Highlights of Climbing Mount Laurel

Princeton University Press, 2013

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plansmartnj
Policy Briefing: Mount Laurel Revisited, Beyond the Supreme Court Decision

December 13, 2013
Springville, Mount Laurel, NJ - 1969

Source: Gillette, Camden After the Fall, 2005, Philadelphia Bulletin, 1969

Source: Kirp, Our Town, 1995, courtesy of Peter J. O’Connor
Ethel Robinson Lawrence
1926-1994

Source: http://goodwinlecture.rutgers.edu/lawrence.htm
The non-profit corporation will construct the low and moderate rental units on at least two (2) sites at a gross density not to exceed ten-units-per-acre ... in any zone in the Township...[and]...not ... more than two hundred fifty-five (255) units...”

1985
We provide families the choice to live in high-opportunity communities with access to decent jobs, good schools and a safe environment — communities where racial and economic discrimination have historically prevented these families from living.

LEARN MORE ABOUT FSHD

POTENTIAL RESIDENTS: APPLY FOR HOUSING »

NEWS
Mayor Redd To Join Camden Seniors and Disabled on “Walk for Wellness”
June 7th, 2013

NEWS
FSHD Executive Director Peter J. O’Connor Gives Commencement Address at Borea College
May 8th, 2013

NEWS
New Princeton University Study Says Pears About Affordable Housing in Suburbs Are "Unfounded"
May 7th, 2012

Suburban Housing
The affluence of New Jersey’s predominantly white suburban communities, with their many employment opportunities and top-notch schools, offer a unique setting for racial and economic integration through the development of affordable housing.

Senior/Assisted Living
By providing affordable living and supportive on-site health and social services, FSHD creates safe environments for the elderly to “age in place.”

Education Is Key
Through the Margaret Donnelly O’Connor Education Centers, FSHD provides the daily educational support needed by our resident children to compete and succeed in quality school systems.

Climbing Mount Laurel
The Struggle for Affordable Housing and Social Mobility in an American Suburb — Published by Princeton University Press

“Life is an opportunity to help others.”
Peter J. O’Connor, Founder and Executive Director of FSHD
Ethel R. Lawrence Homes site (outlined in red), Mount Laurel, NJ
Design Criteria for Ethel Lawrence Homes

• Lower density than the 10 units per acre permitted by the settlement
• High quality suburban development, with extensive landscaping and irrigation systems
• Townhouses, not apartments
• No large parking lots
• Dwelling units substantially larger than the minimum standards
• Housing as attractive as possible
• Active outdoor recreation, education, and social services facilities
SITE PLAN

ETHEL R. LAWRENCE HOMES
Mount Laurel, New Jersey

FAIR SHARE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT INC.
Non-profit Sponsor - Developer

WALLACE ROBERTS & TODD
Landscape Architecture, Urban Design, Architecture, Environmental Planning

OUTDOOR ACTIVE RECREATION AREA 4.1 ACRE
EDUCATION / RECREATION BUILDING 10,000 G.S.F.
MANAGEMENT / MAINTENANCE / SOCIAL SERVICES BUILDING 7,500 G.S.F.
AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING 140 D.U.
Holy Trinity of Neighbor Concerns: Property Values, Crime, and Taxes
Equality Court, Mount Laurel, NJ - 2012
What Is “Affordable” Housing?

Maximum of 30% of household income for housing costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Rent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area Median Income</td>
<td>$73,550</td>
<td>$1,839</td>
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<tr>
<td>80% of median (moderate)</td>
<td>$58,840</td>
<td>$1,471</td>
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<tr>
<td>50% of median (low)</td>
<td>$36,775</td>
<td>$919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% of median</td>
<td>$7,355</td>
<td>$597</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Funding Sources for $26.7 million Ethel Lawrence Homes
140 rental low and moderate income townhouses

Federal Home Loan Bank of New York 34%
Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits 49%
State of New Jersey 34%
Fair Share Housing Development, Inc. and affiliates 15%
Private sector developers 8%
Other 1%
Monitoring Mount Laurel Study
2004-2013

What’s the Impact of Ethel Lawrence Homes on:
• The Community
• The Neighborhood
• Residents
Effect of the Project on the Community: Comparison with Similar Nearby Communities
Figure 5.1. Trends in Crime rates in Mount Laurel, New Jersey, and three comparison townships (Source: NJ Division of State Police).

