independence. Interviews have revealed the case where residents have incentive to remain in public housing because of the financial security of the housing situation – i.e. by informing management of a change in personal circumstances, rent would be reduced to 30% of revised income. Another case revealed a woman who had grown up in public housing and after procuring a high paying position with the Boston Housing Authority remained in public housing, but was encouraged by her employer to move. As the condition of public housing improves, more financially secure residents would likely remain. Today the figure would probably be statistically insignificant.
Figure 1. Map of Boston highlighting Blue Hill Ave., at its origin in Dudley Square, and its length to the south, past Franklin Field.
The Site

Franklin Field is a neighborhood in the Dorchester section of Boston that has undergone extreme change since it was developed for public housing in 1954. Given the current redevelopment in the section of Blue Hill Avenue immediately to the north—from Dudley Square to Talbot Avenue, the main thoroughfare through the neighborhood, it is not unlikely that change will soon occur at Franklin Field. (See Figure 1.) Redevelopment of the site of the former Boston State Hospital, two blocks to the east of Franklin Field might also encourage revitalization of the area. In fact, though, a change needs to be made in the whole system of public housing, for which this proposal made for an affordable, mixed income project at Franklin Field might serve as a prototype. It is central to this thesis that Franklin Field was renovated in 1986, under a completely different set of housing policy that makes possible the reconfiguration presented in this thesis.

Both physically and socially, an overhaul of the Franklin Field development could create quite a positive impact on the neighborhood, its residents and businesses. The image of public housing is in need of attention. The current Republican, Democrat and Presidential support of public housing reform, as exemplified by various aspects of House Resolution (H.R.) 4194, specifically the section entitled “Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998,” suggests that the climate is right to re-invent our national housing programs with the numerous federal funds and programs available to aid in the transformation of public housing and communities throughout the United States. Affordable housing made possible by subsidies will be the only option for poor people, many of whom are part of a growing population of immigrants who come to the
United States to attain basic freedoms and/or financial stability. Increased success will come from redressing chronic problems with a degree of cultural sensitivity and an understanding of the impact of the physical environment on its inhabitants as well as the role that community, family and, ultimately, self-perception play in maintaining the resource which can be affordable housing. This is acknowledged in the October, 1998 signing of H.R. 4194 which calls for the deconcentration of poor people living in public housing and for desegregation.

The introduction has presented the background and the issues that this thesis will address. Chapter I elaborates on the various issues and defends their application in the context of the reconfiguration of public housing, especially in light of the former long standing policies that had not been altered or reexamined. Chapter II gives a more complete introduction to Franklin Field, the specific site that will be re-designed and discusses public housing in general terms. Chapter III then discusses the role of HUD, policy related to HOPE VI and House Resolution 4194 as regards public housing and its reform. Finally, Chapter IV presents the design, applying the intellectual debate to the depressed housing site of Franklin Field, the victim of HUD and its former policy and problems due to management issues faced by the Boston Housing Authority (BHA).

In our rush to provide housing for the urban
immigrants and to accommodate our high
population growth rates, we have been building
more, without really asking what.

Oscar Newman, *Defensible Space*, p.6

"A socially well balanced low income community
may seem a contradiction in terms, and indeed it is.
However, low income does not necessarily mean
the poorest of the poor nor need it be restricted to
those on Welfare and AFDC. It should be possible
to achieve a much greater income spread in the
future as new families move in. This can provide
greater stability and also role models of
accomplishment for children and adults alike."

Franklin Field Redevelopment
Public housing is placeless in its general sameness from site to site. The form of public housing has, at best, a disparate and troubled history. It expresses not the ideals, goals and values of those inhabiting the units, but the ideals, goals and values which the government and its architects and planners hoped to instill in the inhabitants. There is no sense of memory embedded within the architecture, a bitterness and melancholy has public housing come to represent; it has no sensitivity to its residents. The current residents consist of classes of people and ethnic enclaves that were never anticipated by architects, planners and city officials responsible for the erection of public housing. And, the quality of materials was inferior to such a degree that the project is now in decay. For the same reasons that public housing generally finds itself in a malaise, so is the case with Franklin Field. Thus, the reconfiguration of Franklin Field will not be nostalgic — the project will be razed. In many ways it will be more cost
effective to demolish and rebuild rather than renovate what is already there, as was done in the 1986 re-design. The new project will make every effort to be contextual, site specific and sensitive to its residents. The redesign will center around the richness of the form of a courtyard type of housing.

Figure 4. Map of project site showing building configuration of original 1954 housing development at Franklin Field, with elderly housing (linear blocks on the right) built in 1962.

Note: Wall denoting original boundary of Franklin Field was never deleted from map.
The Ubiquitous Courtyard

A courtyard housing model bears the potential to address problems of affordable housing in terms of cultural, social and safety issues. With additional programming of social services in a mixed income, ethnically diverse, environment, it will provide for a spectrum of opportunities and experiences for the residents.

First and foremost, dwellings around a courtyard are generally considered to be secure and to promote a sense of community. At Frank G. Mar Community Housing in Oakland, the residents note that “security has proved to be so effective for the central courtyard that parents are willing to let their kids play there unsupervised.”\(^\text{18}\) Similarly, at Melrose Court in the Bronx, New York, it is noted that, “creating interior courtyards creates a level of security and privacy not typical of the area.”\(^\text{19}\) The implications of courtyard as "protective environment" come from the possibility to close off a common entrance, as with a fortress or walled city. This proposal, with separate entrances onto a common courtyard, allows for the opportunity for increased mutual surveillance and, thus, the opportunity to protect the general environment from outsiders. Gates at the rear of the courtyards open up to a common area, but allow the courtyards to be closed off if conditions in the larger neighborhood necessitate such action. Anonymity becomes a mask that is impossible to hide behind in such a context.

The neighborhood of Franklin Field is a multi-ethnic community, in which large scale construction of any type of housing would provide for ethnic diversity. Given such diversity, there is a high likelihood for the need to culturally and socially acclimatize residents of various backgrounds to each other, and in some cases to life in the United States.

\(^\text{18}\) Tom Jones, William Pettus, AIA, and Michael Pyatok, FAIA. Design for Living: Affordable Family Housing, p.112.

\(^\text{19}\) Ibid, p. 188.
States. While cultural pluralism is important to maintain, a degree of assimilation into the life of the courtyard contributes to the well being of both the residents and the housing development. As part of a community, people tend to feel enabled and less isolated, creating a sense of empowerment that may have larger implications as a contributor to the end of a cycle of poverty. The courtyard is an area for communal activities to occur and for people to get to know their neighbors, visually if not socially. In the three-story design proposed for this thesis (see Chapter IV) almost all of the approximately 40 units in each courtyard configuration have a courtyard face and those on the second and third floor, without direct access to the courtyard have balconies overlooking it. Life around a courtyard can also be expressive in the commonalty of experiences, such as child raising or a fondness for singing or cooking.

Ironically, the current plans of the Franklin Field housing development show that it is divided into three courtyards, the result of the 1986 re-design of the development by Carr, Lynch Associates and Wallace Floyd Associates. In the original site plan, parking to serve the units and a high degree of crime rendered the “open space” useless. The re-design resulted in three oversized courtyards to allow for green space and play areas. Unfortunately, the scale is not quite appropriate for the communal or individual activities that were hoped for by the re-design. The courtyards are too large to be private and too poorly located to be public.
These issues are not peculiar to Franklin Field, but to the majority of other public housing — especially high rise (the tower in the park scenario), but also low rise developments and both models are devoid of any sympathetic relationship to the surrounding neighborhood. (See Figures 6 and 7.) Columbus Homes in Newark, NJ [built in 1955], for instance, consists of 13-story slab buildings, which face each other, placed at a 15 degree angle to the adjacent streets.\textsuperscript{20} This sort of detachment from the larger neighborhood contributes to a sense of isolation on the part of the residents which, in turn, emphasizes a lack of control over one’s environment. When people have more control over their environment, they are more likely to feel as though they have more control over their lives.\textsuperscript{21} Attempts have been made in this proposal to extend into the neighborhood, although the difficult in proposing a courtyard type for this end is that

\textsuperscript{21} Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative video.
the courtyard as a form, is inherently introverted. This becomes an issue here in the sense that one always wonders about the purpose of a gate – i.e., if the gate or wall is to keep people in or out. The desire here is not to keep people in, but given the sense of detachment and distaste which current public housing residents feel towards their environment, the intention behind these proposed courtyards is to supply a sense of refuge with which people will identify and call home. The secure residential environment—understood by a resident as a haven and interpreted by outsiders as an expression of the inhabitants' egos—maybe one of the most meaningful forms of social rehabilitation available to the family and to society.\textsuperscript{22} If the current status quo is to continue at Franklin Field, the long-term appearance and condition of the development will have as attitudes and behavior

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure6}
\caption{Figure 6. William P. Hayes Homes in Newark, 1954.}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure7}
\caption{Figure 7. Plan of the Cathedral Housing Development in Boston, MA.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{22} Newman, p.13.
Figure 8. Periphery of Franklin Field Development along Stratton Street.

much to do with resident as with the operation of BHA management and maintenance. It is pertinent to note here, that the redevelopers of Franklin Field in the 1980s had their hands tied, so to speak, by HUD guidelines. It is only the change to HUD's Code of Federal Regulation adapted in the early 1990s, specifically section 941.203 that states that new public housing units "shall be designed, constructed and equipped so as to improve or harmonize with the neighborhood they occupy, meet contemporary standards of comfort and livability, promote security, and be attractive and marketable to the people they are intended to serve." The allowance to give mobile vouchers for residents to be moved off-site and thus reduce the number of units in a renovation allows for the flexibility to raze one or more buildings on a site or otherwise physically reconfigure the footprints of existing buildings in "old" public housing, as well. The changes proposed in this thesis would, therefore, have been impossible under former HUD legislation, but are consistent with its newer direction.

23 Franklin Field Redevelopment Design Report, p78.
The realization of the physical problems associated with public housing was, undoubtedly, instrumental in HUD's change of mind, in addition to the cost effectiveness of demolition versus rehabilitation in some cases. Before the current reforms were made, HUD focussed on building units for the lowest cost, downplaying human factors such as privacy, security and local character from its equation. Psychological effects of HUD's "projects" on their inhabitants and society at large surely played a role, as well as a desire to open public housing doors to previously excluded families.

Cultural Implications of Courtyards

Courtyards appear in many different cultures, as do other design elements such as balconies and definition of the entry point or stoop. The range of social groups that have occupied and are now living in courts clearly evidences the universality of the type.

In fact, many architectural traditions have common elements or themes. To speak of specifically American, Chinese, Jamaican, or any country's specific architecture is to speak of architectures that likely don't exist solely in and of the culture itself. Migration patterns of citizens to and from their homeland and colonization of any of a number of developing countries, all producing similar forms which are maintained and associated with a national identity, suggests that architecture has reached the condition of a melting pot with more efficacy than most societies. Images and memories which people carry societies. Images and memories which people carry with them — ideals or symbols of a way of life cross the oceans with people, telecommunications, and the

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media. An architecture may embody a way of life, local materials and local building techniques, but it is probably truer than not that the architecture has its roots in many sources. A common form of architecture may be home to many cultures. For this reason, the use of the courtyard housing type, and recurrent elements and themes grounded in the styles and influences of the surrounding area, are at the heart of this re-design for a culturally sensitive affordable housing. The goal of this re-design is, for example, to generate the “patterns of making place” which Max Belcher [a Liberian American photographer] observes and responds to as he moves comfortably from American Africa to African America— that is, to demonstrate a sense of cultural assimilation in architectural expression.\(^\text{26}\) In another way, the courtyard model transcends not only physical boundaries, but economic boundaries, as well. While there are beautiful, extravagant examples of privately owned courtyard houses, the courtyard has been applied in situations ranging from palaces and villas to a functional means for bringing light and air to the interior of very dense, lower income housing.

It is pertinent to differentiate the single family courtyard house from multi-family courtyard housing. The courtyard house, as demonstrated in Figure 9, is a single family

\(^\text{26}\text{Max Belcher, Beverly Buchanan and William Christenberry. House and Home: Spirits of the South, p.15}\)
are located. This space can be used simply for protected outdoor space, for cooking, ceremonial rituals or for increased air circulation. In warmer climates, of course, it tends to provide a small shaded area. As a multi-family arrangement, on the other hand, Polyzoides describes that courtyard housing has “strategies about how to achieve a collective of dwellings in a dense urban situation without destroying personal amenities of individual dwelling and garden, concepts about communal living and the city itself all have potential for universal application. Whether single or multi-family housing, the courtyard carries similar meaning for either capacity – bringing in light and air,

**Figure 10.** Plan of 1925 mixed use courtyard housing in Los Angeles.

**Figure 11.** Street elevation of mixed use courtyard housing in Los Angeles (plan in Figure 10). Polyzoides observes that “even today, immigrant and migrant groups have found in the now old courtyards a convenient and inexpensive place to live, a way station between a foreign existence (in Asia, Mexico, or New York) and the promised land.” This would include such housing as this 1925 courtyard housing.

status as the symbolic center and focal point for gathering, potential to be a fully formed exterior public room and, “since combined family activities were performed in the court, it gives a chance for the elder members of the family to oversee the habits and behaviors

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27 Polyzoides, p.VIII. Polyzoides touts the courtyard type as a viable form for both single and multi-family housing in Los Angeles, acknowledging its multi-cultural roots and appropriateness for a variety of environments.

28 Ibid. P. 44.
of an individual in the form of family structure and the dwelling as a whole. In public housing, the implications for this type are the ability for surveillance and monitoring of behaviors within the courtyard. It is also the author's observation that, especially in developing countries, older or abandoned single family courtyard houses will become re-inhabited by a number of poorer families such that one gets the sense of the adaptability or flexibility for adaptation of the courtyard for either single family or multi-family use.

Finally, remember that courtyard housing here is being proposed as an antidote to the physical and social shortcomings of public housing. Ed Marchant, a real estate advisor and adjunct professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, has a litmus test for affordable housing which is merely the response to "Would you live there?" As public housing exists today, whether in reality or our perceptions/stereotypes, most Americans not currently living in public housing would not move in, given the current condition of most of the housing. Jim Campano, the latter day spokesman for the residents who were displaced by the razing of Boston's West End, stated that Boston Public Housing was offered to then homeless West Enders — almost 40 years ago — but less than 10% of those displaced took advantage of the offer. No one disputes that any and all standards are low for public housing — from initial design decisions to "projects" which don't screen tenants. Chester Hartman berates the system, as it has come to unfold, for its neglect to supply decent, affordable housing to all.

