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Introduction:

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has recently pushed for the revitalization of public housing neighborhoods which have become especially distressed through joblessness, crime, and disrepair. It has adopted the view that public housing projects built between 1930 and 1980 with a modernist design – that is, form should follow function – has significantly affected the lives of their residents in a negative way (Goetz 2002). HUD has attempted to combat these problems through the Home Ownership for People Everywhere (HOPE VI) program, which provides funds for demolition, rehabilitation, and revitalization of troubled housing projects under the philosophy of poverty de-concentration. HOPE VI projects are intended to promote the dispersal of public housing units to other areas and to establish mixed-income developments in place of poor neighborhoods.[1] The belief is that through poverty de-concentration and the creation of mixed-income housing projects, poor people will have improved life chances with which to participate more productively in society.

HOPE VI projects have become aligned with the New Urbanism - an urban planning and architecture movement that seeks to construct diverse, mixed density, and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods. This alignment has effectively made the New Urbanist movement extremely influential in redevelopment projects of inner-cities. Through the implementation of their design principles, proponents of the New Urbanism believe HOPE VI projects can create neighborhoods with a strong sense of community that support social equity among groups of people with diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. This paper focuses on Heritage Park, a HOPE VI project, to investigate

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[1] Information gathered from the HOPE VI website
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/hope6/about/index.cfm>

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whether the ideology of HUD and the principles of New Urbanism have encouraged

social equity within the project and its surrounding community.

Heritage Park is mixed-income housing development located in the Near North

section of North Minneapolis, Minnesota. It is a 145-acre site situated just west of I-94

and is split to the north and south by Olson Memorial Highway 55 (see Figures 1 and 2 in

the Appendix). It was ascertained by HUD and local government authorities[2] that the

poor population of Minneapolis was unjustly concentrated in North Minneapolis, and

they considered the public housing units located in the Sumner-Glenwood and Near

North neighborhoods especially distressed; Heritage Park was erected in replacement of

these public housing units (Goetz 2002). As a New Urbanist project, Heritage Park's

design is intended to de-stigmatize low-income housing and to foster social interaction

among people of varying socioeconomic backgrounds. It is believed that these processes

will help achieve the project's goals to craft a sense of community and establish social

equity among Heritage Park's residents and the larger Near North district of Minneapolis.

Through an analysis of its conceptual beginnings, its intellectual and physical

design principles, and its implementation, I argue that Heritage Park has generated some

aspects vital to establishing social equity among its residents, including demographic

diversity and a tight-knit community. Yet the project's success has not been a result from

its New Urbanist design or HUD poverty de-concentration ideology, but is due to strong

civic engagement, economic and racial integration, and the acceptance of diversity by

residents within the project. Therefore, through this case study approach, it becomes

necessary to research further HUD ideology and the employment of the New Urbanism

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[2] The local authorities included the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA), the Metropolitan
Council, and the City of Minneapolis.

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within inner-city redevelopments, and to question their ability to establish strong communities that support social equity within projects holding diverse groups of people.

The structure of this paper is meant to enable the reader to gauge the entire process by which Heritage Park was developed and designed, and its broader relationship to achieving social equity. The first section of this paper describes the political-economy of place perspective, a theoretical approach to urban geography that enables geographers to view the political and economic interests involved in the development of urban places.

Using the political-economy perspective, the next section analyzes how and why Heritage Park was initiated, and is divided into three parts. The first part shows that HUD's belief in poverty de-concentration was the driving force behind the demolition of the former housing projects located in Near North Minneapolis and revitalization of the neighborhood through resident displacement. The next part describes the goal of HUD to establish economic integration, and focuses on two reviews of case studies that attempted economic integration. The third part details the rise of New Urbanism, explaining how the movement's relationship with HUD led to its control over inner-city design.

The following section focuses on the presence of the principles of New Urbanism within Heritage Park and is divided into four parts. The first discusses the democratic aptitude of New Urbanism in the planning process and the opportunities community residents had to influence Heritage Park's design. The second examines the 'environmental affordance' model put forth by proponents of the New Urbanism, which simply affirms the ability of good physical design to positively change behaviors of residents living in urban neighborhoods, and why it is important to understand the design of Heritage Park. The third analyzes the specific New Urbanist principles related to the

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construction of community and the creation of social equity, and their seemingly contradictive influences on Heritage Park. The last part inspects New Urbanist aims to use their principles as a means to gentrify neighborhoods, and questions whether gentrification of Heritage Park would lead to an economically and racially diverse neighborhood that could fashion social equity.

The fourth section begins with a reflection on my own experience with Heritage Park, and the impressions I received through a visit to the project and a timely interview. From this experience and my analysis on New Urbanism and Heritage Park, it is apparent that the physical design has had little positive affect on the communal behaviors of Heritage Park, at least in terms of building civic bonds and accepting diversity necessary to establishing social equity, as these came about from active and engaged human agents within the project's community. However, maintaining the current strength and diversity of the Heritage Park community is contingent upon its resistance of further gentrification.

Finally, I conclude by remarking on the ways in which future projects could be directed more appropriately to improve attempts to create and maintain truly progressive, integrated inner-city neighborhoods. Then I explain the implications that can be drawn from this case study analysis of Heritage Park, in that it cannot be generalized to all HOPE VI projects or New Urbanist neighborhoods. Lastly, I explain the further research needed to be done to in order to more aptly investigate the community structure of Heritage Park and to more explicitly comprehend New Urbanism's ability to promote social equity in the real world.

