

The Impact of Affordable Housing Homeowners on Neighborhood Stability

Community Problem

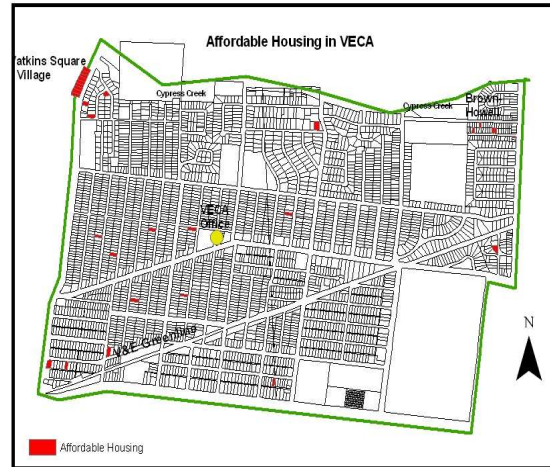
Many studies have indicated that homeownership is vital to the development and success of a neighborhood. The positive implications of homeownership have caused some local agencies to create affordable housing subsidies for its lower-income residents. This study looks into how these affordable homes impact the stability of a developing community. The VECA neighborhood is my area of study.



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Research Issue

The project involves interviews with affordable housing residents about community involvement and perceptions about their neighborhood. Information from the Register of Deeds website allowed for sales and ownership information. GIS data provided precise locations of the homes. An analysis of the physical upkeep of these homes is also utilized.



Project Outcome

Through my research, I found that the affordable homes examined may not be beneficial to the stability and development of the VECA area. Lack of long-term homeownership, below average lot conditions, and little indication of community engagement show that affordable housing residents may not be creating significant relationships with the neighborhood.



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 Hays, R. Allen. "Neighborhood Attachment, Social Capital Building, and Political Participation," *Journal of Urban Affairs*, Vol. 29 (2007): 182-205.
 Jennings, James. "Urban Planning, Community Participation and the Roxbury Master Plan in Boston" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 594 (2004): 12-33.
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Findings

Since the beginning of VECA CDC's affordable housing program in 1996 only 47% of the original residents remain, 43% of homes are occupied by new residents, and 10% are left vacant.

Current owners have been living in their homes for an average of 6 years. (19% less than 2 years, 19% 3-6 years, 12% 7-9 years, 48% over 10 years)

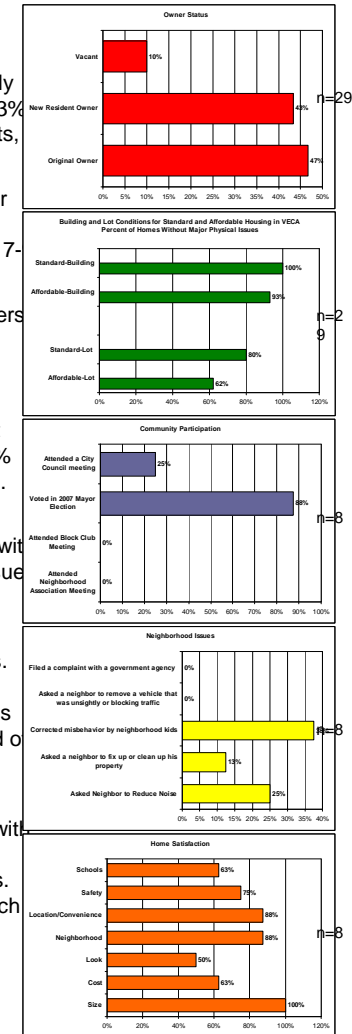
The average occupancy of former owners is only about 5 years. (27% under 2 years, 33% 3-6 years, 27% 7-9 years, 13% over 10 years)

93% of affordable homes stood without any noticeable building issues, and 63% had no problems with yard appearance.

Lots adjacent to the interviewed participants had no reported problems with building conditions and 80% had no issue with yard appearance.

Few participants indicated any kind of major involvement in community issues. 25% had recently attended city council meetings and 88% voted in the previous mayoral election. 62% made some kind of effort to motivate change in their neighborhood in the past year.

Most residents expressed satisfaction with the size, surrounding neighborhood, convenience, and safety of their homes. They were less satisfied with issues such as schools, cost, and physical appearance.



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