The courtyard form adds social meaning and a level of attractiveness which lends to it physical merit, rendering useless a comparison between public housing and the courtyard type. The courtyard also responds to the need then to get rid of the stigma of the physical form of public housing. As public housing has degraded to the level of

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housing of last resort, few with the means to leave do not. The people who are most likely to remain are the community activists and tenant leaders who see the potential to build community. Others include those who might have a large social investment in living at the site, given familial or friendship networks. Succinctly, the knowledge that housing marketed to a public with more means and choices must have higher physical standards and maintenance (than public housing) if it is to remain competitive on the market is one reason to advocate mixed income housing. Financing in the form of heavy, ongoing subsidies in lieu of rental income is a burden to the government and a threat to the well being of the project in the long run. The benefits of less government aid in the form of development subsidies to get the housing built and fewer operating subsidies can contribute to more widespread development of an increasing number of mixed income projects.

Why Not Mixed Income?

“Quicker than the eye can see, however, “people who cannot be housed by private enterprise” have been turned into a statistical group with peculiar shelter requirements, like prisoners, on the basis of one statistic: their income. To carry out the rest of the answer, this statistical group becomes a special collection of guinea pigs for Utopians to mess around with. Even if the Utopians had had schemes that made sense socially in cities, it is wrong to set one part of the population, segregated by income, apart in its own neighborhoods with its own different scheme of community.”

Jane Jacobs
The Death and Life of Great American Cities (1961), p.324

One of the concepts central to this proposal is that of a mixed income project. Controversy rages over the issue of razing public housing for mixed income developments — why mixed income? But perhaps more aptly, "why not mixed income?"

Why should poor people be physically isolated in public housing? The fact that more public housing (low to very low income housing) is currently being destroyed than is

30 From interviews at Franklin Field and lecture by Steve Swanger of the Cambridge Housing Authority.
being re-supplied is the only catch in the argument against mixed income, and that should, albeit painfully, be remedied over time.\textsuperscript{31} In New York City, mixed income is the norm in public housing, as it was in many cities in the United States (before it was ended by the HUD dictate that 85\% be reserved for those at or below 50\% of AMI.) Because of an extremely low turnover in its public housing, NYC has maintained a level of income integration, which most experts agree is the key to public housing success.\textsuperscript{32} Mixed income can actually cover any range and assortment of income levels from very low income to low income to moderate income to market rate. While catering to market rate can help to subsidize some of the lower rents that the project will collect, catering to low and very low income can bring in some very important development subsidies.

In fact, though, only 2\% of the population of the United States lives in public housing and most are not there by choice, but for lack of other options — many of the units being torn down in public housing across the nation are vacant (although this is not the case at Franklin Field). In the case of Boston's Columbia Point, now known as Harbor Point, the development was 80\% vacant — that is 1154 out of 1504 units were empty, facilitating its move to mixed income in the late 1980s. In any case, the stage needs to be set — in the cases of most public housing — for a physical environment that will support mixed income. Brophy and Smith declare that it must be excellent in design and management, but certainly location plays a huge role in its success.\textsuperscript{33} When government subsidized housing for low-income people was proposed, it met with opposition from the real estate industry. For this reason, the sites often proposed were remote, vacant sites, chosen with the prodding of the real estate industry, private

\textsuperscript{31} The transition period in which units are being destroyed and being replaced by a lower number of mixed income units will leave a number of low income people in flux. Over time, between increasing number of housing vouchers and increasing numbers of mixed income housing developments, more low income people will be housed in better quality housing than the market now provides.

\textsuperscript{32} Quote from Henry Cisneros. \textit{Is Mixed Income Housing the Key?} March, 1995.

developers, and banks, assuring that neither prime land nor clientele were usurped from private industry. Slum clearance sites were also targeted, as in the case of most of Chicago's public housing, cited as "'islands in the sky': high-rises that housed thousands of the poor and uneducated, surrounded by a vast urban plain. The units were not part of any definable neighborhood, and the areas often were poorly served by both government and the private sector." Furthermore, it is obvious that its service is limited to the poorest of the poor, is isolated and suffers from deferred maintenance due to increasingly higher operating costs in a very limited income situation. In Boston public housing, there is now a minimum payment of $25/month but tenants can earn unlimited income and still only pay ceiling rate for the apartment (e.g. 2-bedroom apt has a ceiling of $676 in public housing citywide). This incentive is in place to retain residents of public housing, but apparently most residents either leave when they are able to afford to or they never increase their income to this extent.

The federal government and HUD are in fact, "setting the stage" for mixed income development but must now reposition themselves legislatively on the topic of mixed income. Recent adaptations to existing legislation include HUD's 1993 HOPE VI guidelines, a competitive funding program intended to revitalize severely distressed properties and H.R. 4194, approved by Congress and signed by President Clinton in 1998 which, among other things, encourages LHAs to bring working families and those up to 80% AMI into public housing. Clouding the issue is the incorporation of higher income people into these revitalized developments, arguably some of the best housing HUD has to offer. This leads to speculation as to whether HUD and the Federal government are revising laws in admission of guilt for isolation of the poor (and every

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35 The data on Franklin Field shows that less than 1% of the population is paying in the range of $651-700/month for rent — it is unclear what size unit the households are inhabiting, in any case.
other problem that burdens public housing today) or whether they desire these new projects to subsidize those less in need, yet be more financially independent (higher incomes lead to higher rents which lead to higher net operating income, leading to fewer operating subsidies). In general, part of the hesitation with mixed income is its speculative causal connection with touted beliefs— in truth, there is little research available on the social benefits of mixed income housing. Its advocates seem to believe that if concentrating poverty in public housing engenders chronic welfare dependency and other social pathologies, then mixing different income groups will produce more desirable social outcomes.36

Government programs at a federal and local level are striving for an ideal of mixing people of various income levels, using an approach of dispersal, if we take into account some of the more recent attempts at poverty relief. For example, the Family Self Sufficiency program aims to "successfully" move people out of public housing into the market rate stream and, in some cases, into a position of homeownership. The federal Moving to Opportunity program gives selected members of public housing rent vouchers to move to areas in which the poverty level is lower than 10%. The Section 8 voucher program—a government subsidy making up the difference between 30% of a family’s income and the area’s fair market rent—has, since 1974, given families mobility and a choice of neighborhoods in which they might live. On a state level, Massachusetts (MHFA) provides tax-exempt financing for projects that reserve at least 20% of their units for low and moderate income households.37 On a local level, the City of Cambridge has recently passed an Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance which maintains that any market rate housing built in the city in excess of 10 units, on a plot which is greater than 10,000 sf, must have 15% of the units set aside for low income families

37 ibid, p73
developers are then awarded a density bonus to offset the loss incurred by the affordable units). Inclusionary Zoning is also at work in New Jersey and Maryland. These programs respond to allocation of housing dictated by the market and are reactive in the sense of trying to move the poor into affluent, stable neighborhoods. The proposal of mixed income for new developments attempts to be more proactive in response to current issues. In fact, though, whether a strategy of dispersal or mixed income, all are geared towards deconcentrating poverty and, ultimately, some balance of a mixed income society.

Mixed income touts many social and economic benefits within the courtyard model. As noted earlier, mixed income demands higher standards of living, more amenities, and more emphasis on a better quality of life, in its attempts to attract residents with more money and therefore more housing options. The development of these aspects would be a priority to the developer in an effort to make the pro forma work and demanded by the resident as a customer. Mixed income would also decrease dependency on government subsidies for the well being of the project, in the short run decreasing units, in the long run freeing up more monetary resources for the development of more mixed income developments. Furthermore, lower concentrations of joblessness have the potential to produce more role models, with more people going off to work in the morning to any variety of occupations. William Julius Wilson would argue that this has merit in reinforcing positive behavioral patterns where they did not previously exist, as in the case of Franklin Field with a working population — full and part-time — of 148 out of 960 residents. The BHA has 15,000 housing units in its

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38 The idea of mixed income is often promoted for the presence of role models, in terms of employed people with a broader set of social interactions. The author’s belief behind this statement is that currently, having such high concentrations of very low income people in public housing, there are few employed people who are actively trying to support themselves and perhaps better their situation. Role model should not be equated in this sense with high quality of character, for such examples certainly exist, even in the poorest of environments. Moderate or market rate units are incorporated, above all, for more financial independence.

39 Out of the 960 residents, 51.1% of the population is under the age of 18.
portfolio and a striking one out of ten Bostonians lives in Boston public housing. As such, in Boston, with a mixed income approach, there is potential for more diversity of experiences and interests among tenants. A mixed income housing situation, as opposed to public housing, may enjoy the presence of more men and two parent families as opposed to the rather atypical situation of a majority of female headed households. One should also keep in mind the potential positive effects of the new development on the community. The mix of residents would likely be more reflective of the larger community, in keeping with the demographics of the census tract in which it is located.

The project would also not carry the stigma attached to a public housing address (if anything, it would suggest a contrast would occur between what is and what was). As it is no longer public housing as we know it today, this prototype allows for contact between lower and moderate income people, perhaps dispelling some formerly held stereotypes and changing attitudes and perceptions. Finally, one of the greatest benefits to this model which, with the aid of supportive services hoping to achieve the end of a self-perpetuating cycle of poverty, is to provide a residential continuum for those who might otherwise be displaced by a rise in income, as in non-public housing projects funded specifically for very low to low income tenants.

Mixed income allows people with higher incomes – including the working poor – preference in entering public housing. In a broader sense, including non-public housing, it supports the right/ability of the residents to earn more money and not be penalized by eviction for overstepping the income level requisite for residency, as is the case with federally funded housing projects specified for very low to low income people. In

40 From interview by author with Kathleen Field of the BHA. Autumn, 1998.
41 One would expect that this development alone would not cause a turnaround in the income mix or populations in the neighborhood. Therefore, the residents would likely be people similar to the demographics of the neighborhood or actual neighborhood residents for whom the new development would be attractive. Higher income people of the same race or ethnicity of the larger neighborhood might move in or stay in the neighborhood after they had “made it big” for social reasons specific to African Americans or other ethnic groups.
projects using funding set aside for developing housing for low to very low income people, the residents are subject to six to twelve month income verifications, at which point the property managers are required to give notice to residents who are above the "legal" income limit for the project. Failure to verify or to maintain the income guidelines agreed upon results in a default on the loan, necessitating immediate repayment. Such contracts include funding using the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, which requires that a minimum of 20% of the residents be at or below 50% of the area median income (AMI) or 40% to be at 60% of the AMI.42 The IRS, which administers the LIHTC, maintains strict auditing schedules. The security of tenure which residents of public housing experience due to the lack of an income cap on rents, should not be limited to the inferior conditions usually associated with public housing. By providing housing for a range of incomes in an amenable environment, the resident would have a real choice of whether to stay or go — as opposed to escaping substandard conditions -- once they are in a stable enough position to exercise their options. As opposed to the undesirable conditions of most public housing today, this is an option that people in more amenable mixed income developments might, realistically, choose to exercise.

The reality of mixed income projects offers a mixed range of responses of the pros and cons of mixed income developments. While HUD’s journal, Cityscape, reports that Chicago’s Lake Parc Place shows decreasing income and employment due in part to higher income people moving out, Karen Ceraso in “Is Mixed Income Housing the Key?” reports a reduction in crime and employment among previously unemployed residents. Brophy and Smith describe an “in-depth study published in 1974 that measured success by higher levels of satisfaction among tenants in mixed income developments that found income mixing works. The primary reasons for the increased satisfaction were related to the quality of the development, specifically its “superior

42 Applications promising to serve much lower income people are given more points in funding rounds and are, therefore, more likely to receive funding.
design, construction, and management.\textsuperscript{43} Meyers acknowledges that there's a tension between wanting to provide housing for those in need and, on the other hand, wanting the stability that working families bring.\textsuperscript{44} In fact, preferential treatment of working class families gives families living in areas where affordable housing is scarce an opportunity to live in decent housing while saving towards the American Dream. Middle class aspirations, as in the dream of homeownership, are alive amongst even very-low income populations in public housing developments across the nation.

Some of the realities of mixed income developments include: issues of race – whether all income groups must be of the same race in order to foster social interaction among households with differing incomes,\textsuperscript{45} importance of location – is development so centrally or conveniently located such that higher income people don’t think twice about the mixed income aspect, for example Tent City, centrally located in downtown Boston, has good management such that issues don’t arise like preferential treatment of moderate income residents over low income residents, importance of quality design and careful consideration of income thresholds that will make or break a project. Observations of the use of project amenities in developments like Harbor Point in Boston, among others, show that the lower income people tend to be more enthusiastic and involved in the development than market rate renters. This demonstrates how higher income people might consider such developments only as a place to sleep, whereas lower income people with middle class aspirations are trying to become involved, taking advantage of the opportunity to voice an opinion or use available resources.

\textsuperscript{43} Brophy and Smith, p.4.
\textsuperscript{44} Ceraso, p.4.
\textsuperscript{45} Schwartz and Tajbakhsh, p77.
The Need for Social Services

To support low income and immigrant families, the provision of social services is an important component of the mixed income model. Ceraso states that advocates of mixed income housing seek to create viable communities by also providing increased maintenance and security and the social services necessary to sustain the mix. Likewise, Brophy and Smith note that “if upward mobility of low-income residents is a goal, it is necessary to have activities that are specifically aimed at creating opportunities for them...” These services contribute to self-sufficiency and increasing self esteem, providing necessary resources which the resident may not know exist or otherwise have access to. Levitan and others have shown that poor families often have multiple impediments to becoming self-sufficient, including a lack of basic skills, poor quality housing, lack of transportation, poor health and sometimes substance abuse problems. Therefore, a coordinated package of services is often necessary to achieve self-sufficiency.