Theoretical Background – The Political-Economy of Place:

The political-economy of place perspective allows geographers to move beyond the geographical question of what and where something (a commercial building, housing development, industrial park, etc.) is built, to also analyze why, how, and for whom things get built. More specifically, the intention behind the political-economy of place is to focus on the politics and economics of all scales, and how they intertwine with one another to create the form in which a given place develops. This perspective is important for urban geographers because it enables us to piece together how cities change and grow over time.

Scholarly works by Logan and Molotch (1987), Hayden (2003), and Cox (1998) use the political-economy perspective to explain the role of individuals, government, and growth machines in the process of developing urban places. Additionally, implicit within this study of the political-economy perspective of Heritage Park is Anthony Giddens' (1995) structuration theory, which pronounces that human action shapes and is shaped by social structures. His theory presents a helpful framework with which to understand the relative power of human agency in transforming current urban growth mechanisms.

Using her knowledge of the political-economy perspective, Hayden (2003) shows how development agencies and real estate entrepreneurs profited from certain government policies that enabled them to establish a sustained method of outward growth, (i.e., away from the central cities) known as suburbanization. For instance, preceding World War II, powerful real estate groups with help from influential politicians, such as Herbert Hoover, lobbied to the federal government to subsidize

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private, single-family home developments and craft more favorable home-lending conditions for more Americans.

Analyzing how suburbs became the standard form of development and who its main actors were in 20th century America with a political-economy lens, Hayden was able to show that the process of suburbanization was not inevitable. Rather, certain real estate individuals and groups were able to shift government and economic policies in their favor, maximizing their profits and influence on urban planning. Thus, one can surmise that individual and group actors have the power to recalibrate the policies and forms of urban (re)development. These individual and group actors who manipulate policies to achieve control and profitability of urban development plans can be comprehended cumulatively as 'growth machines.'

In "Places as Commodities" and "The City as a Growth Machine," Logan and Molotch (1987) provide a powerful insight into the political-economy of place through their analysis of the growth machine. Their growth machine thesis helps illuminate the specific actors politically involved in urban places and the geographical configurations that mold economic development in cities. The two authors begin by critiquing the notion put forth by influential developers and politicians that all forms of urban growth are necessarily beneficial to the public. Instead, Logan and Molotch (1987) assert that the common forms of urban growth (e.g., suburbanization and sprawl) in the 20th century and continuing today do not build wealth within the public sector, but merely redistribute it. This redistribution of wealth, however, is not spread evenly among all places and social groups, but is intentionally allocated to those located and/or in control of 'top places' (Logan and Molotch 1987, 49). Furthermore, access to the top places is reserved

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only for those with prominent social standing. Thus, the authors see the 'reality of place,' or the ways in which a person's location is directly linked to social status, as a critical factor in understanding growth machines and the process of urban development. Furthermore, it is the inequalities of place which help define and reinforce social inequalities and facilitate the fundamentally unbalanced mode of urban growth in the United States.

Also using the political-economy perspective and the growth machine thesis as background, Cox (1998) examines the complexities of local economic development, a process that intertwines political economics within spaces of dependence and spaces of engagement. He defines spaces of dependence as the 'localized social relations upon which…essential interests' are realized; spaces of engagement are defined as 'the space in which the politics of securing a space of dependence unfolds' (Cox 1998, 2). In other words, there are two separate arenas in which the politics of place transpire that accommodate a convoluted set of interests and actors of varying scales.

While I argue that Heritage Park does have certain characteristics that encourage social equity, it was not continuously recognized throughout the entire development process. Moreover, the development of Heritage Park involved many actors of varying scales, all of whom attempted to influence its direction to best fit within their own agendas. For example, HUD, a federal institution, was able to use its enormous funding capabilities to encourage local government authorities in Minneapolis to prioritize HUD's interest in de-concentrating the poor community within Near North Minneapolis (Goetz 2002). Viewing all of the actors involved in the development of Heritage Park – such as

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HUD and its HOPE VI program, McCormack Baron Salazar (MBS)[3], local government authorities, and community and legal groups – through a political-economy lens is necessary to illuminate their collective or competing roles in producing and contesting Heritage Park, and to disentangle their specific interests.

The Political-economy of Heritage Park:
Poverty De-concentration

Heritage Park could be viewed as a project designed to combat the inequalities of place theorized by Logan and Molotch through situating people of separate socioeconomic classes together in the same location. As a HUD HOPE VI project, it has sought to de-concentrate the poor community of North Minneapolis, which Logan and Molotch (1987, 94) argue as compulsory in order to achieve true integration. Under the philosophies of poverty de-concentration and economic integration, it is alleged that the mixing of groups of people with different levels of income will deliver equitable access to jobs, education, healthcare services, and amenities (Goetz 2002). The power behind HUD's rhetoric became apparent early on in the development process, and was essential to the project's ultimate establishment.

The project was initiated by a consent decree from the *Hollman v. Cisneros*[4] court case in 1992, which began as a discriminatory case about a lack of housing choices among African-American residents of low-income housing and evolved into a civil case aimed at de-concentrating areas of high levels of poverty within North Minneapolis (Goetz 2002). Although many proponents of Heritage Park claim the court's decision was primarily based on giving poor people better housing choices (Williams 2002), with

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[3] MBS is a private company that specializes in New Urbanist projects and is the lead developer of Heritage Park

[4] *Cisneros*, of course, stands for Henry Cisneros, who served as the Secretary of HUD from 1993-1997.