- New Jersey
- Mount Laurel
- Evesham
- Cherry Hill
- Cinnaminson

Opening of Ethel Lawrence Homes
Figure 5.2. Trends in property values in Mount Laurel and three comparison townships 1994-2010. (Source: NJ Department of Taxation)
Figure 5.4. Effective tax rates for Mount Laurel and three comparison townships (Source: NJ Division of Taxation)

- Mount Laurel
- Evesham
- Cherry Hill
- Cinnaminson

Effective Tax Rates

Year:

Opening of Ethel Lawrence Homes

Graph shows the effective tax rates for Mount Laurel and three comparison townships from 1997 to 2010, with a notable increase in the mid-2000s due to the opening of Ethel Lawrence Homes.
Effect of the Project on the Neighborhood

Ethel R. Lawrence Homes (outlined in red), Mount Laurel, NJ, 2011
Figure 5.3. Trends in property values in Mount Laurel and neighborhoods adjacent to the Ethel Lawrence Homes.  (Source: Asbury Park Press Property Records 1994-2010)
Effect of the Project on Residents: Detailed Surveys of Two Groups

Applicants to Ethel Lawrence Homes

- In-house selection process/waiting list
- Did not move in
- Move into the development

Several years later

Survey two comparable groups

- Health
- Income
- Employment status
- Behavior
- Kids’ opportunities
The Neighborhood Effects Debate

CROSSING THE CLASS AND COLOR LINES
From Public Housing to White Suburbia

MOVING TO OPPORTUNITY
The Story of an American Experiment to Fight Ghetto Poverty

MOVING TO OPPORTUNITY: A SYMPOSIUM
Neighborhood Effects on Economic Self-Sufficiency: A Reconsideration of the Moving to Opportunity Experiment

Susan Chmect-Lundquist
Saint Joseph's University
Douglas S. Massey
Princeton University

This article revises the Moving to Opportunity housing mobility experiment, which heretofore has not provided strong evidence to support the hypothesis of neighborhood effects on economic self-sufficiency among adults. The authors undertake a conceptual and empirical analysis of the study’s design and implementation to gain a better understanding of the selection processes that occur within the study. The article shows that the study is potentially affected by selectivity at several junctures: in determining who complied with the program’s requirements, who entered integrated versus segregated neighborhoods, and who left neighborhoods after initial relocation. Furthermore, previous researchers have not found an experimental treatment effect on adult economic self-sufficiency, relative to controls. The authors propose an alternative approach that involves measuring the cumulative amount of time spent in different neighborhood environments. With this method, they find evidence that neighborhood is associated with outcomes such as employment, earnings, TANF receipt, and use of food stamps.

Under the influence of the Chicago school, American sociology historically placed great emphasis on the ecological context of social behavior, but attention to spatial issues waned in the 1970s and 1980s as the...
Figure 7.1. Exposure to violence and disorder in neighborhoods of ELH residents and non-residents in 1999 and 2009.
Figure 8.4. Effect of years lived in ELH on mental distress

Unmatched Comparison $B = -0.025^+$

Matched Comparison $B = -0.018$
Figure 8.7. Effect of years lived in ELH on economic independence

Unmatched Comparison $B = 0.040^*$

Matched Comparison $B = 0.039^*$
Figure 9.1  Path model showing effect of ELH residence on mental distress and economic independence among adults estimated from matched samples.
Effects of Living in Ethel Lawrence Homes on Children
Figure 8.11. Effect of years of ELH residence on parental support for academics

Matched Comparison
$B = 0.079^{**}$

Unmatched Comparison
$B = 0.084^*$
Figure 8.13. Effect of years in ELH on hours studied per week

Matched Comparison
$B = 0.874^{**}$

Unmatched Comparison
$B = 0.807^{**}$

Hours Studied per Week

Years in Ethel Lawrence Homes
Figure 9.2. Path model showing effect of ELH residence on academic outcomes among children estimated from matched sample.
Conclusions

1. Possible to build affordable housing in affluent suburb without negative effects on host community
   - no effect on taxes, property values, or crime rates

2. For adults, access to affordable housing in an affluent suburb improves life:
   - reduces exposure to disorder & violence
   - lowers frequency of negative life events
   - improves mental health
   - increases economic independence
   - does not reduce social support

3. For children, access to affordable housing in an affluent suburb improves education:
   - improves learning conditions at home
   - increases hours of study
   - improves school quality
   - reduces exposure to disorder and violence within schools
   - does not reduce grade achievement
THANK YOU

QUESTIONS?