With the time limitations now placed on receipt of federal welfare benefits, city governments and local agencies are preparing for how this will affect their constituency. They have encouraged residents, through the use of social service programs, to acquire skills and education necessary to procure employment. Social service provision will be most essential to recent immigrants in need of social services, given that most poor legal immigrants who enter the date on or after the date on which the new welfare bill becomes a law will be denied aid under TANF, Supplemental Security Income, Medicaid and foodstamps for 5 years. Previously, many would not take advantage of social

46 Brophy and Smith, pp.3, 25.
48 This is outlined in the New Welfare Law and Emerging Issues for PHAs. Previously aid was given to anyone who qualified and had resident alien status.
services for fear of losing benefits provided through welfare, medicare and minimum taxation rates. Given the current demise of welfare, the average person in public housing will have to reconsider the benefits provided by the availability of social services.

A number of social service programs are currently available to residents of public housing, although latent issues such as the negative and defeatist attitudes towards oneself described by Oscar Newman (p.13) or danger stemming from “turf” issues with rival gangs affect usage. This low usage can appear superficially as residents of public housing simply not taking advantage of the availability of services. For example, the neighborhood teen center located at Franklin (aka Harambee) Field has been accused of sending youths from the Franklin Field development home because of the animosity between youth from Franklin Field and youth from neighboring Franklin Hill.

As discussed in the previous paragraph, proximity of the services to the residents is a key factor in attendance. Social services tend to present a more complex problem with regards to public housing. Current residents of Franklin Field have been faulted for not taking advantage of services for reasons of proximity -- issues of territoriality with a neighboring public housing project, Franklin Hill, contribute to a decline in the use of services. Most important of all, though, is that high visibility be given to the services offered, as residents must know that services exist if they are to utilize them.

In the decision regarding whether or not to incorporate social services into the design of a development, the decision must first be made about the role of public housing in the lives of its residents. That is, whether public housing is again to be transitional, as it was originally intended, or whether it will be a final destination for those lucky enough to obtain an apartment. Lane’s article says that supportive services should
be considered to make public housing transitional, ultimately turning to the private market but offers the final caveat that PHAs must avoid any situation where they are providing housing from cradle to grave.\textsuperscript{49} Self-sufficiency is, in fact, the role of supportive services.

\textsuperscript{49} Limiting terms of residency is an idea debated in a number of different forums, but as yet does not have support – would not really solve problems only unsettle neighborhoods that currently have the opportunity to be a community – and studies show that the length of tenure of most residents in public housing is not unreasonably long.
The Proposal for Reconfiguring Franklin Field

The spectrum of social services offered in this project will include: day care, English as a second language, adult education, a Task Force office and job training/skills, in addition to a proposal for an on-site branch of the Boston Public Library. The Task Force Office at Franklin Field will continue to be in charge of posting and otherwise advertising available services.

The 1986 Franklin Field Redevelopment report, *Design Report: Final Plan and Program* (p12) notes that without real access to such programs and the absence of on-site facility to house them, there is no focus for community life. Despite such recognition, in the existing development the day care center and a space for the tenant task force are housed in the basements of two different buildings. By contrast, the redevelopment scheme of this thesis proposes that the classes be supplied by community development corporations (CDCs) or other help groups, but actual classes and activities should take place in one of the community public spaces integrated into each courtyard configuration, while the branch of the library and the day care center are suggested as a separate building.

Delivery of services, in addition to the services being offered, plays a huge role in residents' decision to take advantage of services or not. For that reason, the space for the provision of social services will be incorporated into the re-design of the Franklin Field site. Social services have such an important role because they form part of the support system that this mixed income project hopes to provide. By including social services on-site, residents will have them at their disposal — the setting will be familiar,

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50 The nearest branch of the Boston Public Library is in Codman Square (note distance of Codman Square from Franklin Field Development in Figure 1). All are on "the other side of the tracks."
as will be a number of the faces attending the classes, assuming that classes will draw their largest audience from the population of residents at the development. The sense of community for which the courtyard housing has the potential, should start to create a support network as residents begin to interact. Of course, there would be a need for a service coordinator or a social worker/case manager to encourage the right services getting to the right people. The services will not be offered by the BHA, but rather by outside agencies whose focus is the delivery of health care, small business enterprise promotion, etc.51 The services, as well, will be offered to the greater community, inviting the "outside world" in, under controlled circumstances. In this case, coordination with any of the local CDCs or community agencies would be logical and mutually beneficial, in the sense that CDCs and other "help" organizations get their funding based on the number of people who attend their sessions and utilize their services. The integration of this re-design with the larger neighborhood is imperative to overcome the memory of this site as public housing. Ideally, it will also contribute to the comprehensive revitalization of the area.

Embedded in the idea of including various services on site, while other more basic services are available in the neighborhood, is the hope of drawing the outside community to classes/activities within the boundaries of the re-designed housing and to encourage residents to use the immediate commercial area to fulfill their day-to-day needs. While there are a large number of businesses owned and operated by African Americans, there are also growing numbers of West Indian and Latino businesses catering to their respective ethnic groups. Asians, which are a minority at Franklin Field, might still have to travel a distance to procure food items specifically catering to cooking needs, although as their numbers grow there would be more incentive for Asians to own

51 In the 1970s, before the BHA was put into receivership, one of the BHA’s housing commissioner’s board members, Doris Bunte, made efforts towards supportive services for residents provided by the BHA, an
businesses or otherwise assert their presence in the area. The limited commercial space incorporated into the design might be allocated to a local community development corporation working on economic development and increasing business opportunities for minority members of the community. Given the greater diversity anticipated in the new development, it may be that future entrepreneurs emerge from the population at the newly reconfigured Franklin Field.

The housing is intended to be rental available to a mix of incomes as follows: 30% very low income, 30% low income, 30% moderate income and 10% market rate. Under this scenario, but keeping in mind that the affordable homeownership units would give priority to Franklin Field residents, a potential 30% would have to move. The breakdown of units according to income is in keeping with the author’s belief that people should not be isolated by income, rich or poor, and that public housing is as much an aberration as is the concept of “the gated community.” The benefits derived from the presence of market rate units is an environment that has to be attractive and amenable to appeal to people with housing choices (which are necessary for the long-term financial success of the development) and the lower income units that provide the opportunity to leverage private funds against public subsidies and ensure long term affordability of the development.

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52 In a market study done for the BHA, market potential is found to be poor, with revenue potential ranging from $500/month for a one-bedroom to $750/month for a 6+ bedroom unit. This thesis does not support these figures entirely, taking into account the dynamics involved with the change in welfare, the current redevelopment of the upper section of Blue Hill Avenue near Dudley Square, the plans of Northeastern University to extend into the Dudley Square area and the Boston Redevelopment Authority’s plan to redevelop the site of the former Boston State Hospital, an immense site located a few blocks to the west of Franklin Field.

53 This percentage is likely to be lower, as the end of welfare for most families necessitates people having to go out to find employment or enter into job training.

54 Although it is usually not considered as such, public housing is as much a gated community as wealthier communities that pride themselves on their physical gate. One could argue that the psychological/social
There is a delicate balance in determining the number of units to provide. The scenario presented in this thesis increases the number of total units and the total bedroom count. There is a total of 482 units proposed in this design -- 432 rental units (versus 426 existing) and 38 homeownership units, 23 along the cemetery edge of the site and 27 empty sites that are currently gaps in the nearby community. An option explored by the BHA of redeveloping Franklin Field presents a total of 442 units of which all are one-, two-, or three-bedroom apartments and townhouses, dramatically decreasing the current count of bedrooms. The BHA's intention is to create clusters of

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problems that arise from setting oneself apart in a gated community are as much the result of the environment as the problems faced by public housing residents.
villages, in theory perhaps similar, but formally very different from what this thesis does with courtyards.\textsuperscript{55}

\section*{Conclusions}

Courtyard housing as a prototype for mixed income affordable housing with supportive services has much potential. As a model for housing, courtyard housing is not new, just generally forgotten. Incorporating social services is not a radical proposal either, just often overlooked. And mixed income can be considered as a state of equilibrium in any community. Social housing created by the Public Works Administration, utilized the courtyard in its early phase. Polyzoides states that any housing prototype that challenges the American intellectual monopoly of the building in the park deserves careful attention and study.\textsuperscript{56} While this is true, the low-rise high density models which have become the more recent icons of affordable housing need to be challenged as well, moreso because of the indifference displayed by the architectural form. Before a change in HUD legislation inspired by HOPE VI, much public housing was renovated according to HUD restrictions making it difficult not to leave the majority of the buildings intact. Most have been maintained as public, low to very low income housing and the mending of the project shows scars of what was. The hope of this proposal is not to be grounded in the memory of public housing, but to suggest yet another alternative for residents and the rest of us in society to move forward in our attitudes about housing society as whole, incorporating rather than isolating the weakest or the poorest. The reform of agencies and the programs discussed in the Chapter III

\textsuperscript{55} The renovations in Option B proposed to the BHA, without any new construction are almost $50$ million dollars, with hard costs accounting for a whopping 98.5\% of the total development cost.\textsuperscript{56} Polyzoides, pp. 9-10.
are potent, but controversial, vehicles for housing reform. Chapter II will first introduce Franklin Field, the site to which all issues and policy will be applied.

Figure 13. Photograph of interior courtyard of Langham Court. It is an example of a recently built mixed income development in the South End of Boston, Massachusetts.
Figure 14. Plan of Tent City, a mixed income, courtyard-type apartment complex in the heart of Boston, Massachusetts. It is a dynamic project responding to the diverse conditions of its various street edges with a range of unit types, from townhouses to apartments.
Chapter 2

Franklin Field: A Case Study of Reconfiguration versus Renovation

Figure 15. Sign Announcing Franklin Field Development.
An Introduction to the Franklin Field Development and Its Context

Through an understanding of current situations and past events at Franklin Field, as a prototype of public housing, one can appreciate the carelessness of the majority of such developments in responding to their environs and their inhabitants. Visually, Franklin Field is not bad for public housing, but the design of the site and the buildings are, in fact, insensitive to both the residents and the neighborhood. Unfortunately, the shortage of affordable units nationwide—especially for those earning less than 20% AMI, in addition to the “safety net” of public housing rent adjustments are a disincentive to leave public housing, to make it transitional as it was intended. Low rent need not be synonymous with inferior. The history, past renovations, current residents and problems of Franklin Field present a sound case for the implementation of ideas and the need to strive for ideals for a healthy living environment. The evolution of the guidelines set by the Department of Housing and Urban Development over the years as well as the new policy activated by the President’s signature on The Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (H.R. 4194) have been and will continue to be instrumental in changing the face of public housing. These will be discussed in Chapter 3. The detriment of past guidelines will be exemplified by the ineffectiveness of the 1986 renovations at Franklin Field, discussed in the latter part of this chapter.

The Franklin Field housing development is located in Dorchester, a neighborhood of Boston. Currently owned and operated by the Boston Housing Authority, it was previously part of the adjacent piece of land known as Franklin
Figure 16. This 1939 map shows Franklin Field (center) before the section to the south was allocated to the BHA for the development of family and elderly housing. In the upper left corner is Franklin Park and adjacent to Franklin Field (to the right) is the Catholic Cemetery, which still occupies this space today.

Field — land owned by the Parks Department which was given over for public housing in the late 1940s, serving first as temporary war housing. The Franklin Field family development consists of 19 three story brick buildings and the elderly development, built in two phases during 1962, consists of 12 two-story buildings.
A total of 504 family units and 160 elderly units comprised the entire development, although over the years the number of units has been amended to 346 family units and 80 elderly units. Both developments are fairly randomly situated on approximately 27 acres of land bound by (1) Franklin Field/Westview Avenue (to the north), (2) a Catholic cemetery (to the east), (3) a residential neighborhood of triple-deckers and single family homes/Stratton Street (to the south) and (4) a commercial district, at the western tip where Stratton Street and Westview Avenue meet Blue Hill Avenue, the main commercial venue of the area. (See Figures 14 and 15.) The development has a density of approximately 17 units per acre that is fairly consistent with — in fact, slightly lower than — the neighborhood. The configuration of the development, as built, is fairly typical of public housing in the 1950s. That is, three-story brick buildings severed from the existing urban fabric by roads that are not allowed to pass through or otherwise penetrate the site and buildings which form no relationship either to each other or the existing neighborhood (See Figures 6 and 7.) Although lessons had been learned about

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57 The buildings bear no relationship to adjacent streets or neighboring structures, they are situated for optimum light exposure for each unit.
the problems of high-rise and even mid-rise buildings by the mid-1950s, the buildings still had no sense of context or sensitivity to spatial relationships.

The history of the elderly housing is equally as distressing. Built in 1962, it is located between the family development and the Catholic Cemetery. The roads essentially end when they arrive at the elderly development and the parking lots are used by disoriented “outsiders” to make a u-turn, given the end of the road. The buildings that are on the fringe, near the cemetery have been badly vandalized, their elderly inhabitants victimized and the buildings have been boarded up for years. In an interview with Steve Newark, the off-site manager in charge of maintaining the elderly project, he explains that “over time, the elderly did not take to it,” speculating on the long walk to get to services and the crime. The buildings themselves are two-story walk-ups (i.e. no elevator) that have not been able to serve the elderly population effectively. The population of the elderly has been steadily declining with no signs of increasing and, for this reason, half of the units were approved by HUD to be renovated as family housing.
Other elderly want to stay, but the state has funded more conversions to family units yet to come.\footnote{1998 interview by Lawrence Vale with Sandy Henriquez.} Ironically, Wright makes the observation that “elderly public housing was often quite attractive and set in good neighborhoods; in short it did not look like public housing”\footnote{Wright, p.239.} – apparently the Franklin Field Elderly Development was a project that did not measure up to the quality of other elderly developments. By 1962, the neighborhood surrounding Franklin Field was starting to deteriorate.