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HUD on board, it clearly morphed into a case about dispersing poor communities. In addition to HUD, the case defendants included the MPHA, the Metropolitan Council, and the City of Minneapolis. Influenced by HUD's rhetoric (and money), all of these groups had an interest in de-concentrating and dispersing clustered poor communities, and so it was determined that the public housing units located in Sumner-Glenwood and Near North, Minneapolis would be demolished and replaced by a housing development with a fewer number of low-income units (Caniglia 1997; Goetz 2002).

As Goetz (2002) explains, the de-concentration of the poor is a contentious issue. Many have questioned whether their dispersal further disadvantages the poor, who see their communities and social networks torn apart, and find themselves isolated within larger consortiums of higher income people (Bohl 2000; Caniglia 1997; Williams 2002; Day 2003; Grant 2006). Furthermore, the public housing projects that were eventually demolished to make room for Heritage Park contained more than 900 units. Finding adequate replacement housing for all the displaced residents proved to be exceedingly difficult considering the lack of available affordable housing within the Twin Cities metropolitan region during the time. While poverty de-concentration may be theoretically acceptable, its practice can lead to realities of displacement, relocation, and the destruction of existing communities (Caniglia 1997; Goetz 2002; Day 2003).

Thus, the project's implementation process became quite complicated, as oppositional actors and community organizations involved themselves in the development of Heritage Park. Members of the soon-to-be displaced Near North Southeast Asian community started to protest the demolition of their public housing homes, believing their structures of community support would disintegrate with

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displacement. The Northside Neighbors for Justice (NNJ) and the NAACP, which came under new leadership, also began protesting the Heritage Park project with the same argument pertaining to the African American community in Near North, in addition to a fear of gentrification (Goetz 2002).

None of these oppositional groups were shy to use the local media to popularize their concerns and the court system to justify their claims. Using these resources increased the level of interest and the scale of engagement of the project issues. They aimed to create awareness of the negative effects of affordable housing demolition and removal, including the burden it placed on real families (Goetz 2002). As Cox (1997, 18) states in his essay, 'Leverage [over spaces of dependence] is not something static…rather it is discovered in the process of conflict.' These oppositional groups were able to convince the Minneapolis mayor to halt demolition of the Near North public housing units, although only temporarily. According to Goetz (2002), the groups wanted additional HUD funds to rehabilitate the housing projects in place, instead of destroying them and starting all over. HUD, however, rejected to send these funds, and when appeals were made, the court ultimately ruled that demolition and revitalization should continue as planned. While these groups were able to shift public conversation from focusing the benefits of poverty de-concentration to its malevolent consequences and garner support for their interests and arguments, the ideology of poverty dispersal eventually won out.

Economic Integration through HOPE VI

Economic integration within inner-city neighborhoods is also one of the main goals of the HOPE VI program. This goal is part of the wider assumption that integration

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can improve the 'life chances' of low-income housing residents through benefits such as proper role models, access to employment, and safer neighborhoods (Shore 1995; Rosenbaum et al 1998). Several projects besides Heritage Park have sought to (re)integrate people of different levels of income. Two of these projects are Lake Parc Place in Chicago, Illinois and Crawford Square in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Rosenbaum et al. (1998) describe Lake Parc Place, a public housing project that was demolished and rebuilt to include both public and affordable units. They maintain that the working class families who moved into Lake Parc Place were able to stabilize the project, making it the safest public housing project in Chicago. Moreover, from the results of various surveys and interviews they conducted, both residents of the working class and those on welfare living in Lake Parc Place felt safe, had meaningful social interaction, and were satisfied overall by their living situation (Rosenbaum et al. 1998).

However, the authors note that the success of Lake Parc Place was due to the fact that many of the working class families who moved in had a lot in common with the residents and families on welfare. They assert that other mixed-income developments prior to this one failed to attract higher income people who had common interests with public and affordable housing residents – that is, the market-rate residents were usually single and/or did not have children – which had acted as a barrier to social interaction and the construction of strong community ties (Rosenbaum et al. 1998). Furthermore, Lake Parc Place was completely African-American, and did not attempt to integrate people of different ethnicities, which may have facilitated community building through similar cultural bonds. In other words, it is more difficult to achieve strong, socially equitable

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communities in a project that seeks to integrate a wide variety of incomes and ethnicities, such as the Heritage Park project.

Crawford Square in Pittsburgh, described by Deitrick and Ellis (2004) is another inner-city project devoted to economic integration of a neighborhood employing the New Urbanist design.[5] The authors maintain that the project has largely restored the neighborhood's image and perception within Pittsburgh residents and business developers. Although the project is racially diverse and includes a mix of income levels, it still excludes the very poor, those who are eligible for public housing (Deitrick and Ellis 2004). Thus, its aims are not quite as lofty as Heritage Park, which has sought to integrate people of very low incomes, moderate incomes, and high incomes together.

The integrationist aims of HOPE VI projects like Heritage Park are exceedingly difficult to achieve, as they mainly involve attracting middle-income professionals to live in poor, marginalized communities (Day 2003). It is still undetermined whether strong communities represented by a wide range of income levels can be established within new inner-city housing developments. It is also debatable whether attempts to establish new and economically diverse neighborhoods is worth de-concentrating poor people who may be unwilling to see their communities and social networks dissolve as a result from demolition. Nevertheless, economic integration has been prioritized by HOPE VI, and was one of the main forces behind the development of Heritage Park.

