

DETERMINING CRITICAL FACTORS IN COMMUNITY-LEVEL PLANNING OF HOMELESS SERVICE PROJECTS

BY

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Landscape Architecture
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2012

Urbana, Illinois

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, communities around the U.S. have been faced with an intractable problem of rising homelessness, dwindling resources, and increasing numbers of tent cities within municipal limits. In this moment of U.S. upheaval, we have a chance to rethink what home means and how local policies can better meet people's needs of home, particularly for those considered homeless. A common thread unites all community conflicts and decisions about shelters, transitional centers, tent cities and other institutionally created housing for the homeless—core beliefs about what 'home' and 'homelessness' mean. How we think about 'home' and what that means for housing impacts how people without access to those dominant types of housing are conceptualized. National approaches to home have implications for all citizens, but particularly for those who find themselves unable to afford the types of accommodations associated with 'home.'

I locate this study of citizenship and home within spaces of housing designated for "homeless" persons, believing these spaces to be much more than a transitional space through which homeless people are moved back into societally accepted housing. Instead, I see them as spaces of citizenship practice, within which local policymaking, service provider rules and regulations, and physical spaces themselves all play critical roles in determining the degree to which residents can access economic, cultural and political citizenship.

Research on homeless services often evaluates how well services function within a shelter. In my work, I seek a more contextualized sense of the role of homeless services in community-wide decisions about homelessness. My study seeks to understand how issues of dominant values and normative beliefs about homelessness impact the planning of homeless shelter/housing projects. At its core, this dissertation examines the conditions under which conflict over definitions of "home" and its relationship to housing, diminish the effectiveness of local communities' efforts to build shelter-related services that meet the needs of service recipients. I examine this question in the context of six shelter

developments over the course of 35 years in Champaign-Urbana. These six projects comprise the bulk of the community's efforts to address homelessness, and taken as a whole, offer a variety of situations in which to examine my research question to understand the critical factors across multiple decisions. I employ social constructionism as the basis for this project. Social constructionism informs my understanding of the nature of social problems—that knowledge about a social problem is constructed through experience and language and that these are historically contingent and contextual.

I selected the community of Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, as the focus of my research. I characterize the Champaign-Urbana community as a “caring city,” quite different from the “mean cities” so well documented by legal geographers and advocacy groups. Places like Champaign-Urbana are far less studied and thus less understood as sites of contestation over similar rights and citizenship issues, though in more nuanced ways than the overtly punitive approaches of mean cities. Within this community, I examine six shelters that have been proposed and developed over the past thirty-five years, developing analysis of how community discourses impacted physical and social aspects of the shelter. I included seven major interest groups as sources of community discourses. These include city council and staff, homeless service providers, shelter project developers, media, community members supporting projects, community members opposing projects, and community members experiencing homelessness. Each of these interest groups, to varying degrees, has played an important role in shaping community understandings of homelessness and appropriate actions to deal with homelessness. I structured my data collection to seek out, as much as possible, each interest group's contributions to local discourses. My data sources include relevant City Council meetings (audio recordings), historical media coverage regarding each project, interviews with project developers, interviews with city officials and staff, interviews with shelter residents, and policy documents for each project, as well as city policy documents regarding homelessness in general.

The first analysis chapter offers an overarching analysis of the role of “home” and “homelessness” assumptions in shaping the development debates. I address debates over the purpose of a shelter, in which shelters have been framed either as housing or as social service centers, before moving to a discussion of “home” and “homeless” as framing devices in conceptualizing shelters. I then turn to a discussion of how assumed population characteristics shape stakeholders’ approaches to shelters, particularly in whether stakeholders frame the developments as legitimate/illegitimate.

Chapter 5 continues this analysis, focusing on gender as one critical population characteristic. Gendered norms of “homelessness” play a significant role in decision-making about who is deserving of housing and services, and these decisions impact what men and women are afforded in their living environments. Women have benefited from communities’ reliance on gender norms, yet there are also drawbacks to one’s identity being so firmly tied to “home.” One is the unequal treatment of single women, and another is the association of one’s identity as belonging in the home, when women may not feel the same attachment to home that others assume they should have. Men have been stigmatized and maligned through communities’ reliance on gender norms. They occupy spaces that fail to meet “home” needs, most importantly privacy and dignity. As “failed men,” they often are not provided with living spaces but rather treated to punitive police actions.

Chapter 6 addresses the issue of how communities frame poor people and their place in the community, drawing out implications for the ways in which policymakers and the broader community interact with, allocate resources for, and otherwise treat these individuals. Within any community, stakeholders choose to represent the poor in various ways, including casting them as objects of scorn, pity, charity, empathy, or otherwise. These particularities of communities’ representations of homeless individuals have implications for their policies. In this chapter, I examine how ideas about homeless individuals, imagined as members of the community, impact stakeholders’ support for housing for these individuals, as well as their framing of that housing’s purpose. I clarify the opportunities for citizenship

that are available (or not available) to unhoused community members, based on the various representations of their place in the community.

Chapter 7 begins an examination of the shelter spaces through the lens of “home” needs. Understanding personal needs and how those needs are met by different spaces allows for an evaluation of shelters from the perspective of home needs. To ground this study’s analysis of shelters as spaces of “home” provision, I draw on the fields of social and environmental psychology. Using Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, I develop a basis for determining the elements of home that are necessary to support basic human functioning and well-being, including shelter, privacy, heart, hearth and roots.

Chapter 8 examines the physical and social spaces of the shelter projects to understand which elements of home are advanced in discourse about the projects, which elements are/were actually operational in the spaces, and how these elements and their operationalization compare to the qualities of home that are most valued by people labeled “homeless.” In this examination, I look not just at the elements themselves, but at the way they are manifested in the physical and social environment. I attend to the variations across projects, seeking to more deeply understand how these variations matter for the goal of providing qualities that are associated with the idea of ‘home.’ Ultimately, it is the stability of self, and confidence in one’s surroundings and his/her place in it that will allow someone to flourish as a human being. The points raised are critical elements that designers, planners, developers, and communities as a whole must begin to consider if we are serious about supporting individuals in achieving well-being and positive functioning in all types of housing situations, not just those associated with mainstream notions of “home.”

The conclusion advances a set of recommendations that are meant to address overarching issues of affordable housing and homelessness, as well as some of the thornier details, first revisiting the state of “home” in this country, tying local concerns to broader national trends in thought and policy

practice. I then turn to a summation of the link between participation and full citizenship, advancing a series of recommendations set in the context of Champaign-Urbana.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I believe in tent cities because I believe in the human spirit. I believe in the ability of people to persevere against waves of trauma and displacement, and I find inspiration in the persistent desire by people living in abject poverty to seek out friendships and support others—a desire that stays alive even in the face of overwhelming individual trials and tribulations. I say this without a bit of romanticism. During my work in the Champaign-Urbana homeless community called Safe Haven (see prologue), I encountered some individuals who were manipulative and self-serving, twisting situations to their benefit at every turn. I recall many evenings returning to my house seething with anger, or conversely, whipped by frustration and feelings of defeat, because of internal fighting and conflict. Struggles for respect and power were frequent, and people fell into natural hierarchies of power quite easily. None of those realities outweigh the greater reality that the group of people who comprised the Safe Haven Tent Community persevered as a coherent group through threats of arrest by the police, threats of violations and fines by the city, denial of assistance by most of the citizens of the community, and daily reminders in the newspaper that they were considered to be drunk, lazy, irresponsible people who cared nothing *for* their community and were conversely not cared for *by* their community. It is to each of these individuals that I extend my deepest gratitude for welcoming me into the group, valuing the talents I had to offer, and most importantly, opening their “doors” (tents) to each and every individual who came to them needing a place to stay, a friendly ear, and a healthy amount of dignity in what is quite often a very undignified situation.

I also owe a huge debt of gratitude to my support network during my time at University of Illinois Urbana Champaign. Laura Lawson, my PhD advisor, is an amazing, strong woman who has believed in me, my motivations, and my work from the beginning, and she has taught me what it means to be a caring and ethical person no matter what situation we find ourselves in. I have benefitted from

her careful and caring approach to research, which always includes the people who are most impacted by the research. She has solidified my approach to research as an act of engagement. She has also been, and continues to be a mentor and friend with whom I can laugh, cry and plan to change the world one step at a time. Lynne Dearborn has also played such a powerful role in my work and development as a scholar, with her unflappable spirit and thoughtful questioning. I would not have been able to conduct this project without her eye for organization, rigor and detail, and her expertise in this area. Coupled with her tutelage has been a passionate commitment to my work, and we have shared mutual excitement about the possibilities of pushing the field in new directions. Dianne Harris has played an instrumental role in bringing me to the field of Landscape Architecture, teaching me at an early stage in my graduate career that this field has such exciting possibilities for those of us who are thinking about social justice. She has inspired a group of graduate students who share a commitment to justice, and deserves great credit for attracting and mentoring us. She consistently has been a champion of my work and I owe a great deal of my confidence to her early and continued encouragement. Lastly, Lisa Bates has played an important role in my development as a scholar, forcing me out of my comfort zone and into areas where I have to confront tough questions about my work. She has played this role while also conveying the utmost support, creating an atmosphere of rigor, but also collaboration. I owe these four fantastic women so much, and I feel confident that they each will continue to play a role in my research and life.

All the folks at the East St. Louis Action Research Project have also played a pivotal role in my development as an engaged scholar and a strong community ally. Vicki Eddings, Mike Andrejasich, Janni Sorensen, and Martha Watts have taught me so much about what it means to be a good partner in the East St. Louis community, and what it means to do work that positively impacts the community. I am so thankful to have had the experiences with ESLARP and will carry them with me throughout my life's work.

I also owe a great deal of gratitude to a number of people outside the university, some for support and some for inspiration (and some for both). Chris Evans spent many afternoons with me, telling stories of the community in ways that only a true artist can—painting pictures of the community, of homeless characters in the community, of the injustices of the community, and of the people who worked to make it a better place to be. He shared his art, his time, and his world with me, with no expectation of returns for any of his gifts. I have my research focus and perspective because of him. I have Andy Harmon to thank for his persistent support for me during my graduate career. It is no small task to undertake a doctoral degree, and his support made it possible for me to work through the program while still maintaining physical, mental and emotional health. My parents have also played a significant role in supporting my mental and emotional health. I am so blessed to know that I can pick up the phone at any time, with any crisis, and they are on the other end of it, ready to help in any way they can. I could not have gotten through the final months of this dissertation without them. Finally, I owe so much to Jen Knapp. She has played so many roles in my life that it is hard to sum them up. She has been a mentor, a best friend, a colleague, an instrument of change, a source of inspiration, a source of support, and a daily reminder that life is about inspiration, change, friendship, and love. Her spirit is all through my work, and just as important, her organization skills! She has participated in my work every step of the way, from early conversations to the design of the project to the gut-wrenching months of data collection to organizing and writing the dissertation. Her strength of character and commitment to working for justice are awe-inspiring and helped me craft my own sense of self and commitment to this work.

Lastly, I want to thank the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for their funding support for my work through their Doctoral Dissertation Research Grant. They provided funding for my data transcribing and analysis and the writing phase of my dissertation. I am deeply grateful for their support.

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PROLOGUE

Author's Note: This story is about a tent community that was begun in 2009 by a group of street-sleeping individuals in Champaign, Illinois. Three weeks into the tent community's existence, members of the tent community asked me to assist them in planning to meet their goals. Over the next year, I worked with members and two other advocates/organizers to achieve the group's goals, in the process forming close working and personal relationships with many of the original and later members. I write this story as a precursor to this dissertation because in many ways, my experiences with this tent community set the stage for my project, including the sorts of questions I began asking, the insights I gleaned from the members, and my increasing fascination with the capacity of local government to have significant impacts on the lives of all its citizens, housed and unhoused alike. I write this story, then, for two reasons. First, in the midst of a sea of more technical writing, I think beginning with a story is a nice way to ease into the subject. I also write this story because it provides the reader with an understanding of what I experienced during that summer, the issues that were important to/for the tent community, and why I ask the questions I ask in this dissertation.

Tent Camper Meeting 6/29/09

Authored by Safe Haven Tent Community Member

Sitting in the Illini sun
on a Champaign afternoon
Homeless campers in a tent
as the summer blossoms bloom

where shall we sleep
in the wake of homeless blues
singing sad songs of broken hearts
in worn-out dilapidated shoes

you can have this job
with a title for your name
each with some authority
and a function for your brain

we'll divide the list of chores
among the members of the group
and when we meet and gather
we'll enjoy bread and soup

and when we are well-organized
each task allotted out
a fine machine of social change
we'll have a powerful clout!

In the spring of 2009, a small group of individuals, some coupled and some single, began camping together in the backyard of the Catholic Worker House in Champaign, IL. This act alone was not unusual. People had covertly camped in this backyard and in the one next to it (occupied only by a vacant house) for years, coming and going at night, leaving only small traces of their existence behind. What made this group different was their visibility. Refusing the bare survival of sleeping under a tarp, with water, mud and spring snows running freely into their sleep space, they began erecting tents. In the process, they laid claim to the space in its entirety, running off some individuals they perceived as “troublemakers” who they claimed “just wanted to drink and drug.”

In the beginning, the tent community was comprised of 8-10 individuals, six white and two black, with some additional people staying with them for a few nights. For the most part, each individual had her/his own tent, with the two couples sharing a tent. They arranged themselves on either side of a path that led from the main St. Jude’s Catholic Worker House to the smaller resident house at the back of the property. A campfire lit up at night but was always extinguished by 10:00 p.m., their “lights out” time. The individuals who comprised the tent community formerly had been “on the street” by themselves or in pairs. A few of them had been victims of multiple physical attacks, perpetrated as they tried to sleep. They rejected the passivity of this position, choosing instead to create a visible community, which offered safety and security while they slept. In the process of establishing their safe space, they became an organized body with a central mission to house and care for themselves in a manner deemed acceptable by and accessible to them. Forming this group coalesced individual homeless people into a public that began to articulate its own goals, and developed the potential to garner community support—financial and otherwise—as a recognized entity, rather than individual nuisances.

The group’s vision was formed collectively over the early months of the tent community’s

existence. People were on the street for myriad reasons, but the reasons that brought them to the tent community were not so different. People wanted safety and a chance for self-sufficiency beyond mere survival. Individuals repeatedly shared their common stories of being jumped while sleeping in parks and alleys. One man spoke to city council about his trials of the past year, remarking that after the death of his wife and loss of his three children to the state, he had little to keep him going until the tent community formed. There was often an optimistic atmosphere, with many members of the group reiterating the common belief that they could accomplish their goals if they worked together and tried hard enough. Our bi-weekly meetings were often a combination of goal setting activities plus motivational speeches from members to bolster the group's newly formed identity.

Rallying around mutual goals set the stage for formulating a plan for the future. During the bi-weekly meetings, I presented Dignity Village's¹ approach to becoming a legal semi-permanent village, offering various options and facilitating discussion about what the group wanted most. As we solidified pieces of the community and the future plan, I developed a written document that represented the group's goals and strategies. As a harnesser of resources and a University of Illinois graduate instructor in Fine and Applied Arts, I was able to bring in a former Urban Planning student to assist with developing technical aspects of the plan, in particular zoning requirements and recommended modifications. Together, we created a plan entitled "A Proposal to Champaign City Council Urging the Amending of Code to Accommodate the Humane and Dignified Treatment of Marginalized Communities," which offered the group's goals and strategies, along with illustrations of the housing they sought and precedents from other tent cities. Many of our ideas for the physical structuring of the buildings and overall lay-out of the tent community came from conversations with Dignity Village in Portland, OR, as well as Dignity Village's "Tent Cities Toolkit," an interactive DVD that details how groups could set up

¹ Dignity Village is a 60 person semi-permanent village in Portland, Oregon, that began as a tent city in 2000. They have served as a model for many tent cities in the U.S., particularly with the production of the Tent Cities Toolkit, a multi-media guide to organizing functions within a tent city.

their own village. These plans were completed in early July 2009 and presented to individual Champaign City Council members over the month of July.

Mission

To create a safe, clean, self-governed community environment for economically distressed residents of the State of Illinois, through establishment of an open-air place where people living on the streets can have their basic needs met in a stable, sanitary environment, until they are able to access another form of housing more in keeping with said resident's personal goals and aspirations.

Vision

Safe Haven is a village model, integrating all functions of daily life at a local scale, because when numerous challenges are brought together they can be met together. Safe Haven is a place where a person can learn more about what it means to be a participant, engaged in a big picture that includes them. They get to "be somebody." Safe Haven strives to foster community and self-empowerment while providing transitional housing for its members. One of our main goals is to provide a **safe, drug-and-alcohol-free alternative to the streets** for homeless adults every night. To that end, we implement a variety of operational activities needed to maintain a safe, diverse, and empowering community that provides support for members to pursue their own goals while working interdependently toward a vision of the Safe Haven community. Our longer-term goal is self-sufficiency through the creation of micro-industries, which will develop the Safe Haven economy and provide skills and training for people in need.

Location, Site Amenities, and Structure

Ideally, we seek a site that offers one or more acre(s) of land that is located in a lower density area with access to a bus line within 2 blocks of the site. With the proper location, Safe Haven can become a service provision "neighborhood" with appropriate space to maintain self-sufficient practices, including food production, solar water heating, and energy-efficient housing construction methods, as well as micro-enterprises for economic self-sufficiency. Safe Haven has established a Sanitation Crew who is responsible for keeping the site and surrounding area clean of trash and waste. Safe Haven maintains one

Portalet, at a total cost of \$60 per month, paid with private donations and our own funds. As the community grows, we will rent additional Portalets. Safe Haven has a Security Crew who maintains and ensures security and respect within the site. No alcohol, drugs or disrespectful or aggressive behavior are allowed in Safe Haven. Heating will be accomplished in accordance with the City of Champaign Fire Code. Future phases of our community include more permanent structures that can be outfitted with heaters that meet standards set forth in the Fire Code. Safe Haven does not currently have shower facilities. As one of our first construction efforts, we will be constructing a solar shower for residents.

The proposed semi-permanent structures measured 8x8x8. These units utilize small electric baseboard heaters and are lined with blown-in insulation. Each of these units can be constructed with volunteer labor for approximately \$1500. We anticipated building units based on need, given the low cost of each unit and their individualized nature. The units were designed fairly simply, and as many of the members had construction skills, we felt confident that we would be able to build the structures on our own or with other volunteer labor.

At the beginning, the group would have required 6-10 units. In the first month of existence, we received nearly \$1000 in donations from individuals seeking to support the group. Later in the summer, we developed a Faith Coalition of nine churches (five initially) to support Safe Haven that would have been able to fund the construction of these buildings. Given the low cost of the group's needs, we requested no funding from the City of Champaign, only a zoning variance and a vacant parcel of land.

The group never intended to stay in the Catholic Worker House backyard permanently. Members recognized the limitations of the site, and, wanting to provide shelter to others in their position, they sought a larger site where they could expand and build heated semi-permanent structures. In fact, the plan excerpted above also devoted attention to identifying potential city-owned locations within city limits. Media coverage, however, focused mainly on the moments of conflict—between Catholic Worker House and neighbors, between homeless “drunks” and neighbors, and between the city's standards of

living and the flagrant denial of them by the campers. News coverage was fast and fierce in those first few months.

Emerging from the combination of tent community members' and organizers' efforts was a serious and viable plan. The problem was that the public never saw this plan in all its detail. From the first few weeks of the tent community's existence, the local newspaper and two local television channels were covering the group, often several times a week. We welcomed the chance to tell the story of the tent community but quickly found that the news outlets were interested in a particular framing. The story that the media presented to the public was a controversy over the takeover of a residential backyard (and by implication, the neighborhood) by homeless campers. The media's understanding of the tent community's plan was best exemplified in the June 23, 2009 edition of the *News-Gazette*, where reporter Mike Monson wrote that the tent city "is drawing fire from some neighboring residents, who say the residents are often drunk and make noise late into the night" (Monson, 2009a). This idea that the tent community was a bunch of drunken miscreants appeared in the majority of the news coverage in the first two weeks of the tent community's existence. Talk of zoning violations dominated the remainder of the coverage, with the *News-Gazette's* editorial board submitting their own opinions: "Time to fold up 'tent city'" and "Tent living is not acceptable."

By the time the *News-Gazette* ran a story that focused on the actual plans of the tent community, public sentiment (in the form of online comments on the article) was highly skeptical and gave little merit to the plan. Even then, the reporting gave scant attention to the plan's details, and many aspects of the plan came under fire, such as the exact heating plan, fire codes, bathrooms, and the like. The conflict-driven news coverage and editorializing suggested that the tent community transgressed community standards: sleeping in tents, using a port-a-potty as a bathroom, and bathing with a hose made people uncomfortable. But beyond these surface transgressions, the community

tapped into a deeper vein of thought about homelessness. The spectacle of a self-consciously independent and politicized community that made demands upon the local government challenged the belief that “good” homeless people submit to what is offered public and non-profit organizations by confessing their wrongs, developing habits of personal responsibility, and promising to reform themselves.²

Two major implications extend from this belief—the first is that the shelter system is the place to be “good,” and the second is that to be “good,” one must act as an individual, submitting her/himself to the will of experts that will help her/him. Here was a group of homeless people that, for various reasons, were unable to access the local shelter system, but they weren’t asking for money, housing, or help from the experts. I think one of their most eloquent statements was “not a handout, just a chance to be self-sufficient.” But most important, was the simple fact that the group had the audacity to camp as a *group*. As one member of the tent community observed early on, in response to the city’s unwillingness to negotiate, the assembly of an intentional community represented power to city officials—as long as homeless people remained individuals, they presented no threat to the status quo, but when they banded together, they became a public entity, that threw into question, the myth that homelessness is an individual, rather than communal, problem.

Homeless individuals are often viewed as nuisances by their very existence in visible spaces in the community. They are regarded as interrupting the atmosphere of “appropriate” civic behavior through meeting their bodily needs. Relieving oneself in the bushes, sleeping on benches, and rummaging through dumpsters challenge the assumptions about what behaviors are appropriate to public space. But individuals do not urinate in the bushes to actively challenge standards of living—they do so because they must. Here in Champaign, the tent community went from existing in public space to challenging

² See my usage of Feldman (2004) in the introduction, as well as a more extended discussion of assumptions about homeless individuals in Chapters 4-6.

the normative appearance of that space by making contentious a few of the issues surrounding standards of living. In the past, many people had turned up to city council meetings protesting actions like an anti-camping ordinance and supporting actions like opening new housing for the homeless, but the council had not faced efforts to this extent by homeless and housed together to challenge the community's philosophy and method(s) of shelter provision. City staff and officials' public comments about the tent community often were, "We have shelters; just tell them to go to the shelters." But for members, the tents offered a quality of life that exceeded that of the shelters, despite the lack of permanent structures and indoor plumbing. Members publicly argued to the City Council that the tent community offered them dignity, safety, and self-sufficiency, calling shelters into question in the process. The City reacted to this challenge by threatening hefty fines, up to \$750/day, for violating zoning ordinances Sec. 37-102 and 37-103 that state "Unless otherwise provided in this chapter, no structure or land may be used, erected, converted, or structurally altered in the IT-MX Districts, except for one (1) or more of the permitted uses listed above or one (1) or more of the following provisional uses, provided the provisional use meets the requirements of this chapter." The ordinances list two dozen permitted and provisional uses, including emergency and transitional shelters/housing for the homeless, yet these uses are required to be *dwellings*, defined by the City Code as "any building or a portion of a building, occupied or designed to be occupied by one or more units each of which is used or designed to be used as a permanent place of abode for human occupancy." These fines were premised on the belief that tents do not constitute dwellings.

These threats of fines led to the end of the tent community, but the fines represent much more than city ordinances. Governmental regulations like building and zoning codes are predicated on a particular set of beliefs: 1) that the standards are at an acceptable, agreed-upon level for people to live safely, 2) that everyone can reasonably achieve the standards set forth without undue hardship, and 3) that local governments should actively put standards like these in place. There are many problems with

these beliefs. Most fundamentally, the notion that any of these standards are fixed is false. For instance, in 2009, the City of Champaign granted twenty-one zoning variances. The frequency of zoning variances suggests that the City uses the zoning code as a template, rather than an unbreakable set of rules. Yet, city staff and officials refused to entertain a zoning variance for the tent community.

Negotiations with the City stopped abruptly in late August 2009. By this time, the group had endured four rapid moves between temporary sites over the course of two weeks. The group finally settled in the yard next to the parish center of St. Mary's Catholic Church, only to be given one week to cease and desist (by the City). These further threats of fines forced the group indoors, where its members stayed for the remainder of its existence. People continued to be housed in a peer-run environment, but some of the magic left when the tents were abandoned for a more shelter-like atmosphere. The tents were an important dwelling form that contributed greatly to the sense of community; they made it feel like a small interdependent neighborhood was being created and made the sharing of meals and other resources more obvious. The result was a sense of optimism; the tents signaled the presence of big plans for the future. Within the tent city, the roles of helper and helped formulated by public policy were not only rejected, but also even reversed.

Once indoors, with the weather turning cold, I heard a marked shift in the discussion of collective action among members toward conversations about *other* people on the street that need *our* help. Clearly this help was necessary, as the number of people who joined the community climbed to 45 as the winter stretched on, but much of the feeling of becoming empowered equals was lost in the physical shift from individual tents on common property to a shared floor in an open room. As one member stated, "When we was at St. Mary's I kept saying, man, I'd rather be back in my tent cause at least I had...it was just canvas sides but it was like I had privacy, you know, you change your clothes in there and not worry about it. And then when we was in St. Mary's...if you was laying out in the dayroom,

if that's what you wanna call it, you was under everybody's eye... it was like we were all in like a little fish bowl." For this man, and other members, the tents offered a space of one's own akin to a private residence, with visual privacy, delineated lines of private and public space, and capacity for organizing a space according to your own needs and/or whims. The open room blurred the lines between private and public, causing members to exhibit territorial behavior in an attempt to police those boundaries. In addition, there was no possible visual privacy. These conditions create a seeming paradox: while members had individual tents, they were able to live communally, while living in close quarters eroded feelings of communality and increased individuals' territoriality.

Though the group's efforts officially ended in May 2010, those first three months of outdoor living allowed the group and some in the surrounding community to tap into a vision that exploded many people's ideas of what is possible through collaborative action. Safe Haven Tent Community members wanted to do for themselves and each other. While there were certainly feuds that arose between individuals, as in any household or neighborhood, the tent community atmosphere was one of camaraderie. Most importantly, the members considered themselves to also be legitimate members of the broader Champaign community and genuinely felt that they were performing a valuable service for it. The question that extends from this, for me, is how communities can incorporate the thoughts, desires, needs, and efforts of their unhoused community members. I focus on this question and offer my recommendations in the conclusion as my own effort to convert the good intentions of our communities into more positive and effective housing actions.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

I sit here and I listen as I pledge to the flag. I'm not homeless. America is my home, I'm only houseless. I'm that Vietnam era veteran today that has no place to stay in one of the wealthiest nations in America.

(Shelter resident, CCCmeeting040495)

In recent years, communities around the U.S. have been faced with an intractable problem of rising homelessness, dwindling resources, and increasing numbers of tent cities within municipal limits. In this moment of U.S. upheaval, we have a chance to rethink what home means and how local policies can better meet people's needs of home, particularly for those considered homeless. A common thread unites all community conflicts and decisions about shelters, transitional centers, tent cities and other institutionally created housing for the homeless—core beliefs about what 'home' and 'homelessness' mean. How we think about 'home' and what that means for housing impacts how people without access to those dominant types of housing are conceptualized. In this chapter, I address meanings of 'home,' and the connections that ideas of 'home' have to physical housing forms. I also examine the implications of linking particular physical housing forms to 'home' in terms of citizenship. I turn to a brief look at "the homeless" as a socially constructed category of people, discussing their access to the rights of citizenship based on housing status. Within this topic of citizenship, I then look to some gray areas of U.S. housing in which notions of 'home,' legality, and standards of living exist in contradiction, in order to ground my theoretical constructs. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the links between public policy and the spatial realities of 'home,' in the process demonstrating why these issues are of importance to designers, planners, municipal policymakers, and housing advocates alike.

Viewing home, and relatedly, homelessness, as constructed social ideas allows for more meaningful conversations about what people need in terms of their living environment. For instance,

the stated goal of most homeless services in the U.S. is (generally) to provide access to societally accepted housing for those who have been unable to access it on their own. Yet most communities lack the appropriate amount of truly affordable housing necessary to make that goal a reality. Faced with this practical problem, many individuals occupy “homeless” housing, like shelters and transitional centers, for years, or they house themselves in illegal or marginalized ways. Thus standards of living and ‘home’ ideals become a contested terrain, where needs are not being met by societally accepted housing practices, yet personally acceptable practices are considered inadequate and in some cases outlawed through the creation of more stringent building and zoning codes.

Standards of living in the U.S. are modeled on the ideal of homeownership as the ultimate “home.” As geographer Tony Sparks notes, “Within the American paradigm of propertied citizenship, the homeless and homelessness appear as problems to be corrected rather than a necessary byproduct of the paradigm itself. In this frame, the division of space into public and private (in terms of ownership or possession) and the delineation of activities proper to these spaces appear uncontested, monolithic and stable” (2009, p.36). All housing types are a trickle-down standard from the owned home, and the values that are so highly regarded in the owned home - namely privacy, control, security of tenure, nuclear family units, space/comfort, and ownership itself - are used to evaluate other housing types. The degree to which housing types meet each of these values dictates their relative worth or status in the community, and over the past 150 years, many of these housing types have been removed from the housing stock. Yet certain housing types persist in the community that harken back to past centuries and decades—shelters, SROs, group homes, and transitional centers³ physically look like the residential hotels and rooming houses of the past, yet these housing types today are only accepted as appropriate

³ The term “transitional center” indicates a type of shelter that offers shelter beds coupled with social services that are purported to improve individuals’ self-sufficiency, i.e. to provide them with the skills to “get off the street.”

to house “special” populations, namely mentally ill, disabled, formerly incarcerated, and “homeless” people.

The home ideal of detached, private, market-based accommodations dictates the degree to which other environments are viewed as “home” or something else. The stakes are high when considering the implications of building housing exclusively for people labeled “homeless.” In the U.S., people deemed “homeless” by the federal definition can access emergency shelters, transitional centers, and permanent supportive housing, yet their presence in these housing types reinforces the label of “homeless.” Geographer Stacey Murphy documents a situation in San Francisco where a new housing referral program directed “homeless” individuals to units in one of the city’s single room occupancy hotels, which was “historically used by the poorest residents of San Francisco, including many homeless men and women who used hotels for short-term stays when they could afford them” (2009, p.316). The referral program eliminated that option for people not enrolled in the program, cutting down on the number of accessible hotel units for them.

In contrast, if U.S. cities adopted policies that supported the construction of rooming houses and residential hotels with varying degrees of privacy, and they allowed these structures to be built without homeless programs attached to them, would the people in them still be homeless? Logic says “of course not”—they are being housed in a manner suitable to meet their needs. Yet the term “homeless” was first used by early 20th century housing reformers to describe residents living in these environments, arguing that their supposed detachment from the community was the real source of homelessness. I use this example to illustrate that the socially constructed nature of the label “homeless” has never just been about the presence of shelter. For instance, the current HUD definition of homelessness includes “Individuals and families who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes a subset for an individual who resided in an emergency shelter or a place not meant for human

habitation,” a highly subjective category that points to permanence as a quality of ‘home’ (“Homeless”, 2011, p.75995)

There have been politically advantageous reasons for expanding the definition of homelessness over the years, as it has allowed advocates to demonstrate numbers and thus a need for funding,⁴ but it has also served to bolster a narrowly defined home ideal, contrasting many other living environments and arrangements against the ultimate ideal of homeownership. Changes were recently proposed (but ultimately rejected) to the HUD definition to include the addition of “doubled up” (overcrowded) living arrangements (“Homeless”, 2011). This change would have allowed people in those situations to access government money to improve their environments, but it also would have labeled those environments as “not home,” further shrinking our conceptualization of what a home can be for someone. Similarly, advocates of sit/lie⁵ and anti-camping ordinances argue that it is unacceptable as a society to allow people to remain homeless, arguing instead that they should be admitted into shelters as a step on the path toward independent living. Yet this argument begs the question, were they not living independently before? Because the method of independent living did not possess enough qualities of the home ideal, it is delegitimized and indicated as a condition of homelessness, where the *dependent* living in a shelter is seen as a step in the direction of independent living in a societally-defined “home” environment.

⁴ See, for example, Burt, Martha R., and Cohen, Barbara E. *America's Homeless: Numbers, Characteristics, and Programs That Serve Them*. Urban Institute Report. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute Press, 1989, and Hopper, Kim, and Hamberg, Jill. *The Making of America's Homeless: From Skid Row to New Poor, 1945-1984*. New York: Community Service Society of New York, 1984.

⁵ Sit/lie ordinances are increasingly popular municipal strategies to keep homeless people out of central city areas. These ordinances make it a civil violation (with fine) to sit or lie on walls, picnic tables, and other areas where someone might loiter. For a full description of these ordinances and others, see *A dream denied: the criminalization of homelessness in U.S. cities*. (2006). Washington DC: National Coalition for the Homeless and National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty.

I interrogate these issues not because I am an advocate for people being put in situations where they have to sleep outside. On the contrary, I am an advocate for socialized housing, in which the government recognizes the basic human right to shelter and provides for it. But in a society that does not consistently provide housing for its people, it is essential that our nation and communities carefully question the home ideal and consider alternative dwelling practices in terms of how well they meet needs, not how closely they approximate a narrow ideal. This move is not just for poor people but rather to question, as a nation, whether our home ideal is appropriate for a diverse citizenry and the best use of the nation's resources. Questioning this ideal not only allows us to consider dwelling practices like tent cities and RV/car living, it also allows us to begin to accept other living situations like rented rooms, SROs and boarding houses as acceptable dwelling practices for people of any age and any family situation. Equally important is reconsidering how well our "homeless" designated housing is meeting the needs of the people who live there and how it can be reshaped to do so more effectively.

What is home and what does it look like?

When someone says the word 'home,' so much is conjured up in one's mind—a combination of past experiences, American ideals, and current realities.⁶ These ideas of home pervade decisions about what sorts of housing we live in, how our communities are arranged, and who is accepted as members of the community. These ideas of home take physical form, and over time, the U.S. idea of home has supported particular physical forms. In discussing the privileging of particular ideas and forms, I primarily focus on the role of the residential hotel and the single-family house in U.S. history because over time, residential hotels have all but disappeared, while single-family houses have proliferated, despite the documented need for residential hotels as cheap accommodations. These changes have occurred through federal and local policy and market-based decisions designed to establish the single-family

⁶ See Moore (2000) and Moore (2007) for overviews of meanings of home within environmental psychology literature

house as the primary mode of housing. Thus the ideal of “home” has narrowed and solidified from earlier American epochs into the contemporary association with ownership of the single-family detached house. Prior to the Civil War, “home” much more closely approximated the community as a whole, with insiders being taken care of by the community, while outsiders were told to move along. After the Civil War, though, “home” became associated with the residence, shrinking the scope of its functions and in doing so, creating the category of homeless (Veness, 1992). With this emphasis on the residence, home also became attached to the family. Historian Todd DePastino (2003) reports that in the early 1900s the term “homeless” meant an unattached single man. It had nothing to do with whether he was sheltered or not, and had everything to do with his attachments. During the early 1900s, “homeless” men paid for cheap commercial lodging, the only affordable option for their small paychecks.⁷

As DePastino points out, Progressive Era reformers who worked in U.S. cities during the 1890s to 1920s were highly concerned with modernization and promoting family.⁸ Political scientist Gwendoline Alphonso sums up the Progressive approach as, “family functionality and morals were viewed as fundamentally determined by its economic condition... affirm[ing] a proactive, interventionist state—one assumed to exist not independently but in organic relation to family” (2010, p.228). These reformers sought to eradicate lodging houses and residential hotels as aberrant forms of living. Prior to this period, lodging houses and residential hotels had proliferated in cities to meet the rising housing demands of the influx of workers (Frank, 1989; Groth, 1994). These structures were unregulated and many were filthy. Yet DePastino argues that the biggest problem was not filth but the threat to the home ideal (2003). Where the dominant ideal of home at the time was that of family, personal

⁷ These same men used municipal lodging houses in times of recession but avoided them when possible because of their restrictions and work requirements—many of them demanded hours of splitting wood or other menial tasks to earn a night’s stay. See Groth (1994) and Hoch and Slayton (1989) for more discussion of these decisions.