**Historical Context**

When the Franklin Field housing development was built in 1954, it was part of a thriving Jewish-American community. *The Death of an American Jewish Community* chronicles the history of Blue Hill Avenue, the main thoroughfare running by the Franklin Field housing development, which used to be the lifeline of the community. In the 1960s, the neighborhood found itself in a state of disinvestment as a group of bankers known by the acronym B-BURG, Boston Banks Urban Redevelopment Group, concentrating minority investment in the area encouraging the strong Jewish community which had inhabited the homes and storefronts of the neighborhood to flee. The extent of the Jewish flight was immediate and intense and in a few years – between 1968 and 1972, the neighborhood that was predominantly white and Jewish became predominantly African American. Furthermore, according to the City Directory for each respective year, the neighborhood, which had 11 vacancies of homes and businesses in 1954, had 36 vacancies in 1968, 91 vacancies in 1972 and 80 vacancies (plus 17 “no returns”) in 1981.\footnote{It is pertinent to note that the number of businesses and residential addresses in the area fairly steadily declined from a high of 203 in 1954 to a low of 129 in 1981.} The following graph demonstrates the state of disinvestment experienced by the neighborhood of the Franklin Field development.
In the same way, the change in population signaled further changes occurring within the community, as the following charts demonstrate:
Table 2 -

**Total Population 1950-1975**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Boston</th>
<th>Franklin FF Pop.</th>
<th>Loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>801,444</td>
<td>28,384</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>697,197</td>
<td>26,422</td>
<td>-6.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>641,071</td>
<td>25,832</td>
<td>-2.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>637,986</td>
<td>25,675</td>
<td>-0.60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total loss: 163,458 2,709  -----  

This table disguises important racial and demographic changes. As shown in Table 3, since 1960, Franklin Field has changed from an exclusively white neighborhood to one that is largely black.⁶¹

Table 3 -

**Racial Composition 1960-1970**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>% of total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>2,056</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>21,046</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Census data for 1990 shows that the black population of the metropolitan statistical area of Franklin Field South is 82.6%.⁶²

All classes of Jews along Blue Hill Avenue felt the pull of their people and institutions to the outer suburbs of Boston. The neighborhood began to decline through the lack of ability (know-how and financial constraints) of African American homeowners to maintain their homes, as well as the lack of commercial investment. The Blue Hill Avenue neighborhood that had strong political support in the past now had no political

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voice. The decline in voting commonly associated with unstable areas brought about a lack of political representation. When a community consists primarily of poor minority racial or ethnic groups, it often becomes marginalized politically and receives fewer and fewer of the services and resources it needs. The lack of employment opportunities and the lack of incentives built into the welfare system hindered public housing residents from moving into the job market.\textsuperscript{63} In short, the neighborhood was largely abandoned, the housing stock left to decay. In the midst of the neighborhood is the Franklin Field Housing development, an "island" spatially segregated from the main venue of Blue Hill Avenue and fairly well forgotten. Franklin Field is almost hidden from view when on Blue Hill Avenue but for a single sign announcing the Franklin Field development. The layout of the site was not intended to create continuity with the fabric of the neighborhood nor is the site circumnavigable. The development has poor access to public transportation and shopping and facilities. To get anywhere requires a walk to the nearest bus stop. The closest shopping is in Codman Square which requires an hour of travel time roundtrip and does not contain any big supermarkets or department stores.\textsuperscript{64} In short, the four streets that form Franklin Field tend to be rather anonymous.

In 1986, the Franklin Field family development was renovated by Carr, Lynch Associates and Wallace, Floyd Associates, Inc. The analysis and approach of the redevelopers as outlined in their Design Report: Final Plan and Program was very accurate in terms of the social and physical needs, but unfortunately they undertook the venture with their hands tied, both by HUD legislation restricting modifications to the existing buildings and, seemingly, by the budget, leading to shortcomings in the execution. Although cuts had to be made to stay within budget, the final figure on the

\textsuperscript{62} MSA denoted as Franklin Field South in breakdown of areas presented in 1990 census, prepared for the Boston Redevelopment Authority. This does not include hispanic blacks.

renovations was $33 million dollars and almost none of the identified social services were implemented. As Sandy Henriquez, head of the BHA puts it a decade later, "you can't tell that approximately $33 million dollars went into that site." In their *Franklin Field Redevelopment Design Report: Final Plan and Program* they note the extremely deteriorated physical condition of the place and its many social problems as well as the need for community facilities to support community development and family life at Franklin Field. They go on to say, "The development presently lacks social services of any kind. Programs in the surrounding areas are in short supply, are underfunded and have long waiting lists. As a result, there are strong unmet needs for daycare, for adult education, for job placement and training referral. Without real access to such programs and the absence of an on-site facility to house them, there is no focus for community life." The realization of these recommendations was apparently not feasible. Currently, the only community-type spaces are a daycare center and the tenant task force office, both located on-site in the basements of two different buildings. Mail for the development is collected at a central site in the BHA management office, open only during business hours.

The buildings, which were in poor shape to begin with, were worked on with shoddy craftsmanship by a developer who did not, ultimately, finish the project. The 1986 Redevelopment Design Report states (p.8), "We do not underestimate the difficulties in achieving a successful physical and social environment at Franklin Field. Both the buildings and the site, poorly planned to begin with, are largely worn out. The buildings are of two types – a long and a short – each made up of repeating modules.

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64 Franklin Field Redevelopment Design Report, p.5.  
66 Franklin Field Redevelopment Report, pp3-4.  
67 Ibid. pp. 9-11
While the buildings are Class A construction, they are as cheaply built as possible, with oddly placed structural members, undersized floor slabs and a soft exterior brick facing that is spalling away in many locations." "The buildings are placed insensitively about the site, generally following the streets, but with little regard for topography, approach or visual relationship to one another." At the time of the redesign only 300 units of the original 504 were occupied. The report notes a forty percent vacancy rate and boarded up buildings (especially in the elderly division), supporting the decision to enlarge apartments and reduce the final count from 504 to 346 units of family housing plus the eighty units of elderly housing. Ultimately, the redevelopers emphasized the landscape and the apartments, using principles of good defensible space, but fell short of their design proposal. For example, report discusses how "the large spaces between buildings are freed from parking. They are redeveloped with a hierarchy of outdoor spaces running from private yards immediately adjacent to ground floor units, to common building yards for use by the residents of each building, to central courtyards with walkways, sitting areas and playgrounds for all residents.

68 1998 interview with James Comer, on-site manager at Franklin Field. The developer declared bankruptcy before completing the project, causing further expense.
69 Franklin Field Redevelopment Report, p. 9.
Community support facilities are located along Ames Street central to the development.\textsuperscript{70}  This hierarchy is not apparent upon visiting the site, which may have been a fear of the redevelopers when expressing that such areas must not take on the image of a no-man’s-land.\textsuperscript{71}  In fact, the front yards, as well as the courtyards, seem out of scale with minimal distinction between the two.  The private yards look desolate or merely used as storage for valueless items.  On a recent visit on a cool, holiday Monday, the author made the observation that almost no one was occupying the courtyards, but rather congregating in groups on the periphery.

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid, p.20.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid, p.27.
From a design standpoint, the redesign is definitely better than it was, but while re-invigorated, Franklin Field still has many strong physical issues as well as many social issues which have yet to be addressed. The biggest changes lie in the reconfigured physical environment and its implied statement about the residents. Where previously parking existed between the buildings, heavily vandalized although easily surveilled, three courtyards were designed and streets were added to accommodate the limited number of vehicles owned by residents, as well as provide street links through the site.\textsuperscript{72} This was a positive step emphasizing the human rather than automotive presence at the development.

\textsuperscript{72} Ironically, even though strategically located, cars were heavily vandalized when parking was located between buildings.
Demographics Pertaining to Recent and Current Residents

The demise of the surrounding neighborhood cannot be separated from the history of the Franklin Field development. The entire area has undergone extreme disinvestment and cultural change since the inauguration of the project in 1954. According to a set of 1993 Franklin Field resident interviews, 54% of the interviewees had lived at the FF development for twenty or more years. Of those interviewed, 69% thought that Franklin Field "looks like" public housing even after its redevelopment. 40% would not recommend the development to a friend. Most of those who felt that it looked like public housing would not recommend it to a friend, although the violence largely associated with the surrounding neighborhood was also stated as a reason. The length of tenure of many of the interviewees suggests that many have first hand experience of
the neighborhood and the development at its lowest point in the late 1970s. Most -- 91% -- declared that they would like to move into a house. Many acknowledge it as a sort of unattainable goal; others seem to regard it as the antithesis to the problems of their existence at Franklin Field (in terms of noise, privacy and control of environment).

Similar issues are noted by Lawrence Vale in his 1998 article, “Public Housing and the American Dream: Residents' Views on Buying into the Projects.”

Although this thesis is not concerned with the sale of public housing units to its residents, Vale’s data is informative in its revelation that 69% of Franklin Field residents interviewed for the article were not interested in owning their current apartment and also that only 11% were very satisfied with the development.

Figure 22. The shaded area #31 designates boundaries of the Franklin Field South MSA.

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73 Housing Policy Debate, Volume 9, Issue 2.
74 Vale, “Public housing and the American Dream.” The Tables (Nos. 6 and 7) containing this information relative to others from Boston Housing Authority projects shows that Franklin Field has the lowest satisfaction ratings of all.
Where once the Franklin Field South community was white and Jewish, it is now predominantly minority, inhabited by Blacks (18% of whom have migrated from the South), West Indians, Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, Vietnamese, American Indians, Mexicans, Guatemalans and Hondurans, according to the BRA Special File created from the 1990 Census of Population and Housing. A visit with BHA on-site manager James Comer revealed residents of the Franklin Field housing development as being predominantly African American with a high concentration of Latinos – Dominicans and Puerto Ricans – but also Cape Verdeans, Vietnamese, West Indians and Salvadorans. Tenant demographics from the Boston housing Authority database of October 29,1998 revealing ethnicity at Franklin Field show the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4 -</th>
<th>All Family Members</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black*</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>53.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish*</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>960</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Within the categories as Black are included American Blacks, Africans, and West Indians. Within the category of Spanish would be any group that speaks Spanish or a derivative thereof. The lumping of all people with black skin or all people who speak some derivation of Spanish serves as an indicator of the fact that cultural and ethnic diversity is not appreciated by, at the very least, the Boston Housing Authority’s management information system.

Of the population as measured by the 1990 Census, 1,046 or 11.2% of the neighborhood population is a foreign-born person who entered the US between 1980 and 1990. Of the total population for the Franklin Field South tract, 20.1% is foreign born. 746 (12.22%) persons over the age of 5 years are linguistically isolated, speaking
no English at all. 755 persons over 18 (12.5%) have less than a ninth grade education, 1,905 (31.5%) have some high school education and only 1,953 (32.3%) have a high school diploma. 914 (15.1%) have some college education and 376 (6.2%) have either an associates or bachelor's degree. 138 (2.3%) have a graduate or professional degree.

Of the residents of the Franklin Field housing development, 95% of the households are headed by single women. The average household size is 2.8 persons with 51.1% under eighteen years of age. Approximately 4% of family members in the family housing development are over age 62. In the census tract, women outnumber men 5,090 to 4,282, with women on average older than men with a median age of 28.1 versus 23 years of age for men. This would be expected, given the larger number of single mothers. It would also be expected that the women would have a higher median age, since there are fewer adult males.75

Although rent is calculated at 30% of a household’s income, adjustments are made for family size which make this information difficult to use to get the “big picture.” In fact, though, the median income for Boston is $60,000 for a family of four, setting 98.5% of the Franklin Field housing development at or below 50% of Area Median Income (AMI). Median rents for Dorchester are as follows: $600 for a one-bedroom apartment, $850 for a two-bedroom apartment, $900 for a three-bedroom apartment, based on a Boston Redevelopment Authority study of units advertised in the Boston Sunday Globe for the first quarter of 1998.76

75 This would be expected, given the larger number of single mothers. It would also be expected that the women would have a higher median age, since there are fewer adult males.
76 The analysis notes that while not an accurate indicator of actual median rents of all occupied units, it is the best available indicator of the rents a tenant currently seeking housing in the rental market will encounter, especially in turnover units.
As is common among residents of public housing, the majority of households receive some sort of welfare or TANF. At Franklin Field, household income is distributed as follows, as compared with rents being collected:

### Table 5 -

**Comparison of Income Earned and Rents Collected at Franklin Field**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Distribution of Household Income at Franklin Field, 10/29/98 (in dollars)</th>
<th>No. of HH</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-999</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000-1999</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2999</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000-3999</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4000-4999</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000-5999</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6000-6999</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7000-7999</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8000-8999</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9000-9999</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10000-</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20000-24999</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25000-29999</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30000+</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>337</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Table 2: Rent Calculated at 30% of Income (in dollars) |  |
|---|---|---|
| $25 | 0-50 | 25 |
| $50 | 51-100 | 77 |
| $75 | 101-150 | 76 |
| $100 | 151-200 | 30 |
| $125 | 201-250 | 38 |
| $150 | 251-300 | 26 |
| $200 | 301-350 | 20 |
| $225 | 351-400 | 8 |
| $250 | 401-450 | 12 |
| $300-500 | 451-500 | 9 |
| $501-550 | 5 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Distribution of Rents for Residents at Franklin Field, 10/29/98 (in dollars)</th>
<th>No. of HH</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-50</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-100</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-150</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151-200</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201-250</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>251-300</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301-350</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>351-400</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401-450</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>451-500</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501-550</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>551-600</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>601-650</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>651-700</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>701-750</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 10/29/98 spreadsheet of Tenant Demographics from the Boston Housing Authority

In the worst case scenarios of residents having to leave the development because of the change in unit allocation, HUD FY98 Fair Market Rents are $697 for a one-bedroom, $874 for a two-bedroom and $1092 for a three-bedroom unit. This suggests that, with a Section 8 mobile voucher, former residents of Franklin Field would
be able to cover rents in the area using the vouchers. According to median home sale prices in the 4th quarter of 1996 and the 4th quarter of 1997, Dorchester experienced a 9.8% change in residential sale prices, from $116,500 in 1996 to $127,900 in 1997. Unfortunately, the rental vacancy rate in the Boston area is just over 1%, although there is a fair amount of renovation and construction occurring within the city. In terms of both market rate and affordable housing, *ceteris paribus*, mixed income housing has a viable market, as described under the pros and cons of mixed income in Chapter I.

Of all family members living at Franklin Field, 120 (12.5%) are employed full time, 28 (2.9%) are employed part-time or seasonally, 107 (11.1%) are disabled, 492 (51.3%) are children under the age of 18, 15 (1.6%) are elderly. 105 (10.9%) family members collect Temporary Aid for Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC), 108 (11.25%) collect Supplemental Security Income (SSI), 58 collect social security, 26 report other income and 29 report no income at all. In the census tract, 17.3% of women and 20.2% of men were unemployed in 1989. 919 (33.2%) of men and 1,647 (45%) of women over the age of 16 were not in the labor force. Median income for households was $17,001 for Franklin Field South and mean income reached $24,415, considerably higher than the approximately $7,750 median income for the Franklin Field housing development.