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[5] McCormack Baron Salazar, the lead developer of Crawford Square, is also the lead developer of Heritage Park. They have New Urbanist developments in over 30 American cities. <http://www.mccormackbaron.com/HTML/home.html>

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The Rise of New Urbanism

New Urbanism is an urban planning and architectural movement that has aimed to change the form of American cities away from the existing development practices that have led to urban sprawl and suburbanization. Its roots began in the 1970's and 1980's and was primarily focused on creating less dispersed and less car-oriented suburban neighborhoods. The movement was popularized among urban planners following the construction of Seaside, Florida and Celebration, Florida, two developments which have become notorious among many scholars of urban geography (Fulton 1996; Ellis 2002). Aspiring to establish growth management, environmental protection, and urban revitalization, the goal of New Urbanism is to redefine American living through a return to some 'traditional' designs and smaller, more 'human scale' regions, districts, and neighborhoods (Bressi 1994; Katz 1994; Fulton 1996; Bohl 2000; Ellis 2002; Rees 2003).

Like Hayden's analysis of the rise of suburbanization, proponents of New Urbanism were able to use powerful rhetoric to successfully lobby for federal funding and approval to re-imagine inner-city (re)development and design through the HOPE VI program. In 1996, the federal government became officially aligned with the principles of New Urbanism, when the HUD Secretary, Henry Cisneros, signed the Charter of the New Urbanism (Rees 2003). Thus, public efforts to revitalize the inner-cities were synchronized with the design principles of New Urbanism. This agreement signaled the rise of New Urbanism as the preeminent form of development within HOPE VI subsidized projects and shifted the way in which public and affordable housing is conceived in American city planning.

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Elliott et al. (2004) explain that the ascent of the New Urbanist movement within inner-city redevelopment projects was not much different from the political and economic processes that led to the standardization of urban sprawl and suburbanization. They contend that when the proponents of New Urbanism were able to convince the federal government to align itself with their principles, it created political opportunities for actors 'to adopt and espouse selective New Urbanist themes and imagery to construct and advance divergent visions what urban space ought to be' (Elliott et al. 2004, 2). Essentially, New Urbanists were given the power to re-imagine and reconstruct the American inner-city in the manner in which they saw fit. Thus, New Urbanist language became the only way in which urban development could be discussed, at least in terms of HOPE VI revitalization projects, much like market-led growth and sprawl became the only language in which actors and groups could discuss 20th century urban planning.

Furthermore, in accordance with the guidelines by which HOPE VI funds were distributed, 'public-private partnerships' were created in which private developers were contracted to build the inner-city projects while implementing New Urbanist principles (Elliott et al. 2004). These partnerships often allowed the private developers to greatly influence, if not dominate, the overall design of the HOPE VI projects. This has also allowed them to continue to make sizeable profits through federal grants and subsidies. Following suit, the MPHA contracted a private developer, McCormack Baron Salazar (MBS) to head the development of Heritage Park.

Thus, the principles of New Urbanism have become a presupposed outline of design among public officials and developers, leaving little room for dissent about the form inner-city projects should take. HOPE VI has endorsed New Urbanism, believing

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the ambitions of public housing revitalization and New Urbanism share common attitudes as to the most effective ways to redevelop cities (Bohl 2000; Elliott et al 2004). If one is to understand New Urbanism and its role in inner-city redevelopment, it is important to understand the rhetoric it propagates and to grasp the ways in which its influence has affected the design and aspirations of HOPE VI projects like Heritage Park. An inquiry into the level of social equity of Heritage Park becomes accordingly pertinent, and an issue of concern for the poor and disenfranchised.

New Urbanism – Community Building and the Establishment of Social Equity:

Community Participation

Although many HOPE VI projects, including Heritage Park, have been headed by private developers, community participation in the design process has been indispensably connected to the strategies of New Urbanism (Grant 2006). In this way, resident and surrounding community members could conceivably offer suggestions and alterations to the draft design plans of site developers and architects. The most popular method with which to engage the surrounding community within the planning process has been an intensive workshop, or charrette, in which community members can offer opinions of the design drafts made by the developer and its design associates (Bohl 2000; Goetz 2002; Day 2003; Grant 2006). However, Jill Grant (2006) asserts that these charrettes offer little opportunity for design principles that do not coincide with New Urbanism, essentially positioning the preferred designers as visionary leaders of city form and function. Deitrick and Ellis (2004), on the other hand, claim that the success of Crawford Square was partly due to strong community planning processes that identified the various needs for affordable housing in the Hill District; and the developers and architects were

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not the *de facto* deciders, but were participants in the neighborhood plan. Still, one has to

question whether alternative designs or language forms, which may not have coincided

with New Urbanist principles, were allowed in the Crawford Square charrettes.