⁸ Jane Addams wrote about the family, primarily from the perspective of reforming immigrant families through “bring[ing] them in contact with a better type of Americans” (Addams, 1930a, p.231). See both volumes by Addams (1930a; 1930b) for further description of Progressive Era reformers’ perspectives.

obligation and nurturing, unattached men exposed housing as merely a market relation, with their casual lodging and ability to purchase all the services of home, including laundry, dining and social life. Despite single men's desire to pay for commercial lodging, charity workers sought to regulate it, believing that driving up the cost of commercial lodging would "steer previously self-supporting lodgers into the arms of social welfare authorities" (DePastino, 2003, p.135). As the country moved from a nation of pioneers to a nation of industrial workers, new ideas developed about what type of dwelling made a suitable home. "Outmoded types of housing such as the tent, frontier cabin, collective shelter, or tenement house were reclassified as unhealthy and uncivilized" (Sparks, 2009, p.17).⁹

From 1930 to 1970, with decades of government commitment to improving access to the ideal (homeownership), other types of housing maintained a tenuous existence as accepted temporary environments on the way to homeownership, for instance boarding houses, lodging houses, and residential hotels. Public housing also was originally built to address housing needs for "good moderate and middle-income" families who were out of work or had lost their home in the depression (Wright, 1981). As geographer Veness (1992) makes clear, while public housing was considered transitional and temporary, it enjoyed political support because it targeted upstanding moderate and middle-income families. The Wagner-Steagall Housing Act of 1937 shifted public housing efforts from lower-middle-class families to the very poor (1981, p.227). Once it became clear that public housing was not a temporary stop for these families, political support waned.¹⁰ As the economy worsened in the 1970s

⁹ U.S. housing policy has consistently privileged ownership of single-family detached houses over other forms of dwelling, including apartments and residential hotels. Governmental intervention played a large role in solidifying ownership of the single-family house as the national ideal. The Housing Act of 1939 insured lending companies and promoted construction of new houses, both of which encouraged a sharp uptick in homeownership. Prior to this time, most middle-class and working-class households rented.

¹⁰ Gwendolyn Wright cites one case in Chicago where only 21 of the 533 families that were removed from slums could afford to rent the replacement PWA housing (Wright, 1981, p.226). Yet even with the upwardly mobile public housing residents, the elegance of the buildings was cause for concern among builders and realtors because they were considered to be too nice for families to want to move out and into their own houses (1981). As public housing budgets shrank and the effects of urban renewal took hold, units were made sparser and smaller, and their waiting lists shot up as those displaced by urban renewal sought public housing as their only choice. Public

and 1980s, the less desirable living environments of the boarding house, lodging house and residential hotel were increasingly recognized as permanent, and without the promise of homeownership in the future, they became less acceptable and people living in them were increasingly labeled as “homeless.”¹¹

Conversely, the revered single-family detached dwelling typified American ideals. Architectural and urban planning researcher Lynne Dearborn maintains that, “Homeownership in the United States has been linked to an idealized notion of the American way of life since Thomas Jefferson envisioned a nation of yeoman farmers” (2006, p.40). Jefferson’s *Notes on the State of Virginia* state, “Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God,” and that those who could not rely on “their own soil and industry” became dependent, a condition that “begets subservience and venality, [and] suffocates the germ of virtue...” (Vale, 2000, p.95). This early belief in self-sufficiency led to a bootstrapping mentality that has persisted through centuries of U.S. housing policy. Historian Gwendolyn Wright remarks, “On an individual level, they represented personal independence. On a social level, they showed family pride and self-sufficiency. Politically, the architecture seemed an expression of democratic freedom of choice. And economically, it mirrored the pattern of private enterprise, rather than planning for the overall public good, which characterized American society” (1981, p.89). By the

housing came to be seen as a last resort rather than a housing choice of a temporarily stranded, but upwardly mobile class of households. As housing authorities increasingly viewed these environments as places of order and control, they utilized architecture that symbolized these values—the tall, self-contained towers that we now associate with crime and violence. Residents disliked the tiny apartments and large, under-utilized outdoor spaces of these complexes, and since these towers cost substantially more to build than low-rise apartment buildings, budgets for maintenance shrank (1981).

¹¹ The shifting standards of living regarding residential hotels (SROs) provides an example of the solidification of certain ideals of home in physical housing. SROs have come back into fashion in some cities as a way to provide cheap, affordable housing for single people. However, conflict arises over the question of whether shared baths and kitchens are appropriate, given the assumed privacy needs of individuals. Full privacy was not always considered so important though. Veness argues, “At one time, such communal spaces were the basis for many utopian architectural designs because they supported what people perceived to be some of the basic components of home. Later they were effectively outlawed because they undercut the primacy of the family. Today, they look regressive and feel repressive, even though family types have changed and many are unable to manage on their own” (1992, p.461). In fact, Mostoller’s studies of SRO units and their occupants found that six elements are necessary for an SRO unit: bed, wardrobe, table, chair, stand and sink cabinet, not private bathrooms and kitchens (1989, p.272).

1950s, the suburban ideal, with its single-family private residences filled with homeowners, was a reality, thanks to federal spending through the GI Bill. Homeownership was seen as strengthening national security, tying couples down and reducing women's free time. Wright (1981) reports that some housing proponents saw the tedium of homemaking as a way to keep women from potential contact with communist clubs. As suburbs grew, the single-family detached dwelling took on further significance in the American mind, adding the virtues of peace and refuge from the bustling city that suburbanites could easily reach by train. Even within the homes, there were multiple zones of retreat or refuge from "the intensity of family life" (1981, p.112). Suburban homes were also a symbol of the rewards of thriftiness, as it took a great deal of sacrifice to attain a house in the suburbs.

Today we are left with a legacy of narrowly defined housing options and a definition of homelessness that encompasses many forms of housing that formerly were accepted or at least widely practiced but have since been regulated out of legality except under certain circumstances. This housing can be grouped under the following definition: not living in a "fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence," including an "emergency shelter or a place not meant for human habitation" ("Homeless", 2011, p.75995).¹² Shelters offer accommodations that are remarkably similar to the cheap residential hotels that dominated the inner city landscape until urban renewal. And even though hotel residents were also labeled homeless at points in history, today the term has taken on greater stigma, as women and men of color have become overrepresented in shelter populations, and frequently shelter residents and street people are assumed to be mentally ill or substance abusers. Shelters often require residents to submit to reforming practices like daily breathalyzers, random drug tests, proof of job searches, case management, and scores of life skills and other "empowerment" classes, all as preconditions to a roof over their head each night. Yet their living conditions are not terribly different from the cheap

¹² This definition comes from the final rule in the HEARTH Act—the most recent piece of legislation regarding homelessness. This legislation dictates the rules and regulations of who is defined as homeless, shaping who is eligible for federal funds.

residential hotels of the early 20th century. The characterization of these residents as “homeless clients” denies the possibility of their living environment serving as a home and denies the person the attribution of independence and self-sufficiency afforded to those who can pay for housing.

Home and citizenship—a brief history

In American society the form of tenure is read as a primary social sign used to categorize and evaluate people. Cultural anthropologist Constance Perin lists categorizations of people based on tenure—these paint a picture of difference based on age, stage in the life cycle, permanence, responsibility, trustworthiness of person, neighborhood surroundings, and economic circumstances. Home ownership is tied to the family as a “sacred institution and the fundamental institution of our society” (1977, p.47). It also represents a steadily climbing social value, with the apex of ownership. Homeownership came to be the ideal on which democratic citizenship was based, with arguments that ownership anchors one to the community and gives him roots and stakes (Feldman, 2004). For Lawrence Veiller, a Progressive era anti-hotel reformer, home ownership was a foundation for citizenship because of the contact with government, not just ownership itself—in other words, the “*concerns* of the household...form the substance of one’s exercise of citizenship” (2004, p.122). Cultural geographer Paul Groth argues that, “Most hotel residents share typical American values, but they do not (or cannot afford to) fasten their identities to the anchor of private property” (1994, p.8). Yet Progressive Era reformers sought to do away with residential hotels, believing them to breed bad citizenship (1994). Civic responsibility was thought to be lacking in rental relationships, and reformers harkened back to the founding of the U.S. as a democracy made up of homeowners, ignoring the exclusionary nature of our early democracy. The amount of material possessions was seen as a marker of citizenship, meaning stability and civic worth (1994).

The link between housing tenure and access to citizenship has less to do with one's relationship to the physical housing and more to do with the social relationships that stem from the type of tenure. This vision of citizenship is not predicated on a system of rights, but rather a series of financial relationships that guarantee fixity to a location. As Perin (1977) argues, homeownership and higher citizenship status go together because the individual or family carrying a mortgage cannot leave the community as easily as others. Dolores Hayden documents a 1920s corporate official saying, "Get them to invest their savings in homes and own them. Then they will not leave and they will not strike. It ties them down so they have a stake in our prosperity" (2002, p.49). To business interests, homeownership was meant to shape an ideal worker and consumer, rather than some of the more grandiose notions of citizenship espoused by reformers at the time. As Groth points out, "One of the ironies of the Progressive Era was that reformers fought monopolies but often helped big business as well...big landholders with prominent downtown blocks of land were often reform allies and charity organization directors. Concerns about moral problems thus merged easily with concerns about real estate values without seriously challenging the American city's established power structure" (1994, p.230). This vision of homeownership as a "tying down" expects households to engage in a variety of financial and employment responsibilities but is less clear about the rights afforded to them, and in cases like the corporate official quoted by Hayden, business interests were explicitly against rights of freedom and independence.

Despite business's goal to create good consumers, reformers firmly believed in the link between proper dwelling environments and promotion of good morals. This belief pervaded early efforts to house industrial workers and their families (who often also were industrial workers themselves). One mill owner justified his ownership of all cottages by arguing that absolute control (by him) was needed to reform the evils of his workers' morals (Wright, 1981). In fact, while there was significant attention paid to the types of housing most appropriate to different "stations" in life, the notion of continuous

social progress led many to believe that no American citizens would be servants and/or poor for very long, leading to an utter inattention to the quality of housing for the lower classes (1981). In the 1840s, pattern book designers¹³ saw their craft as an important part of promoting a democratic republic (1981). In similar blindness to poverty, they felt that if everyone was provided with the knowledge of dwelling plans, they would have no barriers to achieving their appropriate dwelling, and anyone who did not conform was deviant and less civilized. As Wright says, “There was no excuse for poverty” (1981, p.84).¹⁴

April Veness’s work on poor people’s homes suggests that these deep-seated philosophical connections between ways of dwelling and presumed civility (or even humanness) still are alive and well today, and are equally ignorant of the constraints of poverty and the logical dwelling strategies adopted by those living in poverty. The persistent American belief in upward mobility implicates those who continue to live in poverty—why else, if not through some fault of their own (read: laziness, substance abuse)? In fact, as tenement conditions were exposed in the late 1900s, the common answer was to get the deserving poor out to the suburbs into inexpensive cottages. Those who could not (or as they believed, would not) get to the suburbs were believed to simply have bad morals and behavior. When the Public Works Administration began demolishing slums and building public housing in the 1930s, they catered to lower middle-class households who were perceived to have been hurt by the Great Depression, not to the households who were removed from the slums (Wright, 1981).

¹³ These were designers who developed patterns fitting to different types of dwellers at the time, for instance, farmers and working men. Patterns were for modest, orderly, single-family dwellings—one and two-room rammed earth or log cottages—in which male workers could house their families in a self-sufficient manner thought to promote the virtuous citizen (Wright, 1981, p.84). Emphasis on cheap, local products abounded. As one pattern book author declared, “We are proud of the flimsy, unsubstantial structures, so sneered at by foreigners...They are the homes of the people, who will by-and-by build and own better ones” (In Wright, 1981, p.86).

¹⁴ Despite these assertions, large tracts of self-built housing—from pattern books and otherwise—were made of cheap wood and other parts, and, as historian Dolores Hayden argues, “did not always meet basic requirements for sanitation, health, or efficiency” (2003, p.119). She goes on to say, “These houses were low-tech compared with multi-family housing designed of concrete or brick” (2003, p.119).

Creating citizens, theorizing citizenship

National approaches to home have implications for all citizens, but particularly for those who find themselves unable to afford the types of accommodations associated with 'home.' Environmental psychologist Jeanne Moore critiques U.S. notions of home for this reason, stating that, "what is valued by homeless people is often ignored, diminished, and set aside in favor of a set of steps back to the stereotypical home" (2007, p.152). In fact, dwellings have been destroyed in the name of 'home;' people with roofs over their head have been declared 'homeless;' and in the wake of dwelling destruction, those labeled 'homeless' have been put back into the same environments that were originally destroyed in the name of 'home.' With the destruction of residential hotels (SROs) and the construction of homeless shelters in the 1980s and 1990s, a polarization developed between home-dwelling citizens and shelter-dependent clients (Feldman, 2004). At the same time, middle-class reformist values put forth in these environments often devalue the residents' experiences and advance a view of 'home' that residents are supposed to seek out but are not granted during their stay at the shelter (Veness, 1993). The illogical nature of this situation aside, people invest greatly in the notion of 'home' and go to great lengths to further those notions, rejecting other conceptualizations in the process.

Insomuch as 'home' is a politicized notion, homelessness is equally politicized. Where some critics may argue that homelessness is not a problem of thought but of will—to get everybody into a home—political theorist Leonard Feldman argues that "the dream of putting everyone into homes is not only unrealistic in the current political climate but also insufficient" (Feldman, 2004, p.22).

Homelessness is not just about housing. Homelessness is a political identity, tied to ideas about the identity of citizenship and the connection of housing to that identity. As Kathleen Arnold says, "The home represents the synthesis of the two rubrics of normative criteria defining citizenship: it signifies economic independence and is the precondition for any degree of citizenship and further, it symbolizes

political identity...The lack of a home signals an asymmetrical power dynamic: homeless individuals are not merely inconvenienced by their homelessness but culturally stigmatized and politically disenfranchised” (Arnold, 2004, p.3).

In this section, I pull from two political theorists, Kathleen Arnold and Leonard Feldman, to construct the theoretical basis for my inquiries. In doing so, I illustrate the problem of relying on normative ideas of home in theorizing about how homeless persons can better attain full citizenship status, and advance a path to citizenship that subverts the home ideal, rather than reinforces it. A few concepts bear description before delving into their theoretical power. The first is the notion of political “Othering.” Kathleen Arnold argues about homeless persons, “Their condition is viewed as natural rather than political or economic...Consequently, the problem is depoliticized and reduced to a binary mode of self/other, clean/dirty, responsible/irresponsible, and independent/dependent...They are a familiar Other: a dirty, uncontrollable, broken-down phantasm of the average mainstream citizen” (Arnold, 2004, p.7). In not possessing a societally recognized ‘home,’ then, the homeless figure becomes devoid of a political identity.¹⁵ They are first and foremost “homeless,” and this identifier becomes all encompassing. Having been “othered,” the homeless figure can be pitied, despised, helped, rejected, and so on, but the homeless figure is not one that can advocate for her/himself as a citizen with agency. Leonard Feldman refers to this othering as the production of *bare life*,¹⁶ a condition marked by “fundamental exclusion from political community.” He goes on to say, “To be excluded from the political community—a civil death—is to be deprived of the right of action and of opinion. It is not easy for someone deprived of legality to challenge more particular deprivations, economic or cultural”

¹⁵ Political inclusion is not simply voting. Arnold argues, “the mere granting of civil rights or the vote or reforming wealth classifications is insufficient. Rather, political freedom will only be possible when difference, identity, and economic status are not reified in political ideology and practice, when they are not essentialized...Citizenship is having the cultural, economic, political and social space in which one can pursue one’s individual and community life” (Arnold, 2004, p.48).

¹⁶ For a full theorization of bare life, see Agamben, G. (1998). *Homo sacer: sovereign power and bare life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Feldman utilizes Agamben to mobilize the concept in terms of homelessness.

(Feldman, 2004, p.102). He utilizes this concept of bare life to describe the political injustice wrought upon homeless persons, in addition to economic and cultural injustices.¹⁷ As quoted earlier, he argues that the idea that putting people into homes is insufficient as a corrective to the injustices of homelessness. Putting people into homes would act as a *redistribution* of resources, correcting the economic injustice; however, in seeking to put everyone in a “proper home,” societally defined, we seek to eradicate other forms of dwelling that do not fit this vision, and in doing so, produce marginalized existences for those who live in these alternative types of dwellings. Feldman states,

The dream to put everyone in homes is a manifestation of the dream for a completely unified “people” purified of bare life, a dream that perversely and paradoxically creates the bare life it seeks to eradicate; it is the dream that orients the violence of a war on poverty toward the destruction of working-class neighborhoods in the name of slum clearance. This is not to reject calls for affordable housing; it is rather to insist that such policies be developed in a pluralistic spirit that avoids the production of an excluded bare life as the “other” against which singular norms of home and home-dwelling citizen stand (2004, p.22).

Based on this framework of justice and citizenship, I conceptualize homelessness as a period of time for an individual marked by extreme social and/or spatial displacement, lack of access to civil rights, lack of access to safe and appropriate living arrangements, and, sometimes lack of mobility (see Mitchell, 2005; Moore, 2007). Comparing homeless persons to Arendt’s characterization of refugees, Feldman cites Arendt in saying, “Their plight is not that they are not equal before the law but that no law exists for them” (2004, p.102). Legal approaches to homeless encampments offer a microcosm in which to see this lack of access to citizenship. Feldman examines two court cases in which protesters in homeless encampments are ruled to be legal or illegal in their protest, based on their need to sleep in the tents. The rulings in each suggest that one must be a home-dwelling citizen to be able to invoke the

¹⁷ Correctives to economic injustice are referred to as redistribution, indicating that wealth and/or resources have been redistributed among the populace. Correctives to cultural injustice are referred to as recognition, indicating that a marginalized group of people are recognized as an interest group with a cultural identity—these are commonly referred to as “identity politics.” Debates over the merits of redistribution versus recognition are extensive. For a cogent presentation of this debate, see Nancy Fraser’s (1997) *Justice interruptus: critical reflections on the “postsocialist” condition*. New York: Routledge.

First Amendment in sleeping in a tent for protest. Feldman says, “It is worth noting the irony of these two cases read together. They permit housed citizens to engage in symbolic public sleeping to protest their *potential* homelessness but prevent homeless citizens from occupying a tent city to protest their *actual* homelessness” (2004, p.140). Thus, Anatole France’s famous argument that the law keeps both rich and poor alike from begging, sleeping under bridges, and the like, does not hold up in the face of this contradiction—home-dwelling citizens are permitted to sleep outside, but homeless citizens may not, for in the act of fulfilling necessity, they cannot, according to the courts, also be expressing their rights. “For the tent to signify as a public, political protest and as an expressive act, it must not be occupied by a body that needs to sleep there. It is now clear that when law guards the empty tent from occupation by homeless activists, it is also guarding the category of citizenship from occupation by the homeless” (Feldman, 2004, p.141).

The question, then, is what must happen for homeless individuals to access full citizenship. Feldman and Arnold differ in their paths to full citizenship. Arnold acknowledges the paradox of the homeless subject, in comparing the homeless to immigrants, arguing that the two groups “face two similar reactions: either demands for assimilation or criminalization. In the case of the homeless, they are either integrated into the welfare system in order to become rehabilitated (an attempt to subsume the Other into the Same) or subjected to arrests or police harassment...The homeless on the street, who are not necessarily welfare recipients, are treated as unassimilable and accordingly as criminals to be driven away or otherwise erased from the public view” (Arnold, 2004, p.7, 14). Yet Arnold upholds a normative home ideal in her proposed solutions, advocating the following: “Full citizenship with all its connotations necessitates a relatively steady, secure place of residence as it reflects economic independence and status and allows one to participate in political life” (2004, p.48). This approach ignores the subtlety of citizens engaging in alternative dwelling practices and upholds normative ideas of home. Take the following statement: “Welfare hotels are a temporary solution where the caseworker

and family do not know how long the benefit will last. The space is often cramped and not *intended* [my emphasis] for a family but rather a couple and the conditions afford no *privacy* [again, my emphasis]...Just as welfare hotels are similar to some homeless shelters, it should be noted that very often staying in a shelter and being on the street are not much different” (2004, p.64). Arnold’s confidence in these statements stem from underlying assumptions that remain unexamined, despite her careful political-theoretical framework, particularly assumptions about a static sense of privacy and standards of occupancy.¹⁸ Undergirding her argument is an unquestioned reliance on normative ideas of a “stable home.” In fact, Arnold spends so much time articulating what is not ‘home’ about shelters, hotels, and “the street” that she leaves no room for the possibilities of home. Instead, she advances a “stable home” as the following: “affordable (one quarter to one third of one’s monthly income), have a fair landlord, and be located in an area with access to grocery stores and transportation, and no one residing under that roof would be normally violent or abusive” (2004, p.84). Yet these criteria are largely ones that have been created by government standards and do nothing to push the boundaries of what a home means to different people. Ultimately, arguing that homeless persons must occupy societally accepted living spaces to gain full citizenship does nothing to correct cultural or political injustices.

Counter to Arnold, Feldman argues that a way through these constructed walls around citizenship is a rethinking of what it means to ‘dwell’ and reconceptualizing public space as a place of dwelling. Feldman critiques those who sought to end the “homelessness” of boarding houses and SROs, arguing that to call residents of these non-normative living arrangements “homeless” is to “misrecognize[e] the viability of alternative habits of dwelling” (Feldman, 2004, p.112). In theorizing on justice and democracy, Feldman finds political inclusion to be fundamental to achieving economic and

¹⁸ Privacy is recognized as a fundamental human need (Altman, 1976; Newell, 1995; Reiman, 1976). However, the achievement of privacy can take a number of forms. Arnold advocates for a physical form of privacy that fits with contemporary U.S. middle-class standards of living. I address the issue of privacy in Chapter 7.

cultural justice. In other words, if political exclusion lays the groundwork for privileging redistribution of resources over recognition of identity, then political inclusion lays the groundwork for recognition of homeless persons as citizens who can mobilize to achieve greater redistribution based on self-defined needs. While homeless persons remain politically excluded, home-dwelling persons choose redistribution for them, denying recognition of their own agency as citizens. It is in this distinction that Feldman finds the potential of homeless encampments, in that they are capable of (and have demonstrated a record of) creating collaborative relationships with home-dwelling citizens where homeless activists dictate the agenda as equal citizens. These relationships both recognize homeless groups as active citizenry and, through forming coalitions, the groups' power to demand redistribution grows. Recognition as citizens, coupled with demands for redistribution of resources, offers a double corrective to the inequalities manifested in homelessness. Indeed, Perin remarks, "The more equitable distribution of those components of wealth, income, and power is indispensable to the goal of a more just society. Equally important are the self-respect and social esteem only available through being in culturally valued relationships" (1977, p.212). Feldman's approach is far more inclusive in practical (and theoretical) terms. I maintain that we need to shift from thinking about how to get people into normalized housing so that they can take part in practices of citizenship, and instead start thinking about how to change the criteria of citizenship.

Locating citizenship practices

I locate this study of citizenship and home within spaces of housing designated for "homeless" persons, believing these spaces to be much more than a transitional space through which homeless people are moved back into societally accepted housing. Instead, I see them as spaces of citizenship practice, within which local policymaking, service provider rules and regulations, and physical spaces themselves all play critical roles in the degree to which residents can access economic, cultural and political citizenship. Other scholars have also identified the shelter as a key, yet often overlooked,

institution in the operations of misrecognition.¹⁹ Political theorist Leonard Feldman argues, "The institution of the homeless shelter ought to be analyzed...not simply in terms of its adequacy as a form of housing redistribution but also for the cultural subtexts it embodies and institutionalizes" (2004, p.95). This misrecognition can take on different forms depending on the type of shelter—emergency shelters promote bare life, while transitional, “designer” shelters treat their clients as “subjects-in-the-making” (Feldman, 2004).

A number of scholars and advocacy organizations have interrogated issues of citizenship and homelessness in terms of public space, looking at the role of municipal ordinances and privatized public space in limiting homeless persons’ rights.²⁰ This body of work examines the negation of rights and limiting of citizenship for homeless individuals insofar as citizenship and rights are tied to a need to exist in space. In their theorizing about public space, dwelling and citizenship, these scholars set the stage for my inquiry into shelters as a particular space of citizenship formation/rejection. Feldman’s theoretical framework offers an avenue into examining shelter and housing spaces, building on the rich literature about citizenship implications of public space laws to expand the conversation into spaces of housing as well. Studies of “mean” cities²¹ often emphasize that cities have a plethora of anti-homeless policies while providing few shelters or services—this approach to shelters and public space keeps shelters in the shadows of critique while policy about public space is foregrounded as the primary method of robbing homeless individuals of their citizenship and rights. However, shelters are often one of the few spaces homeless people can legally occupy, and these spaces serve as de facto “private” spaces for

¹⁹ For instance, see Feldman (2004) and DeVerteuil, May and von Mahs (2009)

²⁰For further reading, see *A dream denied: the criminalization of homelessness in U.S. cities.* (2006). Washington DC: National Coalition for the Homeless and National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty; Amster, R. (2008). *Lost in space: the criminalization, globalization, and urban ecology of homelessness.* New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing; Mitchell, D. (1997). "The annihilation of space by law: the roots and implications of anti-homeless laws in the United States." *Antipode* 29(3): 303-35; Mitchell, D. (2003). *Right to the city: social justice and the fight for public space.* New York: Guilford Press.

²¹ Designation by national advocacy groups that indicates heavily punitive municipal practices towards its homeless citizens. See *Homes not handcuffs: the criminalization of homelessness in U.S. cities.* (2009). Washington DC: National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty and the National Coalition for the Homeless.

them. As DeVerteuil, May and von Mahs argue, “The more pressing need is to examine the changing constitution of those other spaces in which the majority of homeless people spend most of their time: shelters, refuges, prisons, drop-in centers and rooming houses. It is into these spaces that homeless people are ‘disappearing’” (2009, p.651). Given this reality, it is necessary to consider carefully what sorts of citizenship are allowed, promoted, or discouraged in these spaces, often beginning with the planning of the shelter.

Shelters play a role in limiting the overall agency of homeless persons in legal terms. Feldman argues that because of the court-afforded entitlement of homeless individuals to bare life and nothing more (e.g. a floor of a shelter with no rights to demand more), “the most minimal space in a shelter is sufficient to turn street-dwelling back into a (constitutionally criminalizable) choice. Where a shelter floor is available, public sleeping is illegal, and the homeless shelter becomes a space of confinement” (Feldman, 2004, p.71). Along this line of logic, the only time a homeless individual has no choice is if faced with death—anything else represents a choice and thus is punishable by law. “To be “truly homeless,” it appears, is to be reduced to bare (and helpless) life. To be “falsely homeless,” one can infer, is to insist upon acting as a thinking, judging, coping person” (2004, p.72). Thus, Feldman argues, “Once the homeless have been reduced to bare life in the legal imagination, the shelter becomes a legitimized space of confinement, and resistance to it becomes constitutionally punishable via the ban” (2004, p.76). What does this legal construction mean for thinking about individuals’ needs of ‘home’ when legally they are only afforded the right to remain physically alive? The U.S. legal system has created an environment in which homeless persons have little to no decision-making power about their living arrangements. Sparks notes that even within scholarly literature, “Only recently have scholars begun to view the practices and place-making tactics of the homeless within the U.S. not in relation to a homed norm but as the production of spaces wherein ideas and norms of citizenship may be called into question, resisted, and reworked...Arising from these works has been a call to take seriously the poor

and homeless as agents in the struggle to redefine norms of citizenship (Sparks, 2009, p.36).”²² This dissertation offers alternatives to this reality based on principles of human rights and equal access to decision-making about living situations, independent of one’s current housing status.

Policy implications for home, homelessness and citizenship

Designers, planners, municipal policymakers and housing advocates all play an important role in improving homeless persons’ access to citizenship at the community level. Homeless individuals’ marginal existence as citizens in the community largely leaves them at the mercy of municipal decision-making about their current and future living arrangements. As I articulate in later chapters, this decision-making process draws on existing norms and ideals about what a home is and what it means to be homeless, with far less attention given to understanding the needs of potential residents of “homeless” housing as those individuals understand and express them. The framework of economic, cultural and political justice has great traction when applied to a study of local decision-making because it trains a lens not just on how many services are provided but *how* the services were created, with *whose involvement*, for *what purpose*. For instance, if two shelters are created, with one publicly discussed in terms that suggest it is a place of containment while the other is characterized as a temporary home, I argue that the housing itself and treatment of residents differs greatly. The planning of “homeless” housing impacts homeless citizens of the community—as such, within the framework of justice, they deserve cultural recognition as an identity group who can define its needs and dictate forms of redistribution.

Municipalities largely do not recognize homeless citizens as an interest group or as having political power. When considered as having claims to community resources, homeless persons are

²² See Ananya Roy’s (2003) “Paradigms of propertied citizenship: transnational techniques of analysis.” *Urban Affairs* 38(4): 463-491, as well as Talmadge Wright’s (1997) *Out of Place: Homeless Mobilizations, Subcities, and Contested Landscapes*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

treated to redistributive services that are planned by others in the community. When they are not considered, they form their own housing, often in the form of tents and other makeshift structures. Regardless of the form of the housing, neither situation allows for political inclusion or cultural recognition of the “homeless” residents. Encampments often fall prey to municipal decisions that are quite similar to other countries’ approaches to their marginalized populations, particularly illegal immigrant populations. For instance, in Israel/Palestine, immigrants inhabit “informal spaces,” that are technically illegal but purposefully overlooked by the city (Yiftachel, 2009). Similar approaches are used in the U.S., where homeless encampments are often allowed to exist until they become a “public” problem, evidenced by housed citizens’ complaints or a need for the space on which the encampment sits. By withholding legal standing, cities wield power in the form of policing, surveillance and service provision. Municipalities stand to gain a great deal from simply tolerating these spaces, as they exist in “permanent temporariness—concurrently tolerated and condemned, perpetually waiting ‘to be corrected’” (Yiftachel, 2009, p.90).

The legal relationship between shelters and encampments is even more troubling. Shelters are seen as acceptable methods of housing “homeless” people, but as Feldman points out, the mere existence of a space on a floor is enough to outlaw other forms of dwelling by “homeless” persons because of the lack of political identity afforded to them. I raise a recent legal ruling to demonstrate this. In *Pottinger vs. City of Miami*, homeless plaintiffs challenged a Miami ordinance that made it unlawful for any person to sleep in any public spaces or on private property of another without consent of the owner. The plaintiffs won their case on the grounds that they were involuntarily compelled to sleep in public (May, 2008). The court ruled this way because they determined that the city of Miami did not have enough shelter to house Miami’s homeless residents, consequently, homeless individuals were not making a deliberate choice to sleep in public spaces, making their conduct innocent and not a conscious decision (2008). While this court case prevented people from being fined or arrested, it also

set a precedent that if there are enough shelter beds, regardless of how the shelters operate and what the living conditions are like, then living in encampments (or even on a bench) is not constitutionally protected. This approach negates personal beliefs that shelter living can be unacceptable.

What legal scholarship cannot describe or promote understanding about is what constitutes home—and by extension, what sorts of spaces fit the bill as home. Legal explorations are not enough to understand the complex ideas of home that guide encampment residents' decisions to avoid shelters. They are also not enough to understand how the space of a shelter can promote or discourage citizenship. Faced with the reality that the federal government still funds shelters and many organizations continue to build shelters with little to no understanding of how the spaces operate for residents, designers and scholars can play a valuable role in translating the important elements of home into better shelter design and operations, as well as navigating the boundaries between helpful standards of living and those that stigmatize and outlaw personally acceptable manners of dwelling.

Drawing out the complex intermingling of shelters, tent cities (or other self-made housing), municipal ordinances, and police action demands explicit attention be given to the values and beliefs about home and homelessness that undergird our national and municipal decision-making. Yiftachel says about municipal approaches to informal spaces, though it applies to all planned "homeless" spaces, "When these patterns crystallize into a relatively stable manner of managing the metropolis, we can begin to discern an *urban regime* – an institutionalized system of controlling space and population" (2009, p.94). In effect, cities are divided into zones of legal existence by homeless individuals through ordinances, shelters, and police action. It is therefore imperative that we understand how these few spaces of legal existence operate as spaces of citizenship.

This scholarship follows a trajectory of research that is increasingly locating issues of homelessness in spatiality. Research on homeless shelter services has traditionally been (and continues

to be) found in such disciplines as Social Work and Psychology, but since the late 1990s, with Lois Takahashi's groundbreaking work on NIMBYism, stigmatization, homelessness and AIDS (1998), scholars have increasingly seen homeless shelters and other "homeless" spaces as sites of conflict over deeper meanings of space and perceptions of legitimacy in claims to space.²³ Today more and more scholars in spatially-oriented fields are taking up issues of homelessness, pushing the study of this social issue in new directions.²⁴ My work begins from an understanding that community-level responses to homelessness are tied into the perceptions and productions of space. The everyday landscapes we actively produce are manifestations of our best thinking about what communities should look like and how sociospatial relationships should be created and manipulated to suit human needs. While some of the critical geographic literature on homelessness and space is explicit about the legal implications for how we think about space and citizenship, I believe that there are also untold, yet important implications for design practitioners and thinkers.²⁵ Communities create and sustain discourses about space and the people in those spaces. These discourses impact the sorts of spaces that are created (spaces of citizenship), who is able to use them (legitimation of citizenship), and in what ways (citizenship practices). As scholars and practitioners, we are situated to positively impact these discourses in ways that promote inclusive spaces and practices of citizenship.²⁶

²³ For early works on this topic, see Dear, M. (1992). "Understanding and overcoming the NIMBY syndrome." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 58(3): 288-300. This vein of scholarship has been widespread in the field of critical geography, with such works as Mitchell (2003) laying the groundwork, while more recent additions offer more nuance, like Murphy, S. (2009). "'Compassionate' strategies of managing homelessness: post-revanchist geographies in San Francisco." *Antipode* 41(2): 305-325..

²⁴ For instance, see Teresa Gowan's (2010) *Hobos, hustlers, and backsliders: homeless in San Francisco*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

²⁵ See Amster (2008), Blomley (2009), Blomley (2008), Mitchell (2005, 2003, 1997), Mitchell and Heynen (2009)

²⁶ My mind goes immediately to Walter Hood's dynamic, contextualized designs for public parks in Oakland, where he created spaces that eased anxieties and provided appropriate services to different users. These designs came from a firmly contextualized understanding of that environment and those using it, as well as a commitment to inclusive design. Understanding the environment as socially constructed is relatively easy in the abstract, but understanding *how* it is socially constructed requires embeddedness in the flows of the community. See Walter Hood's (1997) *Urban Diaries*. Washington DC: Spacemaker Press. Also see Margaret Crawford's (1995) "Contesting the public realm--struggles over public space in Los Angeles." *Journal of Architectural Education* 49(1), pp. 4-9.