The end of welfare has many implications for public housing residents and for the BHA. With such a high number of residents currently receiving aid, the BHA spends worthwhile time wondering what its operating budget will be. BHA Administrator Sandy Henriquez acknowledges that it will be impossible to say, “give me my rent and let your kids go hungry” although she does favor a mandatory community service program saying “I don’t think that we’re going to find many people volunteering to do it. There’s still a mentality of entitlement. It flies in the face of ‘you don’t get to choose your...
community because you’re poor and it’s the BHA and because you’re on some sort of community service program because of where you derive your income you have to do stuff that tenants in other affordable housing communities don’t have to do.” On the benefits – “it would be great. I could redeploy my staffs differently and get more work done – and it would give the residents a greater sense of “ownership” of buildings.77

The statistics set forth here are not surprising to find associated with public housing and, in addition to the census tract data, albeit somewhat outdated, form the basis for the programming of the affordable housing proposal made on the current site of Franklin Field public housing. The issues that are exposed through census data and through data supplied by the Boston Housing Authority – for example, immigration/migration data, levels of employment, age of the population – are not so unique, demonstrating the plight of very many housing authorities and municipalities. These are issues that are solved not just by the provision of decent, affordable housing and/or the aid of social service agencies or community development corporations, but by high level policy decisions made at the federal level. This is often the only aid or subsidy available to provide for those for whom the market does not. The following chapter will discuss the role of HUD and a partial evolution of the policy that resulted in the HOPE VI program, potentially the future of public housing in the United States today.

77 Vale interview with Henriquez. Summer, 1998
Chapter 3

HUD, HOPE VI and House Resolution 4194: The Importance of a Concerted Effort in Effectively Serving Public Housing

“We are not dealing with the problems of the city dweller alone but the problems of the entire American society itself. During the 10 years that the proposal to establish a Cabinet-level agency to deal with these problems has been before Congress – this decade of deliberation – a new generation of slum children have reached school age. The pollution of water supplies and thousands of tons of smog a day continue to threaten our health and safety. Clogged city streets and inadequate transportation facilities continue to plague the shopper and commuter. Roadside slums: junkyards and neon nightmares disgrace our civilization.”

Senator Abraham Ribicoff, 1965
Senate Committee on Government Operations

“Unlike welfare reform, however, where reducing dependency is the paramount goal, reducing dependency in public housing represents only one of several conflicting goals in efforts to reform public housing.”

Lance Freeman
For better or for worse, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has become synonymous with public housing. This chapter will look at the implication of HUD’s creation, past and present decisions and potential for the future in the context of the necessity of a comprehensive approach to public housing. Included in this analysis will be a critique of the HOPE VI program – which reflects HUD’s current thought and attitudes towards public housing – and the recently passed the *Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998* (H.R. 4194), drafted by HUD and Congress and signed by President Clinton, a document at whose heart is the intention to deconcentrate poverty and lessen segregation in public housing. The problems of public housing in the United States today are not merely the product of poor design, but of policy decisions made in good faith, with unanticipated repercussions. Even very early decisions to use the architecture and various rules to mold the residents into model citizens should have suggested that this housing was more than just about giving people a place to live. In any case, today we know that housing low-income people is a complex problem. The comprehensive nature of HUD and the acknowledged need for such a cabinet-level department suggests that the awareness has existed at least since 1965. In some ways, we are also burdened with the awareness that many of the issues associated with public housing constitute a multifaceted, full-fledged problem that we have created for ourselves.
A Little HUD History

The legislation for HUD was introduced in bill S. 1599 to the Senate Committee on Government Operations and, on September 19, 1965, made into a Cabinet-level agency. In its Declaration of Purpose is written “The Congress hereby declares that the general welfare and security of the Nation and the health and living standards of our people require, as a matter of national purpose, sound development of our Nation’s urban communities and metropolitan areas in which the vast majority of its people live and work. To carry out such purpose, and in recognition of the increasing importance of housing and urban development in our national life, the Congress finds that establishment of an executive department is desirable to achieve the best administration of the principal programs of the Federal Government which provide assistance for housing and for the development of our Nation’s communities.”

The programs consolidated in the 1965 formation of HUD included: the Housing and Home Finance Agency, Federal Housing Administration, Public Housing Administration, Federal National Mortgage Association, Community Facilities Administration, and the Urban Renewal Administration. The Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA), established in 1947, was the Federal agency primarily concerned with urban affairs and housing, administering a wide variety of interrelated programs, all directed towards better homes and communities. The major programs of this agency have become rooted in our national economy and have grown into a pattern of Federal assistance to states, localities and the private industries. They provide the leverage which most of our state and local governments need to cope with their urban growth. HUD took over these responsibilities under the leadership of Secretary Robert Weaver, the former president of

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78 Establish a Department of Housing and Urban Development, p.7.
79 Ibid, p.22.
the HHFA. Under the new arrangement, Weaver attempted to coordinate the tasks of each to the benefit of all, although as a presidential appointee, the Secretary of HUD changed with each administration. Some Secretaries have had more notable terms than others, some with more presidential support than others. The Clinton administration has played a key role both in the 1993 creation of the HOPE VI program aided by HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros and currently, the passing of the 1998 Housing Bill with the aid of Andrew Cuomo. The legislation will:

Transform public housing
Create housing assistance vouchers
Enable more families to qualify for FHA mortgages
Revitalize and improve public housing developments
Increase funding for Community Development Block Grants
Increase funding for homeless assistance
Expand fair housing programs
Expand the Youthbuild Program
Create homeownership voucher program
Authorize HUD to develop a home rehabilitation demonstration program

The bill has enormous implications for the future of public housing, some apparent and some less so.

It seems reasonable to believe that utopian views inherent in public housing were already starting in the 1950s and that by 1965 the political and social climate of the United States demanded a government level agency be formed to address persistent inequalities and shortcomings in housing, especially since the government had been making public statements attesting to its dedication of decent housing for all Americans
since 1937. By 1973, St. Louis’ infamous Pruitt Igoe would be condemned and razed in phases, widely known as one of public housing’s biggest mistakes.

The Hopes of Hope VI

There are many significant issues that arise from the formation of HUD, from the government’s acknowledgement that the United States was tending away from a vision of itself as a largely agrarian rural society and thereby accepting its urban destiny. Within the context of housing, the consolidation of such inter-related agencies under one roof reflects the comprehensive approach which housing necessitates. How and where people live in cities has an enormous effect on the urban environment -- whether people live in public housing or single family homes will have an impact on the urban environment and quality of society. Such HUD programs as HOPE VI, initially called the Urban Revitalization Demonstration Program (URD) testify to an interest in what people need to live in an urban environment, as well as the how and where. Providing housing was a task informed by sociologists, with planning departments and architects believing that problems would be solved by design.

A 1997 issue of Architecture magazine denounced HUD for its pre-HOPE VI anti-human approach to housing at which time “some of the nation’s best architects were ratcheted into producing the nation’s worst housing (p.96).” “Projects” are aptly named, as housers experimented with how to house the urban underclass. At the root of these designs and rules was how ultimately society would be affected by the housing, not the residents. That the evolution of HUD’s guidelines (as exemplified by such programs as
HOPE VI) should finally get around to what the residents need from a housing
environment is encouraging, as is the policy that allows for blurring of physical and
economic boundaries of public housing into its greater neighborhood context. The
stimulation of this comprehensive approach to serving public housing residents and the
controversy created by promoting mixed income housing or private management speaks
of HUD’s ability to have its hand on current issues, although the forlorn state of most
public housing today was surely the impetus. It is more difficult to decide whether HUD
should be applauded for being forward thinking or decried for its retroactive behavior in
its approach to dealing with the problems of public housing. The problems of public
housing and housing low and very low-income people are not new. Apparently, the
timing was right for H.R. 4194 promoted by HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo,
Representative Lazio (NY) and Congressman Joe Kennedy, such that in an amended
form, it was ultimately accepted by Congress and President Clinton.

HUD will now be considered in light of its role in public housing, specifically as
creator of the HOPE VI program, its active support of moving towards privatization and
project-based private management, the evolution of its policy to achieve its goals and
the nuances of H.R. 4194 as it pertains to housing. This recent signing of HUD’s
appropriations bill into law gives HUD a $24.5 billion dollar budget for “key HUD
programs.” Much of these appropriations will work in tandem with what has already
been introduced by HOPE VI.

Many housing and financing programs fall under the jurisdiction of HUD,
including the recent HOPE VI program. Under a series of HUD programs, attempts have
been made to repair or renovate the deteriorated buildings, modernize, upgrade basic
systems, etc., with limited overall success. Alone, these renovations have done little for
the quality of life in the housing development, as is the case with Franklin Field. The
Baltimore Housing Authority is also in a position of having put millions of dollars into the
repair and renovation of its developments, now asking for permission to raze the same
developments and begin anew for reasons that the housing is both substandard and
unmarketable.\textsuperscript{80} HOPE VI, still one of HUD's top priorities, was established in 1993,
originating with the Senate and the 1992 National Commission organized specifically to
address the revitalization of severely distressed public housing developments. HOPE VI
is now in its second phase. From Hartford and Newark to Denver and San Francisco,
100,000 apartments in the nation's worst public housing projects are being razed under
HOPE VI.\textsuperscript{81} One of the greatest strengths of the HOPE VI program is its flexibility in
responding to the unique needs and objectives of particular projects and housing
authorities.\textsuperscript{82} HOPE VI provides a flexibility and understanding that HUD legislation had
not allowed for previously. It is a unique combination of funds for bricks-and-mortar
needs as well as social and human services.\textsuperscript{83}

As discussed in Chapter 1, previous HUD rules required housing authorities to
maintain building footprints in any renovation to a public housing development. Given
the indifference towards design in the typical public housing development, the effect of
this is the perseverance of substandard urban design and architecture without a
relationship to the neighborhood, to the other buildings in the development and,
ultimately, alienation of residents to the development and each other. So, although for

\textsuperscript{80} Gerald Shields, “City seeks to raze repaired housing; Millions of dollars in federal funds spent on
renovations; Homes 'people don't want,'” \textit{The Baltimore Sun}. November 6, 1998. P.1A.
p. 1.
\textsuperscript{82} Anthony S. Freedman, “Hope VI: Lessons and Issues.” \textit{Journal of Housing and Community
years public housing was being renovated, the same social ills that the renovations sought to remedy were returning, with few exceptions. In this sense, HOPE VI "liberates" LHAs [local housing authorities] to make decisions with private partners that historically have been made for them by HUD or Congress. For example, replacement units need not be provided on the site of a targeted project. They may be located in other areas and the displaced residents receive Section 8 vouchers. Unlike traditional public housing, the site itself may be re-configured and used for commercial and community purposes, as well as housing.\textsuperscript{84}

Physical reconfiguration of the buildings aside, the latest HOPE VI legislation reflects a comprehensive approach to public housing renovation which transcends the idea that the physical environment is the only aspect of public housing influencing the life of a resident. Allowances for social services and community-oriented activities demonstrate the recognition of the deprivations felt by residents that adversely affect self-esteem. Rosenthal lamented, in 1994, that because the various programs have been separate from each other and are not comprehensive, they generally have fallen short of complete success. In some cases, these buildings fell again into deteriorated states only a few years after renovations were completed. Rarely were the social conditions of crime, drug abuse, lack of educational and employment opportunities, or other conditions of family distress positively addressed...Developments that should have been replaced rather than renovated could not be. Even buildings that could have accommodated larger families or better supported family life with improved unit layouts through the construction of simple small additions were required to be completely gutted and reconfigured internally at greater expense, simply to comply with program

\textsuperscript{83} Lane, p.898.
\textsuperscript{84} Freedman, p. 27.
restrictions. Such is the case with the Franklin Field renovations of 1986, as discussed in the previous chapter. The building footprints could not be altered, limiting the effectiveness of the renovations with the result of interior courtyards that are too big for the scale of the buildings. In any case, the financial and legislative support did not exist for the extensive incorporation of social services and community building needed at the development. In addition to the positive effects of physical reconfiguration allowed in revised HUD guidelines, the support of the concept of mixed income is another step in reforming legislation which came to concentrate the poor and jobless in one area.

In Chicago, high rise housing projects are 'corrosive landmarks of poverty and racial segregation' – it is a city whose housing projects are located in eleven of the nation’s fifteen poorest census tracts. The city wants to raze 11,000 apartments, nearly forty percent of its public housing for families, over the next 15 years. At Chicago's infamous Cabrini Green, HOPE VI funds will be used to promote a mixed-income environment, create housing options for residents, test management alternatives, improve security and develop human capital within the local community. The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) has emphasized the physical replacement, rehabilitation, and deconcentration of poverty at the development in an effort to achieve lasting revitalization. Cabrini Green

Figure 23 (right). Four mile stretch of public housing in Chicago, including Robert Taylor Homes.

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85 Journal of Housing, p. 22.
87 Lane, p. 898.
was a victim of the Le Corbusier “Tower in the Park” school of thought which
consented people in high-rise towers, unintentionally leaving the open space around
the building unkempt and unclaimed.

Likewise, the Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago is the typical red brick high-rise,
begun in 1959 and completing a four mile corridor of public housing (see Figure 21).
While the new high-rises were welcome replacements for a shantytown, they quickly
became the nation’s largest government sponsored ghetto. It, too, will be renovated
under HOPE VI, with $1.5 million dollars allocated to social services given that 96% of
adults at the development are unemployed and the knowledge that little may change if
they are simply moved from the development. Robert Taylor is unusual because no new
public housing will be built on the cleared site. Instead, smaller mixed income
developments and an industrial area are planned. Some public housing is planned
nearby. 88

Issues of deconcentration arise in H.R.4194 which opens the door to allow
working class people into public housing, provides 290,000 new Section 8 vouchers over
the next few years and allows 50,000 families to apply Section 8 mobile vouchers
towards a mortgage. Efforts at deconcentration are denounced by Michael Pyatok, an
Oakland based architect and advocate of affordable housing. Pyatok states that both
HUD and the Congress for New Urbanism (CNU) subscribe to the erroneous assumption
that concentrations of poor people are the major source of their maladies and that
dispersing them...will make neighborhoods more functional and stable. 89 Turner
(p.373) makes the very strong statement that today’s concentration is the legacy of

89 McKee, p. 97.
decades of discrimination and segregation. Indeed, in the 1998 housing bill, the intention is to transform public housing by reducing segregation by race and income, among other things, and to expand fair housing programs that reduce housing discrimination. Earlier, this chapter discussed the need for a comprehensive approach and, in fact, this new bill acknowledges segregation and discrimination in housing as detriments to deconcentration or, conversely, purveyors of concentration. Pyatok makes a good point, though, that concentrations of poor people are not necessarily the problem, only one makes the observation, time and again of inferior low-income communities – in terms of housing options, access to transportation and the general condition of the physical environment. They receive little political support, shoddy maintenance of infrastructure and poor service delivery. One can almost picture immigrants who are afraid of “the system” or unknowledgeable of their “equal” rights, failing to speak up and be heard because to do so in their homeland was a crime, at worst, a waste of time, at best. The assumption here is that deconcentration will not break up families or uproot people who don’t want to leave, but rather it will provide for more options. As such, it might not be considered a need, but instead a worthy goal.