       With respect to Heritage Park, it is my opinion that although MBS allowed for

input from public housing residents and Near North community members in terms of the

components to be built within Heritage Park, the developer and its design associates

illegitimatized design options that were not in line with New Urbanist ideology. Between

1999 and 2000, MBS held three phases of public meetings in which the master plan of

Heritage Park was devised. These meetings involved public housing residents, adjacent

neighborhood residents, business people, social service providers, and others who could

offer their input and suggestions as to their wishes concerning the future of the Near

North district and Heritage Park. MBS put the Urban Design Associates (UDA), who are

frequently involved with New Urbanist projects, in charge of drafting the master plan and

the design of residential units for Heritage Park.[6] It is clear that MBS was devoted to

encouraging community contribution, but the Master Plan notes that the design principles

were already in place before planning meetings took place, developed from the *Action

Plan for Redevelopment of the Sumner Field, Glenwood, Lyndale, and Olson Public

Housing Developments and Adjacent Land*. While the Action Plan was also intended to

gauge and implement Near North community interests (Goetz 2002)[7], with HOPE VI

funding and the UDA on board to plan the project, New Urbanism was clearly the *de*

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[6] Information gathered from 'The Minneapolis Near Northside' redevelopment master plan via the City of Minneapolis website < http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/docs/near_northside_master_plan.pdf >

[7] In accordance with the consent decree from *Hollman v. Cisneros*, the Action Plan was drafted from two focus group meetings, one for the Sumner/Olson site and one for the Glenwood-Lyndale site. Goetz maintains that although the focus groups were rather inclusive, some nearby residents were excluded and language barriers existed, especially for the Southeast Asian community.

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facto design for Heritage Park. If New Urbanism does not accept criticism, or at least tolerate alternative urban design ideas – especially from members of a community that are directly affected by the project – it severely discredits the movement's ability to craft built environments that encourage social equity.

Environmental Affordance

According to the Charter of the New Urbanism[8], neighborhoods should be compact and pedestrian-friendly and they should include mixed-use buildings of multiple densities. The charter also makes evident the CNU's desire to build strong communities that support social equity within diverse neighborhoods:

> 'The Congress for the New Urbanism views disinvestment in central
>
> cities…increasing separation by race and income…and the erosion of society's
>
> built heritage as one interrelated community-building challenge' (CNU 1996).

Proponents of the New Urbanism believe that employment of its design principles within HOPE VI projects can not only combat the 'interrelated challenge' of inner-city redevelopment, but encourage behavioral changes in people necessary to create more harmonious, diverse neighborhoods that support social equity and community building, which is termed 'environmental affordance' (Rees 2003).   Although the CNU has acknowledged that 'physical solutions by themselves will not solve social and economic problems' (CNU 1996), some scholars still assert that the New Urbanists have placed too much emphasis on physical form and its capacity to affect behaviors. Others agree with New Urbanists, believing good urban design can positively affect lifestyles and establish better social relationships among diverse neighbors.

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[8] The Charter of the New Urbanism was crafted by the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) in 1996.

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Within her critique of New Urbanism, Amanda Rees (2003) states that the movement's environmental affordance model maintains that propinquity of different ethnic and/or economic groups alone can cultivate social interaction and the shaping of community bonds. She argues that community networks are built through common interest rather than physical proximity. Kristen Day (2003) also claims that New Urbanism places too much importance on physical design to act as a catalyst for change, saying that physical transformations may not be the best solution to social problems. Furthermore, she rebuffs the generality in which the term 'community' is used in New Urbanist dialogue, asserting that it can have different meanings and connotations to separate groups. Because of this, community has intrinsically exclusionary undertones, something New Urbanists do not seem to acknowledge.

Cliff Ellis (2002, 277), a supporter of the New Urbanism, maintains that 'well-designed streets and public spaces provide a supportive environment for place-based socializing,' and a construction of a sense of community. Thus, he concludes that good design can '*support and encourage*' community building. Deitrick and Ellis (2004, 428) concur, believing that 'good design can improve the quality, durability, marketability, and community acceptance.' Furthermore, Duany and Plater-Zyberk (1994, xx) maintain that 'neighborhoods that are mixed-use and pedestrian friendly…can integrate natural environments and man-made communities into a sustainable whole.'

Yet claims that New Urbanist design provides environmental affordance are deficient in empirical evidence (Talen 1999), and the construction of community bonds must be investigated more thoroughly on a case by case basis. This investigation requires an analysis of the design aspects of New Urbanism related to community building and

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social equity and how they are employed within Heritage Park. Through this analysis, it becomes apparent that many of the New Urbanist design aspects and community standards found within Heritage Park have sought to build a very particular type of community that does not seem to encourage goals of diversity, much less social equity.

Design and Community Principles

There are three important components of the Charter of the New Urbanism related to the building of community and social equity. First, it declares that neighborhoods should be diverse both demographically and architecturally to strengthen 'the personal and civic bonds essential to an authentic community.' Next, they should capture the uniqueness of place by fashioning buildings with historically relevant architecture. Third, they should employ design methods of 'defensible space' to ensure the safety of 'neighbors [who] know each other' (CNU 1996). It is clear that the master plan of Heritage Park, drafted by the UDA and MBS, followed many of the guidelines found with the Charter of the New Urbanism endorsed by HOPE VI:

> 1) Design for social integration: mix market, affordable, and public housing units seamlessly throughout the neighborhood and design to the same quality for all housing types such that income distinctions are invisible.
>
> 2) Design within the historic context: to Minneapolis traditions, to Near Northside traditions and to ethnic traditions.
>
> 3) Design for safety – provide defensible space, and design for "eyes on the street."[9]

In opposition to the historical tendency of architecture in American cities to distinguish between affordable and higher income housing, New Urbanists strive to emphasize local architecture within their designs that effectively makes affordable