This research contributes in three major ways to existing literature and practice. First, understanding “home” as a process imbued with meaning challenges policy literature to include experience as a valid form of policy creation and analysis (also see Padgett, 2007; Robinson, 2008; and Veness, 1993). This research redefines the terms by which policy understands the concepts of homelessness and home rather than simply offering a different definition. Second, in terms of professionally-based literature and practice, this research offers findings and research methods that further our understanding of “home” needs of shelter residents.²⁷ This research has the potential to develop a process for service providers to use in better understanding and responding to one’s needs for/of home. Finally, existing literature generally focuses either on policymaking or on experiences of homemaking and home.²⁸ Policy work favors a focus on subpopulations of homelessness, e.g. chronic, substance abuse, mental illness, and veterans, but Robinson (2008) denounces this approach, arguing that categories have come to represent our understanding of homelessness. Likewise, Vandemark (2007), a geography and nursing researcher, finds that experiential concepts like sense of belonging, displacement and social exclusion are rarely touched on in housing policy research. If research continues to privilege a medicalized model of disabilities such as mental illness and substance abuse, the body of research and subsequent policies will only be able to address those individuals who fit those models. This study explicitly links experiences of housing and home to policymaking as a way to open up the policy conversation to new understandings and directions for research and practice. It also expands

²⁷ See, for instance, submissions to the 2007 National Symposium on Homelessness, available at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/homelessness/symposium07/> This literature focuses on understanding populations and locational characteristics, but emphasis on the moment of service provision as an opportunity to provide for “home” needs is not advanced.

²⁸ This split is exacerbated by the explicit focus of journals on either policy or experience, though some journals are working to span the gap, such as *Housing, Theory and Society*. For an example of work that attempts to bridge the two, see David Clapham’s (2003) “Pathways Approaches to Homelessness Research.” *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 13: 119-27. Nonetheless, scholarship on experiences of home continues to circulate mostly in anthropological and cultural studies circles.

policy-based, theoretical, and advocacy understandings of citizenship implications of homelessness by including shelters and working within a “caring city” context.

Dissertation layout

Within this dissertation, I lay out my theoretical constructs in the introduction, with my methodology articulated in Chapter 2 and a thick description of the local context of my study in Chapter 3. I have arranged my analysis into five chapters. The first begins to address my research question, articulating which norms the community of Champaign-Urbana operates from regarding home and homelessness. This chapter looks at how underlying norms shape the debates surrounding each development. Chapter 5 examines gender norms, using two of the developments in a comparative analysis. Chapter 6 offers an in-depth examination of the norms of community membership, theorizing how perceptions of homeless persons’ place in the community impact support for shelter development and, when supported, what sorts of spaces are promoted. I turn to a deeper exploration of the spaces of shelters in the final two analysis chapters, evaluating each shelter space in terms of the dominant needs of home, juxtaposing community dialogue, project developer’s statements, and the stated needs from shelter/housing residents. In Chapter 7, I examine issues of privacy, evaluating shelter spaces in these terms, while Chapter 8 addresses four other elements of home in its evaluation of shelter spaces. I conclude with policy recommendations for Champaign-Urbana specifically and municipalities generally, advocating for a participatory process that promotes political inclusion of homeless citizens and supports shelter development based on needs, rather than developments grounded in normative ideas of home.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

Research on homeless services often evaluates how well services function within a shelter. In my work, I seek a more contextualized sense of the role of homeless services in community-wide decisions about homelessness. My study seeks to understand how issues of dominant values and normative beliefs about homelessness impact the planning of homeless shelter/housing projects, in addition to pragmatic factors like funding availability, site availability, and other material constraints. At its core, this dissertation examines the conditions under which conflict over definitions of "home" and its relationship to housing, diminish the effectiveness of local communities' efforts to build shelter-related services that meet the needs of service recipients. I developed this focus through a combination of scholarly and professional/activist activities that complemented and informed each other as I built my research trajectory and scholarly commitments. I will address the scholarly activities in this section and my professional/activist activities in a later section.

To arrive at my research question, I conducted an extensive review of the literature on community-level planning for homeless programs. This literature largely focused on community processes such as community opposition and relationship building (e.g. Dear, 1992; Devine-Wright, 2009; Lyon-Callo, 2001; Pendall, 1999; Smith, 2010; Wynne-Edwards, 2003). For the most part, this literature did not examine how values and beliefs within community stakeholders impacted community-level planning. The literature provided only minimal discussion of community decision-making as a historically contingent process, in which past decisions impact current and future decisions (for exception, see Crowley, 1998). I find historical analysis a fruitful way to understand how values and beliefs are constructed, reinforced, broken down, and modified as communities deal with the planning of homeless service projects.

Many studies have examined facility siting as a situation of conflict, often between different interest groups and the city government. Their conclusions and recommendations focus on this moment of conflict, offering advice to city governments on overcoming so-called NIMBYism or examining why residents engage in NIMBYism (e.g. Dear, 1992; Devine-Wright, 2009; Lyon-Callo, 2001; Pendall, 1999; Smith, 2010; Wynne-Edwards, 2003). Less represented in the literature are studies that interrogate underlying beliefs and assumptions at work in NIMBYism and the relationships between government, non-profit agencies and community members, although Takahashi's (1997) theorization of these issues includes a thoughtful description of how stigma could become embedded and mutually reinforcing of both people and spaces. These studies take for granted the belief that local governments want to produce shelter services, and that the opposition to homeless services comes only from community members. Because the research focus is temporally situated at the moment of attempted shelter siting, the studies are unable to account for the multiple stages of decisions, priority-setting and conflicts that came before that point. This focus also sets up a false dichotomy between government and citizenry, such that government is represented as pro-shelter development and citizens are anti-shelter development. The literature does not examine the more intangible ideas about homeless people and spaces.

I seek to more deeply examine the planning of shelter-related services, postulating that decision-making around new service projects is rooted in fundamental beliefs about homelessness and home. This approach has not been widely adopted in the study of shelter planning, although a few researchers have introduced it as a way to understand underlying beliefs and values within a community which, while difficult to collect data on, nonetheless impacts decision-making (most notable are Crowley, 1998 and Hartnett, 2000). Approaching decision-making as both a product and producer of beliefs about the nature of "home" and "the homeless," my research has the capacity to expose how communities establish, solidify, and change their decisions in this sector over time. I do so by examining

patterns of public discourse concerning the planning of shelter spaces in one community over a period of 30 years.²⁹ Within this planning, I examine the values and beliefs held by local service providers, city council, city staff, local media, and homeless individuals. Attending to a broader spectrum of stakeholders across multiple shelter projects allows me to detect patterns and reveal dominant values and beliefs regarding homelessness and planning spaces for those experiencing the need for shelter.

Municipalities make decisions about funding, zoning, and other issues that impact shelter development and overall community effectiveness in providing a responsive continuum of services. Likewise, local providers decide whether to undertake new shelter projects based on their perception of needs in the community. Communities are rarely able to meet the needs of all homeless individuals in the community, and local providers and city officials must set priorities. In Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, there is a historically documented street population that exists outside of the shelter system, for which services have not been created. These individuals are mostly single men. In reviewing historical newspaper articles, I discovered that this population of rough sleepers, while not comprised of the same individuals, has been around in the community and documented in the local newspaper from as early as 1983, and continues to exist. I have personally witnessed specific unmet needs through my experiences working with these street homeless in the area. In 2009, I began working with a group of 12 homeless individuals to establish a tent community in Champaign-Urbana. During this time, unemployment was at a 20 year high in the community and one of the largest weekly motels had just closed in May 2009, eliminating over 100 units of affordable housing. I knew a number of these individuals through my experience(s) running an empowerment group at the local men's transitional center. One of these men contacted me to help the group in their quest to sustain their small tent community. These individuals³⁰ have been unsuccessful in their attempts to use existing homeless services in town, largely because of

²⁹ See Chapter 3 for a full description of the local context.

³⁰ as well as at least a dozen more "rough sleepers" whom I have met in local soup kitchens or while hanging out with other homeless men

criminal records (including sexual offenses), substance abuse, and/or incongruence between the restrictive environments of a transitional shelter program and the individuals' needs to maintain feelings of autonomy and self-reliance. Although HUD placed priority on addressing the needs of this population (AHAR, 2010; Pearson et al, 2007), the communities' services have been unresponsive to this population.³¹ My central question is not why these services in particular have not been created, but more broadly, if a "logic" can be detected within the community's decision-making concerning multiple homeless service projects. While practical matters of funding and land/housing availability certainly impact decision-making, I posit that values also impact what communities decide to build for their homeless populations.

The scale of this inquiry is more in-depth than comparative research that examines factors for community support/opposition, specifically in regards to homeless and affordable housing proposals (e.g. Basolo, 1997, 2000; Scally, 2010). Isolating one factor—values and beliefs regarding home and homelessness—allows me to develop an in-depth understanding of its operation in planning projects. The existing literature on 'home' and homelessness argues that homeless services are unresponsive, and thus ineffective, because they lack sufficient understanding of self-defined needs, particularly those related to individuals' social and emotional needs of 'home' (Miller and Keys, 2001; Moore, 2007; Rivlin and Moore, 2001; Sparks, 2009; Veness, 1993; Wakin, 2005). I develop this focus on values and beliefs regarding home and homelessness to advance my central research question and hypothesis:

Research Question: Under what conditions does conflict over definitions of "home" (and its relationship to housing) diminish the effectiveness of local communities' efforts to build shelter-related services that meet the needs of service recipients?

³¹ Matteson 2006 found that shifts in HUD's priorities to emphasize chronically homeless (their term for what I term 'rough sleepers') and permanent housing were met with great resistance by local Continuums of Care) The local service providers have not ignored that the chronically homeless population exists, as multiple Council of Service Providers to the Homeless (CSPH) meeting minutes indicate verbal statements of concern about this population, but proposals to create services for them have not gone past internal CSPH discussions.

Hypothesis: Effectiveness is diminished when normative definitions of home held by powerful interest groups in the community determine the shape of new homeless service projects, in conflict with the needs of recipients, as identified at the inception of the project.

Research design

I employ social constructionism as the basis for this project. Social constructionist tenets form the backbone of the research design, including orientation of the research question, data collection methods, and inclusion of specific sources of data. First and foremost, social constructionists assert that “our access to the material world is mediated through language and discourse” (Jacobs, Kemeny and Manzi, 2004, p.3). Social problems, then, are contingent, contested, and subject to interpretation. Social constructionism informs my understanding of the nature of social problems—that knowledge about a social problem is constructed through experience and language and that these are historically contingent and contextual (Burr, 1995; Hibbard, 2005). Housing scholar Janet Smith supports the privileging of language as an active medium for constructing narratives about social problems, arguing that viewing language in this way “shifts our attention from the object...to the way in which we speak about the object. Our focus is directed towards the way in which language creates the ‘possibility’ of phenomena” (Smith, 2000, p.223).

Social constructionism has been adopted as an approach in housing research since the 1990s as a response to the limitations of positivism (Fopp, 2008). Housing scholar Jim Kemeny notes that particularly in studies of homelessness, positivist research has excluded marginalized perspectives in its “acceptance of government- and media-dominated definitions of what comprise the main housing problems and how they should be ‘solved’” (2004, p.62). I am attempting to go “back to the basics” in my study, by examining the values and beliefs on which our conceptualizations of housing ‘problems’ and homelessness are based. As Perin (1977) says, taken-for-granted notions must be raised to the status of data in order to examine them. My approach is in keeping with policy researcher Greg Marston’s critique of orthodox social policy research methods that forego meaning to focus on

measurement in framing social policy (2004). I contend that without an understanding of how communities define homelessness and 'home,' researchers cannot understand why communities make particular decisions regarding housing for those experiencing homelessness.

Indeed, my initial inquiries for my project began when I personally witnessed a gap between tent community members' and city government's conceptualizations of acceptable housing and the negative outcome of that gap, in that those individuals were no longer able to house themselves in ways that allowed them to feel pride, dignity and safety. In understanding their perspective as a starting point for my research, I am better equipped to uncover the workings of power in public discourses regarding housing and homes for the "homeless." My research question is formulated to inquire into the ways in which communities formulate homelessness as a particular type of social problem, and to seek to discover how beliefs and values, as perpetuated in public discourses, impact actual policy outcomes in the local context.

As housing researchers have taken up the social constructionist approach, they have developed the conceptual framework of the "policy narrative." This framework rejects social problems as "facts" that can be objectively understood and fixed, and instead focuses on how 'problems' are conceptualized through the actions and discursive framings of government, interest groups, media coverage, and individual interpretations (Jacobs, Kemeny and Manzo, 2004). Given that homelessness is such a complex social problem and highly controversial in any discussion of solutions, the policy narrative is a fitting framework in its attention to how multiple stakeholders can and do shape discourse. It focuses on the connections between the shaping of discourse and the impact of discourse on actual outcomes of decision-making. Making this connection allows the research to push beyond common research framings of community opposition (e.g. Dear, 1992; Wynne-Edwards, 2003) and punitive municipal

reactions (e.g. Amster, 2008; Mitchell, 2003) to understand how community-wide discourses impact both positive and negative actions toward homeless individuals.

The community is the unit of inquiry for this project. I define “community” as comprising the multiple interest groups, or stakeholders, within a bounded geographic area (usually municipal boundaries) whose language and actions combine to create outcomes for that geographically bounded area and the people living within it. I conceptualize homelessness as a community-level issue for several reasons. First, decisions about services and housing for, or regulations against homeless individuals are made at the community level. Given my inquiry into values and beliefs, I find that the ‘community,’ as I have defined it, represents the appropriate scale at which to examine these values and beliefs, reasoning that they circulate at the community level, and thus would impact the outcome of all homeless service projects that were created through community action. Where individual programs may be more or less responsive to the needs of their clients based on organizational structure and/or personal philosophy of the director, communities are necessarily a mix of people who may be entirely unsympathetic to the homeless, people who may be sympathetic but have very different views on how the issues should be handled, and people who take more progressive stances toward the issue of homelessness. Inquiry at the programmatic level can reveal patterns of decision-making based only on the part of the program director or overseeing not-for-profit agency, which obscure broader community decisions. Examination at the state and/or federal level can reveal patterns of decision-making that impact local capacity, but cannot account for the decisions and priority-setting done by stakeholders in the community (Crowley, 1998). And finally, looking across multiple communities could reveal city-level factors that impact a local government’s willingness to support homeless shelters and services, but, like the other scales of inquiry that could examine decision-making, it is not appropriate to examine how stakeholders’ values and beliefs impact the outcomes of planning shelter and service projects in a community. I situate my in-depth examination of values and beliefs in planning homeless

shelter/housing projects within one community, as the purpose of my research, is to understand the link between discourse about homelessness and actual shelter provision outcomes. My site selection, case selection, and data selection were developed to most effectively answer my research question.

Site selection

I selected the community of Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, as the focus of my research. My selection of sites is in keeping with recent calls to expand scholarly understandings of homelessness to include different types of municipalities. DeVerteuil et al argue, “One of the more frustrating aspects of recent work by geographers on homelessness is the tendency to proceed as though the problems of homelessness – and responses to those problems – are implicitly everywhere the same: or, more accurately, perhaps, the same as in New York City or Los Angeles” (2009, p.655). Champaign-Urbana are twin cities that merge into a single metropolitan area with two distinct municipalities. Visitors to the cities are frequently unaware that they have passed from one to the other, but to those who live and work in the cities, there are palpable differences. I do not wish to overemphasize these differences, as they are not a pivotal piece of my research, but the differences do help to lay the foundations for my examination of the planning of homeless shelter projects within the cities. As of 2010, the total population of the cities of Champaign and Urbana is 122,305. Economically, the cities represent themselves quite differently.

Communities like Champaign-Urbana are underrepresented in the scholarly literature on local homeless planning and policies, furthering a lack of understanding of this type of community. Champaign and Urbana city staff and officials represent the cities collectively as a “community who cares”—city council members frequently express a genuine wish to “do good” for our more disenfranchised residents. While “doing good” is certainly a term that is contested among different members of the community, I can name multiple city staff, former mayors and even a comptroller who sat on various shelter boards in town and frequently commented on the need for these services.

Indeed, several recent articles argue that there has been an overemphasis in urban studies literature on punitive municipal actions toward homelessness (DeVerteuil, May and von Mahs, 2009; Laurenson and Collins, 2007). This framing “ignore[s] the increasingly varied and complex geographies of homelessness that characterize the contemporary city” (2009, p.647). This study of Champaign-Urbana answers that call for more nuanced framings of homelessness responses—what DeVerteuil, May and von Mahs refer to as “poverty management” (2009). Many of the researchers who examine local homeless policies locate their studies in “mean” cities.³² For instance, the City of Tempe, Arizona has no shelters, soup kitchens or showers for the homeless, but they have enacted a series of punitive city ordinances regulating where and how these homeless individuals occupy public spaces (Miles, 2003). Researchers who look at “mean” cities are doing incredibly relevant and important work to challenge these regressive legal measures against homeless individuals, and I discuss this research at length in Chapter 6 on homelessness and citizenship (e.g. Amster, 2008; Mitchell, 2003). However, research on “caring communities” is scant, providing policymakers and researchers with little understanding of the nuanced issues at work in these types of communities. As Feldman theorizes, “If ameliorative and punitive approaches both reinforce the separation of the homeless population from a normative public of home-dwelling citizens,...one must pause before simply reasserting the desirability of compassionate policies over and against a punitive approach” (2004, p.5). I mean to develop an understanding of “caring” cities that resists a dichotomy of ‘good’ services on one hand, and ‘bad’ ordinances on the other.

I also selected Champaign-Urbana because I have lived and worked in the community for six years, and I know the area and people very well, particularly those who work on homelessness and

³² ‘Mean’ city is a term coined by The National Coalition for the Homeless and The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty to indicate cities whose policies are egregious in their attempt to criminalize homelessness. These cities are often characterized by an extreme lack of homeless services, coupled with one or more actively enforced anti-homeless policies like anti-camping, anti-loitering, and anti-panhandling ordinances. See *A dream denied: the criminalization of homelessness in U.S. cities.* (2006). Washington DC: National Coalition for the Homeless and National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty.

other social issues, as well as city officials and staff in both cities. I also have a vested interest in making it a better place to live. I have worked in the community since 2007 as a homeless advocate, activist, and researcher, working with unhoused members of our community on issues that we believed were important, including one homeless group's efforts to sustain a tent community in 2009. My involvement in Champaign-Urbana affords me the opportunity to work through my findings with the people who care about them and who have great insight into the planning activities that I examine. Moreover, my relationships will also ensure that the research reaches receptive audiences who can benefit from its findings. Entering a community as an unfamiliar researcher is difficult and creates more of an opportunity for critical pieces of the puzzle to remain undiscovered or for the work to not be accepted by members of the community. My relatively long-term and engaged position in the community aids in my attempt to understand community-level responses to homelessness, since I have had time to develop a nuanced sense of the community.

Champaign-Urbana has developed a number of shelters, transitional centers, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing since the early 1980s. People in the community who worked on homeless issues in the early years, all of whom were volunteers at that time, developed the idea to build a "continuum of care" well before the federal government began requiring communities to do so (33Interview). Women in the area developed a center for women experiencing domestic violence in 1970, and in the late 1970s/early 1980s, volunteer groups also began emergency shelters for men and women. Studies of "mean cities" are necessary and illuminating, but the literature also needs to have studies of "caring cities" to gain a more nuanced sense of the complex personal and community politics and assumptions at work in any response to homelessness.

Researcher positionality

I have substantial personal investment and connection to this project. My interests in homelessness issues have always been viewed through a lens of social justice, and I strongly believe that everyone engaged in the project of improving housing and communities has a lot to learn from people experiencing homelessness. This belief has laid the groundwork for my research and the sorts of questions I ask in my research. I developed an interest in tent cities and self-governed homeless communities a few years ago. While this interest was taking root, I was preparing for my preliminary exams, and a chance opportunity presented itself to me. A small group of homeless individuals solicited my assistance in securing their tent community in Champaign, as it had attracted city attention and was beginning to experience harassing visits from the police. I spent the summer of 2009 working with this group to secure land and zoning variances from the City of Champaign to develop a small “village” comprised of tiny houses. We failed in our attempts, and I spent the nine months after that summer working with the group simply to keep them in somewhat acceptable living situations. My experiences in working with this group, and our frequent interactions with the City, local media representatives, and interested community members, led to the development of this project.

I am both intellectually and personally invested in understanding how communities make decisions about homeless housing. In fact, Greg Marston remarks that this subjectivity is an acknowledgement of the power of writing and language to constitute new social relations (2004). I was recently asked by one of my research participants, a housing scholar and advocate, whether my activism biased my research. I expect that this is a question that many housing researchers would ask, given the prevalence of positivist research methodologies in the field. I find that my positionality as an activist and researcher has allowed me to shape my research in more critical ways by starting from the perspectives of those most impacted—people experiencing homelessness in the community. Using

their perspectives as a starting point provides clarity for my research and allows me to situate it alongside research that utilizes professional perspectives as its starting point.

Constructing community discourses

I included seven major interest groups as sources of community discourses. These include city council and staff, homeless service providers, shelter project developers, media, community members supporting projects, community members opposing projects, and community members experiencing homelessness. Each of these interest groups, to varying degrees, has played an important role in shaping community understandings of homelessness and appropriate actions to deal with homelessness. I structured my data collection to seek out, as much as possible, each interest group's contributions to local discourses because, as Jacobs and Manzi believe, "Actors do not merely provide descriptions of events, but are themselves constitutive of wider policy discourses and conflicts" (2000, p.36). Policymaking is a dynamic political process that involves contestation between these different value and knowledge claims. In a similarly minded study, Brinegar (2000) examined public attitudes toward anti-homeless policies that the City of Tempe, AZ was enacting. Her stated objective was to better understand if these punitive policies were passed because of outright public support or public apathy. While this study offers a perspective that is not often seen, with the exception of studies of NIMBYism, the research design still sets up a comparative case between local government and the broad category of "community members," failing to recognize the varying levels of power, interest/involvement, and knowledge within that large category. To properly understand how communities grapple with the complexities of homelessness services and policies, we must look at interest groups in bounded roles, rather than using traditional roles of state and society to conduct inquiries.

At the same time that different interest groups advance conflicting understandings of homelessness, these groups operate within a structure of possible narratives. As Ockwell and Rydin state, "Actors do not, however, act within a vacuum. Discourses simultaneously have structuring capabilities as they provide parameters within which people act and shape the way actors influence the world around them" (2006, p.383). In other words, community narratives about homelessness are shaped by what has been said before and by past decisions that set policies based on narratives of the time. Interest groups are constrained by the structuring of discourse and policy, and those with narratives that fall outside dominant ideas may be marginalized, or if marginalized already, may not have enough access to influence dominant narratives. As Rappaport says, "Because empowering narratives are resources, they are distributed unevenly by social class and other such statuses, both ascribed and achieved...The right to tell one's own story is an index of power and of psychological empowerment" (2000, p.7). As such, community discourses of homelessness must be understood as ongoing processes of power struggles, suppression of alternative stories, and solidification of dominant narratives.

Emphasis on homeless community members as interest group

Though homeless individuals' perspectives are rarely heard, asked for, or considered in the planning of shelter projects, like those I examine in my study, I believe that as those most impacted by the decision-making, they constitute an interest group that should be included in the planning process. Not only should they be included, but their perspective should play a prominent and visible role in shaping the outcomes of the process, specifically the structure, design, location and other important aspects of the shelter development. My privileging of the homeless perspective stems from a two-part commitment within my research to theoretical groundings and emancipatory aims. Social theorist Rodney Fopp advocates starting from the perspective of those who are most impacted by a problem, stating that,

Beginning with the perspective of those who are marginalized increases the possibility of understanding the social order which is “much harder to detect than when one starts thought from the activities of those who benefit most (Harding 1992).” Beginning research from the standpoint of those who have been pushed to the margins facilitates the possibility of detecting “the social mechanisms through which power relations are made to appear obviously natural and necessary. (2008, p.171)

First, I engage critical theories of citizenship as the grounding for my work. Theoretical literature on citizenship and homelessness postulates that homeless individuals are forced into a state of being “less than citizens” through a variety of mechanisms (e.g. Arnold, 2004; Feldman, 2004; Mitchell, 2003), one of which I argue is exclusion from participation in planning housing and services targeted for them. Given these theorizations, I bring homeless individuals’ perspectives to bear on the planning process, not to artificially insert their voices into the discussion but rather to examine what their perspectives have to offer the process if they were to be included, and to understand how their public statements, however limited, impact the community discourses about homelessness, ‘home’ and citizenship.³³

Second, I seek emancipatory aims in my work, meaning that I seek to uncover historic injustice, power dynamics, and opportunities for change (Groat and Wang, 2002). To meet these goals, my research necessitates that those most impacted have a voice in working toward positive social change and justice. Marston declares that, “The challenge for social policy research and analysis is to strive for a fuller account of the agency and voices of ordinary people who are struggling to create a respectful space and decent standard of living in a political environment where notions of collective responsibility and protection are being replaced by the individualization of risk” (2004). Attending to the expressed needs, meanings, and feelings of homeless individuals in the community provides me with a way to assess the planning process and outcomes from which they were so often excluded. Additionally, tapping into understandings advanced by those most impacted by homelessness allows me to

³³ For connections between home ownership and citizenship, see Lands (2008), Perin (1977). For theorizing on citizenship, immigration, and homelessness, see Arnold (2004).

understand injustice and power dynamics through their experiences.³⁴ My project includes the perspectives of homeless individuals from a number of the shelters/homeless housing units in the community. I compare their constructions of ‘home’ and their own needs with public discourses on the same topics, i.e. statements that were circulating at city council meetings and in the media, as well as with statements made by project developers/providers about what they believed the needs to be. Though homeless individuals’ perspectives were not publicly circulated in these venues, inserting them into the conversation allows me to examine the ways in which their perspective would have added to, modified, and/or supported the public discourses.

Inclusion of particular projects/events

My hypothesis necessitates a community-level unit of analysis, and I chose six shelter/housing projects that have been developed in Champaign-Urbana by people rooted in the community, rather than national organizations like Salvation Army. Each of these projects’ development was based on various housed community members’ perceptions of need for the services.³⁵ I also chose them along spectra of failure/success in siting programs, target population served, location, physical structures, and community support/controversy. I decided on six projects because collectively they represent the bulk of homeless sheltering efforts in Champaign-Urbana, with the exception of a few additional projects. These other projects were omitted for feasibility and viability reasons. The six projects I chose were viable projects because each of them received a fairly large amount of media attention, as well as city

³⁴ A new and small trend in homeless research is to incorporate “consumer perspectives”. I recognize that this trend is an attempt to bring homeless individuals into the conversation, but the language of “consumer” indicates a market-based relationship that frames homeless individuals as consumers of a product that service providers are ‘selling’. As Marston (2004) points out in the Australian context, there has been a shift in language related to public housing such that tenants became ‘customers.’ He finds that the market-based terminology reflects changes in the way the government has changed its approach to public housing and supportive services, shifting to a market model, much like the U.S. government has done. Naming homeless individuals as ‘consumers,’ while it could be simply a different word, indicates to me the imposition of a market-based logic—these are the services we have to offer you; if you don’t like them, you don’t have to stay. It also places the homeless individual far from the locus of control over programmatic issues, putting policymakers and providers in the ‘expert’ role, while relegating homeless individuals to the passive role of consumer.

³⁵ For instance, one project began with the police night lieutenant seeing a problem, another because university housing researchers and local service providers perceived a gap in the continuum of housing services.

council meetings devoted to them. Though city council meeting recordings could not be obtained for three of the shelter projects, they represent major community efforts, and interviews and media coverage provide part of what is lost by not having the recordings. In these six cases, I look at the discursive constructions as well as the policy outcomes. The historical nature of these cases affords me the opportunity to understand policy outcomes in concert with the discourse about the projects.

The six projects I examined are as follows, in chronological order of their development:³⁶

1) *McKinley Men's Emergency Shelter*. This shelter opened in 1979 in the heart of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus as part of a local church. Its location was a source of controversy with UIUC. It served single homeless men through providing a day center in the church main room and night-time shelter in the basement. The shelter provided for 40-65 men per night until it shut down its services in 1997 due to limited space and dwindling resources.³⁷

2) *Center for Women in Transition*. This transitional center began as an emergency shelter serving women and children in a rented house in the mid-1980s. Today it is located in a residential neighborhood in Champaign close to downtown, with four single-family detached houses that have been converted into accommodations for the families in the program. This program has enjoyed high levels of community support since its inception but also was subject to resistant NIMBY efforts from neighbors.

3) *Springer Center*. In 1990, soon after the federal government passed Title V of the McKinney-Vento Act, requiring that any surplus federal building must be offered for homeless services before any other uses can be considered, a small group comprised mostly of graduate students and a few homeless

³⁶ See Appendix A for a table of relevant information regarding these projects.

³⁷ Its "replacement" was the TIMES Center, and many people in the community see the TIMES Center as a continuation of McKinley Emergency Shelter. I view them as separate projects because of major differences in their programmatic requirements and structure, overseeing agency, staffing, location, physical design, and impetus for its development.

individuals applied to obtain the Springer Center for use as a drop-in center and potentially transitional housing for homeless individuals. This application met great opposition in the community and was rejected by the federal government due to lack of local support.

4) *Homestead Apartments*. This 25-unit SRO (single resident occupancy) serves individuals who qualify, based on income, offering housing and supportive services. A local non-profit developer began planning this SRO in 1995 amidst a storm of public controversy. The ex-director of the developing non-profit described public resistance to the development as the worst case of NIMBYism he had ever encountered (J. Rose, personal communication, September 15, 2008). After changing locations and negotiating with multiple irate neighborhood groups, the project was successfully completed (where) as an apartment building for 25 individuals.

5) *TIMES Center*. This transitional center began serving single homeless men in 2000 in a newly-constructed building in an industrial area of downtown Champaign. Its location was contested by Champaign business owners who were worried about its impact on the businesses and the presence of homeless bodies in downtown (J. Rose, personal communication, September 15, 2008).³⁸ This center was created to serve the men that McKinley Men's Emergency Shelter had served and it exists today as a 2-level transitional program for up to 70 men, with an open floor plan for the 50 men in Level 1 and semi-private rooms for the 20 men in Level 2.

6) *Safe Haven Tent Community*. In 2009, a group of ten homeless individuals attempted to house themselves in tents as a coherent tent community. Their efforts took place in a residential area in downtown Champaign, lasting for three months before threat of fines (from zoning and building code violations) forced them to move to another location, where they moved indoors after more threat of

³⁸ Jim Rose, ex-director of Homestead Corporation, a housing non-profit that developed Homestead Apartments

finances. Their efforts were the source of much public controversy, as the location, physical structure and organization of the group challenged the existing services in the community.

Methods of data collection

Historical city council meeting minutes and recordings

These recordings offer a rich source of data that allows me to examine public discourses and conversations about the proposed shelter developments. Housing scholar Annette Hastings finds that housing scholars have overlooked the political nature of language, and in doing so have “limit[ed] themselves to data produced through formal research interviews, or to formal policy documents” (2000, p.134). Actual recordings and transcriptions from city council meetings offer an unfettered look at actual discourses from the period of development across a spectrum of interest groups. These recordings provided me with rich data from city council members, project developers, members of the local Council of Service Providers to the Homeless (other providers in the area), community members opposing the project, community members supporting the project, and occasionally homeless community members speaking about the project. I elected to gather most of my data about different interest groups from this source as it allows me to hear arguments, knowledge and beliefs at the moment of planning, rather than only being able to understand the moments through retrospective interviews, which provide valuable information as well.

I located Champaign and Urbana city council meetings by using a personal news archive (detailed below) that dated from the mid-1980s to early-2000s to identify likely dates of important city council meetings. After assembling this list of dates, I combed the City of Champaign and City of Urbana meeting minutes for those dates as well as the entire time period during which projects were proposed and/or developed. Unfortunately, the City of Urbana only maintains audio recordings for the last 18 months, so any relevant recordings were not accessible. The City of Champaign maintains their audio

recordings back to 1995, so I was able to attain recordings for all meetings related to three of the six projects. Of the six projects, only one was located in Urbana, and this was the only project on which I found Urbana City Council meeting minutes. I conducted two interviews, one with Urbana ex-staff and one with an ex-council member, to fill in the gaps in the information regarding city council and staff discourse about this project.

Historical media coverage

Like the Champaign City Council meeting recordings, historical media coverage offers a window into how language was used by those quoted in the news as well as how the media framed the projects in accordance with the agenda of the owners. Media cannot be seen as an impartial vehicle for information dissemination. Instead, as Heinz (2005) asserts, media is often owned by society's power elite, and as such, represents dominant interests. In this study, I position the media as an interest group but during my examination of news coverage, I analyze the framing of stories as the media-driven portion, while isolating other interest group quotes within the articles to build my understanding of that particular interest group.

I utilize The News Gazette as my primary source of media for several reasons. First, print news is archived and accessible across all the years I examine. Television news is difficult to access and often gives a more compressed account than print news. Additionally, I use this source because Champaign-Urbana is essentially a 'one paper town'—The News-Gazette is the only major daily newspaper, and there are several other print media sources that I include, but their circulation is low and thus less important to understand widely circulating public discourse about the homeless service projects in question. Finally, The News-Gazette is locally-owned, further inserting the owners' agenda and perspective into community-level discourses.

I systematically searched News-Gazette archives one week before and after major city council meetings to obtain news coverage of the meeting and of the project being proposed for development. In addition, I came into possession of four personal news archives. One of the key informants for this project gave me a large personally-constructed archive of News-Gazette articles dating from the mid-1980s to early-2000s on the subject of homelessness. Two more participants in the study gave me their personal news archives on their projects (Homestead Apartments and Center for Women in Transition) as well as additional articles on homelessness. Finally, I maintained my own personal news archive of the sixth projects during my involvement. Combined with my original search, these articles comprise a very thorough coverage of the projects under examination as well as additional articles that serve to broaden my understanding of homelessness discourse in Champaign-Urbana, totaling approximately 400 news articles.

Interviews with developers/providers

I interviewed the major project developer(s) and provider(s) across all six projects.³⁹ In total, 16 individual interviews were conducted with those who either played a major role in developing the project or were associated with service provision within the shelter/housing. These interviews provided details about the pragmatic elements of the projects, including funding issues, site constraints, and other types of material constraints. The interviews also provided an opportunity to view the project's complexities from the perspective of the person(s) developing and implementing the ideas. Without these interviews, my attention to public discourse could easily fall prey to misunderstandings about why certain decisions were made. In order to uncover values and beliefs at work, I need to be able to understand which decisions were influenced by external forces and which were more driven by values and beliefs regarding homelessness.

³⁹ see interview protocol in Appendix C

I was able to access all the major project developers and providers through my professional networks in the community. I identified these individuals through city council meeting minutes and media coverage of the projects, as well as asking interviewees for recommendations for additional participants. Interviews ceased for each project when I began to receive mostly redundant information.

Interviews with city staff/council

I interviewed six current and ex-city staff⁴⁰ and councilmembers from both Champaign and Urbana, using these interviews as supplementary data sources for projects with accompanying city council meeting audio recordings, and primary data sources for projects without recordings. Interviews with ex-staff members provided an opportunity to understand the conflicts that arise when matters of funding, efficiency, and effectiveness of project development contradict matters of personal beliefs about what projects “should” be.

Self-identified needs and meanings of ‘home’

I collected this data through several methods, given the wide span of time across the projects. I was able to obtain information about self-identified needs and meanings of ‘home’ from the perspective of homeless community members from four of the six projects. The following sections detail how I collected each of the four sources of data:

McKinley Men’s Emergency Shelter—I obtained research reports about homeless men who accessed McKinley Men’s Emergency Shelter from research conducted by Professors and graduate students from the Department of Social Work, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign (UIUC). Within these reports were sections dedicated to relating the men’s perspectives about what they needed in terms of shelter and services. These reports, while certainly not first-hand accounts, do provide a modicum of information about how men were talking about their needs in the context of the Emergency

⁴⁰ These ex-staff members all left on good terms with the city. I interviewed them because of their roles in the development of shelters in the 1990s.

Shelter. I found the reports in document archives maintained by individuals who developed Center for Women in Transition and Homestead Apartments, further underscoring the overlapping nature of how the community understands homelessness and need. I also was able to interview one person who resided at the shelter in 1989 and 1990—this individual plays a central role throughout my work, as he provided me with his own personal news archive, his artwork from his years in the shelter, and his perspectives on the Men’s Emergency Shelter, as well as his perspectives from his involvement on a mid-1990s mayor-appointed Homeless Task Force.

