BUILDING EQUITY INTO PLANNING: TOOLS AND CHALLENGES

Conference of the Southern New England American Planning Association
September 24, 2015

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Open Communities Alliance
Open Communities Alliance is a new Connecticut-based civil rights non-profit working with an urban-suburban interracial coalition to advocate for access to opportunity, particularly through promoting affordable housing development in thriving communities.
ROAD MAP

- Defining Equity
- Challenges
- Effective Tools
WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EQUITY?
RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES

- Vast income & wealth gap – Blacks and Latinos earn half or less than Whites (CT)
- Educational achievement
- Health disparities
- Unemployment disparities
- Incarceration ratios

Also – disparities for people with disabilities & single parents
THE EVIDENCE THAT ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY MATTERS GROWS EVERY DAY
Outcomes for children who moved before age 13:

- Girls were 26% less likely to become single parents
- Greater chance of going to college, and a higher quality college
- 30% higher income

We estimate that [a move] out of public housing to a low-poverty area when young (at age 8 on average) using an MTO-type experimental voucher will increase the child’s total lifetime earnings by about $302,000.

Second Chetty et al. study showed that the longer a child can be in a lower poverty area the greater the positive outcomes.
## CONNECTING TO PLANNING: GEOGRAPHIC OPPORTUNITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Indicators</th>
<th>Economic Indicators</th>
<th>Neighborhood/Housing Quality Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students Passing Math Test scores</td>
<td>Unemployment Rates</td>
<td>Neighborhood Vacancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students Passing Reading Test scores</td>
<td>Population on Public Assistance</td>
<td>Crime Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment</td>
<td>Job Growth</td>
<td>Neighborhood Poverty Rate</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Employment Access</td>
<td>Homeownership Rate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Job Diversity</td>
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**Final Opportunity Score (Map)**

- **Education Opportunity Score**
- **Economic Opportunity Score**
- **Housing/Neighborhood Score**
## WHERE DO WE LIVE?
### OPPORTUNITY BY RACE AND ETHNICITY IN CT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asians</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Big picture – how to we achieve access to opportunity?

- Investing in under-resourced areas.

AND

- Ensuring that people who want to can move or otherwise access higher opportunity resources (schools, jobs).
SO, IF INCOME MATTERS, THE LOCATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING MATTERS

CT Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity Level</th>
<th>% CT LIHTC Units</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>9%</td>
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## Challenges: Entrenched Views/Myths

### Struggling Communities:

| Everyone wants to stay and should have the right to do so. | v. | Everyone wants to leave and should have the right to do so. |

### Thriving Suburban Communities:

| Objecting to affordable housing means you are a NIMBY racist. | v. | Poverty concentration will harm our schools/kids, housing prices, crime rates, property taxes. |
Maps/Data!

- Opportunity Mapping
- Segregation maps
- Subsidized housing maps

Surveys

HUD Affirmatively Furthering Obligations/Resources
Surveys and focus groups in CT show that many people want to move. National surveys show that diversity is valued.

How the survey is developed is important.

What does “Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing” Mean?

Taking meaningful actions [to] ... address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns, transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws.
Bel-Crest development, West Hartford, CT Race Restrictive Language

"No persons of any race except the white race shall use or occupy any building on any lot except that this covenant shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race employed by an owner or tenant."
TO WHOM DOES THE AFFH RULE APPLY?

- Jurisdictions and Insular Areas that are required to submit consolidated plans for the following programs:
  - CDBG
  - ESG
  - HOME
  - HOPWA

- PHAs receiving assistance under sections 8 or 9 of the United States Housing Act of 1937

[see 24 CFR § 5.154(b)]
Recipients must produce a FAIR HOUSING ASSESSMENT at least once every five years. This must encompass:

- **ENGAGEMENT.** Engaging the community in fair housing planning and adhere to community participation requirements. See 24 CFR § 5.158.

- **ASSESSMENT.**
  - Using the Assessment Tool provided by HUD. See 24 CFR § 5.154(d).
  - Analyzing fair housing issues and contributing factors in their jurisdictions and regions. See 24 CFR § 5.154(d)(3) and (4).
GOALS. Set goals to address identified significant contributing factors and related fair housing issues and follow through on these goals in the Consolidated Plan and/or PHA Plan. See 24 CFR § 5.154(d)(4)(iii).

ACTION. Take meaningful actions that AFFH and not take any action that is inconsistent with the duty to AFFH. See 24 CFR § 5.150 and § 5.162.

ADJUST. Look back and make adjustments to previously established fair housing goals to ensure that progress occurs. See 24 CFR § 5.154(d)(7).
AFFH DATA

Large dots are:

- Public Housing
- Other Multifamily
- Project-Based Section 8
- LIHTC

Beta version available at http://www.huduser.org/portal/affht_pt.html#affhassess-tab
The Fair Housing Assessment must take a regional approach.

The Fair Housing Assessment and Consolidated Plan must reflect the same fair housing concerns and goals.

The AFFH rule is only as strong as

- HUD’s ability/willingness to enforce it and
- Local advocacy that identifies issues as part of the public comment obligation.
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