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[9] These guidelines were spelled out in 'The Minneapolis Near Northside' master plan, although not ranked or ordered in the way I have here.

housing indistinguishable from market-rate housing (Bohl 2000). However, Day (2003) has questioned the incorporation of locally relevant architecture, stating that local history and context may be contested by different groups who have constructed separate meanings for the places in which they live. Furthermore, the type of housing architecture chosen to represent an urban locality's history has suggestive undertones about what constitutes a 'good' home and an 'authentic' community. For instance, affordable housing design that includes characteristics of single-family homes and landscapes would imply the singular relevance of owner-occupied, market-rate housing in local architectural heritage. Moreover, gearing design to hide the presence of affordable and public housing would suggest to both residents and outsiders that market-rate housing is the fundamental aspect of a respective community's uniqueness and 'authenticity.' This prioritization of single-family housing in effect renders other types of past housing design as unimportant to local architectural and landscape history and the construction of communal place. Although making different types of housing indistinguishable is a nice idea, the concentration on specific types of housing design and landscaping could discourage alternative forms of living and is a shallow basis on which to accept diversity. This supports the claim that New Urbanism 'leaves no room for challenging the dominant culture and social themes underpinning [a given housing] project' (Rees 2003, 99).

MBS and UDA were very successful in developing a mixed market at Heritage Park, offering several housing types that can accommodate individuals and large families, including apartments, townhomes, duplexes, and single-family homes at various sizes and densities. The final plan for Heritage Park called for 900 total housing units; 440 of these are rental units, 360 are for-sale units, and 100 are senior housing units. Of the 440

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rental units, 200 are public housing, 90 are affordable housing, and 150 are market-rate housing. Of the 360 for-sale units, 108 are affordable and 252 are market-rate.[10] Thus, it is clear that the master planners set out to create a neighborhood with a wide variety of incomes and housing options. It also seems that MBS and UDA were able to disguise income levels to outsiders by pushing for economic integration within multi-unit buildings. Therefore, one could not easily tell if a tenant is on welfare or not.

Some of the housing stock created by the designers was made to look like historic Minneapolis housing architecture. Many of the single-family and duplex houses within Heritage Park are set back several feet from the street to incorporate a small lawn, with steps leading up to a large front porch (see Picture 1 in the Appendix). While these houses do resemble Minneapolis traditions, most of the other housing stock, including townhomes and apartments, do not. They all have separate entrances and porches, but these seem to be attempts to disguise public and affordable housing or create 'defensible space' rather than attempts to make apartment and townhomes look historically relevant. This variance in form and function does present a variety of housing types, but does not integrate Heritage Park well within the surrounding areas of the Near North district and the rest on Minneapolis. Instead, the project 'sticks out' in the urban landscape, with a diverse set of housing types that seem forced together in the same location.

As is the case with many HOPE VI project, in order for them to become widely diverse economically, they must attract middle-class professionals to live in historically

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[10] Information was gathered from a personal interview with Darlene Walser, Vice President of McCormack Baron Salazar in Minneapolis. The interview took place by phone on April 2, 2009.
Affordable units are those that are subsidized for people making between 60% and 80% of the median income of Minneapolis residents. Public housing requires that residents pay 30% of their monthly income, whatever that amount may be.

poor, marginalized areas (Day 2003). Thus, New Urbanist developers and designers reassure potential middle-class residents by promoting the safety of their housing projects through the implementation of tenant screening tests and the adoption of 'defensible space' strategies. 'Defensible space' strategies include breaking up superblocks and attaching front stoops or porches and fenced yards to houses, which assigns close watch of public space to residents and provides 'eyes on the street' to deter illicit activity (Caniglia 1997; Day 2003).

In order to attract middle-class individuals to Heritage Park, it has been a priority of MBS to ensure the safety and security of the neighborhood, which is located in a historically blighted and crime-ridden area (Caniglia 1997; Goetz 2002). Like many HOPE VI projects, this has been attempted through various landscaping and architectural techniques that have created 'defensible space' and 'eyes on the street', as well as a screening process that bars certain individuals from being able to rent or purchase a housing unit. Heritage Park's streets and parks are arranged so that public spaces have unobstructed views, providing very few hiding places for criminal activity (see Pictures 2 and 3 in the Appendix). Furthermore, designers paid close attention to make lights, large windows, and common access hallways, which together form a subtle approach to deterring loiterers and unwelcome visitors (Vogel 2004).

Additionally, MBS has employed a screening process to show potential market-rate residents that only 'high character' individuals are allowed to live in the Heritage Park. The screening process includes inspection of a person's credit history, criminal history, and even current living conditions. Failure to meet certain expectations of MBS resident guidelines can lead to application rejection of a person wishing to move into the

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project (Vogel 2004). Obviously, there are exclusionary undertones a screening process possesses, which could unfairly leave out many displaced individuals for whom neighborhood reconstruction was supposed to help.

Heritage Park has also tried to attract higher income people through various neighborhood covenants that keep the project uniform, with the intention of making all of the housing units look market-rate. These covenants prohibit certain housing decorations that can be seen from the outside, such as political signs, hung rugs/clothes, and replacement window blinds (Vogel 2004). Along with 'eyes on the street' strategies, critics believe strict rules generate a panoptic effect, whereby residents and visitors are constantly reminded not to break neighborhoods rules (Ellis 2002; Grant 2006). Moreover, it is clear that these rules are believed to help sustain or increase property values, which may trigger further debate related to the issue of gentrification.