The Role of Management

Another trend supported by HUD and encouraged by bonus points in HOPE VI applications is the use of private management services, a job which, when applied to public housing developments, becomes multi-faceted and extremely critical. In the case of Franklin Field, poor management in the years following the 1986 renovation has been identified as one of the main reasons for Franklin Field’s current dismal condition. A
recent interview with Kathleen Field of the BHA reveals the BHA's new attitude towards management, which will be decentralized, with on-site or local management available.\textsuperscript{90} One private manager acknowledges that “housing authorities are not straightforward real estate owners, whose principal objective is the bottom line. Most agencies see themselves as social services agencies whose missions include assisting residents with programs such as job skills, child care and access to other social programs. Private managers need to understand this mission and what role they must assume in achieving it.\textsuperscript{91} Currently, public housing authorities (PHAs) are expected to identify resources to improve safety, human and social services, education and job opportunities for residents in order to enhance family living. They are also expected to provide space for resident services (preferably on-site or nearby) and create a comprehensive service plan that meets the needs of the residents. All these efforts should promote the social and economic independence of public housing families.\textsuperscript{92} The question has been raised in the past, “Should PHAs be in the management business?” The National Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing Case Study of the Boston Housing Authority’s Commonwealth development suggests (p.17) that private management “may help preserve the public's investment in low-income housing.” On the one hand, residents of public housing have distinct and perhaps, special, needs that necessitate a certain amount of attention, but is the PHA serving that need any better than private management? Seemingly, the identification of the problems and needs of the buildings and the needs of the residents has to take place on the part of management. As well, the terms of the contract that the tenant has signed in order to take up residency must

\textsuperscript{90} Currently, the BHA’s system of management is highly centralized, with all maintenance calls received in their downtown office building at 52 Chauncy Street. The calls are then passed on to a local person causing a delay of about two weeks. The BHA had a customer service focus under Doris Bunty in the early 1980s, before it went into receivership.

be upheld by management and adhered to by the residents. With effort, this can be done successfully by a PHA or private management, although the prevailing theory suggests that if a service can be provided more efficiently by the private market, rather than public subsidy, it should be done as such. Maybe a better question to have asked would have been, "Do PHAs want to be in the housing business?"

An off-the-record comment by one public housing official indicates that there are those who work for the PHA who don’t like poor people and minorities – would public housing residents be any worse served by a private firm whose bottom line is admittedly economic? Private management companies, at least, have a reputation to uphold. In a film chronicling the rehabilitation of Fidelis Way, now known as Commonwealth, a resident speaks of the benefit of private management saying that they, the residents, are not treated like poor people, but people who happen to live in public housing. Commonwealth is often compared to Franklin Field because they were renovated concurrently in the 1980s, yet with vastly different outcomes. A number of issues contributed to the current state of each, one of which is pertinent to our discussion here – while Franklin Field continued to be managed by the BHA, Commonwealth received management from a strong private management company, Corcoran Management Company (CMC). CMC boasts a support staff with expertise in maintenance, contracting, fiscal management, and management of residents. It experiences less bureaucracy and more efficiency than the BHA.93 Part of the problem with Franklin Field today is the poor management that occurred in the years following the renovation. Other private management companies have not had the same success as CMC and, in fact, there are certain variables that affect performance that will be discussed in the context of

92 Lane, p.879.
93 Boston Housing Authority: Commonwealth Development Case Study, p.4-14.
actual projects in the following paragraph. Management that deals with public housing by hand-holding rather than as a commercial exchange, does in fact encourage dependency, although to a degree, it can also be considered an element of customer service. The next paragraph will discuss the management techniques at a number of mixed income developments, pertinent and perhaps applicable to a new system of management in light of the current redesign of Franklin Field.

Because management plays such a critical role in the long-term success of a development, the approach of management in a variety of mixed income projects – any mix or combination of very low, low, moderate or market rate – is presented here. Cityscape’s article entitled “Mixed Income Housing: Factors for Success” describes management techniques at the following developments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Income Mix</th>
<th>&lt;50% AMI</th>
<th>50-79% AMI</th>
<th>80-99% AMI</th>
<th>&gt;100% AMI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harbor Point in Boston, Massachusetts</td>
<td></td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones Family Apartments in San Francisco, California</td>
<td></td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emery Bay Club and Apartments in Emeryville, California</td>
<td></td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tent City in Boston, Massachusetts</td>
<td></td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Timberlawn Crescent in Montgomery County, Maryland
Income Mix | <50% AMI | 50-79% AMI | 80-99% AMI | >100% AMI
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
29% | 27% | 7% | 37%

The Residences at Ninth Square in New Haven, Connecticut
Income Mix | <50% AMI | 50-79% AMI | 80-99% AMI | >100% AMI
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
26% | 46% | 9% | 19%

New Quality Hill in Kansas City, Missouri
Income Mix | <50% AMI | 50-79% AMI | 80-99% AMI | >100% AMI
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
12% | 34% | 11% | 43%

The different models of management in each case reflect the necessity of each to operate the project under its own specific conditions. For this reason, a variety of management options are presented to exemplify the need to tailor a system of management to each development, rather than blanketing all developments under a uniform system. In each case, the location and the income mix become important factors in determining their respective management strategies.

Management, in all cases, deal with both the property and the inhabitants to varying degrees. Generally, issues such as rule enforcement, prompt collection of the rent and eviction, if necessary, are exercised in all of these projects. The Jones Family Apartments renters enjoy “an intensive staff effort to build the community and to help individuals and families cope with their lives. A professional management/social service team works to support the physical and social structures of the building.” In a very different environment, friction between tenants and constant maintenance plague Tent City. Timberlawn is similar to Commonwealth in the sense that the Housing Opportunity Commission of Montgomery County is a public entity that contracted out to a private
management firm. The company's on-site manager has experience in managing a market-rate development and maintaining it attractively, also similar to CMC. The manager has used market rate and subsidized units interchangeably, helping a market rate resident who lost his job to keep the unit by qualifying for subsidy. The management of Ninth Square, because of its location in a rather run down neighborhood, has had to focus on maintaining the area around the building and pay strict attention to detail to maintain the development's curbside appeal. Tenant screening is extremely rigorous and the management company has expressed no interest in maintaining social services for low-income residents. Quality Hill attributes its success to careful maintenance and a management that screens prospective residents to determine their adaptability to the project's culture.

This article is quite comprehensive in its suggestions that factor into the success of mixed income housing. Indeed, management plays a very critical role. In a more general sense, management is the presence of rule enforcement and the caretaker of the property. Successful management in an environment that empowers the residents to take control over their own actions and responsibility for the development is the goal of the redesign proposed in Chapter IV. Given the track record of the Boston Housing Authority, especially in the case of Franklin Field, the best solution to management would be a public-private partnership between the BHA and a private management company, to be periodically evaluated after two to three years. (One of the biggest benefits to private management is its greater potential for exposure to market-rate practices, hopefully resulting in an attitude of high expectations on the part of the residents.) After the evaluation period, one of two things will happen. The BHA will have learned enough about the private practice of service delivery to successfully
maintain the property or the private management company will have its contract extended. The BHA should be given a chance, but the private management of both Harbor Point and Commonwealth -- two precursors to HOPE VI, that both took the comprehensive approach supported by this thesis -- suggest that private management is almost a prerequisite for success.

Conclusions

Although the actual funding for HOPE VI only applies to the most severely distressed public housing in an area, the ramifications of the change in HUD legislation allowing HOPE VI to exist, affects how renovations will be carried out in all public housing. More than anything, HOPE VI changes how planners, architects and public administrators think about the housing developments with which they deal. When juxtaposing the word project as descriptive of these housing developments with the definition test or experiment, it becomes reasonable to interpret HUD's new rules as the outcome of an evaluation process finally allowing for the physical and social rectification of past shortcomings. Although the funding may not be available to implement many of the necessary changes to revitalize an area, the way of thinking about the needs of the people and the buildings has been amplified, and --for those who entertained HOPE VI ideas and ideals before the legislation -- finally legitimized. And the funding is not only increasing with government support, but has a goal of economic integration and deconcentration in public housing, albeit controversial.

One can see how HUD's current approach and the more recent housing components of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (H. R. 4194) might have effected different changes in the renovations of Franklin Field. None of the
elements presented in this chapter – legislative support from HUD’s guidelines or HOPE VI, deconcentration and the funding of such efforts or strong management – can alone predict success for a development. The comprehensive effort embedded in the creation of HUD is the legacy that it must live up to and spread as an ideology for affordable housing. The extent to which all mixed income will be promoted in the future is now the issue, because housing the poorest of the poor and immigrant populations is still quite an unresolved issue. Unfortunately, the value of such things as education, self-esteem and other intangibles seem to be the key. True the supportive services are not always well utilized, but their existence and availability is a start.

This thesis will not discuss the guidelines and regulations necessary for the continued success of individual housing environments, but it is important to include such guidelines in leases and make them clear to residents for a safe, healthy environment. The signing of such a contract and the knowledge of all residents of acceptable behavior is the only way in which resident surveillance and enforcement can occur.

Chapter IV will now apply principles responding to the shortcomings of public housing, some of which reflect ideals of HOPE VI, all of which express an attitude about the role of public housing and its obligations to society.
Applying the Lessons Learned to the Case of Franklin Field

Figure 24. Original Site Plan of Franklin Field, 1954.

Figure 25. Franklin Field site after 1986 renovations. Roads highlighted in black were added during renovation.
Figure 26. New Proposal for Franklin Field site.
Figure 27. Model of new proposal showing massing of buildings and park area.
The process through which this latest re-design of Franklin Field occurred involves a number of intertwined influences, predominantly involving the application of lessons learned from the current condition of public housing and revised policy stances. These issues informed standard design procedures involving site analysis, program and consideration for the ultimate users of the design.

Chapter IV is the result of the research of all of the preceding chapters. It projects, in a sense, a potential next step in terms of the history and stereotypes embedded in public housing, a response to problems of the past. In a general sense but a specific context, this chapter will emphasize issues of form, incorporation of supportive services and an evolution into a mixed income model as debated in Chapter I. Chapter II has served as a reference for descriptions of the specific context of the Franklin Field public housing development, the larger site and, to an extent, the client. In Chapter III, the feasibility of such a project within HUD guidelines, standards set by HOPE VI and other current issues in public housing — such as property management — have been outlined and established for an understanding of the dos and don'ts involved in public housing today. This chapter will as well set the stage for the consideration and evaluation of other re-designed/renovated housing developments.
Goals of the Reconfiguration

The overwhelming desire of this re-design is to reincorporate the site of Franklin Field back into its surrounding community as well as emphasize the notion of community at the current Franklin Field Housing Development through “good” design and spatial relationships. A major constraint of this attempt was to remain realistic about the project, that it be practical and address actual problems of public housing (such as issues of responsibility for public space.) In addition, the need to stay within the confines of a budget for the development of the project was considered, for which the use of a modular form for the courtyard was optimal.

The following assumptions about process and approach were made before and during the re-design, based on an examination of affordable and public housing literature, site visits, interviews and site analysis, resulting in the design presented here:

1- None of the existing buildings are reused, given that there are few positive associations with public housing and the insensitivity to its inhabitants that the original design and configuration suggests. The buildings were a detriment to attempts to make the new design contextual.

2- Close attention is paid to the street edge, especially Westview Street along Franklin Field, which is its most public face. There are four existing edge conditions that merit different treatment. Care will be taken to differentiate the nature of the various sides of the project site and the transition from one side to another will be carefully considered.
3- The wall running along Blue Hill Avenue extends into the site. Initially, the wall encompassed the site, when the land belonged to the parks department and was a part of Franklin Field. The wall is acknowledged to be, traditionally, a social space. The wall will be used to form gathering and social spaces and will sometimes change its form and language as necessary for continuity and reasonable spatial relationships.

Figure 28. Map of Franklin Field Development showing various site conditions to which site analysis responded.

Figure 29. The wall as it turns onto Westview Street.
4- Additional vehicular and pedestrian circulation will be introduced on-site, especially for continuity and coherence with the surrounding neighborhood. Currently, the roads running around the site end abruptly as they approach the cemetery; there is no way to circumnavigate the site.

Figure 30. Disruption in street pattern exemplified by shaded area. Also note the lack of continuity in residential pattern.

mixed income Furthermore, the roads intersecting the site from north to south do not continue the pattern of the surrounding streets, thereby causing further distinction between the development and the surrounding neighborhood.

5- Affordable homeownership units are incorporated into the design both on the Franklin Field site and the surrounding neighborhood. This addresses issues of and the variety of aspirations among the perspective residents. The homeownership units are considered in light of the extension of Stratton Street and in terms of the implications for funding resulting from the recent passage of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (H.R. 4194).
6- Attempts are made to maintain or increase current density (since affordable units will be lost in the transition to mixed income). The unit count will increase slightly, from 346 family dwellings plus 80 elderly units (a total of 426) to 436 total rental units and 50 homeownership properties – 23 along the cemetery edge of the site and 27 scattered infill sites on adjacent streets.

7- There is a need for a more pronounced “entrance” – i.e. the tip of the site forming an intersection with Blue Hill Avenue, Stratton Street and Westview Street.

Figure 31. Commercial edge of Franklin Field development where Blue Hill Ave, Stratton and Westview Streets meet.