Center for Women in Transition (CWIT)—I obtained research reports from the late 1980s and early 1990s about homeless women who accessed CWIT that were written by graduate and undergraduate students from various departments at UIUC; within these reports were sections dedicated to understanding how the women made sense of their situation in terms of ‘home’ and their identification of needs. As with the reports from the Men’s Emergency Shelter, these reports provide a modicum of information about how women were talking about their needs in the context of CWIT. I found the reports in document archives maintained by the developer and long-time executive director of CWIT. I did not conduct interviews with women currently at CWIT.

TIMES Center—I maintain data from a pilot study I conducted three years ago at the TIMES Center.⁴¹ My pilot study, titled “Privileging the homeless perspective: an examination of home and empowerment,” focused on developing a better understanding of the perspectives on “home” and “empowerment” of men experiencing homelessness in Champaign-Urbana. Interviews were conducted with 14 residents at the TIMES Center by undergraduate co-researchers. The interviews consisted of a series of structured questions, designed around two subject areas. The first topic was designed to gauge

⁴¹ Though I have closed out this study, I continue to have access to data that is already analyzed. By IRB requirements, I am no longer allowed to analyze identifiable data, so the data I access has already been coded and is no longer connected to individual participants.

the men's conceptualization of "home." The second topic was designed to solicit the men's perspective on their needs, how their needs are met by the programs, and their definition of empowerment.

Safe Haven Tent Community—I was able to use several methods of data collection with members of the Safe Haven Tent Community. First, I conducted housing histories with eleven members. These housing histories are employed by other researchers interested in how the concept of “home” functions for individuals, both housed and unhoused. This interview technique prompts individuals to trace their history of all types of housing from their first memories. Doing so situates the person’s current housing situation within a broader trajectory of housing methods/types, leading to better understanding of “how” and “why” one might be in their current housing situation. Some notable descriptions of the technique can be found in May (2000a) and Perkins, Thorns and Winstanley (2008). I also conducted “home visioning” exercises with ten of the eleven members who participated in the housing history interview. Home visioning is an exercise adapted from a Cooper Marcus technique of guided fantasies (Childress, 1996; Cooper-Marcus, 1995). The purpose of this exercise is to allow individuals to mentally create their ideal home and surrounding spaces. As a third way to understand ‘home,’ I conducted personal ‘home’ tours with 6 of the members who participated in the housing history interview. During these ‘tours,’ I provided the Safe Haven member with a video camera with which he/she gave a narrated tour of her/his home space. I used this open-ended approach to ensure that the participant would be the person placing emphasis on important items and processes. I also used a digital camera to take still photos of areas on which participants placed particular importance. Finally, I conducted a “walk-through” with two members of Safe Haven at the original tent site, inquiring about aspects of the site and comparisons to the sites they occupied after their move from that original site. The “walk-through” was also video recorded. All protocols can be found in Appendix C.

Policy documents

For each project, I located an early proposal that laid out the goals of the project, desired number of units, justification for the project, and other areas covered in funding proposals. These proposals gave me a sense of how project developers were identifying needs in the community, and how they were framing their projects. If available, I also collected documents from the Council of Service Providers to the Homeless regarding their stance on the project, as well as reports to the Champaign City Council from the City Manager regarding their instructions for decision-making about funding projects. I also obtained all federally-required reports from the City of Champaign regarding affordable housing and community needs, including the 1990 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS), and each five-year installment after 1990, which was renamed the 5-Year Consolidated Plan. These documents provide insight into the decision-making process, interest groups' influence(s) on that process, how the City Manager frames decisions, and how community needs are defined in official policy documents. Coupled with general news coverage from the personal news archives given to me, these documents do not cover only the six projects under examination, but instead help me to fill out the context in which these six projects are situated.

Methodological rigor

Credibility

I have sought multiple sources of data for several reasons. Most obviously, collecting data on multiple interest groups requires that I seek out as many sources as necessary to obtain the perspective of each interest group. But there are also some limitations of the data that I acknowledge and attempt to fill in with other sources. For instance, city council meetings are only accessible in audio form back to 1995. Three of the six homeless service projects were developed before 1995, so I used the city council meeting minutes to identify interviewees, whom I subsequently interviewed for their perspective, and I used media coverage of the city council meetings to obtain quotes from participants in the meetings, including city council members, city staff, and project developers. But most importantly, the varied

sources of data allow me to triangulate the data to locate contradictions, congruencies, themes and patterns across interest groups and data sources.

Dependability

I have assured dependability through three major practices: 1) maintaining personal notes, observations, drawings, memos, transcripts, and video and audio recordings as an audit trail, 2) creating and maintaining memos that clearly note researcher-driven and participant-driven recommendations and findings, and 3) maintaining clearly marked personal reflections and thoughts. All text and photographic materials are stored and labeled in an NVivo project, where I have also included dates for updates to memos and notes. Audio recordings of interviews and videos are stored in clearly marked folders on my personal laptop.

Transferability

Qualitative research is not meant to be generalizable to other research contexts, but its findings must be transferable, meaning that other researchers can discern contextual differences from research sites and determine the level to which findings may be applicable to other sites. I achieve transferability through thick descriptions of the research site, devoting a chapter to setting up the local context, including in-depth articulations of the policy environment, political atmosphere, housing infrastructure, and demographics.

Data Analysis

My analysis is an iterative process, coinciding with data collection and continuing throughout the process of writing and following up with participants. I began the coding process by accessing my strongest data set—city council meeting audio recordings. I found the meetings to be my strongest data set because it captured all interest groups minus media (due to audio recordings) and raw/”in the moment,” meaning that individuals spoke in reactive ways to the proposed homeless service project,

giving me access to language that was unfettered by me having to conduct a formal interview. Language in the moment provides a contextually rich source of data, which interviews can obscure (Hastings, 2000; Marston, 2004).

I conducted initial coding to sort the large volume of information into manageable groups; I sorted the city council meeting data initially by data source/stakeholder (advocate/activist, homeless, media, city council, Council of Service Providers to the Homeless, service provider/developer of project) as well as specific project (one of six) and comment types. The initial comment codes fell into five types: 1) needs of homeless, 2) belief/assumption about homeless people, 3) belief about homeless services, 4) belief about uses of space in the community, and 5) statements regarding funding and/or other pragmatics of the project in question. Within this initial round of coding, I also did in-depth coding of individual peculiarities to develop a sense of themes at this early stage. After initial coding, I had a codebook that contained 78 categorical or thematic codes. I highlighted five thematic codes that seemed to be particularly important: 1) belief/knowledge about homelessness, 2) belief about space, 3) belief about appropriate home environment, 4) membership in community, and 5) standards of living. Within these five codes, I “coded on” (Bazeley, 2007), meaning that I engaged in a more detailed scale of coding, searching for comments that could be linked to deeper assumptions within the overarching code, and developing a sense of connections across codes. For example, within the code “membership in community,” I recorded the following memo entry:

“I discovered that there are assumptions about homeless people that fit on a spectrum, from the idea that homeless individuals are outsiders coming to town to invade legitimate residents' spaces, bringing crime and bad behavior with them. This view coincides with opposing new development of homeless services. There is also the idea that homeless people are the bad part of the community, the underbelly, and that they become a bigger problem when left untreated, thus we must provide some services to stave off the problem. The next spot on the spectrum is the idea that homeless people are part of the community that need help (charity), and those who are housed should help the homeless--this idea is espoused by people in support of development of services. Next is the idea that homeless are not yet citizens but must work towards it.

This idea occurred with less frequency but was espoused by a homeless man himself, who remarked, "I can be like one of you, an American, not homeless, just houseless." This idea is marked by comments of turning one's life around. Personally, in my interactions with men experiencing homelessness, I have heard this particular idea repeatedly. Finally, at the more 'just' end of the spectrum, people experiencing homelessness are considered full members of the community who are valid and legitimate. Ideas on this end include the idea that homeless people are valid participants in planning homeless services, that they are valid citizens of the community deserving of housing, that they are undeserving of police harassment and criminalization, and at the pinnacle, they are contributing citizens of the community. This last idea was not espoused until the development of Safe Haven Tent Community."

After a first-round coding of city council meeting transcripts, I coded all interviews with project developers and core service providers. I also coded all materials on homeless perspectives, filling out the codes of "homeless needs" and all codes related to ideas of "home." Second and third rounds of data analysis involved close examination of codes and comparisons and queries across codes, resulting in the development of analytical themes from which I derived the thematic content for Chapters 4-8. In these chapters, I develop analysis of overarching norms regarding home and homelessness and needs of "home," as well as evaluation of the shelter spaces in terms of "home" needs.

During the third round of data analysis, which included composing first drafts of chapters, the role of gender in decision-making became clear, and I consciously developed a gendered analysis, focusing in particular on the Men's Emergency Shelter, TIMES Center and Center for Women in Transition, as these three projects were gender-specific. Comparisons among their development discourse, media portrayals, and project developer interviews yielded fruitful findings on the gendered nature of homelessness. Critical geographer Fran Klodawsky calls for more research on gender and homelessness, remarking that, "An infusion of sophisticated gendered analysis about diversity into a policy arena such as homelessness is desperately needed" (2006, p.378). She believes that attention to gender allows research to "incorporate both an appreciation for the multidimensional, multiscale

nature of the meaning of 'home', to recognise that houselessness is not the same as homelessness, and that the latter signals a more existentially complicated set of needs and issues" (2006, p.378).

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

All human subjects phases of my project were approved by the University of Illinois IRB, giving me clearance to conduct interviews/housing histories, focus groups, walk-through, home visioning exercises, and personal home tours with members of Safe Haven Tent Community. I was also given clearance to interview individuals who could speak to policy and decisions about the six projects, including city council, staff, project developers, and members of the Council of Service Providers to the Homeless.

CHAPTER 3: LOCAL CONTEXT

Champaign-Urbana are twin cities, geographically connected and closely intertwined. It is quite common to see residents of both cities at the City Council meetings for either city. Many issues are addressed as a “community,” rather than as individual city issues. For instance, poverty cuts through both cities and the most poverty-stricken neighborhoods flow across municipal boundaries. As a result, organizations often have the letters “CU” in their name, suggesting that the whole community is a more salient entity than just one city or the other. Despite the general sense of the “C-U” community, the cities are not mirrors of each other in terms of approaches to municipal philosophies, visions, or operations.

This chapter, along with demographic and housing information in Appendix B, provides a thick description of the cities of Champaign-Urbana, and at times of Champaign County.⁴² I provide this description for several reasons. First of all, for scholars who seek to transfer findings from this project to their own contexts, the descriptions herein will serve as a basis for transferring findings, as scholars should be able to easily compare and contrast different facets of the local contexts. Equally important though is providing a sense of the C-U community that allows me to contextualize, deepen and otherwise complicate my analysis of the homeless service projects in the cities. A community is more than a sum of its parts, and in this chapter, I attempt to provide an overview of the tangible “facts” of the community, as well as its more elusive qualities.

⁴² Champaign-Urbana is the only metropolitan area in Champaign County, but it is home to multiple organizations that serve the entire county. Particularly in discussions of homelessness and housing, oftentimes numbers will reflect Champaign County, rather than the municipalities. However, the two cities make up a significant portion of the county, and county resources often are concentrated within the two cities, including homeless services, public housing units, and section 8 vouchers.

Homelessness in Champaign County

Prior to the 1980s, Champaign-Urbana had few services for homelessness. A mid-1980s report provided background, stating, “The Salvation Army, Family Services, and the Red Cross have been providing assistance since the 1940’s...By the mid 1970’s, the need for shelters began to surface in Champaign-Urbana. The Winter Emergency Men’s Shelter opened in 1977 in response to the need to provide shelter for homeless men during the coldest months of the year” (Segal et al, 1986). Evidence of homeless men’s needs was overt. An early member of the Men’s Emergency Shelter board described the need as evolving from a shift in policing. This board member says, “Before [the shelter], a night sergeant...would let police bring people in they would pick up, and they slept on benches...and the next morning he would let them out, or they would arrest them to get them off the street” (34Interview). The police department changed their policy to no longer allowing this service. At that point, the night sergeant called a meeting with the faith community to explain the need for a place for these men to sleep. The faith community decided to provide the service, and from that decision, the Men’s Emergency Shelter was born. While it initially rotated between churches, it eventually found a permanent home in the basement of McKinley Presbyterian Church (34Interview).

Champaign-Urbana witnessed similar trends in the 1980s with an upsurge in visible homelessness and the concurrent rise in homeless families with children, often female-headed households. According to a 1986 University of Illinois Social Work report, Catholic Worker House opened in 1980. It was originally a house for refugee families and grew into a shelter serving homeless families. Until 1985, no shelter facility existed exclusively for women and their children. A Woman’s Place began in 1971, but its purpose has always been to serve women who are victims of domestic violence. By 1985, demands placed upon A Woman’s Place made it clear that there was a growing number of homeless women and children in need of shelter. Consequently, the Women’s Emergency Shelter was opened in June of 1985 and offers temporary shelter to women and their minor children

(Segal et al, 1986).⁴³ Homeless women's needs were less apparent at the time. As one early service provider and homeless advocate remarked, "At first we were so dumb, we didn't know there were [homeless women], and there was already a place for women who were abused, A Woman's Place, but we didn't realize there were other homeless women, but because of the dangers they just stayed on the street. They often stayed in family situations or in horrible other things...We met with women who were interested in getting a women's emergency shelter started, and so that first one was over on Fifth Street in Champaign" (28Interview).

Prior to the early 1990s, these various housing and service programs were achieved in an ad hoc fashion, with community groups cobbling together what services and spaces they could manage. The emergency shelters—both men's and women's—had restrictions on lengths of stay. The women's shelter permitted stays of 4-6 weeks, while the men's shelter only permitted three consecutive nights in a given week. Even with these restrictions and the lack of non-emergency shelters, a 1986 Social Work Research Task Force concluded that "C-U has a strong base of services for the homeless," and that the most pressing need is not more shelters, but rather "a better networking of resources" (Segal et al, 1986, p.13). Shelters, particularly those serving women and children, were consistently at capacity, while turning away as many as 415 women and children in 1989, with even higher numbers in 1990 (Ott et al, 1990). Salvation Army, one of two men's emergency shelters, turned away on average 30 men per month due to lack of space. The following chart displays the available emergency shelters in Champaign County circa 1990:

⁴³ Other services were offered in the community, in addition to shelters. The organizations offering services, for instance, the local Urban League, religious organizations, and local townships, offered funding for preventive measures, such as energy and rental assistance. Though this study is primarily focused on shelter-type services, it is important to note that these preventive services play a critical, ongoing role in preventing homelessness for many families and individuals living in extreme poverty.

Shelter	Location	Population served	Maximum occupancy
A Woman's Place	505 W Green, Urbana	Battered Women and Children	17
Catholic Worker House	307 S Randolph, Champaign	Couples, Women and Children	10
Crisis Nursery	Covenant Hospital, Urbana	Children under 5	7
McKinley Men's Emergency Shelter	809 S Fifth, Champaign	Men only during winter	45
Roundhouse	311 W White, Champaign	Adolescents (13-17)	5
Salvation Army	119 E University, Champaign	Men and Families	30 men, 10 families
Women's Emergency Shelter	506 E Church, Champaign	Women and Children	16

Table 1: Emergency shelters in Champaign County, 1990. Data from City of Champaign Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy: FY 1992 – FY 1996

In addition to the supply of emergency shelters, developed over the 1970s and 1980s, one transitional shelter opened in 1989, serving mentally ill homeless individuals. With a capacity of 7, the transitional program operates with a small wait list and remains full (Ott et al, 1990). A second program was developed in 1991 to serve as transitional housing for families. The City of Urbana still operates this housing program as of 2011, with five scattered site housing units. As of 1990, researchers had identified a shortage of transitional housing, as well as a lack of any permanent supportive housing (Ott, et al, 1990).

A count from November 1, 1985 – October 31, 1986 found 900 shelter users. The report indicates that while this count included duplicated users of shelters, it failed to account for any non-shelter users. A Regional Planning Commission survey in 1989 identified 1145 different individuals using shelters, again not accounting for duplication (Champaign County, 1989). By 1993, service providers had begun using the now common Point-In-Time survey—with this measure, they located 220 homeless individuals during one week in the cities of Champaign and Urbana (City of Champaign, 1993). Attempting to account for the causes of homelessness, researchers asked both healthcare professionals

and homeless individuals themselves. Healthcare professionals reported mental illness, lack of public housing and inadequate shelters as the most common causes, while interviews with homeless men revealed that lack of or inconsistent employment and divorce were major factors in their homelessness (Segal et al, 1986). Of those interviewed in 1988, 30% were divorced or separated, and of the women interviewed, 73% had children, one third of whom were in foster care (Segal and Hansen, 1988).

UI School of Social Work documented what was known about the homeless population in 1986 and 1988, based on interviews with service providers and homeless shelter users. These studies reflected the community's need to develop an in-depth understanding of who the homeless were and what they needed (Segal and Hansen, 1988). As early as 1986, UI Social Work researchers understood homelessness not as a matter of choice, but one of access—they state, “Individuals are willing to receive services, but often do not possess the skills or means to access and maintain such services” (Segal et al, 1986, p.11). In terms of employment, most people “wanted to work and were looking, and hoped to find employment that would pay enough to allow them to secure housing of their own” (Segal and Hansen, 1988, p.3). In fact, when asked about their most pressing needs, the majority of those interviewed identified a job as their biggest need. The report nuances the issue of employment, acknowledging that third shift jobs were not accessible given the lack of day centers in the community, and that minimum wage jobs did not pay enough to make ends meet (1988). Almost everyone that was interviewed had some monthly income, with women earning significantly less than men--\$118/month compared to \$218/month for men (1988).

Issues of native versus outsider homeless individuals weighed significantly, both in early and contemporary discussions of homelessness. In 1986, the UI Social Work study found that 61% of women were local, while only 18% of men were local, though an additional 5% had family in the area. Researchers also noted Champaign-Urbana's location as a crossroads between Chicago, St. Louis, and

Indianapolis, positing that its location made it a passing through and returning point for many, particularly men. By 1988, though, understandings of homelessness had shifted away from a belief in the “drifter,” as Social Work studies found that “36% were born in Champaign-Urbana or a neighboring town, and another 27% were born in Illinois...11% have lived in Champaign-Urbana their entire life...[and] almost 60% of the men and women had relatives living in this community...over half of them had contact with their family at least once a week” (Segal and Hansen, 1988, p.2). Researchers speculated that the high numbers of “locals” may have contributed to a greater number of individuals receiving some sort of public assistance, 36%, compared to the national average of less than 25% (1988). The 1988 report states, “There is a temptation to conclude that because there are a number of shelters, Champaign-Urbana has a greater prevalence of homeless persons. This is not the case. The shelters opened in response to a recognized need...Until communities are ready to open shelters to the extent they will be used, they cannot be certain of the number of homeless” (1988, p.7).

The 1991 CHAS indicates the following numbers for shelter users:

	85-86	86-87	88-89	89-90
Men	520	*	365	803
Women	170	*	240	376
Children	210	*	409	271
Adults and Children	*	*	31	*
Total	900	900	1145	1450

Table 2: Numbers of shelter users in Champaign County, 1990

* Data not available

These numbers do not account for the “hidden homeless,” those individuals and families who are either turned away from shelters, staying with friends/relatives in precarious situations, in motels, in substandard housing, or have lost their home. They also do not account for the near homeless, who are at risk of being evicted or have had utilities shut off. In 1990, numbers of hidden homeless reached 747, the majority of whom were families/women with children. Numbers of those near homelessness reached 3318, with the majority receiving energy assistance from the Urban League. While methods of

counting at this time were not controlling for cross-counts, these numbers still represent significant need in the community, and, unlike more contemporary methods of counting, the numbers attempt to account for invisible homelessness (from City of Champaign, 1991).

In 1986, the average age of homeless men was 43, while women’s average age was 31. 70-75% of the population were men, while 25-30% were women. A 1988 study revealed a total average age to be 34 years old. The ratio had also drastically shifted, as the survey found women to make up 30%, men 31% and 35% were children (City of Champaign, 1993). “The majority, almost 2/3’s, had completed high school, and 30% had attended college for varying amounts of time” (Segal and Hansen, 1988, p.2). In the early 1990s, a number of service providers combined intake information to achieve a better understanding of why people were coming to the shelters in greater numbers. They found that most shelter users were single—100% of the men, and 60% of the women. The following chart breaks down primary reasons for homelessness, as identified by the individuals themselves:

Reason for homelessness	Men	Women
Loss of employment	36%	2%
Insufficient income	17%	17%
“In transit”	4%	19%
Domestic violence	2.7%	23%
Released from correctional facility	16%	3%
Released from mental health facility	9%	2%
Alcohol and substance abuse*	8%	6%
Medical condition	2%	2%

Table 3: Reasons for homelessness in Champaign County, 1988

Data from Segal and Hansen, 1988

The 1993 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy states that these numbers are “interesting in contrast to the number of homeless persons who are abusing alcohol or drugs. Five percent of women and 50% of men cited alcohol abuse as a problem. In addition, 11% of women and 29% of men listed drug abuse as a problem. This suggests that while substance abuse is a problem, it is not a primary cause of homelessness. That is, it is the loss of employment, adequate income, and

domestic violence that prevent people from remaining in their own households” (City of Champaign, 1993, p.57). Though writers of the CHAS recognized this fact, they still recommended significant mental health and substance abuse treatment options.

A number of needs were identified in the late 1980s. In 1986, the UI Social Work study indicated that more shelter space was needed to keep up with the growing demand for shelter. They also advocated for the development of transitional housing in the form of group homes, so that people could “reenter the system” after the immediate crisis is past. This transitional housing was conceptualized as small, rather than the larger scale emergency shelters (Ott et al, 1990; Segal et al, 1986; Segal and Hansen, 1988). Additionally, the need for permanent homes, identified by many of the homeless individuals, represented a large hurdle, given the shortage of affordable housing in the community, exacerbated by the presence of University of Illinois students who drive up rental costs. In fact, the 1990 Comprehensive Homeless Assistance Plan identified affordable housing as the primary reason for homelessness in the community, finding that 56% of all renters were rent burdened (City of Champaign, 1993).⁴⁴ A day center was also identified as a need, both for individuals with late shift employment and for better coordination of and access to services (Ott et al, 1990; Segal and Hansen, 1988).

By the mid-1990s, federal funding had increased, and the community began to have more opportunities to create housing for the homeless. In 1993, service providers began articulating more targeted needs beyond affordable housing. On the whole, they advocated for “an increase in the number of shelter facilities or shelter beds for the general homeless population,” and for those “with special needs,” as well as services that “provide an end to the cycle of homelessness, including access to educational and employment opportunities,” and “increased accessibility to permanent housing

⁴⁴ Rent burdened indicates that the household pays more than 30% of its income for rent.

options, including the development of SRO housing, increased rental assistance, and counseling and education” (City of Champaign, 1993, p.58). These needs demonstrate attention both to the crisis moment of homelessness as well as the substantive problem of a lack of affordable permanent housing.

A Task Force on Homelessness, commissioned in 1995, executed an 18-month study of homelessness in the area, and they presented findings that were the subject of much debate. This task force advocated for a range of housing alternatives, including emergency, transitional and permanent housing. They recommended spending the bulk of funding on affordable housing, saying, “This would mean some major money for the next several years which should go to support the development and ongoing stability of a whole range of affordable permanent housing alternatives for both individuals and families. This might include things like rent assistance. It might include single-family home ownership. It might include the use of manufactured housing, group homes, congregate living arrangements, and single room occupancy units” (CCCmeeting021197).

Despite the push for affordable housing, the Task Force recommended expanding existing services for men and women, as well as the construction of an SRO. Assertions of need were based on numbers served, as two service providers stated the following:

Last year, from January through December, the center received 688 unduplicated calls from adult women with 676 children, that’s documented, 55% were women with children and 45% were single women. Children made up 34% of the clients we served last year, 73% of the children we served were under the age of 5. Children should not be growing up in homeless shelters or drifting from place to place. With the implementation in welfare reform the Children’s Defense Fund estimates 56,000 more children in the state of Illinois alone will be facing poverty. Our agency served 152 women and 79 children last year, 26% of those people we served moved into permanent stable housing. (service provider, CCCmeeting021197)

What I wanted to illustrate was the increase in numbers. The first time our shelter ever hired overnight staff was only five seasons ago, and I was the first person hired. We had about 40 people a night. Last month we had 69. Last month we served 5,780 meals that we could count. This did not count any seconds. This did not count any snacks. We’ve had to double our staff for the safety of all involved during the evening hours. As a result in budget cuts we

lost our day shelter until someone came in from the county's mental health board. So I have prepared a document I would like to pass out to you for you for reflection later and you know we are only 1 service provider. (service provider, CCCmeeting021197)

Affordable housing needs

Affordable housing in Champaign County has long been a problem. A 1991 letter from the Tenant Union, included in the City of Champaign's 1991 CHAS, called for three housing priorities that reflect affordable housing issues: 1) rent subsidy programs, 2) emergency rent assistance for families at risk of becoming homeless, and 3) increased shelter space for families with children who are homeless. At this time, the Housing Authority provided assistance for 446 families, with another 228 families on a waiting list, which had been closed the majority of the time from April 1986 until September 9, 1991, when the letter was written. (City of Champaign, 1991) In fact, the Affordable Housing Task Force stated that, "Eviction for non-payment of rent is a leading cause of homelessness in our community," citing 725 possessions of premises in 1989 (AHTF letter to City of Champaign, September 20, 1991; in City of Champaign, 1991). Early studies of homelessness in Champaign County overwhelmingly agreed that the major reason for increased shelter and transitional housing needs was a lack of affordable housing in the area (Ott et al 1990, Segal and Hansen 1988). In fact, the 1993 CHAS specifically advocates for resources to be provided to the "near homeless," including rental assistance, public assistance, and an increased supply of affordable housing, as well as budget counseling and tenant advocacy and education. Citing differences in municipal approaches, the AHTF letter indicates that the Cunningham (Urbana) Township allocated \$24,000 in FY1992 for rental assistance to households facing eviction, but Champaign did not participate in providing housing or social services.

Public housing units and Housing Choice vouchers also fall woefully short of documented needs. In 1990, the Housing Authority of Champaign County maintained 152 family units in public housing complexes in the City of Champaign, with waiting lists for the units (City of Champaign, 1991). No new

public housing units for families have been constructed since 1953, but scattered sites were added in 1974 (City of Champaign, 1991). During the 2000s, a number of public housing complexes have been demolished and replaced with mixed-income developments. In terms of Housing Choice vouchers, In FY 89-90, 446 families in Champaign County were assisted through the Housing Choice voucher programs, with a waiting list (City of Champaign, 1991). In 2010, the Housing Authority of Champaign County owns and operates 287 units in Champaign and 130 units in Urbana, as well as 1,340 Housing Choice vouchers for the county. As of January 2010, 97 families were on the public housing waiting list and 1528 were on the Housing Choice voucher waiting list. (City of Urbana, 2010).

In addition to voucher shortages, Champaign fails to protect against Housing Choice Voucher discrimination. In 2002, a landmark case in Chicago ruled that individual municipalities could decide whether or not housing vouchers constituted a form of income. This ruling is significant in that forms of income are included in both cities' anti-discrimination ordinances, so the inclusion or exclusion of housing vouchers as a form of income dictated whether or not landlords could refuse people with vouchers. Both cities voted to include housing vouchers as a form of income, but six months later, Champaign City Council overturned their previous decision. Since then, residents with housing vouchers can rent anywhere in Urbana without discrimination, but in Champaign they must find a landlord willing to accept the voucher. As the director of the Champaign-Urbana Tenant Union noted, this ruling perpetuates the issues of "concentrations of poverty" that Champaign City Council members cite as problematic in existing public housing. (E. Patt, personal communication 08/2010)

In 1991, comparing average housing rates to income, a single wage earner would need to make \$13,603/year for an average one-bedroom, \$16,000/year for an average 2-bedroom, and \$24,000/year for an average 3-bedroom (Tenant Union letter, in City of Champaign, 1991). Rent burden increased by 2000, with 58% having some level of housing problem. The problems were greater in lower income

brackets, with 84% of renter households at or below the poverty level paying more than 30% of their income, and 73% paying more than 50% of their income. The Champaign County Regional Planning Commission is the primary agency that provides emergency rent assistance to the “near homeless,” though their eligibility requirements do not allow them to assist some of the most vulnerable households. For instance, today they offer funds through their Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program, which requires that households demonstrate self-sufficiency within 2 years of the program.

Community dynamics

I characterize the Champaign-Urbana community as a “caring city,” quite different from the “mean cities” so well documented by legal geographers and advocacy groups (e.g. “A Dream Denied”, 2006; Amster, 2008; Brinegar, 2003; Mitchell, 2003). While these studies have illuminated important threats to and violations of the rights of homeless individuals, places like Champaign-Urbana are far less studied and thus less understood as sites of contestation over similar rights and citizenship issues, though in more nuanced ways than the overtly punitive approaches of mean cities. As a colleague recently remarked, ‘caring’ cities’ approaches to homelessness are akin to historical racism in the Northern U.S.—while certainly not as overt as Jim Crow laws, northern cities operated from similar assumptions about race, though in less tangible ways (Rappaport, personal communication 05/06/11). Similarly, ‘caring’ city community members may act from the same negative assumptions about homeless individuals as those in mean cities, but the less punitive focus results in what critical geographer Geoffrey DeVerteuil (2006) terms “poverty management” (also see Murphy, 2009).

Concretely, the differences between mean and caring cities lie mostly in their adoption or rejection of punitive municipal ordinances. For instance, Champaign and Urbana have entertained and/or rejected proposals over the years to become more punitive. In one instance, an early 1990s incident of one man sleeping on a bench in downtown Champaign sparked a proposal for an anti-

camping ordinance. Public outcry was great, and Champaign tabled the ordinance due to lack of political will. Champaign did pass an aggressive panhandling ordinance in 1994 to discourage panhandling in the campustown area, at the same time initiating an awareness campaign to educate the “public” about panhandlers and discourage them from giving money. This tactic is typical of mean cities, but the difference is that the campaign itself was short-lived, and the panhandling ordinance is fairly limited in its scope, restricting only harassing behavior, threats or physical contact, and asking for money near ATMs. Urbana underwent discussions of a far-reaching anti-panhandling ordinance in 2011, but ultimately limited the scope of the ordinance to outlawing only aggressive panhandling in areas with ATMs and other high-risk situations.

Furthering the notion of a caring city, City Council members and staff from Urbana and Champaign have been involved in various homeless services over the years. The City of Champaign long-time financial director, Richard Schnuer and 1987-98 Mayor Dan McCollum sat on the board of the Men’s Winter Emergency Shelter throughout its existence, occasionally volunteering as well. Former Urbana City Council members Esther Patt and Ruth Wyman were also active advocates for affordable housing. Patt has worked at the Champaign-Urbana Tenant Union for 32 years, and both Patt and Wyman served on an early 1990s Affordable Housing Task Force that pushed for the development of an SRO in the community. At different times in history, multiple council members (from both cities) have had to abstain from voting on social service funding because of their involvement on service agency boards (E. Patt, personal communication, 08/2010).

Appeals to the community’s positive values were made repeatedly by city councilmembers throughout the project planning processes. One city council member remarked that, “I think a government that serves well should appeal to what Lincoln called the better angels of our nature. I think this proposal is a response to that appeal” (CCCmeeting010996). A 1995 Task Force on

Homelessness stated their understanding of Champaign, saying, “We’re in a community that prides itself on its economic and physical growth but also has an obligation to remember the poor and the less fortunate. We believe that the city should promote both economic opportunities and assist in providing for basic human needs for its citizens” (CCCmeeting021197). Another city council member remarked, “I strongly believe that the responsibility of being a prosperous city is also taking care of our needy” (CCCmeeting030497). A city council member also questioned ideas of market-based housing regarding Homestead Apartments, stating, “I don’t think that we can ask people to lift themselves by their bootstraps if they don’t have any bootstraps. There is just a basic step we have to take to help people start climbing up, and I realize that not everyone who was able to use this facility will ever be able to move out of it, or they will move into another similar type of program, but I am convinced that many people over the life of this program will benefit greatly by it. There are people who would not have the opportunity to live in decent housing if we don’t do this” (CCCmeeting010996).

Despite this characterization of Champaign and Urbana as caring cities, the two cities have different approaches to framing themselves. The City of Champaign’s Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS), Consolidated Plans and Comprehensive Plans all focus on the city itself, with little description or acknowledgement of Urbana and the surrounding county.⁴⁵ Urbana, on the other hand, crafts the same documents with significant attention to the City of Champaign and the surrounding county. In some ways, this difference can be attributed to the relative impacts of each city. Champaign contains the majority of economic areas and shopping districts for the residents of Champaign-Urbana, while Urbana has far less commerce. But in other ways, Urbana’s attention to surrounding areas reflects a more holistic approach and a willingness to take the lead on securing better futures for its citizenry. For instance, when federal funding became available through the HOME

⁴⁵ The CHAS was a precursor to the Consolidated Plan. Both are tools to secure federal funding for affordable housing, homelessness, and neighborhood improvement.

program,⁴⁶ the cities of Urbana and Champaign and Champaign County formed a consortium to secure more HOME funding, and the City of Urbana offered to administer the funding, a significant undertaking.

Politically, the two cities are also quite different. Urbana uses a Mayor-Council government of the strong-mayor type, where the mayor operates with great political independence and authority. Champaign operates under a Council-Manager government, where the City Council is responsible for legislative functions like passing ordinances and establishing policies, while the City Manager acts to run operations and implement policies, as well as advise council. The two cities also differ in their number of at-large city council members. Of Champaign's nine city council members, the mayor and three additional council seats are at-large, meaning that they are elected by the entire community, not just their district. In Urbana, all of the seven council members are elected by their ward, with only the mayor elected as an at-large position. This difference is significant, as at-large members must raise more money for their campaigns and garner larger segments of the vote, often representing powerful interests over the interests of people in a particular district (E. Patt, personal communication 08/2010). There are also racial issues with Champaign City Council. Because the city is so drastically segregated, with most Black residents, many of them living at or below the poverty line, living in northeast Champaign, the only poor minority representation on the council comes from that district. A similar situation occurs in Urbana, as many of Urbana's poor Black residents live in the northwest end of Urbana, geographically contiguous with Champaign's northeast end, and this ward offers the only minority representation.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ HOME funds are federal dollars that communities receive based on x.

⁴⁷ Political party affiliation of city council members seems to play a significant role in decision-making. However, political parties are not so clear in Champaign, as the ballots are technically non-partisan, meaning that a candidate's party affiliation is not presented to voters, even though it may be significant in their conceptualization of issues. In Urbana, candidates' party affiliations are clearly stated on ballots, offering voters some, albeit limited, insight into how that candidate may approach issues in the community. Champaign's non-partisan approach to

The twin cities' overall approach to community planning differs greatly, with Urbana enacting more redistributive policies than Champaign, and Urbana actually participating in homeless services in addition to funding other providers. Both Champaign and Urbana have townships, a form of government that deals with property assessment for local taxation and general assistance for residents in need.⁴⁸ These townships were formed in 1860 as a way to bring governments closer to the people. Sources of revenue are based solely on property taxes, unlike municipalities. While both cities maintain townships, their approach to the delivery of services varies. With only half the population, Cunningham Township's (Urbana) General Assistance fund allocated five times the amount of Champaign Township's (Champaign) General Assistance fund in FY2010, as well as spending additional funds on social services.⁴⁹

In addition to township funds, both cities also had access to federal funds through the 1970s and 1980s, under President Nixon's Federal Revenue Sharing program. These funds were used for social services funding, but when the program was discontinued in FY 1986-87, the cities of Champaign and Urbana took different approaches to funding social services in the wake of the federal disinvestment. In Urbana, "the Township has levied taxes in the Town Fund to replace Revenue Sharing and continues to provide grants for community services" (Cunningham Township FY2011 Budget). The Township shares this funding responsibility with the City of Urbana, both using local funds to provide grants to community social services. Through a combination of Township town funds, City of Urbana general

elections is supposed to promote voting for the candidate and not the party, but in reality, it can disguise candidate party lines. A former Urbana alderperson remarked that a big difference between the two cities was that despite Champaign's non-partisanship, many of its council members were members of the Republican Party, while most of Urbana's alderpersons were members of the Democratic Party (E. Patt, personal communication 08/2010).