New Urbanism and Gentrification:

Grant (2006) claims that New Urbanists actually encourage gentrification of poor neighborhoods, believing it to be essential to neighborhood revitalization. Deitrick and Ellis (2004, 440) argue that 'good design helps to create places of enduring quality capable of attracting residents and business owners to re-invest generation after generation.' While the process may lead to revitalized neighborhoods, gentrification implies the dislocation of poor residents who cannot afford elevated rents caused by increased property values. Gentrification of Heritage Park, for instance, would displace its low-income residents, causing the area to be less economically diverse, and most likely, less racially diverse as well. The project currently boasts the presence of a multitude of ethnicities, including Somali, Hmong, Lao, Latino, African-American, and

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Caucasian.[11] Displacement of the low-income residents within these groups would greatly reduce the vitality and strength of a neighborhood built upon economic and ethnic diversity. Thus, if New Urbanists really do support gentrification efforts, they cannot expect their designs to promote a sense of social equity, as they would not be aligned with notions of integration. More specifically, then, New Urbanism cannot be credited with the constructing the strong, diverse community found within Heritage Park.

Community Building and Social Equity, a Process of Civic Engagement:

After first researching New Urbanism and the process in which the Near North project was implemented, I came to Heritage Park critical of its ability to forge a diverse, socially equitable community among people of various incomes and ethnicities. While driving and walking through the site, I initially found my criticism to be justified. The site was rather empty, with very few pedestrians and bicyclists, two things I was sure to see in a New Urbanist neighborhood.[12] Additionally, the wide open spaces and parks, although amenity rich, seemed to isolate some buildings and residents from the rest of the community (see Picture 4 in the Appendix). As I walked around the site, nearly finished with my fieldwork, I entered the leasing office near one of the entrances to the development on Olson Memorial Highway to see if I could gather any more information on the specifics of Heritage Park. While in the leasing office, I talked to Margie Curtis, an employee of MBS, but also a resident of Heritage Park.[13] She told me that she could not believe the type of community that was in place when she moved in from downtown Minneapolis. She claimed that "everyone knows everyone," and the project "has a

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[11] This information was also gathered from my interview with Darlene Walser.

[12] Although it must be acknowledged that I visited Heritage Park on Friday, April 3 in the middle of the afternoon, so people may not have been outside due to the weather or they were still at work.

[13] This personal interview took place on site at Heritage Park's Leasing Office on April 3, 2009.

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suburban feel" within an inner-city neighborhood. Furthermore, she mentioned that Heritage Park was the type of community in which "people can watch their neighbors children" and feel comfortable about it. When I asked her about how social interaction among various groups was initiated, she said that the community had set up various events, such as the National Night Out, in which people could engage with others of separate income levels and cultural backgrounds. She acknowledged that these events pushed her to meet people of different cultures and to accept the diverse population that lived around her in the neighborhood.

It is my belief that community building and the establishment social equity within Heritage Park was based upon civic engagement in which people made an effort to create long-lasting relationships with their neighbors. While New Urbanists or MBS may claim it is their designs which allow for such relations to develop, acceptance of diversity and social equity among the project's residents, belonging to various economic and cultural groups, was not swayed by the way in which their houses looked or how they were situated in relation to one another. Community bonds were forged through human agents, such as Margi Curtis, who chose to act in ways that developed friendships, trustworthiness, and understanding. Social equity was cultivated among the current residents of Heritage Park through the efforts of community members who wished to achieve it and willing to reach out to others in order to attain it.

While a high degree of civic engagement in the community has been a significant component of the project's accomplishments[14], it is entirely possible that the successes of Heritage Park may be largely due to its inability to attract a lot of people with sizeable levels of income, namely middle-class homeowners. According to Darlene Walser, only

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[14] This is an opinion based upon one interview, and clearly cannot be assumed as factual.

65 of the planned 150 for-sale houses have been filled. Though this low level of home-ownership rates could be reflective of the current housing market, a high rate could result in heightened property values that could cause increased gentrification. This would lead to further displacement of lower income residents. So far, low-income residents in the project have been able to enjoy housing security in an open, amenity rich community. Continuation of a racially and economically diverse Heritage Park community that supports social equity is contingent upon its future capacity to resist gentrification.

Conclusion and Case Study Implications:

HUD has to be given credit for creating the HOPE VI program, which attempts to create diverse, integrated neighborhoods within poor and blighted areas of cities. Economic and racial integration within neighborhoods are vital to forming equal access to jobs, education, health care, and other services. However, the way in which HUD's rhetoric and implementation methods of HOPE VI projects – including its employment of the New Urbanism – create diverse neighborhoods has to be questioned.   HUD has assumed the preeminence of poverty de-concentration in establishing more integrated inner-city neighborhoods, and the principles of the New Urbanism appear to have begun to dominate the physical design of inner-city redevelopment projects. It may be discovered that New Urbanism's popularity is only beneficial to those who can capitalize on inner-city decline and revitalization, when it is learned profits can be gained much like they have been during the post WWII suburbanization era of the United States. Although ideals of compactness, pedestrianism, and uniqueness of place may provide environmentally sustainable designs, they are increasingly profitable and do not promise progressive social change.

