Race, Class, and Housing in Louisville, KY

The Racist Origins of City Planning, Banking, and Real Estate
NEW MAP OF GREATER LOUISVILLE
KENTUCKY
THE GATEWAY TO THE SOUTH

PUBLISHED BY PEASE ENGINEERING CO.
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LOCAL ADDRESS

Facts About Louisville

Unless otherwise specified, figures are for the city of Louisville
Business Statistics are from the U. S. Census of Business for 1933

| Population of mapped area, estimate | 400,000 |
| Louisville City 1935 estimate | 326,887 |
| New Albany | 1930 | 25,825 |
| Jeffersonville | 1930 | 12,041 |
| Clarksville | 1930 | 2,240 |
| Land Area | 37.68 sq. miles |
| Altitude above sea level | 466.42 feet |
| Latitude | 38° 15' north |
| Longitude | 85° 45' west |
| Families 1930 U. S. Census | 80,079 |
| Dwellings | 64,152 |
| Home Ownership | 41.5% |
| Assessed valuation | $568,055,419 |
| Bank Resources | $165,230,000 |
| Manufacturing Plants | 519 |
| Value of Products | $191,096,626 |
| Wholesale establishments | 482 |
| Sales | $127,251,000 |
| Retail Stores | 4,012 |
| Sales | $81,229,000 |
| Paved Streets | 327 miles |
| Parks & Playgrounds | 2177.85 acres |
| Parkways & Park Roadways | 57.56 miles |
| Schools | 155 |
| Enrollment | 65,234 |
| University of Louisville enrollment | 3,564 |
RESIDENTIAL SECURITY MAP

LEGEND

A  FIRST GRADE
B  SECOND GRADE
C  THIRD GRADE
D  FOURTH GRADE

SPARSELY BUILT UP
(COLOR INDICATES GRADE)

INDUSTRIAL

COMMERCIAL (IMPORTANT RETAIL AND
WHOLESALE AREAS)

UNDEVELOPED OR FARMLAND
(NO PROBABLE CHANGE WITHIN 5 YEARS)

PREPARED BY
DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND STATISTICS
WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF THE
APPRAISAL DEPARTMENT
HOME OWNERS' LOAN CORPORATION
MARCH 12, 1938

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY.

I - Explanation

II - Security Area Descriptions-
listed alphabetically and
numerically.

Prepared by:

Division of Research and Statistics
with cooperation of the
Appraisal Department.

September 22, 1937
b. Favorable Influences. One of the highest restricted residential areas in or around the city. Contains many estates located on the ridge in the North part of the area overlooking the Ohio River. Three golf courses near.

c. Detrimental Influences. Lack of adequate transportation but type of population makes it not necessary

2. INHABITANTS: Business men - Executives and Capitalists; b. Estimated annual family income $4,000. upward

c. Foreign-born families no %; ____________ predominating; d. Negro no; ___%


5. CLARIFYING REMARKS: Section around Country Club is estate property. Indian Hill subdivision in Northeast, Mockingbird Valley subdivision Southwest of Mockingbird Valley Road have ample restrictions for building homes from $10,000. up. Eightfoot subdivision is well restricted but not quite so high as in other portions. Brownsboro Road which bounds this area on South is a four lane highway leading to Cincinnati.

An Exciting Finish at Churchill Downs, Louisville, Ky.

SECURITY GRADE A AREA NO. 1
. Favorable Influences. City conveniences - close to principal business district

c. Detrimental Influences. Red light district on Eastern side of area - old type of large obsolete houses - mixture of inhabitants

2. INHABITANTS:
   a. Occupation Cheap laborers - some;  b. Estimated annual family income $300. - 1000.
      negro mechanics
   c. Foreign-born families none; __________ predominate; d. Negro yes; __ 80%

4. AVAILABILITY OF MORTGAGE FUNDS: a. Home purchase None;  b. Home building None

CLARIFYING REMARKS: This is about the worst area in the city - low type property and inhabitants. Some negro business extending out Walnut and Chestnut Streets.

SECURITY GRADE ___D___ AREA NO. 11
1931 - Comprehensive Plan

After the U.S. Supreme Court abolished Louisville's racial zoning ordinance in 1917, real-estate interests and city planners employed new strategies and a new language to enforce segregation in the form of zoning and comprehensive planning.

1860 - Louisville Slave Pens

The historical marker at the corner of 2nd Street and Main Street in downtown Louisville denotes the site of one of Louisville’s largest slave markets. Slaves were shackled together in pens when not being displayed to buyers. Louisville’s role in the slave trade...
desirability in neighborhoods from a residential view-point.
Current Data Overlays….

- Mortgage Denials
- Homeownership
- Current Zoning Patterns
- Residential Property Values
- Vacant & Abandoned Properties
- Population Living in Poverty
- Development Trend
- African-American Population

Additional Data to Explore….

- Access to Property Insurance
- Predatory Service Practices
- Access to Health Services
- Crime and Public Safety Trends
1909 – The Birth of City Planning

• National Conference on City Planning - Held in Washington, D.C.