Figures 32 and 33. Views of buildings along Blue Hill Avenue used as contextual/design references.
8- A pedestrian street is desired as a link between all of the housing in the new development. Its importance will be manifold including: serving as a visual link throughout the site, creating both pedestrian and automotive venues, creating a broader public realm, and public "green space" throughout the site.
The Program

Reconfiguration of the Franklin Field site with sensitivity to both residents and context resulting in:

- 436 units of rental townhouses, flats and duplexes arranged around 11 courtyards
- 50 homes for private homeownership infilling empty lots on adjacent streets
- Linear park spanning from end-to-end of the project site

The following supportive services/facilities will be incorporated:

- Daycare center
- Classrooms for English as a Second Language, job training, skills acquisition
- Branch of Boston Public Library/afterschool study
- Task force office space
- Community room/community gathering space
- Community Garden
I. Rejoining the current site of Franklin Field with the neighborhood: 
Influence of the Site on Design Decisions and Layout

Analysis:

Figure 35. View along Stratton Street, immediately to the south of the site.

The immediate neighborhood of Franklin Field public housing development consists of discrete pieces which might be described simply as the field (Franklin Field aka Harambee Park), the dense residential streets from Stratton and below, the cemetery, the commercial district along Blue Hill Avenue and the Franklin Field development. These pieces present four different edge conditions that this re-design must address in its efforts to be contextual. Furthermore, although there does not appear to be any logic behind the placement of streets in the surrounding neighborhood and, as such no reason to imitate their patterns, there are no adjacent streets that directly penetrate the development, giving the sense, physically, that the development is severed from
the greater neighborhood fabric. There are roads at the periphery of the development, especially approaching the elderly housing and the cemetery, which literally lead nowhere. The first attempt at design involved attempts to re-order street for continuity and addressing the edge conditions, always keeping in mind intentions for the variety of housing desired on the site.

94 As noted earlier, this disjointedness is a common practice in the design of the sites for public housing developments.
Result:

The outcome of what might be considered the first design phase involved extending the houses along Stratton Street further east along the cemetery. The incorporation of homeownership units was a concept that grew from the continuum of housing opportunities that were to be provided at this site, the spectrum of which includes: single family homes, rental

Figure 37. Photo of houses proposed along Stratton Street, on the periphery of the Catholic Cemetery. Stratton Street has been extended through site, to reconnect w/ Westview Street. The homes enhance the fabric of Stratton St and provide opportunities for affordable homeownership.

Figure 38. View from newly created intersection of Stratton and Westview.
townhouses, apartments and
duplexes. Extending the single
family homes and triple-deckers that currently occupy
Stratton Street reinforced the residential edge, forming a
logic for the continuation of Stratton Street in front of the houses. (See Figures 37 and 38.) This, of course, provide
access to the new homeownership units,
simultaneously allowing circulation around the entire site to Westview Street where, previously, the road simply ended. The site has also been laid out so that roads such as Lucerne Street and Lyford Street extend into the site, continuing the system of roads and reconnecting the previously severed site with the adjacent neighborhood.

Figure 39. Extension of Lucerne St into site.

Figure 40. View of extension of Lyford Street towards park
The project takes advantage of the extension of community streets into the new development as an opportunity to bring the neighboring community into the new development. At the corner of Lucerne and Stratton Streets, a branch of the Boston Public Library is proposed, adjacent to a daycare center that would serve the entire community. Across from the library is proposed a neighborhood park, a water park for children.\footnote{Other such parks abound in Cambridge and other parts of Boston.}
Analysis:

II. Responding to Edge Conditions.

The effect of the neighborhood context on building form.

Although the use of a courtyard form had been previously decided upon for emphasis on community as well as cultural significance (see Chapter I), the various edge conditions dictated the orientation of the buildings, and the resulting access to services supplied the rationale for the different apartment types and distribution. The prominence of the Westview Street façade, as seen from across the field demanded they that form a rhythmic stretch of entrances, interrupted only by an occasional through street and the spaces between which serve as service courts for parking and collection of refuse. (See Figure 43.) Stratton Street's residential nature demanded a feel of smaller horizontal scale in relation to single family and triple-decker houses. In all cases, but especially
along Stratton Street, the vertical scale of neighboring houses have been respected for optimum visual coherence.

Result:

The courtyard was designed to be modular to respond to various circumstances. In working with the site, the standard courtyard form had to respond to three different conditions: (1) the curve of Stratton Street, (2) the need to meet the street edge, which sometimes caused variations in corner lots, and (3) the prominence and regularity of Westview Street.

Figure 44. Current view of the Franklin Field Housing Development (Westview Street) from across Franklin Field.
Seven of the eleven buildings forming the new Franklin Field Housing are located along Westview Street, the other four face Stratton Street. This presents the most public face of the building onto the public park space and always makes clear where the entrance is. This is in striking contrast to the often hidden/blurred locations of the entrances that exist in most public housing. On Stratton Street, the facades differ in the sense that they are longer and more fragmented, horizontally, both for design/site considerations and as part of an effort to emulate the character of the variety of residential facades found on Stratton Street. The tip where Westview and Stratton meet Blue Hill Avenue is not programmed for residential buildings but for limited commercial space and open

Figure 45. Front entrances of buildings, prominently located along Westview St.

Figure 46. Hidden front entrance, typical of Franklin Field buildings.
Figure 47. View along Stratton Street showing relationship of building facades to houses.

Figure 48. Aerial view showing relationship between buildings on Stratton.
public space which allows visual and public realm penetration into the site. This vista culminates in a new branch for the public library and a private daycare center, additional programming intended to achieve the goal of allowing the lives of residents of the surrounding neighborhood and the residents of this new affordable housing development to touch, if not to intermingle. The part of the site located at its heart, which is not programmed for housing, is developed into a linear park that is intended, as well to serve as more programmed outdoor recreational space than the nearby field provides.
Figure 50. Aerial view of entrance and public space culminating in view of proposed public library and daycare on right.

A map of the Boston area confirms a dearth of playgrounds in this area of the city. (See shading of parks on map in Figure 1.)

Figure 51. Detail of linear park opening western end of site to neighborhood. Note wall curvature.
Analysis:

III. Application of a contextual icon into the site.

    Use of the Franklin Field wall to create gathering spaces.

    Reference to the wall along the Blue Hill Avenue edge of Franklin Field is made by Hillel Levine as a gathering place in the 1950s and 60s, referred to in *Death of a Jewish American Community* as follows:

    "There was plenty of room on the wall on a late summer day. But in early fall, with the advent of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, wall space was at a premium...The wall at Franklin Field was the one opportunity for all of the disparate neighborhood characters to connect." ⁹⁶

    The wall is the true edge to Franklin Field, of which this site was a part until 1954. This redesign intends to take advantage of the history and nostalgia embedded in the form of the grey stone wall to define gathering spaces as one moves from the Blue Hill Avenue edge, east towards the cemetery through the open space defined by the edges of the buildings. Given the fact that the wall defined the boundary of the park and is as such inherently a separator, care has been taken in its application on the site. The wall has been brought into the site to unify – to create gathering spaces and to bring both residents and non-residents within the public space boundaries of the development.

Result:
The symbolism of the wall is carried out throughout the site in the reconfiguration, as the wall becomes a high wall, a low wall, a path, the foundation for the library, in every case defining gathering space. The wall undulates and turns corners. Its “liveliness” forms a contrast with the formal and more restrained nature of the buildings. It runs east-west across the site and helps to form the spaces that comprise the linear park which serves both the residents of the development and the community as large. (See Figures 49 and 54.) As noted earlier, the sense of the wall is for gathering.

Figure 52. The wall as it is allowed to enter new site.
Figure 53. The wall as it is used to create gathering spaces within the park.

Figure 54. Linear park through center of site, where wall is used to define gathering spaces. Also note relationship to rears of courtyards.
Analysis:

IV. Circulation through the site.

Safe zones for pedestrians and cars made possible by means other than cul-de-sac – the use of the *woonert*.

Both people and cars need to have access to the site, although the use of streets by both is sometimes considered incompatible. It is observed that the traffic needing to drive through the site would be limited to that needing to go from one courtyard to another. Because streets reasonably extend into and from the existing neighborhood, there is no need to "cut through" the development to get to a destination other than the housing. In most developing countries and rural villages, cars and people use the same streets. The need is to make such an environment as amenable and practical as possible.

Figure 55. Original 1954 site plan. The cul-de-sac is not necessarily the only answer to pedestrian safety.
Woonerfs have been used to varying degrees of success in a number of different countries. A woonerf, or pedestrian street, has been incorporated into this plan. The interior streets have been laid out using concrete pavers, as much for the visual effect of a change in surface and by extension a change in use as for the gentle vibration and resulting hum which psychologically causes drivers to slow down. The extension of the pavers into the service courtyard and to the street’s edge denote that a change

Figure 56. View of the site. Note change of materials at site demonstrating application of pavers for the woonerf.

Figure 57. Detail of woonerf as it extends into service courtyard.
is occurring in the driving environment. It also creates a visual tension, drawing people both into and out of the site and unifying the site with a common visual element.

A three foot wide sidewalk has been incorporated along the park's edge, acknowledging that some pedestrians might not feel so confident about sharing the street with cars. Although, if one is strolling with a friend, it would be more comfortable to be in the street than cramped on a sidewalk. Great planning minds like that of Jane Jacobs believe the street can be comfortably used by both cars and people.

Figure 58. Use of pavers to create woonerf, denoting special use of service courtyards and interior streets of the proposed development. Woonerf creates continuity between the apartment buildings and park area.
Analysis:

Practical community-building design and programming elements.

People from a variety of backgrounds – American as well as foreign born, have traditions of gardening vegetables and/or flowers. Sometimes these gardens are for the recreation of having one's hands in soil, nurturing plants, other times, it is for the added nutrition of vegetables in one's diet, an additional expense in one's budget. It can also be for the cultivation of hard to find or very expensive vegetables from one's homeland or travels.

Result:

A community gardening space has been included on-site. The community garden will be centrally located to discourage theft of vegetables and will be maintained by the gardeners and a committee of residents designated to oversee the fair allocation of plots and maintenance of the area.

Figure 59. View of community garden at site.
The Courtyard Configuration and Layout of Units

The housing looks to the courtyard model for the reasons presented in Chapter I, designed as a flexible form to meet the needs of the site and the residents. The form chosen for the courtyard was instrumental for meeting the needs of the building in light of the four potential edge conditions: the front (facing the street), the back (opening to the park/central court), the street length (which needs to meet the street edge) and the service court edge (which forms a relationship to the neighboring courtyard configuration and allows direct access to the courtyard). As an inherently introverted form, the courtyard had to be carefully manipulated to create an inviting interior environment that has the ability to extend into the neighborhood and to create a larger spatial relationship...
with the other buildings in the new development. The majority of the units will have a direct courtyard side and a service courtyard side, as much for ventilation as for a visual and social relationship with the total environs of the building.

In its basic form, the courtyard model developed for this project is modular in form and has three essential components: (1) a front edge which houses the main entrance which accesses both laundry and mail services and a gathering space for residents of the building which can double as classroom/office space for the provision of social services and also contains a kitchen for the multi-purpose/cultural uses that this room might receive, (2) a street edge, lined by individual townhouses with entrances both on the street and the courtyard side to add life to the street and (3) a service edge from which there is no direct access to the units (only to the courtyard) which incorporates both flats and duplexes. Parking and garbage removal are located in the service alley.

The height of the building is 37 feet including a three foot parapet wall along the perimeter of the roof which increases to seven feet in the

Figure 61. Diagram of building sections.
front (for a total of approximately forty feet) to hide HVAC output and the elevator shaft penetration of the roof, which is generally 3-4 feet. The buildings are oriented north-south and the interior courtyard, in its standard form, is sixty feet, a distance which allows the full height of the building on each side to receive sunlight.\(^{97}\) The service courtyards, as well, have a width of 50-60 feet. In the seven buildings along Westview Street, winter winds from the northwest will be deflected by the front of the buildings and summer winds from the southwest will be allowed to penetrate through the more open end of the courtyards. The linear park will be somewhat protected by buildings along Westview and the angle of the buildings along Stratton Street will protect them from the full force of the winter winds. (See relationship of elements in Figure 63.)

The physical design of the buildings allows for thirty-foot depths of each “leg” such that each unit has a courtyard side and a street or service side, and thus the opportunity for cross ventilation. The exception to this would be the units housed on the second and third floors.

\(^{97}\) According to sun path diagrams in Lechner, p.484.
of the front edge. Although they have the convenience of elevator service, they do not enjoy frontage onto the courtyard, but rather a public terrace on the second and third floors extending out into the courtyard. This is the only section where more than two families share an entrance.

The courtyard is the area to which the majority of units are intended to relate, the area through which all must pass to take advantage of the services provided in this housing microcosm and in which a relationship to the environment will be formed. Similarly, this is the aspect of the project that hopes to democratically provide "defensible space" in that almost all have direct private access to the courtyard, either through a small yard or a balcony and neighbors should at some point have visual recognition of each other. Each courtyard will be home to approximately forty families.

Figure 64. Drawing of typical courtyard ground plan.
and/or individuals. The hope is that by having a U-shaped configuration there will be a heightened ability to recognize outsiders and, in addition to a direct stake in the well being of the physical environment, the residents should feel more control and therefore feel more empowered within their environment (and by extension their personal life.)

Figure 65. Section through courtyard towards front of building.

Figure 66. Sketch of quality of life/variety of uses of spaces within courtyard.
Although not depicted in the drawings or model, there is the assumption that a gate – of wrought iron rather than brick – will be present at the back entrance to the courtyard. Residents would have the option of keeping the gate open or closed. As the neighborhood is likely to get better with increased investment in the area but currently has a fairly high crime rate, it is difficult to forecast the need for the gate. In any case, the gate is to be more transparent than opaque – that is, it is not to hide the residents or keep them enclosed within the boundaries of the development, but to heighten safety by discouraging entry, when necessary, into the courtyard. The omission of gates in the drawings and model is to suggest that the courtyard is, at least, visually penetrable and that there is a suggestion of the potential for overflow from the courtyard into the larger public realm.