⁴⁸ Champaign and Urbana both have townships as well as city governments. Illinois townships have three functions: general assistance for the indigent, assessment of real property, and maintenance of roads and bridges not covered by other jurisdictions. General assistance provides those in poverty with a monthly check for a specified period of time. For more information on townships, see <http://www.toi.org/About/History.aspx> and <http://www.cctownship.com/cms/township-government/frequently-asked-questions-about-the-purpose-of-township-government/>

⁴⁹ See Table 9 in Appendix B for figures

funds, and 15% Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, Urbana is able to provide grants to social service agencies, including a number of the homeless shelters examined in this dissertation.

Champaign, on the other hand, discontinued social service funding when the Federal Revenue Sharing program ended, and did not begin funding social services again until CDBG money became available.⁵⁰

Champaign began social services funding once CDBG funding was instituted, but since 2008, the city has also diverted its CDBG social/public service funding toward neighborhood improvements instead of its former strategy of funding individual social service agencies like homeless shelters (25Interview).

Differences in funding approaches depend on city councils' priority setting. As one former Urbana staff member said, "At the time the City Council in Urbana was promoting to get more involved directly whereas Champaign was not, and there were even, you know, there was ongoing talk between the two cities about Urbana was actually allocating local dollars to these sorts of programs and Champaign was, at that time, cutting them" (31Interview). The staff member articulated, "They, the Council that we had, was extremely interested and dedicated to trying to tackle the issues locally, and they put dollars in staff where we needed to make it happen as best they could, and so throughout all the various hearings that we went through and meetings, public meetings and such, City Council

⁵⁰ CDBG funds are federally-allocated funds with which municipalities improve conditions for low- to moderate-income households or neighborhoods comprised of mostly low- or moderate-income households. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) can be used for the following: acquisition of real property; relocation and demolition; rehabilitation of residential and non-residential structures; construction of public facilities and improvements, such as water and sewer facilities, streets, neighborhood centers, and the conversion of school buildings for eligible purposes; public services, within certain limits; activities relating to energy conservation and renewable energy resources; and provision of assistance to profit-motivated businesses to carry out economic development and job creation/retention activities. See <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/entitlement/>.

[The HOME program](http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/training/web/abc/activities/) also addresses affordable housing, with the following approved uses: homebuyer programs, homebuyer rehab programs, rental housing programs, and tenant based rental assistance. See <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/training/web/abc/activities/>.

members by and large stood very strongly that they were going to support solutions, and they were going to listen to what people said, but they were also really dedicated to moving forward with something...The greater [public] involvement really came once the project was actually proposed, and that's where you began to see much more general involvement" (31Interview). This assertion is supported by one Alderman's comments, calling the Homestead Apartments project "crucial to the well-being of the city. How we deal with the less fortunate is important to all of us." ("Moving", 1997, p. A-7).

Two service providers remarked the following:

Well then I was very positive about the city of Urbana and their process; we got pretty regular funding from the City of Urbana. Champaign was more of an issue. The mayor in Champaign at the time was Dan McCollum...and I can remember we went to go see where some of the guys were staying up by the tracks together... Some guys were staying up by the tracks in just makeshift cardboard places. For Dan it was a political issue, and that's just not the way a city should be treating some of the people who live there, and he's a very conservative fiscally but liberal in terms of those kinds of issues progressive...City Council had some very conservative people on it. They made sure there were people on that committee who were very opposed to the city doing much of anything, as far as encouraging homelessness or to keep homeless people in the City of Champaign (28Interview).

They [City of Urbana] were very easy, they were so much easier than the City of Champaign, they were just always, okay. You know, their funding, how they did their funding, it wasn't much in terms of their annual social service funding, but they were always pretty easy for us. It was like, you go and you present, and they're like "well, okay..." They always saw it as a priority. And they never had a lot of money because we [our agency] were in Champaign (29Interview).

Norms of government action, spending, allocation of federal dollars

Champaign and Urbana differ in their gathering of data to make decisions. Both cities have commissions, but Urbana relies far more heavily on original information and recommendations to come from their commissions. The community members who serve on the commissions are often people interested in serving, rather than subject matter experts. Champaign's commissions are considered to be positions held by experts in the community, and individuals are appointed based on their perceived

knowledge. They also are commissioned by the city council to study problems. Within this historical context, a few basic norms of government action are worth noting, particularly numbers-based decision-making, preference for homeownership, and ambivalence toward the use of federal funds for shelters.

Based on a review of Champaign City Council meetings devoted to funding allocation, I would characterize the City of Champaign as one that is most comfortable with studies, quantifiable measures, and specific data. They are less comfortable with using public input as a source of information from which to deliberate. Regarding spending on social services, the mayor stated in one meeting, “I think we need to come up with measurable numbers that would range from domestic violence, which is crime, other kinds of crimes that would indicate what the social health of the community may be, all the way down to things like truancy rates, high school dropout rates, teen pregnancy rates. I think there’s a wide variety of numbers we could pull together that when taken together as a whole could give us maybe more insight than we’ve had in the past” (CCCmeeting101795). In the same discussion, the deputy mayor, a long-time city councilmember, bluntly said, “I personally don’t want the social service agencies coming in with requests, nor do I even want input from them, and that sounds very hard and callous. We have such a wide variety of requests for money that it just seems like some of them are throwing money at a problem” (CCCmeeting101795). The majority of council members wanted to engage in a numbers-based decision-making process. As one news article reported, “Some council members also asked for more documentation of the extent of homelessness before committing more city dollars for shelters” (Loury, 1997c, p. A-3). City staff followed suit—one former city staff member recalled needing to produce numbers to prove that shelters and other affordable housing was necessary, rather than relying on visual or anecdotal proof, such as seeing people sleeping in parks or downtown areas (15Interview).

Beyond the focus on numbers, the City of Champaign has believed in home ownership as the ideal form of housing for many years. One long-time city-council member expressed concerns about the

SRO project, saying, “I think it needs to be an agreement that they will not come back and ask for any more money, because I’m already stretching it to use our HOME funds for this.⁵¹ I think that a single family home ownership program is the best thing we’ve got going to establish a very strong community and I dislike using these funds for this, so I want to make sure they don’t come back.” (City councilmember, CCCmeeting010996) Evidence suggests that this councilmember’s stance on homeownership was fairly universal.⁵² Reflecting the city’s hesitance to use funds on projects other than homeownership programs, one news article reports, “The city has roughly \$400,000 available to it annually in a three-year grant. Much of that money was intended for use in the city’s single-family home ownership program that subsidizes first-time home buyers of limited income. But Adams said the city has more available than it can use and the grant must be obligated by July 1 or the city risks losing it.” (Bloomer, n.d.) One long-time city councilmember, a renter,⁵³ expressed his frustration with the council, saying,

“There are aspects of what is before us that I disagree with. I think some of that has come out...in some of the comments I have made about the way I perceive the relationship between transitional programs and transitional housing and the council’s preference of choosing to focus, at least for the time being, on single family home ownership. But I’m prepared, because I take this to be a consensus building process, I’m prepared to forward this with my support and continue to place an emphasis on the needs of people in transitional situations, very precarious situations that either render them near homeless or altogether homeless. I don’t think this plan presented to us tonight adequately addresses that situation as I perceive it, but it’s the best we can get for now.” (CCCmeeting032597)

⁵¹ HOME is a federal program that provides funding to localities for use on affordable housing projects that can span a spectrum from homeownership programs to shelters.

⁵² One housing advocate reported that the council as a whole was quite conservative, saying “the thing they love most about America is we’re a capital society. We’re free enterprise, and we don’t want to let anybody do away with that. You have to pull yourself up by the bootstraps, you just cannot be welfarized. We won’t tolerate that. And the real rite of passage, and the real reward of all your hard work is to become a homeowner” (19Interview). The council’s conservative political leanings were also documented in a number of other interviews, including 29Interview, 33Interview.

⁵³ This city councilmember has been serving for over 30 years and has consistently been the only or one of two renters on the council.

Emphasis on homeownership was pervasive in the 1990s, when many of the projects were developed. Many of the project developers, service providers, and housing advocates also spoke in terms of transitioning people into homeownership. For instance, one service provider argued,

I support a lot of transitional housing, and the reason I support it so strongly is because...we have a lot of people out there who come from the streets, who are homeless, and they can't afford to go out and buy a home...Their credit is shot, and no one is going to listen to them, so it doesn't even pay to waste someone's time going in there trying to purchase a home when you haven't got any credit. One thing that the transitional program can do though, it can begin to work with those individuals, begin to change some behavior, make some behavior adjustments so that by the time, after a pretty long time, they are in a position where they can buy. (core service provider, CCCmeeting032597)

The focus on homeownership was used as a reference point to criticize the Homestead Apartments development. One opponent remarked, "Each apartment will cost the taxpayers about \$65,000. For \$65,000, we could build each homeless person a new house with three bedrooms, with a family room and a fireplace. We could buy 32 houses that would cost \$50,000 each for the same money this building will cost. Something is very wrong here. Are we being cheap by providing only a small apartment for the homeless when we could provide them with a whole house? Or are we mismanaging this project by spending more than we have to, for what we are providing?" (Whelan, 1997). In this case, reliance on a homeownership ideal ignored the practical reality that the federal grant was designated for an SRO project, not single-family homes. It also assumes that single-family homes are appropriate for and desired by all single adults. As one Homestead board member said, though, not everyone wants to spend great amounts of time maintaining their housing, and smaller spaces are better for those individuals (19Interview).

Despite the pervasiveness of homeownership beliefs, housing advocates and project developers also attempted to broaden the conversation to include the idea of a continuum of housing. This framing played an important role in advocating for shelter funding. A number of interested parties remarked,

“We’ve had a lot of comments from the community and from the Council both, talking about what’s best for working with the poor and the homeless, and whether giving them private homes is the best way to go, emergency shelters, transitional shelters, SROs, what is the best thing for the homeless to happen, and as we were looking at a lot of different things in the community...there’s no one answer. Purchasing homes is not the answer for everybody. Being in an emergency shelter is not a need for everybody, so often they need the transitional part before they even need them instead of an emergency situation. I would just remind you again that continuum of care that is built into the requirements for federal funding is very important. It’s just as true in this community as it is in any community across the United States.” (Local housing advocate, CCCmeeting032597)

“I ask that you consider the options as you look at your available funding from the federal government to meet not only the needs of homeless but also those who are striving for self-sufficiency through single family home ownership, but understand that not one solution is enough. You really need to have a full continuum of care, a full continuum of choices.” (SRO developer, CCCmeeting032597)

“To speak a point we heard a lot about the continuum of care from the people who spoke tonight. What HUD requires us to do before we put together a budget for the use of funds is to do a policy document where we identify the breadth of affordable housing needs, and the breadth of resources that are available. What we try to do is then target the funds to community needs that we feel are most critical. In the past we have covered owner occupied housing rehabilitation...This [affordable housing funding recommendation] is really targeted toward the need for permanent low cost housing as opposed to shelter housing and could involve the development of single family homes, it could involve some sort of financial support for tax credit projects that would be supported by council, or development of housing as recommended in the homeless task force report such as efficiency apartments or group homes.” (City staff, CCCmeeting032597)

1990s Champaign city council discussions regarding shelters were also marked by ambivalence toward the idea of spending federal funds on shelters, but they also reflected an unwillingness to diverge from the Consolidated Plan. In the early 1990s, consolidated plans were just being introduced as tools for communities to identify their housing and service needs to garner federal funds.⁵⁴ As such, the implications of a Consolidated Plan were not well understood by the City Council, but they quickly developed the understanding that once needs are set forth in the document, the community has a

⁵⁴ The first document from the early 1990s was called a Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy, or CHAS. This document lasted a few years before it was replaced by the Consolidated Plan. Both documents were created by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as tools for communities to identify housing and neighborhood needs and priorities.

responsibility to use their CDBG and HOME funds to meet that need. City staff played an instrumental role in forwarding the Consolidated Plan as a binding document, and during the discussion about the proposed SRO, city staff and officials repeatedly stated that they had to support the SRO because it had been included in the Consolidated Plan (18Interview, 19Interview). Despite their commitment to following through with the Consolidated Plan, several council members remarked that they would be more careful in the future about what went into the Consolidated Plan. These remarks speak to the power of normative beliefs—in the Homestead Apartments (SRO) discussions, council members would have preferred to leave out certain types of housing, despite the demonstrated need, rather than support the types of housing that would meet the need, and they erroneously thought that city staff could omit demonstrated needs at their will. The same ambivalence was demonstrated in the discussion to build the TIMES Center. In deliberating about spending \$300,000 on the TIMES Center development, the mayor at the time stated that he was not in favor of spending the money but was “going to support it because I think the other alternative is unthinkable” (Loury, 1997d, p. A-6). This ambivalence was felt by service providers as an unsupportive environment. One service provider said to the council, “Every time we turn around and we have a project, we have a proposal, we have a need, we are starting to get messages from this Council that we can’t look here anymore. I have been coming here for 6 years to talk about the problem of women and children who are finding themselves homeless, and I am tired of coming here and having to start over again” (core service provider, CCCmeeting060695). The city council’s overall ambivalence toward shelter funding kept conversations focused on whether or not to support building shelters, circumventing discussions about how to make the shelters the best they could be.

Regarding the way Urbana addresses homelessness, one former city councilmember remarked,

I don’t think they really have a specific approach to homelessness. The City of Urbana’s approach primarily is to comply with HUD requirements so when HUD required the

comprehensive housing affordability strategy, which later became the Consolidated Plan, they do it annually, and the city is required to sign off on the Housing Authority's annual action plan so they do that annually, and the city gives out social service funding so they do that annually, it's more like task-driven and I've never, in all the years I was on the City Council, and actually in the years I have been involved in the community I have never seen the city sit down and any effort to sit down and say, "How do we tackle the problem of homelessness," or study it or anything like that, it only comes up as part of the different tasks they do (25Interview).

Yet a current staff member at City of Urbana describes Urbana's city council as "activist," saying that in the past, members of the staff acted as activists, but in recent years, the council itself has taken on that role (37Interview). This differs greatly from Champaign's expectations of what a councilmember does.

Discussions of the need for shelters were numbers-driven. As one former city councilmember remarked, "when you're talking about a project to address less than 1% of all people affected by a problem you don't need a lot of data to justify it" (25Interview). This person went on to say,

Last year we counted 584 homeless people in Champaign County. Does this project begin to provide housing for 584 people? No. So you talk about 25 here or 30 there, so that's the only data you need because what you're doing is so small compared to the problem that's so big (25Interview).

In the midst of the first counts of homelessness, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the News Gazette diligently reported numbers and their significance. As one 1990 article says, "The need is great and is growing, especially among women and children, according to a Champaign county Regional Planning Commission report. Women and children make up three-fourths of the county's homeless and their numbers are growing at a record pace, the report says" (Bloomer, 1990a, p. A-3). At the same time, local housing and shelter advocates were pinning the high numbers to a lack of affordable housing in the area. One advocate commented that the problem needed to be addressed at its root: a lack of affordable housing in Champaign-Urbana. She said, "We need to make the issue clear — anybody can

become homeless. It's not the individual you have to look at. It's the conditions in the community”

(Pressey, n.d.).

Despite the recognition of need, city council still balked at the idea of spending money on shelter development. One of the factors that made it difficult to pinpoint certain projects or goals for federal funding is the breadth of needs that exist in the community and the shortage of resources. If five different types of housing are needed, the council and/or staff still can choose only one type to fund because of the small amount of funding available overall. As one former city staff member said, “Well we certainly prioritized to the extent that we looked at needs, you know, some needs rose above others. So there was definitely prioritization there, but in terms of picking and choosing among projects, they just weren't there, I mean because of funding, funding was very tight then, I'm sure it is now, so really our role became more of, okay now that we've kind of prioritized the need, what can be done to at least address part of that or begin to address it. So that was really more of our involvement at that point” (31Interview). The breadth of need, then, makes it easier for the city to focus on the priorities about which they feel strongly, since any one project meets such a small portion of the need. One former city councilmember argues,

It's money and values. I mean you can't ignore the money. There's only so much money, and if the city decides we're going to eradicate homelessness in Champaign County and they spent all the money that they could spend on housing dollars on that, other than general funds, but all the CDBG and HOME money, it wouldn't eradicate poverty; it wouldn't eliminate homelessness either. There isn't enough money, that's the problem. But priorities definitely, like with CDBG money--and actually a variety of different council members and people on the staff and whatnot, they're much more interested in improving neighborhoods than in meeting human needs, not that any of them would ever say that (25Interview).

The preference for homeownership was a persistent impediment to creating more affordable rental housing in the community. This preference was also accompanied by misunderstandings about who needed rental units. A housing advocate recalled,

I do remember specific things coming in the conversations at City Council meetings about why do we need to have for-sale housing when there's such a great need for people right now with rental housing, and it's like, well those are students. It's another kind of confusion in the discussion down there, because there's the view that students can afford anything and therefore, and so the prices of rental housing that students live in have nothing to do with what happens around the rest of the community, and it's like, well, no, it's part of a larger market and there's a problem here. Landlords are trying to get anything they can, so they'll jack up the prices, and if they get it from a student they'll keep trying. I think there was sort of a view that the only renters down in Champaign were students" (33Interview).

This housing advocate elaborated on the city's unwillingness to engage in rental assistance, saying that rental assistance came into the national awareness after the 1990 Affordable Housing Act, but the city was reluctant to diverge from their tradition of funding homeownership programs and owner-occupied rehabilitation. Voicing frustration, the advocate said,

We knew the people who were struggling the most were renters, and there was just a basic way to prevent people from losing housing, if you could just give them rent assistance, and it would be relatively inexpensive and go across many families versus the home ownership program or something that would go into the first mortgage kind of stuff and rehab-- it's expensive...If you look at the cost and who benefits from the HOME dollars, which is the biggest source of loose money that has the most opportunity to do a variety of things and be more, and that's what the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS)⁵⁵ was really about, right?...It's supposed to be tailored to what your needs are, and we knew...that less than 2% of the rental units are vacant, which means a very tight rental market...is affecting the people who are working in the community, and so we were like, "If you just give them a little bit of rent assistance they can afford their apartment and then they don't have to worry about losing it." And the city wanted nothing to do with that (33Interview).⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Precursor to the Consolidated Plan; served a similar function

⁵⁶ Here the housing advocate is referring to Champaign only. Recall that Chapter 3 noted the differences between Champaign and Urbana in their approaches to social service spending.

Homelessness in the 2000s

By 2000, service provision agencies had developed a more extensive network of services. The following charts list these services:

Emergency Shelters in Champaign Urbana

A Woman's Place	18 single women and/or with children, domestic violence ⁵⁷	Urbana
Salvation Army Stepping Stone Shelter	14 single men	Champaign
TIMES Center	40 single men	Champaign
Roundhouse	6 homeless teens	Champaign

Table 4: Emergency shelters in Champaign Urbana, 2000. Data from the City of Champaign Consolidated Plan 2000-2004

Transitional Shelters in Champaign Urbana

Center for Women in Transition	32 single women and/or with children	Champaign
Center for Women in Transition	1 scattered site single-family unit, family with children	Champaign
City of Urbana	5 scattered site single-family units, family with children	Urbana
Salvation Army	3 scattered site single-family units, family with children; 20 dorm beds and 8 beds in apartment setting for single men	Champaign
TIMES Center	20 single men	Champaign

Table 5: Transitional shelters in Champaign Urbana, 2000. Data from the City of Champaign Consolidated Plan 2000-2004

In 2000, the Continuum of Care identified gaps in services based on estimated needs versus number of existing beds and found significant gaps for individuals in permanent housing and in housing for chronic substance abusers, persons with dual diagnosis (mental illness and substance abuse), veterans, those with HIV/AIDS, and victims of domestic violence. However, among these large unmet needs, a number of services were not designated as high priority. Those with discrepancies between numbers and priority were permanent housing (158 needed units—medium priority), housing for chronic substance abusers (39 needed units—low priority), dual diagnosis (38 needed units—medium priority), and veterans (39 needed units—medium priority). Although transitional housing had a need for only 24 units, it received a high priority rating. By the early 2000s, federal mandates to end chronic homelessness changed the language of the Consolidated Plan, promoting more specific/targeted

⁵⁷ Also counted under transitional beds

approaches to the defined populations. As in 2000, the Continuum of Care gaps analysis exhibited discrepancies between unmet need and relative priorities, though less so than in 2000. Despite excess inventory of transitional housing, it remained a medium priority. However, housing for chronic substance abusers and dually-diagnosed were both listed as high priority, conceivably because of the federal mandates (City of Champaign, 2005a). Despite the demonstrated need and high priority rating, the community of Champaign-Urbana continues to lack permanent supportive housing for these populations. As of 2012, their focus is on emergency shelter for families.

CHAPTER 4: EXAMINING NORMATIVE BELIEFS

In this chapter, I begin to address the central question of my dissertation: *Under what conditions do conflicting definitions of "home" (and its relationship to housing) diminish the effectiveness of local communities' efforts to build shelter-related services that meet the needs of service recipients?* My purpose in this dissertation is to illuminate and examine the processes by which housing spaces were created, and to examine how well those spaces meet the needs of residents. Within this examination, there are many factors that impact the projects; however, it is not my intention to address all factors in this dissertation, since many of the political and practical factors' impact was on whether or not a project gets built, not what it looks like or whose needs are considered in its development. I will list those factors as an acknowledgement, and I believe that a number of them were important factors in the cases of the two housing proposals that were not developed. These factors are the following: community connections, political will, collaboration between city and developer, personality compatibility, operations management, established legitimacy of developer, coordination of services between agencies, knowledge of precedents, willingness to compromise, power of developer(s), established capacity of developer, adequate outreach efforts, and ability to engage in accepted methods of communication and negotiation with the city. Of these factors, collaboration between city and developer, established legitimacy of developer, operations management, power of developer(s), and political will figured most frequently as impacting the success of a project.

At the inception of this research project, I hypothesized that effectiveness is diminished when normative definitions of home held by powerful interest groups in the community determine the shape of new homeless service projects. Scholars have documented the negative impacts of framing devices,⁵⁸ which rely on normative assumptions rather than facts, arguing that, "Frames held by conflicting parties

⁵⁸ Framing devices are defined as "shortcut devices people use to characterize situations, problems, or adversaries" (Kaufman and Smith, 1999, p.164).

color the content of their perceptions and reduce their need to gather information and examine details. When frames are transferred from one set of circumstances to another, an imperfect match may prompt solutions that do not respond to actual needs and conditions” (Kaufman and Smith, 1999, p.164). The next four chapters address this question in various ways, with this chapter offering an overarching analysis of the role of “home” and “homelessness” assumptions in shaping the development debates. Chapter 3 laid the groundwork, addressing some of the core community needs as they were laid out in planning documents, as well as community values and norms related to governmental role in housing and social services. This chapter addresses a few critical areas of debate where normative beliefs were utilized as justification for support or opposition of shelter developments. I begin with the debates over the purpose of a shelter, in which shelters have been framed either as housing or as social service centers, before moving to a discussion of “home” and “homeless” as framing devices in conceptualizing shelters. I then turn to a discussion of how assumed population characteristics shape stakeholders’ approaches to shelters, particularly in whether stakeholders frame the developments as legitimate/illegitimate. Chapter 5 continues this analysis, focusing on gender as one critical population characteristic.

Purpose of shelters—affordable housing or service centers?

Shelters variously are represented in public discussions as occupying a role of housing and/or social services, revealing their existence to be marked by deep community ambivalence. Fundamentally, what does a shelter do? Who is it for? These questions are not asked of market-based housing. When a subdivision of detached houses is built or an unsubsidized apartment complex, there is little question of who will live there. The assumption is that households with income will live there. But when government-funded housing is built, communities devote high levels of attention to the question of who will live there. There is a loosely-defined notion that shelters are supposed to perform a particular function, but that function is open to interpretation. As one service provider ambiguously stated,

“Appropriate services provided in an appropriate environment are the key” (CSPH member, CCCmeeting112597). Because shelters occupy a variable place in the community, it is difficult for project developers and service providers to focus solely on the needs of the residents. Instead, their spaces and services are complex navigations of resident needs, community needs, normative beliefs about residents (both from service providers and community stakeholders), and normative beliefs that are enforced through federal funding requirements.⁵⁹

Champaign-Urbana community members were distinguishing between housing for homeless people and “affordable housing” by the late 1980s. This separation of housing types developed from the work of researchers and advocates, who were focused on documenting the numbers of homeless individuals.⁶⁰ These efforts were aimed at creating housing for those individuals, since the U.S. lacked facilities to address this population’s needs. However, there was an unintended side effect to this rhetorical split in language, such that any housing associated with homelessness came to be seen as a social service, not as housing. Champaign-Urbana-based advocates also perpetuated this distinction. One outspoken advocate argued, “Most of these people do not know, or they do not profess to understand that one of the greatest crises facing the people of Champaign is affordable housing and housing for the homeless” (CCCmeeting121697). This boundary is not maintained in all statements. For instance, the director of CWIT is quoted as saying, “Rents are very high in C-U, more so than in the average community. And living in public housing isn’t a good alternative” (Ostrowski, 1991b, p.3). One of the SRO developers also argued that the SRO is a form of housing that cannot be matched on the private market, and supporters frequently labeled it “affordable housing” (e.g., CCCmeeting010996).

⁵⁹ For instance, during the 1990s, the federal government began funding transitional programs instead of emergency shelters, believing these programs to be more effective in ending homelessness. Changes in federal funding force local service providers to change their shelter programs, regardless of local-level knowledge and/or understanding of local needs.

⁶⁰ See, for example, Burt, M.R., and Cohen, B.E. (1989) *America's Homeless: Numbers, Characteristics, and Programs That Serve Them*. Urban Institute Report. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute Press, and Hopper, K., and Hamberg, J. (1984) *The Making of America's Homeless: From Skid Row to New Poor, 1945-1984*. New York: Community Service Society of New York.

The rhetorical pairing suggests that it is necessary to legitimate housing through delegitimizing shelters, which bolsters the idea that shelters are not housing, but rather places where homeless people get services. For example, characterizations of the SRO as affordable housing were usually paired with a comparison to shelters in town, arguing that the SRO would alleviate the need for shelters. An opponent of the SRO development attempted to delegitimize the project by saying, "The Champaign City Council is rightly concerned with affordable housing. But this project will be run by social service agencies and amounts to a form of social service funding. Resources dedicated to affordable housing for the poor should do exactly that, not fund other *programs which might actually work against the expressed purpose of the project* (my emphasis)" (Gibson, 1995). This opponent intimates that housing with supportive services is the antithesis of housing—that it could not serve as affordable housing because it is primarily about providing services. This characterization is a powerful norm that dictates the perception of shelters and other "homeless" living spaces as spaces that are something other than housing.

In one conflict, the disagreement over a shelter's purpose was demonstrated. The News Gazette reported two council members arguing the following:

"The \$75,000 commitment to the shelter is outside the \$100,000 in funding the council has set aside for social services funding yearly. "I feel like we're running headlong into something that's very costly with a lot of dangling ends," Schweighart said. The Women's Emergency Shelter is a good organization run by dedicated people, but that's not the point, he said. "There are many good organizations out there with many needs. Are we going to have to put up \$75,000 every time?" he asked. Mayor Dannel McCollum said later he didn't consider the contribution to the Women's Emergency Shelter in the same category as other social service requests. Mainly, he said, the funding is for a capital need that helps fulfill the goals of the city's federally mandated Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy" (Bloomer, 1993b).

By situating the shelter as housing, the mayor gained legitimacy in his argument that the city could justify spending money on the shelter. Characterized as social services, the shelter would only have access to the 15% set-aside from the federal CDBG funds, which is the only source of revenue that

the City of Champaign has allowed for social services. This argument could be on quite different terms if the city was willing to use general revenue or other sources of funding, but their unwillingness to use anything other than CDBG funds increase the stakes of this argument. In effect, the shelter must be proven to be housing to fulfill its funding request.

We're providing affordable housing

Supporters and developers worked hard to frame the SRO as a solution to the lack of permanent, affordable housing in the community, rather than a treatment center. They referenced the absence of SROs or other forms of subsidized affordable housing for single adults, juxtaposing the SRO as the equivalent of public housing, but for single people without children. As one former city councilmember said, "If you are a man or a woman and you have no children, and you're not a senior citizen, and you don't have disability there's no public housing for you period" (25Interview). Part of the argument in framing it as permanent affordable housing was to juxtapose it against shelters— developers and supporters argued that the SRO development would reduce the need for shelters and welfare dependency. Developers also conducted a special survey to gauge the need for and interest in the SRO among the homeless population. This survey found 97 eligible individuals, with over 70 of them highly interested in the housing (developer, CCCmeeting010996). Combined with general homeless survey numbers, developers could prove that the need far outweighed what they could provide, which framed the development as that much more important. Interestingly, despite the developer's goals of providing permanent affordable housing for people with mental illness or dual diagnoses of mental illness and substance abuse (31Interview), the development was not framed publicly as a treatment center. In fact, developers went to great lengths to frame the SRO variously as apartments, permanent affordable housing, and even "homes."

In making the argument that the SRO would serve as affordable housing, the developers skirted a fine line with the City of Champaign, where they wanted to define the SRO as an apartment complex but also reassure the city that it would not become a place for people to stay forever. The City had hesitated to consider funding the SRO because they had concerns that, as permanent housing, the SRO would become a “flophouse” (city councilmember, CCCmeeting040495). In fact, one news article began, “Single-room occupancy hotels. It's the bureaucratized name for what they used to call flophouses” (Bloomer, 1995, p. A-1). City councilmembers were much more comfortable with considering the SRO as a transitional space, meaning that people would have to leave after a certain period of time. Developers argued that a permanent housing complex would serve a need for affordable housing and not for bums, but they also nuanced their language to indicate that people would not stay for long periods of time. As one developer described it, “We lied a little bit, yes. They said, “Well this has got to be transitional housing.” Well, and we knew it’s going to be permanent housing, but we said, “Do your best to make it transitional,” but we knew it was going to be that they could stay as long as they were behaving themselves” (19Interview).⁶¹

We're providing social services

In other instances, shelters had to prove themselves as social services rather than housing, particularly in the case of the move from Men’s Emergency Shelter to TIMES Center. Opponents of the Men’s Emergency Shelter took issue with its lack of rules and preconditions for housing residents. City council members expressed these views, saying,

⁶¹ The need to “lie” about the role of the SRO exposes the fallacy of “moving out of poverty,” a popular notion among policymakers. Particularly regarding homelessness, the idea of moving out of poverty assumes a persistent upward movement of residents through shelters to transitional centers to permanent supportive housing or just permanent housing. In the case of Champaign-Urbana, the continuum is stymied by the presence of very few permanent supportive housing beds, with a prevalence of transitional center beds. The idea that people would enter Homestead Apartments and move out when they “got on their feet” is false because it assumes that people regularly and consistently move out of poverty. The case is more so that people stay in poverty but improve their living situations when provided with subsidies for their housing, not that the subsidized housing itself acts as a catalyst to propel individuals out of poverty.

Council member Jerry Schweighart said he has been opposed to the heavy use of city dollars for emergency shelters because of their lack of rules. He still has questions but is comforted somewhat by the shelter's recent addition of a transitional component and more strict guidelines for emergency guests. (Loury, 1997c, p.A-3)

I have a comment, and this is just a little philosophical. We've been trying so many things and for 15 years we've been running an emergency shelter, and I don't think the emphasis on transition is all that bad. I think we have to make an effort because we haven't succeeded otherwise. We've just been housing people. I just don't think I want to continue to do that, and I know the emphasis that you're making on the transitional part of it and I know that's sort of what we want. (CCCmeeting022399)

Service providers and project developers worked to prove themselves as social services as a point of legitimacy, as the following statements evidence. While service providers are not required to produce numbers that demonstrate their effectiveness, their public statements reflect the tacit assumption that increasing requirements and services, ambiguously defined, will improve the effectiveness of getting people off the streets. Supporters and developers regularly referenced community needs, framing the TIMES Center as a solution to getting panhandlers, public drunks, and other "nuisances" off the streets of the community.⁶² Beyond the basic need to get people off the streets each night (and day), developers pushed the idea of transitioning back into society, a need that was met with enthusiasm from city councilmembers. One city councilmember expressed the belief, "If we don't have really good graduation of facilities, the burden will accumulate. We at least need to have the opportunities to advance people forward and return as many of them to productive spaces in society as we can" (CCCmeeting112597). The TIMES Center was framed as a more effective program than the Men's Emergency Shelter because of its programs, professional staff and rules and regulations. Two service providers made the following remarks in their arguments for funding from the City of Champaign:

There are many service providers who are seeing a lot of people. The difference is in transitional settings you're dealing with people; their issue is to get them off the streets,

⁶² I address this assertion in-depth in Chapter 6, conceptualizing the shelter as a space of containment.

getting them out of the shelter. We are just taking them off the streets, and as Ted mentioned we're just dealing with the symptom. (core service provider, CCCmeeting021197)

The shelter is at this point in time in a pretty significant state of transition. In fact what they determined is that that would displace about 2/3 of the number of people that they had heretofore been serving, so they too have determined that it's time to get a bit more serious with the delivery of the services they have been providing there, so it's just a point of clarification to understand that they are in, at this point, a bit of a transition with that program (core service provider, CCCmeeting060695).

The decision to move TIMES Center to a transitional model was supported by City Council but not the board of the Men's Emergency Shelter. One former board member remarked,

I didn't like some of the choices that were having to be made about the new place. Well, just they were not open to everybody anymore because of the various federal rules. They couldn't be an emergency shelter. They had to be a transition place. You had to agree to be moving on towards solving your various problems in order to be there, and that wasn't what I cared about the most. We were happy to try to give the people help who wanted it, with their alcoholism, or drug addiction, or whatever, and we had some successes...We didn't want that to be a condition for people to be able to stay warm and get food (28Interview).

One of the former Men's Emergency Shelter users also critiqued the transitional focus, saying,

At TIMES, there is a strict adherence to the programming, and it seems much more rule-oriented than MES. There's a willingness to throw people out if they don't play by the rules. At the same time, there seems to be a lack of accountability to show that they're doing any better than MES at getting people out of homelessness. They claim to focus on transitioning but there's no evidence that the programming works any better than the unprogrammed emergency shelter (17Interview).

Is it a home or is it for the homeless?

The distinction between the solution of an affordable home and the stopgap measure of a shelter is another crux upon which community decisions turn. In the case of the Men's Emergency Shelter, TIMES Center and CWIT, the shelters were regarded as non-permanent spaces. The SRO, however, was touted as a solution. Because it represented a solution, as truly affordable housing, conversations operated in the realm of housing, meaning that stakeholders applied their beliefs about

housing and “home” to the project. For the Men’s Emergency Shelter and TIMES Center, they were framed as the lower end of the continuum of housing, serving only to move people on to situations of greater self-sufficiency. As such, stakeholders applied their beliefs about “homelessness,” not “home,” to the projects. This is a crucial point—*depending upon whether notions of home or homelessness are cued in a project, stakeholders will access different sets of assumptions from which they base their arguments and decisions*. Thinking about “home” leads people to focus on the attendant assumptions of what a home provides—namely privacy, safety and security, permanence, comfort and the like. Thinking about “homelessness” leads people to focus on the attendant assumptions about the individual, for instance, mental illness, substance abuse, domestic violence, poverty, unemployment, and others. Focus on personal characteristics versus housing characteristics disguises the ever-present needs of all people for those home-associated qualities of privacy, safety and security, comfort, and the like. CWIT is an exception to this distinction. Even though CWIT is not touted as an affordable housing solution, the presence of women and children cues up thoughts of “home,” not “homelessness” for stakeholders because women and children are tied to “home” in the national consciousness. Single men do not cue this association with “home,” leaving the predominant thoughts of “homelessness” to dictate the terms of the decision-making.⁶³

Home/homeless framing impacts how needs are described as well. Concrete needs statements have justified each project. As the project developer for Homestead Apartments said, "It's not like we started this whole thing. Surveys of the two cities have said for a long time that this was a top priority, so we decided to step in and do it" (“Multiagency”, 1997, B-1). Each project proposal was accompanied by a litany of justifications, but the justifications differed across projects, suggesting that different populations and housing types cue different norms for community stakeholders. The following sections

⁶³Again, see Chapter 5 on gendered norms for an extended discussion. Also see critical geographer April Veness’s (1992) work on the associations between certain groups of people and home.

on size and structure detail some of the concerns that were raised in the different projects. These concerns serve as illustrations of the ways in which “home” and “homeless” act as cues for the sorts of issues that are important in the different project developments.