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Thus, the overseers of future inner-city redevelopment projects – including HUD, local government authorities, developers, and designers – must better assess the needs of residents and the overall reaction to displacement. Only when community needs are understood and displacement is accepted, they must seriously consider whether housing demolition and revitalization is more favorable to rehabilitation in creating strong, socially equitable communities. Furthermore, HOPE VI projects need to be less reliant upon New Urbanism, as experimentation with other physical forms may provide superior alternatives to creating connections among places with unequal access to places. While proponents of the New Urbanism claim it allows for variety, my analysis of Heritage Park seems to show that its design seems to display desire for market-rate uniformity. Possibly there are other design principles which may reflect local histories and distinctions more appropriately. Using other design principles would also reduce New Urbanism's dominance within the redevelopment of inner-cities, much like modernism was able to dominate in the 20th century. In any case, if social equity is to be achieved by any revitalization project, prospects of profitability must be superseded by prospects of livability.

Furthermore, this analysis of Heritage Park does not seem to show that the process of its development accounted for all of the communities living in the demolished housing projects, as many were unwillingly displaced from their homes (Goetz 2002); nor did the use of New Urbanist principles and design within Heritage Park seem to explain the construction of a strong community and the establishment of social equity among the project's current residents. The results of this study, however, cannot be generalized in a way that leads to the assumption that all HOPE VI projects and all New
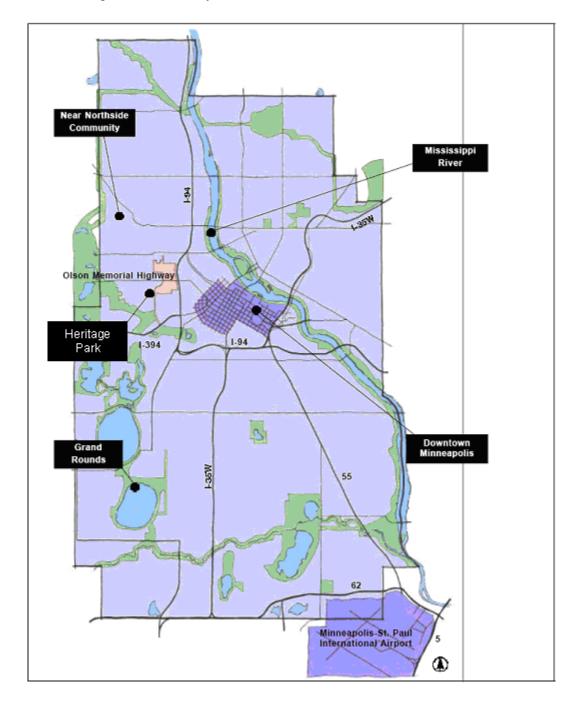
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Urbanist neighborhoods do not encourage social equity within communities. Moreover, it is was not the aim of this study to suggest that the community of the former public housing project in Near North Minneapolis was more socially equitable than the one that exists within Heritage Park. As Yin (1994, 31) has made clear, an individual case study can only be 'analytically generalized,' meaning that a previously developed theory, such as poverty de-concentration or the positive influence of New Urbanism, is only 'used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the case study.' Therefore, the results of this study can only safely assert that HUD ideology and the endorsement of New Urbanism has to be questioned, and neither can be considered necessarily beneficial to inner-city neighborhood redevelopment.

Further research on Heritage Park has to include surveys and more interviews which can better glean the attitudes of residents within the project's community and the level of social equity they believe exists within it. My research was heavily based on New Urbanist design principles, which I have asserted has done little to affect the bonding of the Heritage Park community and the building of a socially equitable neighborhood. More research also has to be conducted on other HOPE VI projects around the country, in order to better understand the success of poverty de-concentration and economic integration within historically blighted areas of U.S. inner-cities. Additionally, more case study research on HOPE VI projects and other housing projects could lead to definitive results on the ability of New Urbanism to craft the harmonious, diverse, and socially equitable communities it claims to establish. Only through an expansion of research and the test of time will it be discernable whether 21st century inner-city neighborhoods are more socially equitable than in the past.

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Appendix:

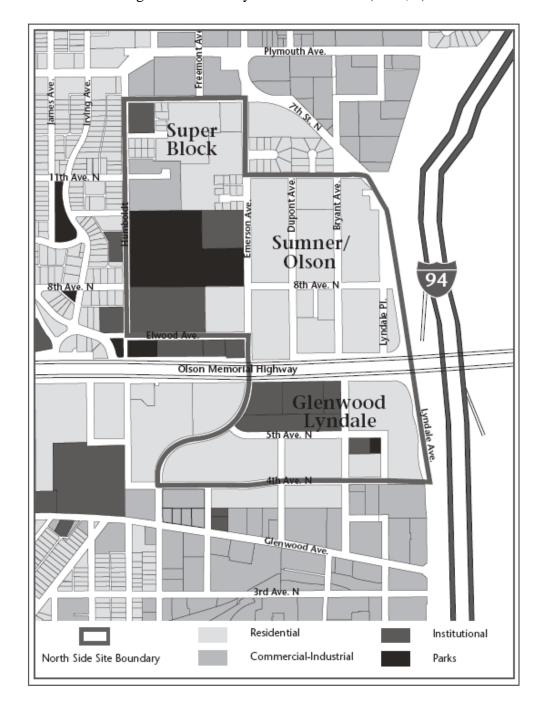Figure 1 – Courtesy of 'Near Northside Master Plan' (2000, 53)

Figure 2 – Courtesy of Edward Goetz (2002, 6)

Picture 1

Picture 2

Picture 3

Picture 4

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