The arrangement of different types of units is not casual, but has direct relevance to the shape of the site and to issues of defensible space. The service edge, which tends to be on the inside edge between buildings, is always fairly regular (i.e. straight),

*Figure 67. Relationship of proposed buildings to each other, to street and courtyard edges and to proposed homeownership units.*
whereas the street edge, along which we find the townhouses, has a livelier, more irregular presence as the townhouse units shift and separate in an attempt to reach and maintain the street edge, while re-forming the courtyard dimension. The dual entrances for the townhouses play an important role in reflecting signs of life on what might otherwise appear to be an unoccupied street.

Figure 68. Model equivalent of above drawing

Jane Jacob notes, in a larger context of successful streets that “There must be eyes on the street, eyes belonging to those we might call the natural proprietors of the street. The buildings on a street equipped to handle strangers and to insure the safety of both residents and strangers, must be oriented to the street. They cannot turn their backs or blank sides on it and leave it blind.” The units on the service side consist, for the most part, of one and two bedroom flats and three bedroom duplexes. The rooms are a variety of sizes, to fit a variety of familial and cultural needs. Similarly, the community rooms, located in the front section of each building, are intended to allow for communal baking needs on ethnic holidays, for birthdays and quincenarios, for larger and extended-family types of celebrations and for learning English or learning how to write a resume to find a job. As well, the courtyards could potentially be extensions of such activity, as the rules governing the lease allow.
This reconfiguration proposal is but one approach to applying lessons learned from the mistakes of most public housing, as the developments exist today. Any house or housing project has the potential for success, as long it takes into account a few critical factors with the utmost sensitivity: its users, its context and its maintenance – that is the ultimate thrust of this thesis. The political atmosphere in which it is created is also important. Policy does not dictate good or poor design, it only provides constraints within which the design is created. Even flexible and less restrictive policy can create dismal architecture. Today we know, from successful and unsuccessful developments, that good design practices – those that are contextual and don’t set apart public housing residents apart as different are the best environments for their residents. For this reason, a comprehensive approach – e.g. a knowledge of history and policy, context and dialogue between all parties with a stake in the outcome – is imperative in the future of housing low-income individuals.

98 Jane Jacobs. The Death and Life of Great American Cities, p. 35.
While this section will conclude the thesis, it would be misleading to suggest that there can be a satisfactory conclusion to a body of work based on the evolution of both policy and changing thoughts regarding how low-income people should live. This thesis represents only a moment in time and thought or, more appropriately, a moment in housing history.

This thesis denounces public housing for its insensitivity to its context and its inability to address the changing needs of its current residents, highlighting the role of policy as an instrument for change. The architecture that we have come to know as public housing is socially disabling, the results of stereotypes (which are partially substantiated by statistics – e.g., levels of poverty and numbers of single parents) and physical design, often non-contextual and spatially alienating from the points of view of both residents and the larger community.

The policy that brought about public housing was conceived of in a different time and place, figuratively speaking, from where public housing has found itself in recent decades. What can now be interpreted as incomplete policy changes over the years caused upheavals in its resident populations as policy makers did not seem to anticipate the change in needs of public housing populations with the changing racial, economic and ethnic groups which would come to occupy public housing. As such, this thesis took the opportunity for a comprehensive look at public housing and its need for support by effective and forward looking policy based on the stark reality of most public housing
today, proposing mixed income and social services within the spatially enabling architecture of a multi-family courtyard type. While no policy proposals have been made in this thesis, recent policy changes in the form of H.R. 4194 and HOPE VI have been examined critically and applied to the site of the Franklin Field public housing development. The study of past renovations and the ultimate reconfiguration of Franklin Field in this attempt is to emphasize policy as an essential ingredient to physical and social change in public housing and also that its evolution into an affordable housing reflective of the diversity of our urban environment.

As policy shifts to accommodate how people live in public housing and the effect of the environment upon its inhabitants — including physical, social and economic isolation — a broader range of examples will begin to appear within what we know of today as public housing. Public housing is being reformed, for better or worse, and has the potential to take any number of forms, especially as government parties change and HUD secretaries come and go. More proactive rather than reactive policy needs to be passed, precisely because (1) public housing affects million of people in the United States and (2) architecture tends to be rather permanent, once a building is built it is expected to have a very long lifetime. Finally, in the near future a competent and ongoing system of monitoring and evaluation is necessary to understand the impact of imposed policy changes and the need for further intervention.

The caution now would be to take care about how new policy is applied – to learn from the far and recent past and create housing that is flexible enough in configuration and spatial arrangement to meet the requirements and special needs of any number of populations. As attitudes and approaches to public housing evolve, it is also necessary
to think of how the need for public housing arose and the niche that it fills today. Are housers and policy makers satisfied with public housing’s current condition? Are they thinking long term in the effects of today’s reforms? To what are reformers reacting?

Public housing was always intended to serve those not adequately served by the private housing market. It was also intended to be temporary in terms of the length of tenure of its residents, but what does this mean, exactly in terms of the approach to design? Was it intended to be uncomfortable or inadequate so that people would not stay long or so that they would feel greater satisfaction with a new residence? How long is temporary? What level of quality is desired by the *Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998* (H.R. 4194)? To strive for ideals was never the downfall of public housing, to impose on people how to live as human beings, and ultimately to create low expectations caused problems. Public housing is, in many ways, an experiment gone bad, but it has been stated time and again that we learn more from our failures than from our successes. Unfortunately, it is the current state of affairs that the “successful” developments, such as the Commonwealth public housing development and Tent City, both in Boston, are viewed as anomalies, given the overwhelming inferiority found in public housing across the United States.

There is much inherent in the recent *Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998* that reflects an observation and a strong learning curve from the public housing built decades ago but the fear is that the image of public housing is changing but the content might not be, as in housing proposal Option B presented to the BHA. (See Afterword.) The courtyard is proposed in this thesis as a typological precedent that Polyzoides notes, “does not necessarily lead to imitation but can rather lead to
transformation.” In redressing the architecture of public housing, in no case should a style be uniformly applied, but explored for its uniqueness in solving a certain problem or problems. It is also important to remember that the architecture alone does not determine how people will live within its walls, that a comprehensive social program based on specific needs is, as well, often an imperative.

The efforts of this thesis have been to explore a few concepts — notably the courtyard, income mixing and the inclusion of supportive services — and to suggest how policy might be considered and eventually materialize into a reasonable product. Assumptions regarding the design were made by considering the shortcomings of the development in its current state, as well as indications regarding potential changes which could not be implemented under then-current policy when the project was renovated in 1986. The ultimate form and synthesis of the issues presented in this thesis — within the boundaries of current policy — could have taken any shape and gone through any number of evolutions based on personal opinions/perceptions, but for the restriction of time. Yes, this thesis presents an analysis and a solution, but not the solution. There is no one right answer, even if one should consider that the solution presented happens to be “right.”

So the questions remain – how will the ideas and processes presented in this thesis evolve? What can and should reasonably be done to this project to make it better? More viable? More applicable and comprehensible to others facing less-than-adequate public housing?
The answers to these questions depend on our attitude towards public and affordable housing, our knowledge of its context and the policy within which we must work. The need for a collaborative effort (hopefully one which includes dialogues with the public housing residents)\textsuperscript{99} is important in exploring all facets of the problem faced and imperative for finding solutions based on the range of experiences that an interdisciplinary group would bring. Precedents are important to research and note, but understanding of the individual circumstances are most crucial to solving the individual problem.

In the next round of public housing revitalization more observations and more learning must take place, all of the individuals and professions involved in the pursuit of "good" housing need to acknowledge that it is an ongoing process. Society is constantly evolving and becoming increasingly multi-cultural and diverse. People, the basis of society, are complex entities that are constantly evolving, and as such, there is nothing final to the process. The following quote, therefore, seems appropriate to this diatribe.

"It has been my experience that one can never accept an architectural or planning solution as final. Every problem seems to require a fresh analysis, a new approach, a different angle. As soon as an idea has become formalized into a rule or procedure, and as soon as designers give up the adventurous search, the solution

\textsuperscript{99} The author would like to note the impossibility of meeting with the residents and/or resident Task Force of Franklin Field during this thesis period and the eight months prior to the actual writing of the thesis. She did not receive any response to her inquiries when trying to contact either the resident leader of the Task Force or the appointed officer, Alexander Lynn.
used in the past seems to dry up and lose its quality and clarity...When an idea has become conventional it is time to think it through again. Never ending exploration and the charting of new ways is the life-force of architect and the New Town planner, whose shield of battle should bear the simple device – a question mark.”

Clarence Stein
Towards New Towns for America, p.227

It has taken public housing many years to admit to its failures which, in some ways, could only be done when PHAs or government were in a position to rectify those problems. Many of the public housing developments that have been torn down recently, including Chicago’s infamous Robert Taylor Homes (which included a section referred to as “The Hole,”) have only been able to do so much given recent federal attention to public housing and increased aid through such programs as HOPE VI. It is apparent that nothing can be done without money and, in fact, it seems that public housing was maintained – stabilized – in its deteriorated state mostly because of a lack of financial ability to implement improvements. Many of the difficulties with public housing have, for decades, been due in large part to an inability for capital improvements and deferred maintenance as well as policy, which then led to unforeseen repercussions.

With the political atmosphere and policy changes favorable for public housing, widespread change is imminent in public housing across the nation, part of which may be the evolution of public housing into an affordable type, creating an atmosphere of long-term reform, of monitoring and evaluation of individual developments that maintain
them as a physically and socially viable environment. The ideal of mixed income in the
reconfiguration of Franklin Field had, at its heart, a change in the extent of physical and
social isolation of low-income people, based on stereotype rather than first hand
knowledge. The radical proposal for the end of such isolation might reposition housing
policy, bringing issues to the forefront with more expediency than in the past, with public
or affordable (however it may emerge in the future) housing not as peripheral, but central
to the well being of a larger community or constituency. All problems aside, public
housing is, in fact, the best housing option for many low and very low-income families in
the United States and it co-exists with other types of housing, albeit often isolated, in
many of our neighborhoods. In short, improvements to public housing might be argued
as a social good. Wouldn't it then seem to be in our best moral and social interest as a
nation to prioritize public housing issues? To keep our eyes and ears open, staying
aware of the effects of the latest trends in public housing?
Two proposals have recently been made by an outside firm to the BHA for a redesign of Franklin Field. In a Marketing and Redevelopment Study done on Franklin Field by Capital Needs Unlimited, two proposals are made for a further redesign of Franklin Field – the first, Option A, calls for retaining all structures and maximizing affordable units. Option A, at a total development cost of $46.7 million dollars, or approximately $100,000 per unit, could be fully financed by HUD and would be retained as public housing. Hard costs represent 98.5% of the total development cost. Modest rehabilitation would be completed with no reconfiguration, including such attempts to increase long term attractiveness such as the addition of canopies, selective cladding and bay windows for visual appeal, additional fencing, landscaping and other site work.

Option B reuses all but eight of the existing buildings, demolishing both the current senior community building and the maintenance facility. What is currently elderly housing is adapted into two- and three- bedroom townhouses, and all will have both a front and rear yard. Many of the units would have peaked roofs and additional space would be allocated for parking. The units formerly allocated for elderly housing would cease to exist as such and the unit count becomes a total of 442 family units, a

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100 A Marketing and Redevelopment Study was done by Capital Needs Unlimited in July, 1998.
102 The maintenance facility which houses management, maintenance and a heating plant would be replaced with a new structure; heating would be converted to building-based.
mix of one, two and three bedroom units. Total development costs for this option are $50.8 million dollars or approximately $122,000 per unit.

Figure 69. Option B, proposed redesign for Franklin Field.

This redesign would, in fact, be a market rate development, but has been deemed infeasible based on the market study for the neighborhood.

There is a certain irony in each of the options. In Option A, it would almost seem that current legislation does not exist, that the legislation resulting in the 1986 renovation had not evolved. Option B, on the other hand, does not seem to believe in such renovations as public housing, inherent in the idea to convert this new development into market rate housing. Nothing similar to the ideas presented in Option B were presented in Option A, yet the total development costs of each differ by approximately $4 million dollars or 8%. Furthermore, Option B, while taking advantage of the reform in housing legislation over the years – e.g. including demolition in the plan – has reverted somewhat to the initial design, where parking overwhelmingly dominates what was

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103 Capital Needs Unlimited, p.22.
previously courtyard space for human occupation, albeit oversized. Each case exemplifies a different approach in trying to utilize the property to reach its full market potential, with a different scenario dominating each – that is, Option A responding to the median income of approximately $7,750 for Franklin Field residents, Option B responding to the fact that median income in a one-mile radius is over $34,000.

With many factors and scenarios to consider, the work of redeveloping such a site becomes a formidable challenge. When considering the options presented to the BHA, an important question becomes, “Who is redeveloping public housing?” Both options have very glaring shortcomings and express no insight into solving many of the problems that currently exist at Franklin Field. Neither option responds to such issues as vehicular circulation or extending streets into existing neighborhood street patterns and the majority of the proposed changes are cosmetic. The many options now
available for redevelopers of public housing make such decisions even more controversial. Awareness of current trends in public housing, expanded capacity to redevelop such housing and sensitivity to both neighborhood and resident needs is increasingly imperative if public housing is to evolve for the better.
Books


Articles and Selected Readings

Anand, Geeta. “The City’s Landlord Sandra B. Henriquez Has Taken Over the Boston Housing Authority at a Crucial Time For Public Housing. She is Known for Her Negotiating Skills and She’s Going to Need Them.” Boston Globe, April 6, 1997.


Interviews

Jamie Bonds, former Task Force Officer at Franklin Field
James Comer, BHA on-site manager of Franklin Field
Joyce Cunha, Committee for Boston Public Housing
Kelly Dean, BHA on site manager of Franklin Field
Kathleen Fields, BHA Planning Director
Jessie Freeman, resident employee at Franklin Field daycare center
Armando Goncalves, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Sandra Henriquez, BHA Director (lecture and informal interview)
Steve Newark, Off-site manager for Franklin Field
Brenda Ramsey, resident and secretary of Franklin Field Task Force Office
Peter Suffredini, BHA data management

23 Interviews of Franklin Field Residents done by Lawrence Vale in 1993
Lawrence Vale interview with Sandra Henriquez
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Figure 6. Franck and Mostoller, Journal of Architectural and Planning Research, p. 193.
Figure 7. Boston Housing Authority, Map of Cathedral Housing Development.
Figure 9. Nevanlinna, Ways of Life in Dwellings, p.31.
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Figure 70. ibid.

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Table 3. ibid.
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*model made with assistance of Scott Merchel.