We’re providing space for the homeless

The terms of conversation across projects reveal an approach to the men’s shelters as provisions of bare life, not home, so most of the needs statements are about providing enough spaces for the bodies, so that men were not sleeping outside in the cold—capacity was the central and prevailing issue. For instance, in the transition from Men’s Emergency Shelter to TIMES Center, the most frequently expressed need was to increase the capacity of the shelter to hold more people and provide more space per person. Supporters cited surveys of homeless persons to prove that the need was there, and they also were able to use the overfilled emergency shelter as an indication that need existed. There was concern that the TIMES Center would be too small and not meet the need, or in the case of Men’s Emergency Shelter, that changes to the interior made it nicer but decreased the capacity. For instance, in the final plans for the TIMES Center, the center was only designed to hold 60 people, which was the capacity of the emergency shelter. One opposing city councilmember asked, “But if we already got 60 in the emergency shelter, and they’re only building 40, doing like they did with the old county jail, you’re building under size already, so we’re already out of space” (CCCmeeting112597). In the case of the men’s shelters, I believe that the community’s approach to size as “larger is better” is tied into Feldman’s notion of shelters as maintaining bare life and little else.

To illustrate the contrast between framings, for Homestead Apartments, the developers worked hard to represent the future population of residents as people who would be able to live semi-independently, maintain employment, and live productive lives. They juxtaposed the SRO with shelters, both in structure and in population. Just two years after the SRO was completed, the same developer,

Mental Health Center, proposed the TIMES Center, and one of their major arguments was that the Men’s Emergency Shelter was over capacity, so they needed more spaces. In this argument, the distinction between housing and shelters is clear—housing must meet certain standards like privacy, physical upkeep, and security/safety, and size is an impediment to meeting those standards. In the case of shelters, though, those standards are not expected. Instead, shelters are expected to provide a place for someone to physically lay their body down for a specified period of time. One TIMES Center supporter said, “This is not the ideal solution. The ideal solution will be the day when we can close the shelters and not warehouse the men in our community who are without a home but rather have homes that are permanent...but it’s necessary” (CCCmeeting121697). Given this implicit understanding of shelters, size is only a problem when there aren’t enough spots for bodies to lie down.

We’re providing homes for people

The issue of size also played an intriguing role in defining ‘home’ and ‘unhome’ for the SRO. Issues of size were debated both for overall size of the structure and for interior spaces. The SRO units were considered permanent housing, and because of this, community members argued that the units should be larger.⁶⁴ As one former city councilmember recalled,

People were saying, “this isn’t fair to people. They should have no housing because you’re just warehousing them in these 215 square foot rooms.” Just how big...these are efficiency apartments, they’re just efficiency apartments, how big do you think an efficiency apartment is? You might live in a 3,000 square foot home but how big do you think an efficiency apartment is for 1 person, say for 1 graduate student. A graduate student who lives in an efficiency apartment, how big do you think it is? 215 square feet is the size of the efficiency apartment, that’s why they proposed 215 square feet here, ‘cause that’s how big they are. Would you like a bigger one? Yeah, no kidding. (25Interview)

⁶⁴ ‘Home’ and ‘homeless’ designations played a part in designing the internal living spaces as well, a point that I address extensively in Chapter 8. I point out one distinction here as a prelude to Chapter 8’s discussion.

Overall size of the complex was also important. During the development of the SRO, neighbors made repeated claims that the project developers were “warehousing the poor,” arguing that the developers should be constructing smaller complexes of no more than 10-12 units. Given the SRO’s proposed size of 35 units, their argument is illogical when compared to other apartment complexes in the community, which are frequently built in excess of 35 units. When viewed as a space of service provision, the issue of size makes more sense—group homes in the community contained eight units on average. Opponents used these group homes as examples of appropriately sized complexes, as evidenced by a letter to the editor that stated, “Although the proposed Champaign Single Room Occupancy (SRO) is promoted as affordable housing for the poor, it’s actually a 35-unit group home and multi-use shelter” (Gibson, 1995). Developers fought back, arguing that size issues in other cities occurred in SROs that contained over 100 units, and that this complex would be an apartment complex like any other in the community. As one project developer argued, ““Since we’re not doing a treatment program — we’re doing a housing program — it’s going be hard to enforce” (Loury, 1996).

Deserving/undeserving⁶⁵

Deliberation over people’s deservedness has much to do with their perceived characteristics. As Hodgetts et al state, “In general, public deliberations carry a polarizing tendency where homeless people are often constructed as strange and unlike us or as people just like us who have suffered misfortune” (2011, p.1742). Within each period of development, differences in the terms of debate across the projects suggest that each project occupied a relative spot in the community consciousness along a spectrum of ‘home’ to ‘unhome.’⁶⁶ These conversations were marked by an attention to who will be served by a shelter/housing development, as well as the defining characteristics of those individuals.

⁶⁵ See chapter on gendered norms for an extended discussion of deserving/undeserving.

⁶⁶ Note that these descriptions are not evaluations of the shelters themselves but are meant only to reflect dominant community discourses about the shelters. In Chapters 7 and 8, I evaluate shelter spaces in terms of “home” needs advanced by residents.

One housing advocate remarked, “I think there was the typical kind of view of who is worthy of public dollars being spent on them, and I think that’s why, that sort of really focused on the SRO aspect” (33Interview). The housing advocate could not pinpoint specifics, saying, “Maybe it’s more a way to say that implicitly it was coming through government, in the sense that particularly when the whole Springer Building incident as well as the CHAS...it was sort of like okay, you’re not going to say it directly because people don’t say, “We don’t like poor people, and we don’t want homeless,” but they will say it indirectly and through what they will support. So if you read what they will support as something that is evidence of what they may not support which is probably conspiratorial sounding, but...” (33Interview).

Determination of population characteristics garnered the most attention and was the source of most heated debates across the projects.⁶⁷ One long-time service provider summed up the importance of the perception of the homeless for developments, saying,

Well the whole thing...I think sometimes it’s the attitude of the community that makes a difference as to what becomes available. I think people see it as basically people are bums and not being able to do anything to better themselves versus seeing homelessness as individual stories that run really a wide gamut from what I’ve seen, there are a few people who just don’t want to do anything, that’s kind of living on the edge, not doing much of anything, not doing anything to improve their situation, to a situation where people have very limited resources, have insufficient jobs or insufficient skills to hold down any jobs sufficient to pay for housing. Then you got the whole issue of mental illness and substance abuse (20Interview).

Determinations of deserving/undeserving primarily were made based on three major perceptions of future residents: 1) degree of productivity/laziness, 2) presence of SA/MI disabilities and 3) troublemaking and/or criminal behaviors. Each of these measures of deservedness has deep historical roots, dating back to pauper laws in England and Puritan settlement policies in the U.S., and stretching throughout the entirety of U.S. history (DePastino, 2003; Hopper, 2003; Kusmer, 2002; Vale, 2000). Long-term discussions of poor people—variously labeled slum dwellers, the “underclass,”

⁶⁷ I address several population-related issues in this chapter but address gendered norms in a separate chapter because it is such a critical norm for these projects, necessitating a fuller theoretical and empirical treatment.

tramps, bums, welfare queens, and the like—have been dominated by attention to the personal characteristics of the poor, often with assertions of the culpability of the poor (Caton, 1990; Gans, 1995; Hopper, 2003). Discussions surrounding the shelter developments were consistent with these national trends, seeking to determine the extent to which future residents would embody deserving or undeserving characteristics.

Presence of substance abuse / mental illness disabilities

Homeless housing and services place great emphasis on substance abuse and mental illness. In general, service providers are committed to helping homeless individuals “fix” their disabilities, without accounting for other critical barriers to permanent housing. For them, their focus on SA/MI may be due to a phenomenon that Hoch and Slayton document,

The classification of the homeless according to a hierarchy of needs tends to emphasize...only those vulnerabilities that caretakers are equipped to remedy. For instance, although most homeless people are unemployed, caretakers rarely treat this condition as a vulnerability by which to prioritize care, despite the fact that a lack of adequate earnings contributes profoundly to the social dependence of the homeless and their inability to rent a dwelling. Caretakers focus on physical handicaps, mental illness, inadequate education, or lack of training as the sorts of vulnerabilities they can help correct... (1989, p.225).

The debates surrounding the SRO development focused on defining the population who would reside in the SROs, particularly the question of whether residents would be productive, working poor people or lazy people with substance abuse/mental illness (SA/MI) issues. The dichotomy is striking—opponents and supporters alike created two distinct categories of people, belying the reality that working people can also have SA/MI issues. A supporter stated, this will not just be another house for people with disabilities, I mean we do have facilities that address this issue” (CCCmeeting041195). Stacey Murphy highlights the ambiguous nature of housing that has supportive services offered, saying,

Despite the fact that they are enrolled in [a program] where eligibility is determined primarily by income level and housing status, the designation of [program] beds as “supportive housing”

automatically inscribes the residents with a set of other special needs or characteristics—mental illness, substance abuse, etc—that justify a set of management interventions that would not likely be tolerated in other private housing arrangements...That the hotel managers feel authorized in some of these interventions highlights the ambiguous status of the residents: their association with [a program] inscribes them as “clients” rather than tenants. (Murphy, 2009, p.316-7)

Opponents created very rigid categories between these two “populations.” An opposing city councilmember asked, “Do the people that go into this facility have to have mental health problems, drug problems, alcohol problems, or can just some poor individual who is down on his luck get in there?” (CCCmeeting041195). One opponent summed up his frustrations, saying, “The people who are supposed to be helped by this...I’m quite uncertain of. First of all, they either need structured kind of housing which includes psychological care, some kind of guidance or they don’t. And if you say, wait a minute we’ve got a problem here because these people are going to be living in a neighborhood in a high density building 25 units, and they might be a threat to a neighborhood, oh no, no, no, that’s not a problem, these are people who just need affordable housing. Whoops, okay, it’s a different picture now entirely” (CCCmeeting010996). For many, the presence of SA/MI in an individual negates other personal characteristics, as well as the perceived ability to work or take care of themselves. In their navigation of issues of size and length of stay, SRO developers worked to distance themselves from negative associations with shelters, particularly these perception that residents are unemployed and substance abusers.

Beyond the dichotomous categories, an even more interesting connection between deservedness and housing types emerges. With the TIMES Center debates, ultimately all stakeholders agreed that SA and MI were problems and that TIMES Center would deal with them. In the case of the SRO, project developers argued that residents would not exhibit SA issues or would have to go through a

treatment program before admittance to the SRO.⁶⁸ In other words, to qualify for a permanent housing unit, individuals had to have *minimized* their disabilities, but to qualify for a space in the TIMES Center, they only had to commit to *working* on their disabilities. From a practical standpoint, this logic is sound—the SRO developers want people to succeed in the SRO, so they develop requirements that will aid in that goal. Particularly given the shortage of subsidized housing in the community, it was important to maximize the potential for success. As one developer said, “It is the intent of the project to make sure that those individuals coming into that project have the most ideal situation for success for independent living” (CCCmeeting010996).

From a standpoint of “home,” the juxtaposition of requirements reveals that the community is only willing to grant a home environment to individuals who have proven themselves as deserving of it. Those who have not earned the privilege of dwelling in a “home” are given a mat on the floor—as Feldman (2004) theorizes, the provision of bare life and nothing more. Framing homeless individuals by their disabilities situates them as clients/consumers of services, denying the possibility that they also can be home-dwelling citizens with equal claims to a safe, secure home environment like the home-dwelling neighbors of these shelters. The policy outcome of this is documented in Chapters 7 and 8, where I demonstrate the socio-spatial impacts of overemphasizing security of homes around the shelter and deemphasizing the “home” space of the shelter itself.

Laziness/productivity

Many of the debates over the SRO development focused on defining the residents’ characteristics along the lines of hard-working or lazy, employed or unemployed, and ability/inability to live independently. Developers worked hard in their public representation of the residents to dispel beliefs that the residents were flawed, lazy, and homeless, despite the condition that residents must be

⁶⁸ The project developers were more silent on the mental health issue, though they did address it in saying that supportive services were offered to anyone who wanted them.

homeless (or formerly homeless) to get an apartment. Supporters promoted future residents as the working poor, people trying to get their lives together and get a job, underemployed but working, and the like. Opponents focused on the SRO's lack of requirements to obtain employment, assumed inability of residents to live on their own due to mental illnesses and/or substance abuse, and the lack of staff to keep residents on task. Safety and security were large concerns for opponents as well, but they never developed the panoply or specificity of fears that were raised with the TIMES Center. Instead, these points of concern bear close similarities to conversations about public housing, where fears and stigmas about poor people are raised. Stigmatization of poor people often focuses on fears that people will develop dependency on the government, that they will take advantage of "the system," and/or that they lack motivation to get a job (Edin and Lein, 1997; Gans, 1995; Vale, 2000). These stigmatized beliefs differ from those associated with "homeless" people, which historian Kenneth Kusmer notes, "Since 1980, the traditional image of the "lazy bum" has been largely supplanted by a stereotype that exaggerates the drug addiction, mental illness, and alleged criminality of the homeless population" (2002, p.246).

One city councilmember notably questioned whether the SRO will "be their home forever, and it will turn into a flophouse?" The association in this statement says quite plainly that permanent residence in an SRO makes it a flophouse. This association makes the assumption that people living in SROs or other forms of cheap, affordable housing are uninterested in improving their lives, which, based on other remarks made by city councilmembers, likely means moving into home ownership.⁶⁹ Perhaps the most disturbing piece of this comment is that those who make their home permanently in an SRO are qualitatively different than people who make their home permanently in other housing situations, like single-family detached homes. As Perin (1977) notes, in the U.S., renters are conceptualized as transient and unattached to the community, so in the case of someone staying for a long period of time,

⁶⁹ See Chapter 3 on local context for a full description of the community's commitment to homeownership

"making it their home," one of the only explanations available is that they are staying because they are lazy and don't want to work harder to get a better place.

Troublemakers and criminals

Attributions of troublemaking and criminality also played a significant role in the delegitimization of proposed developments. TIMES Center, Men's Emergency Shelter and Safe Haven were maligned to the greatest extent in these terms. For instance, in public discussions about the development of the TIMES Center, there were frequent attributions of alcoholism, addiction, mental illness, and criminality, sometimes from the service providers themselves.⁷⁰ In my interactions with TIMES Center residents over the years, many have expressed worries that putting the TIMES Center address on job applications will keep them from getting the job. Despite a lack of empirical evidence linking crime rates to homelessness, multiple stakeholders argued that the presence of housing or shelters for the homeless raise crime in an area. One city councilmember publicly stated that crime reports show the address of the Men's Emergency Shelter frequently, using this statement to argue against the development of the TIMES Center.⁷¹

The content of the statements provides insight into the degree of stigmatization of the men's shelters. Comments about Homestead Apartments tended to provide ambiguous statements of crime rates rising, while comments about Men's Emergency Shelter and TIMES Center tended to be overt statements that the residents were criminals or engaged in criminal behaviors. These shifts in rhetoric suggest that fears of Homestead were more amorphous fears of the crime that is often attributed to concentrations of poverty, while the fears about TIMES Center could be directly linked to the assumed

⁷⁰ For instance, one news article reported the Men's Emergency Shelter's program manager as saying that most people were there because of issues with drugs and alcohol (Livengood, 1998).

⁷¹ Across all statements about homeless individuals as criminals and/or dangerous, over half of the references pertain to residents of Men's Emergency Shelter and TIMES Center. Less than one-quarter pertain to Homestead Apartments, and over one-quarter to Safe Haven. No criminal statements were made about CWIT.

identities of the residents as criminals and/or dangerous.⁷² As one opponent is quoted saying, “Nobody wants the homeless shelter, and the reason is that they don’t want anything to do with that population that you see peeing on the sides of walls, panhandling, drinking in public. If you could have a shelter that was for people who were truly needy, that’s one thing, but this also means a shelter for petty criminals, people who should be in institutions and some who are just plain lazy” (Bloomer, 1997e, p.1).

Public commentary about Safe Haven contained similar statements to those about the TIMES Center but went a step beyond. Safe Haven members, advocates and supporters made frequent public comments that members were hard-working and self-sufficient, and that they were seeking an alternative to shelters. It was publicly known that some members had been banned from the TIMES Center, and assertions that Safe Haven was an alternative were met with suspicion in the community. As one opponent said, “It’s safe to say that the shelter system in this community doesn’t work for people who steal, behave in ways that are threatening to others (frequently while drunk or high), and refuse to look for work” (Curtiss, 2009, comments). Geographer Stacey Murphy theorizes this type of stigmatization of homeless individuals, saying,

Due to the perception that there are supportive services and housing available to all of the city’s homeless who seek them out, these homeless men and women are characterized as non-compliant, “service-resistant” and/or deviant. Unlike the deserving homeless who have dutifully made their way through the service continuum to reside in permanent housing, the homeless on the street, particularly those without obvious mental health diagnoses, are understood by policymakers, law enforcement, and others to be crafting their own circumstances, rejecting opportunities to better their own lives and, in the process, affecting the quality of life of other city residents (Murphy, 2009, p.321).

Many stigmatizing statements were made about the residents in city council meetings and media coverage, promoting the idea that residents were partiers, nuisances, and troublemakers. News media covered the tent community heavily in the first month of its existence, with frequent references

⁷² This assertion bears out under further examination, as Homestead Apartments also figures prominently in the data code “spatial issues--concentration of poverty.”

to neighbors' assertions that the residents get drunk, stay up late, and urinate on their property (e.g. Monson, 2009a, 2009b). One opponent commented, "I work 2 jobs and I feel sorry for people that have bad luck and don't work, but it's not my responsibility either to worry about people there that have criminal activity" (CCCmeeting071409). Another neighbor clearly outlined her divisions between deserving and undeserving, arguing,

They'll tell you they have a curfew but they don't. They were bar-b-q on our parking lot. It's party time all the time. We are serious people. We have been in town forever; we pay our taxes. And I don't think we deserve this kind of, some of them stated at the meeting at the fire station 2 weeks ago or a month ago that they're homeless by choice, this is a lifestyle they want to have, and we people, the police and us, are criminalizing their choice. If you are poor, you don't have a home, and this is what the Catholic Worker House is doing [housing poor people]—that's wonderful, but this is different (CCCmeeting071409).

Safe Haven members and advocates defended the tent community, with frequent assertions of the community's safety, security, respect, dignity, self-sufficiency, self-governance, and absence of drugs and crime. One member said, "Our community is running great. There have been no complications that other service providers haven't seen" (CCCmeeting071409). Yet the stigma of living in the tent community caused many of the residents to avoid the media cameras, seeking to remain unidentified in the frequent news stories about the group. In this case, the attribution of negative population characteristics served to undermine Safe Haven's claims of legitimacy as a self-organized service provider and dignified dwelling place.

Conclusion

Across the projects, community stakeholders used little detail in discussing needs and relied heavily on normative beliefs in debating various points of the shelter developments. Kaufman and Smith argue that, "Frames are believed to precede conscious processing of information for decision making" (1999, p.165). While I am unable to speculate on which phenomenon is the cause, I find the lack of detailed needs conversations and reliance on norms bolster each other, creating an environment

where normative beliefs trump individuals' needs in the considerations taken into account during housing/shelter development. The implication here is that communities need to incorporate thoughts of home and housing as well as population into criteria for shelter development. In other words, the *form* of a development does not need to follow the *function* of it. There is an implicit understanding within service provision that transitional programs and emergency shelters should have spaces that reflect their transitional or emergency nature. I argue that the form of a shelter should follow the needs of home, not the function of the program or the assumptions about the population. Chapters 5 and 6 detail two normative set of assumptions—one about gender and the other about community membership—that figured heavily in discussions, while Chapters 7 and 8 examine the housing/shelter spaces themselves. Chapters 7 and 8 advance an understanding of the impact of normative decision-making on the actual provision of “home” to shelter/housing residents.

CHAPTER 5: GENDERED HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness was considered a masculine condition for the bulk of U.S. history. Histories of transients, bums, and hobos document that these groups were exclusively male (DePastino, 2003; Kusmer, 2003).⁷³ Beginning in the 1980s, numbers of homeless women and children emerged and quickly spiked (Kusmer, 2003). Scholars document the declining real value of means-tested programs like Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), food stamps, and unemployment compensation (DePastino, 2003; Kusmer, 2002). These declines, which began in the 1970s, were coupled with increasingly restrictive eligibility rules for the programs (Kusmer, 2002). In addition, radical cuts to federal housing programs greatly reduced the number of subsidized units available to poor people (DePastino, 2003; “Without”, 2006). Historian Kenneth Kusmer noted, “These developments...were particularly hard on women and children...Between 1982 and 1992 the number of homeless families in New York City alone increased 500 percent” (2002, p.241).⁷⁴ As activists and researchers documented numbers of women and children in shelters in the 1980s, they depicted women and children as the “deserving poor” to legitimate their demands for homeless assistance. In doing so, they solidified gender roles, denying homeless men—particularly those of color—a place in the demand for assistance (DePastino, 2003).

In this chapter, I address gendered issues of homelessness, including pervasive gender norms of men and of women with children, as well as the implications for shelter environments. I examine Center for Women in Transition and TIMES Center as products of these norms and subsequent decision-making. Research on gender and homelessness remains underdeveloped, and work that has been done on

⁷³ These authors also note that hobo culture was often exclusively white as well, but they note that there were many non-white migrant workers despite this cultural exclusion. DePastino documents that by 1980, the “African American ghetto dweller had replaced the elderly white man of skid row as the most visible face of homelessness” (2003, p.258).

⁷⁴ Joanne Passaro offers an important critique to poverty scholars who only examine the stigmatization and social control of women on welfare, arguing that “poor and homeless men are treated far worse by the welfare system than women are...In most states men get no treatment at all” (1996, p.2).

gender issues tends to apply an uncritical lens to the issue, reifying the notion of women and children as helpless victims and excluding men’s issues from the discussion (e.g. Coates, 1990; Gerson, 2006; Seltser and Miller, 1993).⁷⁵ Fran Klodawsky calls for researchers to attend to gendered issues of homelessness, and in the process, to “incorporate both an appreciation for the multidimensional, multiscale nature of the meaning of ‘home’, to recognise that houselessness is not the same as homelessness, and that the latter signals a more existentially complicated set of needs and issues” (2006, p.378). There are a few reasons why this work is so important. First, in some instances, women have been unable to find services because those services so often target homeless men, a situation that demands greater recognition and understanding of women’s homelessness (DeVerteuil, May and von Mahs, 2009). Second, much of the literature on women’s homelessness turns an uncritical eye toward the male experience, but DeVerteuil, May and von Mahs remark that the relationship between homelessness and masculinity is not well understood (2009). Finally, as Klodawsky (2006) rightly points out, attending to men’s and women’s experiences allows for expansion of homelessness, accounting for deficiencies of elements of home beyond just shelter—namely heart, hearth, and roots.⁷⁶ Tomas and Dittmar support this approach, saying that women have historically been disadvantaged economically regardless of their housing status, so “if homelessness were a lack of independent housing, secure employment, and a living wage, then very many women would have to be considered homeless. Defining homelessness as a housing issue exclusively...thus neglects the experience of home for women” (Tomas and Dittmar, 1995, p.494).

Historic roots of gendered “home” and “homeless”

Bowlby, Gregory and McKie define the home as a “social edifice that embodies meanings, values, and attributes that reflect the differing beliefs and experiences of its builders” (1997, p.347). In

⁷⁵ A few studies stand out in their critical application of a feminist lens, including Passaro (1996), Watson and Austerberry (1986), as well as Takahashi, McElroy and Rowe (2002) and Klodawsky (2006).

⁷⁶ I discuss heart, hearth and roots in great detail in Chapter 8.

the U.S., the home has stood as a marker of national identity, class identity, and as I describe in this chapter, gender identity. Critical histories of housing reveal the rigid gender roles to which so many housing reformers have subscribed. Despite the broad understandings of home that exist in scholarly literature and in people's everyday experiences, Dolores Hayden argues that "most American housing is based on federal government policy reflected in Levitt's design of the home as a haven for the white male worker's family" (2002, p.28). Women were expected to lead a traditional life, playing the role of mother, wife and homemaker. Their locus of power was believed to be in their ability to express themselves through cooking and decorating the home (Wright, 1981, p.150). Thus, "the purchase and choice of household furnishings, house design, and leisure and housework equipment is fraught with emotional and gendered significance" (Bowlby, Gregory and McKie, 1997, p.346). They were also moral teachers of their children, again using decorating to instill particular class-based values of "universal" aesthetics in their children.

Reliance on gender norms was a key part of advancing the suburban home ideal during the Progressive Era. Capitalists and unions alike believed in a "family wage," which was meant to discourage women from joining the workforce, keeping wage competition down, while also providing families with more disposable income to consume goods. These assumptions were both based on the fixation of women within the *private* household, acting as consumer and decorator, while men engaged in *public* life (Ahrentzen, 1992; Hayden, 2002). This persistent ideal, Hayden argues, leaves people who do not fit into the mid-nineteenth century family model with few options to secure a space of privacy that is also affordable and located a reasonable distance from their place of employment. Public demands to shelter homeless women and children and lock up or expel homeless men must be couched within this gendered home context. Men are seen as fleeing the domestic sphere and shirking their duties as breadwinners, while women are seen as the victims of male flight, left to toil in the domestic sphere with no breadwinner to support them. As scholars have pointed out, this dichotomy of helpless victim

and willful savage is inherently linked by notions of “home” and domesticity (see DePastino, 2003; Feldman, 2004). “By casting the experience of becoming poor as a tragic loss of home and a disruption of traditional gender roles, stories of homelessness reaffirmed nuclear family and breadwinning ideals and, in so doing, often won the sympathy of an anxious public” (DePastino, 2003, p.251).

Within this gendered home context, homeless men were seen simultaneously as emasculated, failed breadwinners while also hypermasculinized and dangerous (DePastino, 2003). Geographer Jeff Sommers argues that historic public framings of Skid Row “ultimately confirmed the relationship between damaged masculinity and space” (1998, p.291). He theorizes that the homeless skid rower becomes an outcast, “whose presence is indispensable for the construction of those categories of subjectivity from which its abjection is defined because it, in turn, marks the boundary of their identities” (Sommers, 1998, p.289). He becomes, then, no longer a full person but rather an abject body that reminds the domesticated man of what he could become, should he lose or reject his domesticity. “Precisely because it provided a vehicle to police the boundaries of normal masculine conduct, the derelict was an important element in the construction of...domesticity” (Sommers, 1998, p.289). Sommers recounts descriptions of skid row where researchers ignored the presence of families and single women, instead focusing on the moral failings of the single men, claiming that women avoid skid row at all costs, a claim that did not match the reality that many women and families did indeed live on skid row (1998). The difference, and one that I take up in the following section, was the assistance to leave skid row—families and women had access to this assistance, while the pervasive notion of the failed man paradoxically worked to keep men in a position of abject poverty.

These gender norms extended to decisions about shelters as well, with deep historical connections between gender and notions of an acceptable standard of living. Historian Kenneth Kusmer documents programs for transients in the Great Depression, quoting a 1933 National Committee on

Care of Transient and Homeless *Report on Program Standards*, stating, "Mass shelter facilities are not desirable for women. As one social worker later explained, privacy was "essential to a woman," because women had always been protected and were unaccustomed to "the easy give and take with any type of human being which men learn at an early age" (2002, p. 217). This understanding of women and men had direct policy implications, as it was acceptable for men to be in large shelters. Men have always borne the brunt of hostile public attitudes toward the poor. Charitable institutions and public laws were developed in the early 1900s to protect women and children (as the weaker sex), while men were expected to be able to earn a living "regardless of unemployment, accident, or illness" (2002, p.11).

Joanne Passaro argues that this "problem" of homelessness is really a problem of home and the "cultural gender imperatives that are created and reinforced by the ideology of the nuclear family" (1996, p.3). She calls for a focus on understanding "who will *remain* homeless as opposed to who will *become* houseless," including counting who leaves shelters for apartments, rather than who enters shelters (Passaro, 1996, p.3). Connecting realms of policy and practice, Passaro argues, "The status of homelessness merges with gender and racial stereotypes to produce a pattern of discrimination perpetuated by social welfare legislation, the evaluative practices of social service personnel, and the evaluative practices of the rest of us, who daily decide which homeless people deserve our money or our sympathy" (1996, p.29). These practices extend to research as well. Researchers who focus on women and children attempt to account for the effects of shelter life on the mothers and children (e.g. Huttman and Redmond, 1992; Seltser and Miller, 1993). The same focus for single men and women has only begun in recent years, demonstrating the barriers to perceiving single men and women as equally deserving of consideration for their well-being (e.g. Hoffman and Coffey, 2008; Kryda and Compton, 2009; Miller and Keys, 2001).

Local manifestations of the gendered “home”

In Champaign-Urbana, ideas about gender and appropriate home spaces were most clearly demonstrated in two shelter projects: TIMES Center and Center for Women in Transition (CWIT). In the following sections, I detail important differences between the discussions about these projects and the physical implications of those discussions. Both programs are currently run as transitional centers, but both began as emergency shelters. Given their similar backgrounds and trajectories in becoming transitional centers, they offer an ideal set of shelters for comparison, most importantly because both shelters have had the same regulations and requirements from federal funding, so further differences in programmatic and spatial design is a produce of local decision-making, not federal demands.

Deserving/undeserving

Gendered norms of “homelessness” play a significant role in decision-making about who is deserving of housing and services, and these decisions impact what men and women are afforded in their living environments. Homeless men are “failed men,” because they are unable to support themselves, but homeless women, also dependent, “benefit from traditional gender ideologies because their individual failures are not compounded by gender failure—a dependent, needy woman, after all, is no challenge to dominant beliefs” (Passaro, 1996, p.2). Anthropologist Jean Williams also points out the gendered nature of the deserving/undeserving divide, arguing that “understood to be weak, dependent, and appreciative of “our help,” white women with children are most likely to be thought of as victims” (2003, p.100). Locally, decisions about CWIT were rarely marked by debates over the need for additional housing and/or services, while the need for TIMES Center was debated, despite the demonstration of need in homeless counts and in the emergency shelter’s increased numbers. Regarding recommendations to fund the TIMES Center, one city councilmember said, “I would be willing to give that money to families, to people that are truly homeless in this community, but I see us creating

a huge problem, a huge problem by saying let's make it bigger" (CCCmeeting032597). As a CWIT developer said,

When you show them hard core numbers and you back it up and there is, that's what I think, there is humanity amongst people to say, you know, housing is a basic need. Kids need a roof over their heads in order to get to school the next day, and so they're willing to put that behind that, especially for women and kids, it's a much easier sell politically in terms of putting the resources behind it than men. Men had a much harder road to hoe in terms of perception, in terms of, women with kids, it's like it's not always as easy to manage when you're taking care of more than just yourself. When you're a man and you're alone, you should be able to get out there and get a job. (29Interview)

Substance abuse and mental illness

One important gender bias is the assumption that homeless men are mentally ill and/or substance abusers,⁷⁷ an assumption that is much more prevalent than with homeless women. These assumptions are pervasive across stakeholders, though some service providers and supporters refuted them. The TIMES Center's program manager remarked in a local news story, "Drugs and mental disorders are the leading cause for being at the shelter. "I was a pothead for 16 years and that is a friendly reminder of why I'm here," he said. "Those are the type of people I deal with every day." The story went on to report his stance on panhandling: "Your money is going to the dope person or liquor store. I'd rather share a two for two Big Mac with them...These people have hustled for so long, they don't know anything else" (Livengood, 1998, p.1). This program manager was more outspoken than most associated with the emergency shelter. In contrast, most of the emergency shelter's board members took a more holistic approach to describing the causes of homelessness. One characteristic comment came from a board member, who was quoted as saying,

Most of the existing shelters are full. All of the homeless are poor. Some of the homeless are mentally ill. Some of the homeless are addicted to alcohol or other drugs. It is important to remember that the main cause of homelessness is the radical reduction of money invested in

⁷⁷ I use the shortened terms "SA" and "MI" throughout the following section to indicate substance abuse and mental illness.

the housing for the poor by our national government in the last nine years. The federal budget for housing programs for the poor is a quarter of what it was nine years ago (Bloomer, 1990b, p.A-1).

In discussions about CWIT, rhetoric about SA/MI was consistently favorable and understanding. Reviewing all references to substance abuse and mental illness across the projects, I found that references to CWIT residents⁷⁸ were universally characterized by an attention to the struggles of the individual and the barriers/successes in that person's life. Take the following snippets as illustrative examples:

“Ann found herself at the Center during recovery from drug addiction. She had lost a lot but was making strides in turning herself around” (Schmidt, n.d., p.17).

“Trying to stabilize her condition” (Diaz, 1991, p.5)

“has been clean and sober for eight months” (Merli, 1996, p.A-3).

“Many are released from mental institutions in an effort to get them into community help programs” (Pringle, n.d.).

“Other women have mental health issues that make-it difficult for them to work at all. Once the money runs out, these women have difficulty maintaining stability in their medication and treatment, because of a shortage of health care for the indigent” (Krausch, 2005, p.22).

References from other projects reveal different sets of assumptions and different experiences. References to the two men's shelters—Men's Emergency Shelter and TIMES Center—indicate that almost all stakeholders acknowledge that SA/MI are characteristics of the male homeless population. Where they differ is what that reality means for support/opposition to the shelters, i.e. whether or not the community should help individuals with SA/MI. The important point is that consistently, these disabilities are the focus of discussions, making them a basic norm on which decision-making is based. SA/MI are issues that some homeless men face, but public comments suggest that these disabilities are believed to be more pervasive and, in contrast to the women, more characteristic of the person rather than an aspect of their lives with which they struggle. These ways of framing images of the homeless

⁷⁸ A few were matter-of-fact statements that mental illness and substance abuse are some of the reasons why people are homeless. The total number of CWIT-based mental illness/substance abuse references was 9 out of 150 total references across the projects.

support the overall structure from which decisions are made about homeless people. Women's disabilities are downplayed as something that is not their fault, making them a group who deserves help, while men's disabilities are seen as character flaws, making them undeserving of help.

This difference is illustrated in oppositional statements made about CWIT and TIMES Center. Both TIMES Center's and CWIT's neighbors voiced concerns about becoming a "dumping ground" for services, placing the blame on the organization and overall community class segregation.⁷⁹ CWIT neighbors also spoke out against CWIT at one community meeting. One CWIT developer recalled arguments that "they're going to bring our property values down, they're lazy, they're going to bring all this, these issues and these violent men and we're going to have theft and drugs and prostitution and all kinds of stuff in the neighborhood" (29Interview). Yet even within these complaints, neighbors worried about violent men coming to the neighborhood because the women were there. There were certainly neighborhood concerns about the women themselves as well, but after this community meeting, neighbors did not voice opposition. In addition, the City of Champaign was solidly behind the project (29Interview).