• Many fields attended:
  • Municipal art societies, civic improvement clubs, conservationists, settlement house leaders, architects, engineers, landscape architects

• Attended by big names
  • Olmsted, Robinson, Nolen, Ford, Marsh, Simkhovitch

• Main objective: validate study of health, safety, and welfare of nation

• Call for shift from aesthetics (City Beautiful) and focus more on efficiency an scientific management

• Big question: What should the US provide its citizens?
Benjamin Marsh

- Studied economics at Penn
- Brash, reform minded
- Traveled to Germany on numerous occasions and admired the German system
- Believed planning should incorporate social justice and public health perspectives
- “A city without a plan is like a ship without a rudder.” - 1909
Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr

- 1917 organized American City Planning Institute and served as President throughout the 1920s
- 1918 – said that good zoning policy had to be distinguished from “the legal and constitutional question.”
- “in any housing developments which are to succeed...racial divisions...have to be taken into account.”
The big battle at NCCP

- Marsh vs. Olmsted
- Social justice & public health vs. planning expertise and “scientific management” of the city
- Turning point in solidifying national city planning movement
- Olmsted’s interests prevailed
1910 - 1911

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SECOND NATIONAL CONFERENCE
IN
CITY PLANNING
AND THE
PROBLEMS OF CONGESTION
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK
MAY 2-4, 1910

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
THIRD NATIONAL CONFERENCE
IN
CITY PLANNING
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
MAY 16-17, 1911
1917 - Buchanan v Warley

- US Supreme Court ruled Louisville’s residential segregation ordinance illegal
- Case brought an end to racial zoning
- 1921 – Hoover Advisory Committee on Zoning
- 1924 – “A realtor should never be instrumental in introducing any race whose presence would be detrimental to property values”
- 1926 – Supreme Court upholds the constitutionality of zoning in Euclid v Ambler prohibiting apartment houses in single-family neighborhoods
- Zoning established in Louisville 1931, Comp plan in 1932
  - Harlan Bartholomew arrives
Alfred Bettman

- Director of National Conference on City Planning
- National Landuse Planning Committee
- Planning was necessary to maintain “the nation and the race.”
Harland Bartholomew

- First full-time city planner in St Louis in 1916
- Introduced St Louis zoning ordinance in 1919
- Purpose was to prevent movement into “finer residential districts…by colored people.”
- Plans designed single-family areas that prevented future multifamily, commercial, or industrial uses
- Estimated where African Americans might try to move and zoned those areas industrial
Bartholomew’s 1932 Russell Design

COMPARE BUILDING COVERAGE OF A TYPICAL BLOCK

PRESENT BUILDING DEVELOPMENT

SUGGESTED APARTMENT UNIT LAYOUT

NEGRO HOUSING SURVEY
LOUISVILLE KENTUCKY
Walnut Street Before Urban Renewal
“There are a number of obstacles that are fundamental to any scheme for improving housing conditions among Negroes. [These include] A lack of desire among a large portion of the population for something better than they are accustomed to...if it were possible to create among the Negro masses a real desire for decent accommodations, the slums would automatically eliminate themselves.”
Bartholomew’s 1957 Comp Plan

- Two urban renewal areas
  - “Insulate and protect the tremendous values in the central business district against the run-down and blighted neighborhoods around it.”
- 9th Street divide
  - “To allow more breathing space for downtown.”
    - Louisville Board of Realtors
  
  “A high-speed traffic artery or a wide street parkway may prevent the expansion of undesirable entities into adjacent areas.”
  
  “Natural or artificially established barriers will prove effective in protecting a neighborhood from adverse influences…and inharmonious racial groups.”
    - FHA Underwriting Manuals 1936
Renewal Areas
Traditional Development Pattern vs. the Suburban Experiment

1900s 2016
Planning in 2017

Vision of Broadway as a complete street with BRT

Dixie Highway Corridor Master Plan

Social Hubs - Bike Station Hub 800 Block

Frankfort Avenue today

Vision of Frankfort Avenue as a complete street
2007 Supreme Court Ruling on School Integration in Louisville

“Where racial imbalance is a product not of state action but of private choice, it does not have constitutional implications.” - Chief Justice John Roberts
Form Based Codes

How zoning defines a one-block parcel
Density, use, FAR (floor-area ratio), setbacks, parking requirements, and maximum building height(s) specified.

How design guidelines define a one-block parcel
Density, use, FAR (floor-area ratio), setbacks, parking requirements, maximum building height(s), frequency of openings, and surface articulation specified.

How form-based codes define a one-block parcel
Street and building types (or mix of types), build-to lines, number of floors, and percentage of built site frontage specified.
Housing Units Added To Downtowns Since 2000

Sources: Downtown Organizations, Development Strategies, January 2013

- Owner Occupied
- Market Rate Rental
- Affordable Rental

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<th>City</th>
<th>Total Housing Units</th>
<th>Owner Occupied</th>
<th>Market Rate Rental</th>
<th>Affordable Rental</th>
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*Includes 200 additional market rate rental units.
Single Family Residential Building Permits Issued in Jefferson County Between 2011 and 2013

Legend
- Fixed Route
- Single family building permit

Relative Single Family Residential Building Permit Density per Square Mile

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