Complaints against the TIMES Center were profuse and of a more damaging variety, involving multiple city council meetings, and many of the city council members themselves were undecided about the project, with a few completely against the project. The majority of opponents acknowledged that the TIMES Center was necessary but they rejected the various site proposals, arguing on grounds that the men were variously panhandlers, drunks, crazies, thieves, and more generally that they were dangerous and/or nuisances. Many of the opponents of the TIMES Center development were business owners from downtown Champaign. These business owners had legitimate complaints about people who appeared to be either mentally ill or under the influence—most frequently, their complaints were

⁷⁹ In fact, it is largely the same neighborhood for both shelters. See Chapter 3 for a map of existing homeless housing and services in Champaign-Urbana.

that these people scared away their clients and customers. There is no way to know the frequency with which these events occurred, but based on the specifics of their examples, business owners were speaking from experience. One business owner remarked, “I do have some experience being a block away from the Men’s Emergency Shelter as a commercial enterprise, and I was, on a daily basis, impacted by people on the street who hung around the shelter. I’m not here to tell you that I feared for my life or that I expected to have any serious problems, though we’ve seen here tonight that occasionally there are people who are dangerous who are homeless” (CCCmeeting121697).

Media representations and the power of language

Media coverage of TIMES Center and CWIT shows stark differences in subject matter and framing of residents. Positive media coverage of CWIT has persisted through its years of operation, offering inspiring stories about residents and the center itself. It has been covered by multiple community-run news sources, as well as spreads by the News Gazette. The consistently positive media coverage stands out from coverage of TIMES Center, and indeed from all five of the projects, each of which received a great deal of negative coverage, though some more than others.⁸⁰ TIMES Center has not enjoyed the same amount or positivity of coverage as CWIT. Media coverage is almost all from the period of its development, and coverage of it after development has been at times of programmatic changes or during times when homeless counts are taking place.

CWIT and TIMES Center coverage uses drastically different signifiers for their residents and the shelters themselves. One article painted a rosy picture of CWIT, stating, “They are big, inviting looking houses, with playground equipment in front and people hanging out on the porches. These houses are more than just shelter—these houses represent a place where everyone is treated like the independent

⁸⁰ Safe Haven, like the TIMES Center, received mostly negative news coverage. Men’s Emergency Shelter and Homestead Apartments had both positive and negative news coverage.

people they are, where everyone is expected to make their own choices and where everyone gets at least one second chance” (Krausch, 2005, p.22). The article goes on to say,

Every woman at CWT is given the *opportunity* to stay for up to 2 years; this allows each woman to *benefit from the support systems* that the shelter has to offer and to have the time to take a hard look at the choices and consequences in her life. Two years is also *enough time to accomplish goals* that aid women with long-term self-sufficiency, like getting, a GED, getting enrolled in community college, getting a steady job; filing for bankruptcy, getting treatment for debilitating medical conditions, resolving custody issues and much more” (my emphasis throughout) (2005, p.22).



Figure 1: CWIT's director poses with an adopt-a-room project, showing a pleasant, supported environment.
Photo from Merli, 1996, p.A-3

The language of CWIT articles is quite unlike the language used to describe the TIMES Center. One article cites a council member's opposition to emergency shelters because of their lack of rules, saying that “[the council member] still has questions but is comforted somewhat by the shelter's recent addition of a transitional component and more *strict guidelines for emergency guests*” (my emphasis) (Loury, 1997c, p.A-3). A News Gazette editorial also illustrates the common media framing of TIMES Center residents as problems, remarking,

Whether the *problems* that are caused result from *alcohol or drug abuse, mental illness or something else* is irrelevant. The fact is that there are problems, and *shelter managers will*

have to run a tight ship to keep them under control. That not only serves the best interests of nearby residents who essentially are being *forced to put up with the shelter*, but also the residents and employees of the center itself” (my emphasis throughout) (Dey, 1997, p.A-4).

While both TIMES Center and CWIT were framed as transitional environments, the language choices in CWIT discussions suggested a softer, more forgiving approach to CWIT residents than TIMES residents. Rather than saying that CWIT would “return as many of them to productive spaces in society,” a phrase that was more common in discussions of the TIMES Center, phrases were used like “make some strides toward bettering their lives,” “improve life a lot,” and get the women “back on their feet” (e.g. Loury, 1997c; Pringle, n.d.; Wurth, 2002a, 2002b, 2004). CWIT articles suggest a future for residents, a focus that is noticeably absent from discussions of TIMES residents. One reporter remarked, “These homes provide shelter, support and guidance for homeless women and their families, allowing these women to develop self-sufficiency and to accomplish their own dreams as they transition back into their individual lives” (Ligon, n.d., p.17).

Physical implications of gendered norms

Feldman (2004) suggests that the only piece of “home” that our society is willing to offer is shelter—a material roof over one’s head, and anything beyond that must be earned, but April Veness (1992) emphasizes the importance of identity in these decisions, arguing that if society can rationalize that a person cannot provide for oneself or that the person embodies ideas of “home” more than other groups, then more pieces of “home” are afforded to that person. For instance, if a woman is regarded as more private or requiring more privacy than a man, then she will be granted a more private living arrangement in homeless-designated housing, or what Veness calls “designer shelters.” Hoch and Slayton support this assertion, arguing, “The less vulnerable homeless (e.g., single healthy males) are treated as less deserving and so tend to be channeled to temporary shelters, whereas the more

vulnerable homeless (e.g., single women with children) are treated as more deserving and thus receive admission to the better quality transitional shelters" (1989, p.225).

Men traditionally occupy the public face of the family unit, working for wages outside of the home, while women and children, and possibly elderly family members reside privately inside the home. These gender roles have significant implications for how shelter spaces are viewed for men and women. Fran Klodawsky remarks, "North American society is still somewhat less tolerant of children sleeping on the streets (as opposed to unstable and substandard housing, hidden from view), than it is of single (especially black) men doing so" (2006, p.373). She links this belief to public policy regarding locations of shelters and other types of "homeless" housing. In her study of New York City homeless men and women, Joanne Passaro remarks on these gender differences, arguing,

In order to survive, homeless women have little choice but to be active agents of their own suburbanization, complicit actors in a system that defines their place as home and finds homes for them in the outer boroughs beyond the borders of Manhattan. The struggle over the Manhattan landscape is left largely to men, primarily to black men who are childless or do not live with their children; these men are left without homes in part because they are seen as hypermasculinized and untamed, not belonging within the domesticated confines of home (1996, p.85).

Locational impacts

TIMES Center and CWIT both endured debates and discussions regarding their location in the community. For TIMES Center, a combination of normative beliefs and anecdotal evidence about SA/MI created an atmosphere in which no one in the community wanted homeless men/shelters near them. In focusing only on SA and MI, stakeholders characterized homeless men as people who might need services, but they are not seen as people who need a home environment. The resulting framing, then, is "good people protecting their homes/businesses" versus "drunks/crazies threatening other people's homes/businesses." Take the following comment: "What sets the location at Washington and Market streets apart from others, neighbors say, is the vulnerability of the surrounding environment to the

presence of the homeless” (Bloomer, 1997d, p.A-1). One neighbor remarked, “Ex-convicts, substance abusers, the mentally ill...that's not revitalizing anything” (Bloomer, 1997d, p.A-1). This framing led TIMES developers to defend the project in the same negative terms. As the shelter’s facility director said, “It isn’t (that) we’re just dumping something on this corner and walking away from it” (Loury, 1997f, p.A-1).

In stark contrast to the framing of the TIMES Center as a place for drunks and crazies, CWIT was framed by the city and the media as an asset to the neighborhood. In fact, the first CWIT house garnered the City of Champaign an award from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). When asked why the project won, a HUD representative replied that the project was unique because it involved moving a building "across town to a transient neighborhood, helping to stabilize the area to a degree and helping provide a service where it might be needed most” (Wurth, n.d.). The idea that a shelter could stabilize an area runs counter to most conversations about shelters and certainly to discussions about the TIMES Center. Further, discussions about CWIT development were marked by an attention to neighborhood character. Zoning issues were straightforward—the building was required to be in an area zoned for shelters. Beyond zoning, though, the city spoke about its concerns that the house “fit in with the character of the neighborhood” and not “stick out like a sore thumb,” with a staff member saying, “We want to put it in a residential area where it’s going to complement and be an asset to the area. The outskirts of town in the country would be beautiful” (Thompson, 1987). Early neighborhood opposition aside, other important stakeholders have framed CWIT as an asset and as a temporary home for the women and children who reside there.

Aesthetics of “home”

Gender norms about who deserves homes also impact the physical considerations for the two shelters. For the TIMES Center, there was no public discussion about aesthetics. In contrast, CWIT has

acquired and rehabilitated five more houses since this first house, and each rehabilitation effort has been accompanied by positive news coverage, replete with attractive pictures of the 'home' and its new residents. Their last house received the following commentary from the News Gazette: "Let's just say this isn't a typical homeless shelter." It goes on to describe the building, stating, "The kitchen is outfitted with modern cabinets and sleek black appliances. It opens onto a living room with leather furniture and wood laminate floors. The largest bedroom is a pink-and-white showpiece, complete with canopy, writing desk and wainscoting. Quoting the director, "It's absolutely amazing," Sullivan said Thursday. "It's better than my house" (Wurth, 2008). Throughout all news coverage and documentation of city council meetings, there is little divergence from these samples of rhetoric, and statements by the project developer/service provider, city officials and staff, and project supporters display remarkable similarities.

In the context of CWIT, the meaning of home was filtered through a gendered, class-based lens. Community members' comments, including CWIT supporters, student researchers, city officials, and media representatives, suggest that it was important that CWIT reflected normatively gendered, middle-class living, where women find their place in the private, nicely decorated house. Repeated comments linked the physical appearance of the center's buildings to the organization's legitimacy of "doing good work." An undergraduate student research report revealed the following insight: "The effort which was made to make this new building into a home reflects how your organization views its clients. It is extremely client-centered. Comfortable pieces of furniture and home-like decorations convey messages of acceptance, belonging, and respect to clients. This is often lacking in other shelters" (Power, 1996). Another report stated, "There are no outside signs to indicate the house on Church Street is anything other than a home. Entering CWT you step into a front hall, not a reception room. There are pictures on the walls and comfortable couches and chairs in the living room" (Henry, 1996).

Gendered living spaces

Center for Women in Transition's living spaces are clearly demarcated into private bedrooms for



Figure 2: Private bedroom door. Women have the choice of retreating to their rooms at CWIT. Photo by author

women with children, though less so for single women, who live in large bedrooms set up in a dormitory-style. These differences are certainly pragmatic, as with the TIMES Center's goal of fitting as many people as possible, but they also raise the question of who has a valid claim on privacy. Single women do not embody "home" as much as women with children, and their needs of privacy are subsequently not recognized in the

same way. Thus, even within the gendered spaces of CWIT, further gender distinctions are made between those with and without children.

Even with private rooms for women and children, one resident describes her parents' reaction upon first seeing CWIT as "shocked at the lack of privacy" (Bernard, 1991b, p.4). This gendered belief that women need privacy has been perpetuated by volunteers. One news article recounted a volunteer's choices for her adopt-a-room design as the following: "She was adamant, for instance, about the curtained canopy bed. Women at the shelter are under a great deal of stress from divorce, domestic violence, a lost job, a new baby -- or sometimes all four," quoting her further as saying, "I just really felt strongly that she [the resident] needed a place to close and be her own. If she needs a good cry, she can do it privately. If the kids are sleeping, she can close it and have her own space" (Wurth, 2006, p.A-3). While these privacy considerations are commendable in terms of creating a haven, it is noteworthy that CWIT is the only project in which the language of "haven" is used. Homestead Apartments developers certainly talk about privacy but more in terms of realities of resident control over their environment. This notion of home as haven is a gendered idealization, and one that scholars like Sherry Ahrentzen (1992) have proven to be false. Environmental psychologist Jeanne Moore states, "Home has also been

represented as a place full of obligations and prison” (2000, p.209). She quotes George Bernard Shaw’s critiques of the home, recounting, “Home is the girl's prison and the woman's workhouse...The great advantage of a hotel is that it's a refuge from home life” (in Moore, 2000, p.209).

The TIMES Center’s living spaces demonstrate the lack of attention to men’s “home” needs. At the time of development, the most frequently cited justifications for the new shelter were space (needed more) and storage for residents (needed more than 2x2 lockers). Volunteers and service providers argued, “We’re having 65 and 75 people a night in a facility that fits about 30 to 35 people. We have 2 toilets and 2 showers for this many people,” and “We have twice as many people in that space as can really fit in there and as is safe and as is appropriate” (CCCmeeting021197). Yet in the design of the TIMES Center, men no longer had cots—they were given mats on the floor with the same amount of space between them, with lockers of similar size to those at the emergency shelter. Design priorities did not focus on privacy; instead, public discussion and developers’ plans continued to be dominated by the pragmatic goal of fitting as many people as possible into a single space. As one of the developers noted, “It wasn’t very private, but you can’t expect that if you’re sleeping for the night, sleeping on a mat on a floor some place, that’s what we were basing that on, mat on a floor in an open area for the emergency section” (27Interview) . The idea that shelters are just open spaces with mats or cots is pervasive. When asked what he would put in a room if he had one at the shelter, one resident replied, “Hmm I never really thought of a shelter with your own room, but certainly lighting. Nice lamp of some kind, a dresser to put clothes away in, a little closet they wouldn’t have to be large but some way of dividing the space a bit, a chair to sit in, a bed” (TIMES Interview).



Figure 3: TIMES Center locker and sleeping area. Photo by author



Figure 4: CWIT private bedroom. Photo by author

Dictating appropriate “home” behaviors

Gender issues do not only display themselves in the contrasts between TIMES Center and CWIT. Feminist scholars also examine the women’s shelter itself as a site for reinforcement of gender norms. Veness (1994) argues that “designer” shelters try to further “appropriate” behaviors in a home, using methods like parenting classes to encourage dominant ideas of motherhood. Jean Williams theorizes, “The homeless shelter as institution relies upon constant observation and recording of resident actions, as well as their social and sexual histories, as techniques of power that allow staff to “know” homeless shelter residents and to measure and judge them” (1996, p.80). One news article reports the

perspective of a former CWIT resident, saying, “Lewis has complaints about the shelter now— possessions disappearing, the lack of privacy, the difficulty of disciplining a child when staff members and other mothers interfere” (Bernard, 1991b, p.4). The resident was quoted as saying, “There was staff aged 20, 22. Here they are telling us how to raise our kids, and they ain't never had no kids or nothing” (Bernard, 1991b, p.4). Further, CWIT has typically been staffed by white, middle-class women. As the face of CWIT for so many years, their long-time director was an energetic, well-spoken, highly educated, middle-class white woman as well. Once the director position changed, the face of CWIT became a well-spoken, highly educated, middle-class white man. In a mid-1990s evaluation of CWIT, Power (1996) commented on this, saying that seventy percent of the residents are African American, while all staff members she met were Caucasian. Power suggests developing staff demographics that more closely reflect the culture of the residents.

The pleasant environment and support of CWIT also disguise the reality that women are not permitted to have intimate relations at the center, limiting the activities that can take place in the “privacy” of one’s “home.” The current program manager wrote of CWIT’s policy, “Residents can have visitors in common areas only, not in private bedrooms” (K. Sissors, personal communication, 02/21/12). Joanne Passaro recounts a protest that women shelter residents staged against rules that barred male visitors. In this protest, they argued “we’re not just mothers, we’re women” (p.61). Passaro argues, “Protectionism has a price” (p.62). Williams further elaborates, saying, “The lack of private space in which to entertain [visitors]...suggests that homeless people do not need privacy, self-expression, friendships, and sexual relations, or at least that these needs should not be taken seriously” (1996, p.85).

Addressing gender issues for women *and* men

When I taught a course on homelessness at University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, I took my students on tours of TIMES Center and CWIT. I still remember the first group's responses to the shelters. We toured TIMES Center first, and upon leaving the center, students remarked that it was nicer than they had expected. They toured CWIT next, and as they moved through that space, I saw the confusion on their faces. Afterwards, they expressed surprise that CWIT seemed just like a home and said that they would have had a different impression of the TIMES Center if they had seen CWIT first. What they struggled with is that the TIMES Center looks like what we expect a shelter to look like—not a home, but just a temporary space. Even with the minimalistic living conditions, TIMES Center developers faced criticism for the “nice digs” they were providing. One opponent called the TIMES Center the “Club Med for the homeless” (36Interview). The spaces of CWIT, on the other hand, are designed like “home,” in a very traditional sense of the word. Women and children occupy rooms inside large, nicely decorated houses. They cook their own meals, play with their children in the playrooms, and largely dictate their own schedules.

Women have benefited from communities' reliance on gender norms, as Passaro (1996) and Williams (2003) have pointed out. Yet there are also drawbacks to one's identity being so firmly tied to “home.” One is the unequal treatment of single women, and another is the association of one's identity as belonging in the home, when women may not feel the same attachment to home that others assume they should have. Williams documents women resisting the constructions of “dependent poor,” which argue that the homeless can only be “helped” by social service agencies, by self-consciously taking from shelters (when available) the kind of help they feel they need while refusing to participate in the story that the shelter is “helping them to fit back into the mainstream” (1996, p.104). In doing so, women strive to take control of their identities and separate them from the dominant notions of “women in the home.”

Men have been stigmatized and maligned through communities' reliance on gender norms. They occupy spaces that fail to meet "home" needs, most importantly privacy and dignity. As "failed men," they often are not provided with living spaces but rather treated to punitive police actions. When they are given living spaces, as with the TIMES Center, those surroundings reinforce on a daily basis their status as failed men. Communities must recognize that regardless of gender, human beings have basic needs that are met by a home, and judgments of blame/blamelessness do not change that reality. Further, the notion that men should be breadwinners for a household belies structural issues of shrinking jobs, rising unemployment, and other national problems that impact individuals' ability to be economically independent.

Finally, given that our reliance on the nuclear family ideal perpetuates many of these gendered assumptions, we must reevaluate the dominant dwelling practice of "one nuclear family unit per house" as a way to subvert this norm to better fit our dwelling experiences. Housing scholar Karen Frank argues that this practice is not the most fitting for U.S. households, critiquing the model as "envisaged, designed, built and regulated only for the times when all family members are healthy and able-bodied, for the times when they are happy and get along well with each other, and when the household can afford to pay all housing costs from income earned *elsewhere*" (1994, p.228). She advocates for different floor plans to accommodate more situations than a single nuclear family, including floor plans for two family apartments, efficiency units that connect to larger apartments, apartments for multiple unrelated people—each floor plan emphasizes providing as much independence and privacy as possible to each resident. These elements are privileged over gathering and sharing. Other floor plans accommodate child care and work. As housing scholar Sherry Ahrentzen (1992) points out, for many women, the home is a workplace, belying the normative distinction between public—work and private—home. She also looks at housing plus service spaces, advocating for permanent housing that mimics some of the elements of transitional housing, namely sharing of kitchen responsibilities, and

other more interdependent forms of dwelling. Frank quotes Arlene Skolnick as warning, "Rather than yearning for an elusive perfected family, we would be wiser to consider new social arrangements that fit the kinds of family we now have and the kinds of lives we now lead" (in Frank, 1994, p.245).

CHAPTER 6: COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP AND URBAN CITIZENSHIP

The ways we choose to view poor people and their place in the community have implications for the ways in which policymakers and the broader community interact with, allocate resources for, and otherwise treat these individuals. Political theorist Kathleen Arnold comments that the poor often come to “embody all of society’s pathologies: alcoholism, drug addiction, poor mothering, abuse, violence and squalor” (2004, p.52). Yet within any community, stakeholders choose to represent the poor in various ways, including casting them as objects of scorn, pity, charity, empathy, or otherwise. Critical geographer Steve Herbert asks, “Do we frame often marginalized groups as fellow humans for whom we feel a sense of kinship and responsibility? Or do we see them as potential dangers who deserve close surveillance and potential ostracism?” (2011, p.257). These particularities of communities’ representations of homeless individuals have implications for their policies. In other words, if homeless individuals are represented as criminals, particular solutions follow from that. If they are represented as helpless victims, quite different policies emerge. Within these local policies, persistent national ideas about homelessness powerfully shape—indeed, they persuade about how communities respond and ought to respond to people who find themselves unhoused. These ideas stem from our national ideas about the links between “home” and family and fears of deviance from that norm.

In this chapter, I argue that certain “tropes” about homelessness play a key role in shaping overall community response with predictable connections between dominant public discourses and local policymaking. Beliefs in the connections between poverty, disease/contagion, degenerate behavior, laziness, alcoholism and homelessness have persisted in the national consciousness since at least the mid-nineteenth century and continue to figure prominently in national discussions about homelessness (DePastino, 2003). Examining the ways these beliefs develop and influence local planning and policymaking reveals a great deal about why our communities look as they do. In this chapter, I examine how ideas about homeless individuals, imagined as members of the community, impact

stakeholders' support for housing for these individuals, as well as their framing of that housing's purpose. I clarify the opportunities for citizenship that are available (or not available) to unhoused community members, based on the various representations of their place in the community.⁸¹

Ideas about whether or not homeless individuals belong in the community vary. Some residents believe they are outsiders, while others view them as equal members of the community, where membership means inclusion in the imagined community and in actual decision-making processes. To link these perceptions to decisions about actual living spaces for homeless individuals, I employ two concepts with which I evaluate these perceptions and their policy implications: the right to the city (or 'urban citizenship') and the right to housing. I use the term "urban citizenship" to refer to a particular type of citizenship—one that has been advanced by critical geography scholars and activists as a "right to the city." Henri Lefebvre first coined this well-known phrase, conceptualizing it as the right to claim a presence in the city and to democratize its spaces. Since then, many have used his writings to further articulate the meaning of a right to the city. In short, Lefebvre created the foundation for the notion that people residing in a city have the right to participate in planning and shaping the city. Drawing from Lefebvre, political theorist Marc Purcell (2003) advances the notion that inhabitation in the city is justification for political membership as well, basing his argument on the "universality of human existence" and human rights, rather than nation-based citizenship rights. As a concept and political strategy, the notion of the right to the city asserts that inhabitants have 2 rights: 1) to appropriate urban space,⁸² and 2) to participate centrally in the production of urban space. The right to appropriate space, simply put, is the right to use spaces in ways that support daily living needs, which may run counter to the officially designated uses of the space. In terms of street homelessness, a common appropriation of

⁸¹ My framework answers the call from DeVerteuil, May and von Mahs (2009) to address municipal approaches beyond punitive actions. Johnsen, Cloke and May (2005) rely on a similar categorization of approaches as those I advance in this chapter; however, my framework is more comprehensive and places approaches on a continuum of citizenship implications.

⁸² I use appropriate as a verb, not the more common adjective form. "Appropriate" (v.) means to seize for oneself (see www.thefreedictionary.com)

space involves using parks and other public spaces as a sleeping/living area, in contrast to the prescribed uses, meant for the ‘public’ (read: desired public).

While this idea of the right to the city can seem abstract, once it is mobilized into concrete demands, its usefulness becomes clearer. In New York City, a Right to the City collaboration has spread to most of the major metropolitan areas in the U.S. Their website states, “Right to the City (RTTC) emerged in 2007 as a unified response to gentrification and a call to halt the displacement of low-income people, LGBTQ, and youths of color from their historic urban neighborhoods. We are a national alliance of racial, economic and environmental justice organizations.” Their 2009 Policy Platform includes concrete demands:

Right to federal stimulus funds (low-income communities of color play a central role in determining allocation and monitoring of funds)

Right to community decision-making power, including:

- *Expand voting rights to 16 and over*
- *Lift felony restrictions on voting*
- *Community boards*
- *Participatory budgeting*

Right to quality, low-income housing (including passing different legislation, halting evictions and foreclosures, and funding new low-income developments)

Right to public space (max Quality of Life fines, removal of some Quality of Life citations)

These demands create the outline for the group’s platform which is based on the premise of egalitarian rights to the city. Critical geographer Andy Merrifield (1997) argues that exclusion from active political participation in city affairs results in a focus on distributional issues as the only ones that remain for communities and groups to organize around.⁸³ But as the demands indicate, real rights

⁸³ “Distribution” refers to any provisions of money and resources that are not earned strictly through one’s wages. Common redistributions to the poor include welfare benefits, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP—more commonly referred to as “food stamps”). Recognition, on the other hand, refers to cultural and political representation of previously un- or underrepresented groups.

include provision of resources (redistribution) as well as active participation in how those resources are allocated and removal of barriers to equal rights (recognition).

While much of the discussion of urban citizenship focuses on grassroots action by marginalized groups, I employ the concept to interrogate the ways in which housed members of the community frame homeless individuals—as community members with rights to participate, as outsiders with no rights, or somewhere in between. I argue that these frames shape the policies that impact these individuals' lives, particularly the spaces they are legally allowed to occupy in the community. Additionally, the degree to which homeless individuals are framed as citizens of the community impacts the degree to which they have real access to decision-making processes. In this case, I am concerned with the degree of their access to decision-making about the spaces in which they live—shelters and other designated “homeless” housing.⁸⁴

A right to housing comprises the other piece of my evaluative framework. The United Nations recognizes a right to housing as a critical part of the right to an adequate standard of living—in other words, it is a basic human right. A 2011 report on the state of U.S. housing documented, “According to international standards, the human right to housing consists of seven elements: security of tenure; availability of services; materials and infrastructure; affordability; accessibility; habitability; location; and cultural adequacy” (“Simply”, 2011, p.7). A right to housing can be compared to any other rights in a social welfare state, such as Canada’s right to healthcare. In the U.S., housing is largely seen as a market commodity, yet government programs like public housing and Housing Choice (Section 8) voucher programs suggest government understanding that the market cannot provide for all. The notion of a right to housing goes against the U.S. conceptualization of housing as something to be earned through hard work, self-reliance, and “bootstrapping” (e.g. see Vale, 2000). Instead, a right to housing embraces

⁸⁴ “Homeless” housing indicates any housing where a criterion of living there is being formerly homeless. For instance, SROs are used across the U.S. as forms of cheap housing, but many of them require that residents have documentation that they were homeless in order to qualify for housing subsidies from the government.

housing as a basic right to all human beings regardless of their ability to pay for that housing.

International declarations of a right to housing incorporate more inclusive understandings of the rights afforded to all human beings. Internationally, a right to housing does not guarantee homeless individuals the right to a cramped, smelly space on a mat in a large emergency shelter. Instead, it guarantees a right to be housed in decent, affordable accommodations and to play a significant part in planning that housing. A report from the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing states,

The Human Rights Committee recognizes the right of every citizen to take part in the conduct of public affairs. Unfortunately, Government agencies too often make decisions without the necessary information on how they will affect the lives of the people involved. In adopting measures to achieve the full realization of the right to adequate housing, a genuine consultation with, and participation by, all those affected, including the homeless, the inadequately housed and their representatives, should be guaranteed. Efforts should be made to ensure that residents are involved from the beginning of any redevelopment or other projects, and continue to be engaged during the entire process (United Nations, 2010, p.27).

I use the concepts of a right to housing and a right to the city as a lens through which to evaluate community “solutions” to homelessness. I advance the ultimate goal of a community as extending the same rights of citizenship to housed and unhoused members alike, including the right to appropriate space and participate in planning the spaces of the city. Though literature on appropriation of space frequently focuses on “public” space, in this case, I am explicitly looking at the right to appropriate *home* spaces. As a way to think about rights to appropriate home space, consider a homeowner—her right to appropriate the space of her property is extended in full, based on rights of private property and ownership. Renters’ rights to appropriate their home space is more complex and dependent on the relationship between tenant, who has civil rights based on their occupation of a private space, and landlord, who has ultimate rights over the space based on ownership. Renters who live in residential motels/hotels/SROs have even fewer rights to appropriate their home space, as their landlord maintains greater control over the space and tenancy is more short-lived. Unhoused members of the community have no rights to appropriate a home space because they neither possess a private dwelling space, as defined by local building codes and standards of living, nor a place within the

community to create a home space that is not otherwise controlled by someone else through legal ownership. Shelters and other homeless housing may reinforce or mitigate the inability to appropriate space, and in that role, they are a key site for considering a transformation of unhoused community members' rights of urban citizenship. If the ideals of the right to the city and a right to housing were realistically mobilized in these spaces, those residing in the spaces would have rights to appropriate space that were roughly equal to renters' rights.

Applying the right to housing and rights of urban citizenship allows for a rights-based evaluation of policy approaches to “end” homelessness. Many service providers do not consider themselves to be engaged in political issues; instead, many see their role as providing services to homeless individuals as a form of redistributing resources to individuals who need them most.⁸⁵ Yet political theorist Leonard Feldman argues that redistribution of resources without recognition of rights denies homeless individuals their rights of citizenship.⁸⁶ For instance, Feldman (2004) characterizes municipal efforts to simultaneously offer shelter services while sweeping people off the streets as a way to redistribute resources without recognition of homeless individuals as equal citizens.⁸⁷ Often called “identity politics,” this recognition of individuals as equal citizens, coupled with redistribution of resources, offers a double corrective to the inequalities manifested in homelessness.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ This is certainly not the only way that service providers think about their role; in fact, it is probably the most innocuous/unbiased way that service providers approach their job. Others see their role as personal crusaders to save individuals from themselves or as reformers who teach individuals what is best for them and curb their bad behaviors.

⁸⁶ Recognition has been referred to as identity politics since the purpose of efforts to gain recognition are less about seeking economic resources and more about seeking political recognition as an identity group (that then has political power to seek other types of resources). See Nancy Fraser's discussion of redistribution versus recognition in *Justice Interruptus*

⁸⁷ This is a common technique employed by mean cities. Atlanta, GA, for instance, coordinated the opening of the Gateway Center, a full-service 24-hour shelter, with a crackdown on panhandling in the downtown area.

⁸⁸ In theorizing on justice and democracy, Feldman (2004) attempts to bring together two competing perspectives on democratic theory—the first is that redistribution and recognition are necessary preconditions to democratic participation, and the second that an open political process is a necessary precondition for articulation of justice claims (p.108). Feldman finds political inclusion to be fundamental to his “trivalent approach to justice,” encapsulating economic, cultural and political justice. In other words, if political exclusion lays the groundwork for

Proponents of redistribution, not recognition, argue that we, as a society, should not be helping homeless people stay on the street (in the form of public camping, sleeping, etc), but rather should be providing services for them to get off the street. Advocates of redistribution would say that calling attention to, and privileging their difference is counterproductive to the economic redistribution of putting them in homes. However, Feldman critically argues that recognition is necessary in righting injustices of homelessness because the injustices are not just economic issues of maldistribution. Instead, he argues,

Cultural norms concerning what constitutes a proper home are deeply implicated in the phenomenon of homelessness. Housing policies that work to materialize these norms in the built environment produce a reduction in housing options and the emergence of street-and-shelter homelessness. To treat homelessness as a problem solely of maldistribution is to displace attention from the materialized values and norms that polarize society into home-dwelling citizens and homeless bare life (Feldman, 2004, p.91).

In other words, simply advocating for more housing does not allow for a conversation of what kinds of dwelling practices constitute 'home' for people. For instance, some residents in tent cities have chosen to live in tents and semi-permanent structures rather than shelters or other more traditional forms of housing. Attempts to traditionally house them ignore the differences in perspectives about what constitutes a home. Given that recognition is a critical component of homeless participation in planning the city spaces and home spaces, I evaluate the degree to which each approach to membership in the community both *recognizes* and *redistributes*.

For small communities like Champaign-Urbana, identity matters.⁸⁹ This issue of community membership crucially effects how the community addresses homelessness. If city council members

privileging redistribution over recognition, then political inclusion lays the groundwork for recognition of homeless persons as citizens who can mobilize to achieve greater redistribution. While they remain politically excluded, home-dwelling persons choose redistribution for them, denying recognition of their own agency as citizens.

⁸⁹ In larger cities, access to community decision-making processes is less direct than smaller communities. In areas like Champaign-Urbana, decision-making is not an extremely bureaucratic process, but because of the more direct relationship between individual input and community decisions, identity becomes an important factor in decisions.

believe that homeless people are not from their community, they see no obligation or duty to provide services for them—they are simply passing through and should not be offered the opportunity to stay, lest they settle down and deplete the city’s resources. If they consider them to be members of the community, then it is reasonable to assume some amount of responsibility in providing services for them.⁹⁰ Yet there are many ways to view someone as “part of” the community. Homeless individuals may be seen as problems or as equal members of the community. Whatever the view, it implies a particular approach to shaping housing and services for those individuals.

Within the public narratives circulating around each of the projects, I identified five distinct ways that local stakeholders frame homeless individuals’ membership in the community. Clear connections can be drawn between these frames and approaches to shelter development. In the following sections, I provide an overview of each of the five conceptions about homeless individuals’ place in the community and discuss the possibilities of urban citizenship and the implications for their rights as urban citizens. Within each narrative, I describe, illustrate, and analyze the discursive aspects, give examples of variations within the discourse, and consider the implications for policy decisions and for the actual creation of ‘homeless’ housing in the community.

Not members at all

The notion that homeless people are not members of the community is perhaps the most clear-cut way to divorce homeless individuals from the rest of the community. Citizens who hold this belief assert that if homeless individuals are not from their community, they should go back to where they came from and should not be welcomed. As one city council member remarked,

We have people being released from prison to this community, to the Men’s Emergency Shelter that are homeless. I think we are causing our own problems. If I had something....and

⁹⁰ Vale (2000) documents a long history since the founding of Puritan communities of localities struggling to define insider/outsider status as a way to determine who had legitimate claims on the community’s resources.

we are...we are bringing people into the community, we're having them released to this community, we are creating problems. They may have homeless problem, we are creating our own. (city councilmember, CCCmeeting032597)

This narrative is marked by blaming other cities for not taking care of their 'problems.' It is also characterized by a belief in a high degree of mobility of homeless individuals. In 2009, two opponents argued against Safe Haven Tent Community, alluding to this mobility and lack of community status. They said,

Hmmm...So these nice homeless people just get by day to day with a structure of some sort to sleep in. They probably eat for free at a food shelter, which is great, I pay for that. They then do what during the day...drink, walk about begging, scout places to commit larceny, and oh...that's right...when they're tired, they need a place to sleep. Go somewhere else. (Monson, 2009d, Comments)

As for the residents of tent city: Did you know that Massachusetts will put you up in a hotel for as long as it takes for you to "get on your feet" and get a place of your own, in addition to providing you assistance for food? No, I'm not kidding. Google it. ("Time to," 2009, Comments)

In Champaign, the assertion that homeless people "aren't from here" was raised in a set of city council meetings devoted to hearing and voting on a mid-1990s Homeless Task Force's recommendations.⁹¹ During these meetings, justifications for denying community membership were frequently linked to the correctional system. There was a sense that if prisoners were being released and exported to this community, it was an imposition of criminals that were not "from here," rather than people who were originally from here. The issue of prisoners' release and export to the community was hotly debated within the city council, and while some advocated for a need for services and to not ignore the problem, no one challenged the notion that these prisoners were not from Champaign

⁹¹ The Task Force on Homelessness was commissioned by the Champaign City Council in 1995 to investigate homelessness in Champaign County for 18 months and produce a report with recommendations for the city. This Task Force was commissioned at the time when the SRO was being built (opened in 1996) and the Mental Health Center was planning to relocate the Men's Emergency Shelter and add a transitional program to the services already offered. These meetings are important moments in the city's history, as they were overtly devoted to priority-setting regarding homelessness.

County or even Champaign proper. While the prisons are located outside of Champaign, these fictionally formulated terms of debate ignored that parolees are paroled back to their former communities. The question became, then, how to deal with a problem that was being “brought into” Champaign. For instance,

The other thing I asked is how many are from this area? Again I don't mind taking care of Champaign, Champaign County homeless people, but the word I get is that the word goes through the prison population that Champaign has no rules, we're located next to a campus area where the picking is easy, I asked for some kind of list of who are we getting in this sixty homeless people? Are they Champaign County residents? Is it true that they're coming from the prison population? If so, what kind of records do they got? That's a major concern for the safety of the people.” (city councilmember, CCCmeeting112597)

These references to prisoners are not neutral statements of fact. They are embroiled in assumptions of race, class and gender, all of which serve to bolster the stigma of prisoners as dangerous outsiders. In terms of gender, it is significant that the dual discourse of criminality and ‘not being from here’ was raised almost exclusively in regard to the men’s shelter and not the other proposed developments for men and women or women and children.⁹² Further, Lois Wacquant draws attention to the connections between the prison system and race and class. He documents the “carceral continuum,” the connection between urban ghettos and the prison system, resulting in the over-representation of Black men in the prison system. Wacquant argues,

The resulting symbiosis between ghetto and prison not only perpetuates the socioeconomic marginality and symbolic taint of the black subproletariat, feeding the runaway growth of the carceral system. It also plays a pivotal role in the remaking of ‘race’, the redefinition of the citizenry via the production of a racialized public culture of vilification of criminals, and the construction of a post-Keynesian state that replaces the social-welfare treatment of poverty by its penal management (Wacquant, 2001, p.95).

⁹² In conversations about the proposed SRO, concerns were also raised about “outsiders” but the issue of criminality was not addressed, as the following passage indicates: “I just, I got the one question and I’m going to make sure you’re going to answer the one I ask, but the question I want is will local homeless people have precedence in this rather than creating something that’s going to bring outsiders into this area that, we’re creating housing for new people, to see if there’s any way to control that?” (city council re: SRO, CCCmeeting040495). Even without explicit mention of criminals, the implications are the same—we do not want to spend our money on outsiders.

These patterns are subconsciously drawn upon in framing homeless individuals as prisoners from other communities. City council members questioned multiple times where people were coming from—one councilmember remarked, “We don’t know whether the people who are homeless are people in Champaign, Urbana Champaign County, or whether they’re coming from Chicago, East St. Louis, or Pittsburgh, as far as I know” (CCCmeeting030497). In fact, any reference to “other places” named large cities, implying that criminals come from cities, not towns like Champaign.

The implications of this approach to citizenship are fairly clear. In each instance of a fear of outsiders, the speaker voted against funding for the project in question.⁹³ For them, homeless individuals occupied no legitimate place in the community and thus had no claim to the community’s resources or recognition as equal members of the community. This approach to homelessness is not new—since Puritan times, localities have attempted to document transients’ place of residence as a way to refuse service, and this logic has stuck in the national consciousness throughout history (Kusmer, 2002; Vale, 2000). Today, this approach is common in ‘mean’ cities where city ordinances and police practices are designed to run “transients” out of town.

The belief that homeless people are external to the community cannot be refuted simply by proving that people are “from” the area, defined by being raised there and/or having family from the area. The notion that homeless individuals who are not “from” the community cannot claim residency (and by extension, membership) is tied to ideas about home and belonging as well. Housed individuals, particularly homeowners, can move to Champaign and claim residency upon arrival. Their position in the imagined community takes time, but their residency status, particularly if their form of tenure is that

⁹³ This is significant because in the case of the TIMES Center and SRO funding, the majority of the City Council voted in favor of funding the projects. Funding for the SRO project was approved on 04/04/95 with a vote of 8-1. Funding for the TIMES Center was approved on 11/25/97 with a vote of 7-2. Each time, the dissenting vote(s) was delivered by someone who had raised concerns about homeless people not being from the community. Thus this marginal perspective on homeless individuals as outsiders to the community is connected to the marginal votes. If there were multiple people voting no on the funding, with multiple reasons why, the connection would be less clear, but given the dogmatic approach to “outsiders,” I believe the connection is strong.

of homeownership, serves as a basis for access to the community decision-making process. They possess the rights of urban citizenship upon arrival, through mechanisms like paying property taxes or simply having an address which they can use to apply for jobs, retreat into at night, and reference in public meetings.⁹⁴ Housed members of society are free from stigma in moving from place to place for employment, but when unhoused members of society act in similar patterns, this behavior is defined as transient.⁹⁵ This distinction between “resident” and “transient” goes back in U.S. history; even during the Great Depression, agencies received funds that required that resources go specifically for transients, while local and state funds served residents (Gold, 1998). The assumption today is that homeless individuals 1) are mobile enough to travel, and 2) will go to places because of their services, not for other reasons like jobs, family, and other support networks.

Consider the implications of refusing to acknowledge an individual as a resident of the community. Groth points out that, in major U.S. cities, “because officials did not consider hotels to be permanent housing, during the official massive downtown clearances from 1950 to 1970, people living in hotels were not tallied as residents. Hence, when a city demolished an SRO building, “no one” had been moved, and no dwelling units were lost in the official counts and newspaper reports” (1994, p.281-2). Actions like these not only deny redistributive resources to an individual, but they also deny individuals the right to lay claim to those redistributive resources. Given the policy implications of total exclusion from citizens’ rights, it is significant that this strain of narrative has been a minor one in Champaign-Urbana’s public discourse about homelessness. Across the six proposed developments, city council members who employed this narrative were in the minority, keeping their preferred policies of

⁹⁴ In city council meetings, all speakers are required to state their name and address. Those with addresses outside of Champaign are not Champaign residents. Without an address, homeless individuals operate in a state of limbo as to their official status as Champaign residents because of the connection between private property and residency.

⁹⁵ In the late 19th and early 20th century in the U.S., hobos traveled the rails as migrant workers. They did not maintain permanent housing but rather used the nightly, weekly and monthly types of housing in cities in periods without work. Their transience was a source of fear amongst “settled” residents, even though their labor made it possible for the settled residents to prosper in the booming industrial economy.

zero shelter development plus punitive actions at bay. Yet the presence of this narrative served to set the lower boundary of how homelessness was discussed by the community as a whole.

Problem members

“Problem member” statements fully acknowledge that homeless people are in the community but they are characterized as a nuisance or as something that the community does not want to deal with face-to-face. The statements also characterize homeless individuals as a problem to be dealt with. In this narrative, homeless individuals are not treated as citizens but rather as unfortunate elements of the community. For instance,

Now the question is if we don't address it where are these folks going to go? Well too many stumble around in the bone yard, that's great for the image of this community, or a great many decide to camp out in somebody's side yard, use a person's backyard for a comfort station...The fact is that the problem that they present is not just to themselves; it's to the entire community. They are a potential liability. We're going to have to address it one way or the other. Simply saying, “They're not there,” or simply saying, “That if we don't help you, you'll straighten up and fly right, get a job,” it's just not realistic. (city council re: Task Force recommendations, CCCmeeting030497)

City council members and project opponents stated this narrative most frequently, though service providers also espoused these views at times when they were making a case for continued support of their services, as in the case of the Men's Emergency Shelter:

For 18 years this community has benefitted by not having to hire more police. They have benefitted by not having the crime rate that might exist otherwise. They have benefitted from not having to pay taxes on their homes from break-ins that might otherwise occur, because when you leave people in desperate situations where they face the choice of having to break the law to survive, it is not good for the community, and safety is one of the priorities that is listed on that board as I came in the door. (service provider re: Men's Emergency Shelter, CCCmeeting030497)

These arguments were mobilized against developments for men most frequently, as well as Safe Haven Tent Community. They were mobilized to a lesser extent about the SRO, but the statements were still significant. The Center for Women in Transition (CWIT) noticeably has had few arguments in

this vein over the years.⁹⁶ CWIT should have been subject to the same kinds of comments as TIMES Center, given that they were both developments for transitional centers, yet beyond a few instances of neighborhood opposition, no one argued that the women (and children) were problem members of the community. I document the gendered component of these differences in Chapter 5.

While arguments that frame homeless individuals as not part of the community were unanimously against shelter development, those who frame homeless individuals as problems diverge in their views of shelter development. Some frame homeless individuals as “problems” while supporting shelter development, as the first quote illustrated. Other people use their framing of “problem” homeless people as justification for not supporting shelter development, as the following passages illustrate. For these individuals, shelters are equated with problem behaviors, such that building a shelter will result in more problems for an area.

Those of us that are downtown everyday now, which I am downtown to do my business, it's not a perception of fear, there's a real fear. I had the same problems with some of the female staff that I'm associated with will not come down after dark, and as far as urinating, I don't like the p word, so I'll use urinating, not being a problem, have them do it in the stairway of your business everyday and you'll realize it's a problem. So I don't believe we're dealing with perception. Those that are dealing with it now, it's an everyday real problem, and it's something that should have been brought to the attention of the downtown community to discuss. (city council re: SRO, CCCmeeting041195)

For 3 months now when this Tent City was established we've had nothing but problems with drug deals being conducted on my porch, on my property where my daughter lives, at all hours. There is drinking, because they don't allow drinking but they go and drink over here and then they go back to the tents, and it is something that I have witnessed...All party, all hours of the night. They'll tell you they have a curfew but they don't. (project opponent re: Safe Haven, CCCmeeting071409)

⁹⁶ Springer Center developers also did not encounter this argument, but their anti-development issues were very specific, and it makes sense that the community never got around to thinking about who would live there; they focused instead on the legitimacy and capacity of the developer as well as what they considered to be an inappropriate use of a historic building.

These characterizations of “problem” people have implications for how shelters are viewed, i.e. what their purpose is. Those in support of shelters advance a particular understanding of their role as sites of “containment.” This approach harkens approaches in the 17th century U.S., when communities “walled in” undesirable community members, including criminals, the insane, the poor, orphans and juvenile delinquents—each group was relegated to a separate institution (Vale, 2000, p.33). While individuals making these arguments may not personally see shelters as spaces of containment, their public statements imply containment as the primary purpose of the shelter, and as such, they bolster the public narrative about homeless people as objective problems with the attendant policy reactions, in this case to contain the problem “objects” in a regulated location. This framing is consistent with those who oppose shelter developments, as they often cite lack of control and lack of security as their reasons:

...obviously if there was a Mental Health Facility that was built, and there was walls and people said behind these walls, whether it was Mental Health or anything, anything threatening the things behind walls, and people said, “We’ve got these people it’s secured,” I mean to me it doesn’t matter whether it would be a mental health facility or any kind of shelter or a maximum security prison or anything, you’ve got a structured situation that is secure... (project opponent re: TIMES, CCCmeeting112597)

Show me what the Mental Health Center is going to do to protect the fact that I’ve made a tremendous investment in my business in downtown Champaign. Are you going to be there to pick these people off the doorsteps? Are your mental health workers going to come down and protect me, protect the clients at my business? (project opponent re: TIMES, CCCmeeting112597)

I stated I couldn’t support an issue like this unless I knew there was security for the building, what was going to happen to the people when they were turned loose. This is not a good thing for downtown Champaign, and I don’t care what’s at the end of Neil Street, the downtown businessmen are right in the middle of this, so they want to know where the people are going to be; they haven’t got an answer to that. (city councilmember re: TIMES, CCCmeeting112597)

In these statements, homeless individuals are framed as having such pathologies that they must be contained and kept away from the rest of the community. This approach is reminiscent of fears of

immigrant groups as infectious, contaminated bodies that must be contained (Shah, 2001). As historian Nayan Shah documented, these fears have traversed beyond immigrant groups, from framing Chinese Americans as dirty, infectious bodies to framing gay men as diseased pariahs (2001, p.255). Political theorist Kathleen Arnold says, “There are two principal reactions to the homeless and immigrants: demands for assimilation and criminalization...Both presuppose a radical separation of self and Other. That is, the subjectivity of citizenship is perceived as pure and unmarked by difference while difference is associated with the Other” (Arnold, 2004, p.52). While I doubt that community members today would go so far as to say that they fear contracting a disease from a homeless man, the need to contain the men has its roots in the connections between contaminated bodies and segregation from the broader citizenry, and by implication, from citizenship itself (Shah, 2001). The clearest statement of the approach to shelters as containment of “social diseases” was espoused by a supporter of the TIMES Center development, who stated,

Finally let me say that all of us, regardless of where we live, who we are, must be concerned about the problems of our homeless. If you are really concerned about it, then you are concerned that we provide adequate shelter and services for them, that’s the way of preventing urination on our public streets, vomiting, people littering, loitering, and going to sleep in public accesses, to provide them proper places to be. You can’t say, in my opinion, that you’re concerned about the homeless but you don’t want homeless here, or you don’t want them there. You can’t say that you’re concerned about safety and security downtown and in our neighborhoods, and you’re opposed to supporting a facility for these people to house. (CCCmeeting112597)

The implications for the homeless of such statements are dire because such characterizations are linked to denials of humanity. Framing homeless individuals as “problems” effectively makes them objects to be dealt with, with no agency of their own. As Arnold suggests, “Homelessness is perceived as essential, static, and reified and thus absolutely Other...Unconscious fears of the Other combine with conscious action to produce policy that extinguishes or assimilates alterity” (2004, p.81). As Others denied their humanity, they can be moved, contained, released, and otherwise handled by agents of the

community, but they cannot, as Others, claim their rights to political or physical space. For instance, city ordinances may outlaw their survival-based behaviors of sleeping in parks; police may drive them to city limits or give them bus tickets out of town; or police may give them the option of going to jail or going to a shelter.⁹⁷ Samira Kawash theorizes these practices, arguing,

Securing the public requires that a public place for the homeless body be denied. The resultant contradiction between a material body that most certainly occupies space and the denial of any place for such a body cannot be resolved...If the homeless population cannot be eliminated or erased, then at least it can be shrunk down, isolated, and contained so that the public need not feel the pressure of its presence. (Kawash, 1998, p.330).

Homeless individuals have no role in planning services because the services are imposed on them as a method of containment. The spaces are similarly detached from the individuals, as they are spaces created from a community need, not from the needs of the individuals themselves. The individual's capacity to appropriate space is essentially non-existent. Internal living spaces are not nearly as important for consideration as are the external characteristics, particularly the location of shelters in the community and their security measures which are intended to keep people inside (thereby rendering the outside spaces free of problems). As one opponent to the TIMES Center said, "We're not concerned what they're going to do inside their walls; that's not at all the concern" (CCCmeeting112597). Samira Kawash extends her discussion of containment to explain the approach to living spaces as well, saying,

This principle of containing is repeated at the level of the individual. The physical space that is allotted to each body is made as small as possible. Government policies of reimbursing shelter and service providers per person or per unit rather than according to market costs of housing or food rationalize and legitimize the minimization of space or provisions allotted to each body (Kawash, 1998, p.331).

Within the logic of containment, project developers had to prove to the community that they had measures in place to keep residents under control. One big argument made consistently against

⁹⁷ These are all common, documented practices. See Arnold (2004), Mitchell (2003) for further descriptions of these strategies.

Safe Haven Tent Community was that its members were nuisances and that they were unable to control themselves and other homeless individuals, further solidifying the widely held public assumption of the role of a shelter as a space of containment. Most importantly, as contained “problems,” homeless individuals can access some level of redistributive housing and services, but these resources are only provided as an alternative to having homeless individuals out in the community, removing them from the public—both space and people—thus denying them access to urban citizenship.

Need our help

Statements that form the “helping” narrative begin to acknowledge homelessness as a problem of the community, rather than a problem of the individual. As one city council member stated, “I strongly believe that the responsibility of being a prosperous city is also taking care of our needy.” (CCCmeeting030497). Likewise, a TIMES Center developer said, “The bottom line is most of the long-term people are from this area...It’s a question of how the community is going to deal with their poor, with their most obvious poor of all.” (CCCmeeting121697)

This characterization of the homeless is the only one that was mobilized in all six shelter developments. This narrative supports redistribution of resources without recognizing homeless individuals (or groups) as having the right to demand that redistribution, so it allows people to feel good about helping. In Champaign-Urbana, there is a strong tradition of charitable acts by local religious groups, who are the most likely to espouse this particular narrative.

As a rhetorical strategy, the politics of compassion wins out over arguments for a right to shelter by relying on the most visibly vulnerable to make their case, “making compassion the most promising justification for programs with the most immediate (and visible) payoffs, including not only care for the homeless but their removal from sight” (Hoch and Slayton, 1989, p.210). Those who advocated for helping the homeless in Champaign-Urbana were enacting this politics of compassion, a discourse that

has faded in the national consciousness.⁹⁸ Despite its absence in the national consciousness, though, the community of Champaign-Urbana continues to espouse a politics of compassion, most clearly evidenced in the monthly meetings of the Champaign County Council of Service Providers to the Homeless. Since 2007 (and likely before), these meetings have featured regular updates by a faith-based group who coordinates a Canteen Run (providing clothing, food, prayer to people in need, often on the street), another faith-based group who runs a women's winter emergency shelter, and Daily Bread, a faith-based group that runs a soup kitchen. Almost all local service providers gather each month and listen to these organizations' stories told through a lens of faith, ministry and charity, with widespread verbal support from city staff and other non-faith-based service providers. The strong role of churches in the community keeps the politics of compassion alive, but these groups, like services in the 1980s, are only able to provide for basic physiological needs, exacerbated by their lack of access to government funding. Many of these religious organizations use the language of charity (e.g. "needy" and "helping") to describe their actions.

This perception of homeless individuals has two sides: While it implies a community duty, it also implies that the individuals are unable to help themselves. Samira Kawash quotes Rob Rosenthal as saying, "Local approaches to homelessness will typically stress a supplicant's posture and private charity. Since this approach implicitly assumes that homeless people are not stable and dependable political operatives, the emphasis in organizing will not be on homeless people, but on housed people" (Kawash, 1998, p.321). For instance, the mayor argued for continued emergency shelter services for men, stating, "I think I have some sense of who the clients are, and there's no question that I believe that some of them are totally and permanently disabled, that the chances for any serious long-term rehabilitation are close to zero" (re: Consolidated Plan priorities, CCCmeeting032597). Likewise, in support of social

⁹⁸ The politics of compassion has been replaced by "compassion fatigue," a term coined by researchers to describe the turn from compassion to punitive action against homeless people in the 1990s.

service funding and continued support for service agencies, one service provider stated, “The homeless, the poor, the disadvantaged are basically members of a population that are unable to organize and mobilize and advocate for their own best interest. They’re not able to participate in sobriety or abstinence programs without sufficient motivation.” (Member of CSPH, CCCmeeting060695)

The notion of homeless people needing “our” help does not problematize the notion that homeless individuals are in some way broken and also separate from the rest of the competent, self-sufficient community. Instead, it reinforces that individuals have problems, as this supportive councilmember’s statement suggests:

Of course they’re going to accept people who are not necessarily sober 100% of the time. If those people had somewhere else to go would they call that place an emergency shelter? No. What would the emergency be, a clean and sober upstanding citizen with no personal problems doesn’t need to go to such a facility, so why build one? Obviously they’re going to accept people who have too much to drink. When I volunteered at the shelter with McKinley, which was about a block away from my backdoor, one night, I for the first time spent an evening with a man who had smoked a pipeful of crack before he came into the shelter. (CCCmeeting112597)

One of the implications for citizenship then, is that “they” need “our” help. This rhetorical separation denies homeless people’s rights to social services. Thus, our help is contingent on our feelings of community duty (not government duty) to provide for those we perceive as needy and worthy of our help. The framing of “us” helping “them” situates agency with the helpers who can decide whether or not to help and what kind of help to offer. The power imbalance of this framing is evident in one city council member’s argument for minimum standards of living. He stated,

Our building codes and our zoning ordinances were motivated and original intent is to protect the less fortunate. Wealthy people weren’t the ones who needed rules about indoor plumbing and safe electricity and a solid roof over their heads. It was a protective device that communities implemented. (CCCmeeting081809).

This council member sees himself in a protective role, protecting poor people from substandard conditions but not acknowledging that the standards are set by people as well. As such, they are socially and culturally biased. Further, he is unwilling to relinquish his hold on the decision-making about what constitutes an acceptable standard of living.⁹⁹ In terms of citizenship, homeless individuals remain separate from the decision-making process, and thus remain equally lacking in their full rights as urban citizens. Because the provision of help only redistributes at the will of the helpers, this approach represses collective homeless action, as the framing of needy individuals lacks the capacity to *recognize* homeless people as an interest group with the *right to demand redistribution*.

The efforts of “helpers” play an undeniably important role in the amelioration of suffering. However, while many people who participate in this public narrative of neediness see homeless individuals as human beings, they do not necessarily see them as citizens with rights. They also tend to locate the responsibility for care or support of the homeless with local philanthropy, charity and/or religious groups, rather than with the government. Without a clear sense of the rights of individuals to appropriate space and participate in the planning of space, “helpers” create housing spaces that offer limited redistribution resources while rejecting recognition of homeless individuals as having rights to it.

The impact of this approach on the built environment is complicated. First, as many of the stakeholders who espouse this view are from the religious community, the most important issue is their duty to help—because of this focus, there tends to be a more surface-level understanding of the needs

⁹⁹ This statement maps closely onto Progressive Era reformers’ arguments for the destruction of low-income residential hotels, where residents and reformers disagreed over what constituted an acceptable standard of living. For instance, housing historian Gwendolyn Wright quotes a Progressive Era reformer talking about the eviction and demolition of a tenement of Italian residents, as saying, “It was strange to find people so attached to homes that were so lacking in all the attributes of comfort and decency” (1981, p.134). Yet as Wright points out, these reformers based their judgments on middle-class values that rejected immigrants’ practices of dwelling, such as accumulation of printed paper, family photos, scraps of brightly colored wallpaper and the like. As public health standards and building codes have become more standardized, enforcement of standards of living are seen by professionals as positive and protective actions, yet enforcement of standards of living can also move someone from a substandard living situation into actual street homelessness.

of those they are helping, and accommodations are not tailored for much beyond meeting physiological needs. For instance, the Men's Emergency Shelter operated from 1977 to the mid-1980s as a rotating shelter, operating out of different church basements on a weekly or monthly basis. It was eventually housed at McKinley Presbyterian Church after some of the participating churches encountered damages caused by homeless clients and decided to no longer provide services. McKinley's basement was ill-fitted for the purpose of housing people. Common complaints by those running it and those using it were that it flooded in heavy rains, trapped stagnant air, offered little individual space per person, and lacked showers or a commercial kitchen space for preparing and serving food.¹⁰⁰

Need reforming to become members

This strain of narrative frames homeless individuals as people who need social services to become "productive" or "contributing" members of the community, with the unspoken assumption that they are not currently productive or contributing. The desire to reform and not simply give services has historical roots. At the turn of the 20th century, private charitable agencies demanded transients to perform work tests before they could receive food and housing as a measure to separate "bums" from the deserving poor (Kusmer, 2002, p.11). Indeed, as early as the 1820s, communities had shifted from their use of the almshouse as a repository for the poor to instituting workhouses to provide for "the well directed labour of the poor" (Vale, 2000, p.39). These workhouses were necessary, reformers argued, because almshouses were defective in their inability to discriminate between different classes of poor, each of which had different "claims on society." Vale cites these classes as "1st, the poor, by reason of

¹⁰⁰ Yet those running the shelter espoused the belief that each individual who came to the shelter was a guest and would not be turned away. Volunteers complained about what they considered an "extreme" approach, which extended to the point of taking someone's alcohol from him upon entry and returning it to him the next day rather than simply confiscating it. McKinley's operations walk a fine line between the idea that they "need our help" and the idea that "homeless individuals are equal members of our community." While those running the shelter certainly would have agreed with both characterizations, there was more of a sense that they had a duty to provide for these individuals. Nonetheless, I believe that the more radical religious community issues a rhetoric that has the capacity to describe homeless individuals as equal members of the community and there are pieces of their narrative that can be built on to promote a community discourse of equality with more equitable and dignified policies as well.

age; 2nd, the poor, by reason of misfortune; 3rd, the poor, by reason of infancy, 4th, the poor, by reason of vice” (2000, p.40). Believing only the first three classes to be worthy of the almshouse, workhouses were constructed to ensure that the poor would only get support that equaled their labor.

Contemporary notions of the need for “screening” demonstrate a persistent desire to separate the worthy from the undeserving poor.¹⁰¹ This argument has been legitimated by the federal turn to transitional programs from emergency shelters in the 1990s, and the Champaign-Urbana community closely followed the national trend. This public narrative was particularly salient in the conversion of the Men’s Emergency Shelter into the TIMES Center (originally named Transitional Initiatives and Men’s Emergency Shelter—later “Emergency Shelter” became “Empowerment Services”). At this time, city council members were openly supportive of the shift to “transitional” services:

Councilmember: I have a comment, and this is just a little philosophical. We’ve been trying so many things and for 15 years we’ve been running an emergency shelter, and I don’t think the emphasis on transition is all that bad. I think we have to make an effort because we haven’t succeeded otherwise. We’ve just been housing people. I just don’t think I want to continue to do that, and I know the emphasis that you’re making on the transitional part of it and I know that’s sort of what we want.

Mayor: I actually agree with June. I think we should certainly do everything we can, and I thought that was the positive direct change in the program when the Mental Health Center took over. That if you were simply there for a bunk and continuation of your lifestyle as you had grown accustomed that there was not a lot for you in terms of amenities. I thought that was a very positive move, and to direct that reinforcement. (re: TIMES Center, CCCmeeting022399)

In this narrative, people worry about whether or not homeless individuals have enough structure in their programs and enough external motivation to become productive. As one council member asked, in conversation with the developer of the SRO,

¹⁰¹ Recall issues of identity in determining deserving/undeserving poor, as articulated in Chapters 4 and 5.

Councilmember: That’s because the emphasis is on getting people out of the situations that they’re in, and I frankly think that’s the only way we can go. You mentioned that only 14 people had jobs in the SRO, what do the other 10 do?

Developer: The other 10 there’s a mixture. We have some people who are on disability, physical disability, very low income there, or we have some people who are on SSI for various reasons. Then we have a few people who are on Township who are probably likely to have come from a shelter, and so they are moving into Homestead and getting their lives together and then move to self-sufficiency. We have a number of people who volunteer too, so we didn’t count them in our work related group, so there’s still a group there that isn’t working, maybe going to programs either at Urbana Adult Ed or other types of...

Councilmember: That was my other question. Didn’t I hear, I thought that everybody in an SRO would be either working or in a program to produce that sort of...

Developer: That's correct but at any time they can refuse to do that, and use it strictly for housing, the rule allows for people to be voluntarily involved in programs outside.

Councilmember: And you can’t change that rule?

(exchange re: SRO, CCCmeeting022399)

This narrative is also espoused by homeless individuals themselves. One man stated to the city council that he needed support in “getting off the streets from being mentally disturbed to the point where I can become another productive member of society, then I can be like one of you, an American, not homeless, just houseless.” (CCCmeeting040495). While this narrative does not necessarily frame homeless individuals as problems, it does frame them as being “outside” the mainstream community. The intent is to reform aspects of the individual, recognizing that homeless individuals are capable of *becoming* citizens, but that they are not yet full citizens. Well-intentioned people espouse this narrative—as opponents and supporters alike stated,

I had the privilege earlier this year of preparing a tax return for someone [homeless]...This person had some problems in his life but was also working and trying to bring some order into his life and to turn things around, and subsequently was able to find housing. But the type of people that we’re talking about helping here are not people that we should be looking down our noses at and feeling as being a threat. But these are people who are trying to make a change in their life and be contributing members of our community again. (supportive city councilmember, CCCmeeting041195)

We know that is just a stop gap if we don't provide some kinds of programs for those who are capable to move back into the mainstream to be able to do that, and that's where the transitional shelter is very important. (project opponent re: TIMES, CCCmeeting112597)

The impulse to reform has a strong focus on the future—shaping who the individual will become and into what sort of living arrangements s/he will graduate. As such, there is little focus on the present and on what sort of living arrangements they currently inhabit. Reform indicates problems that need fixing, and as the field of homeless services and housing has become more professionalized, there is more reliance on professional knowledge of problems and solutions. In particular, programming is emphasized, while attention to how transitional programs provide for the immediate needs of home is less important. Most significantly, reforming individuals requires 1) determining whether they are possible to reform (screening, often for criminal background checks), 2) entering them into an expert-driven program designed to teach new behaviors, monitor for bad ones and keep someone on the right track, while living in a “transitional” environment, and 3) moving the individual into permanent housing where they can “begin” their life as a contributing member of the community. These measures map closely onto U.S. public housing and welfare practices, where recipients of housing and benefits have also been subjected to multiple reform efforts over the course of the programs (see Piven and Cloward, 1993). The most recent examples of these included Clinton’s welfare-to-work reforms in the late 1990s, and very recently, the demonstration program for Housing Authorities titled “Moving To Work,” a program designed to move public housing tenants into employment.¹⁰² The impulse to reform poor people is not new; instead, each generation of reformers develops different measures to achieve the same basic desire (Vale, 2000).

While the reforming narrative most easily maps onto transitional programs, it is not necessarily a feature of them, nor is it the only time the reforming narrative is utilized. For instance, public

¹⁰² For more information on both programs, see <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/weltowrk/weltowrk.htm> and http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/mtw

discussions about Center for Women in Transition (CWIT) were not characterized by the reforming narrative, and justification for moving from emergency to transitional programs was about the women's needs, not the need to require them to do more. Kathy Sims, long-time director of CWIT, argued that the time limit in emergency shelters was too short to allow the women to properly prepare to move back into permanent housing. Yet even with the focus on future goals, media coverage of CWIT attended to the present moment as well, with great amounts of time devoted to thinking about how the women live in their 'temporary home.'¹⁰³

The reforming narrative played a big role in public discussions about Homestead Apartments, even though its purpose was to provide permanent housing to individuals. City council members wanted assurances that the residents would have to be working or seeking work or in some way "bettering" their lives.¹⁰⁴ In this debate, the project developer stood firm, arguing that HUD anti-discrimination policies prohibited them from requiring residents to seek out those avenues of "betterment." If the city council could have demanded those requirements, that program might look quite different today. Safe Haven public debates also relied on the "reforming" narrative, but in this case, always to oppose the development. One man who had worked in the TIMES Center as a peer advocate argued vehemently against Safe Haven on the grounds that those who were in it were the people who could not "hack it" in the shelter system, for the following reasons:

Contrary to what evicted residents will tell you, shelter staff aren't on power trips, they don't kick out individual residents because they don't like the resident personally, and the decision to evict the resident usually earns the wholehearted support of those residents who are behaving respectfully, staying sober, working (many shelter residents are already employed and saving for their re-entry into mainstream society) or trying to find work, and generally

¹⁰³ I suspect that the lack of "reformist" comments about CWIT is connected to the great number and depth of comments about the role of the shelter as a 'home' for the residents, negating the singular focus on the future. Reforming someone implies that they are in transition, waiting to move on to a new place where they can be their new person.

¹⁰⁴ This rhetoric is an extension of larger fears about dependency on the system, most frequently voiced about "welfare queens" and public housing residents. For discussion about these "populations," see Edin and Lein, 1997; Vale, 2000.

using the shelter for what it's there for – helping people to help themselves...As a former recovery advocate, I can tell you that when you do get a resident who is willing to do the hard (but not impossible) work of transitioning out, doesn't fight you over things like doing the assigned chores that all residents have to do, and who doesn't drink or drug or disrespect others, you go the extra mile to help those residents. (Curtiss, 2009, comments)

This narrative has the capacity to consider homeless individuals as capable of becoming citizens, but it draws a hard line between deserving and undeserving. Redistributive resources are offered, but only if individuals consent to reform themselves in ways that service providers dictate. Because reform indicates fixing flaws, this discursive framing does not allow for recognition of homeless individuals or groups as an interest group. Instead, the focus is on individuals fixing their individual flaws to re-enter society as a "normal" citizen (read: working, tax-paying, hygienic, groomed, "unthreatening," with outward signs of mental health). While the services offered can provide for more than just physiological needs, emphasis on the future disguises the immediate need to appropriate space for one's own. Instead, the notion of transition has often been applied to the living spaces as well, with the promise of a space of one's own in the future.

Already are contributing members

This rhetorical framing includes three different ways of advancing homeless individuals as full members of the community. In all, homeless people are considered to be equal citizens like any other member of the community, but the narratives approach membership in slightly different ways. Each has different traction for advancing homeless individuals as equal citizens.

Already contributing

The first equality narrative frames homeless individuals in terms of their value and worth within the community—in other words, they are productive and contributing despite their housing status. As one Safe Haven supporter argued,

They are responsible residents of Champaign and they need to be treated as such. They, like the rest of us pay taxes. Whenever they buy something they pay tax, on their groceries, any clothing item. If someone buys food and donates to them that person has to pay tax on their behalf, so taxes are being paid by these people. They join us in contributing to our tax base and therefore to the welfare of our community. They should be beneficiaries of that kind of welfare. (CCCmeeting070709)

In statements like this, one can see the potential for moving toward the provision of a right to housing and right to the city. As the Safe Haven supporter argued, homeless individuals are not outside society in any way—they materially contribute to the community in many of the same ways as housed members. Unlike the reform narrative, which assumes that homeless individuals are not productive, the equality narrative assumes the value and worth of an individual prior to any change in their living environment. A case worker at CWIT remarked, “I don’t want to be thought as an agency that is in some sense separate from the people we serve, that is, to imply that they are in a separate class. Being homeless can happen to anybody” (Pringle, n.d.). Homeless individuals also espoused this narrative a great deal, pointing out that they are no different from housed members of the community. In one particularly insightful comparison, a city council member remarked,

Some members of the working poor have had problems with substance and alcohol abuse. I have worked with people in and around and on this City Council who have had problems with substance and alcohol abuse, and they proved to be very fine contributors to the work that this city engages in, and are productive members of the community (re: SRO, CCCmeeting010996).

These arguments tend to follow ideological lines, though, as supporters argue on moral and ethical grounds for the productivity and contributions of homeless individuals. I believe this narrative has limited impact given its reliance on moral arguments. Don Mitchell (2003) distinguishes between rights-based and morals-based arguments regarding homelessness, stating that morals-based arguments work only so far as people buy into them, while rights can be codified into law and enforced regardless of public sentiment. As I articulated in the “needing our help” section, moralistic arguments

are popular when they frame homeless individuals as objects of sympathy, but framing them as equals is not likely to garner support without a more substantial framework.

Rights for all

The second equality narrative does not concern itself so much with homeless individuals as with the responsibilities of the local government to care for *all* of its citizens. Often, barriers to housing are brought up, equating the problem of homelessness with the problem of a lack of housing, for instance, “[This request] is asking you to support a housing program designed for your citizens... It’s a straightforward deal in that it’s part of your responsibility to insure affordable housing and government operating in the best interest of all of its citizens” (project supporter re: SRO, CCCmeeting010996). While this argument appears to be more disconnected from people, with its emphasis on government responsibility, it holds great power for that reason. Arguments about deservedness hold no sway if the terms of the debate are about government responsibility to provide housing. It removes from the debate any discussion of morals or assumed pathologies of the homeless. Instead, it simply invokes a right to housing. Given recent advocacy efforts in the U.S. to meet international standards of the right to housing, this narrative bears significance in moving forward (see “Simply”, 2011).

Citizenship as participation

The third equality narrative draws attention to the role of homeless individuals’ participation in the decision-making process. I focus on this narrative at length because I believe it to be a foundational and viable method to create a more inclusive community with rights of urban citizenship afforded to all. As one Safe Haven supporter passionately argued,

By using the public good as a reason to harass and suggest removal of the Safe Haven community, this assumes that this homeless are not part of our desired public. Such actions exclude them from our community, dehumanize us all and deny us their perspectives, experiences, and contributions (CCCmeeting070709).

Citizenship is at once a condition and a practice, defined through the relationship between individuals/groups and the state. Conceptualizing the importance of citizenship for homeless individuals is, then, a political project. As political theorist Leonard Feldman says, “To take seriously the idea of homelessness as a problem of politics, and to think seriously about what it means to say that homeless persons are (and ought to be) citizens, requires a thorough analysis of the mechanisms and dynamics of political exclusion” (2004, p.15). Political theorist Meredith Ramsay stresses the importance of this relationship between citizen and state, saying,

Participation in the production of public goods, whatever they may be...the product matters less than the process of producing it...because to be a producer of public goods and not merely a consumer endows the human personality with self-respect, respect of others, significance, even nobility. A political community that provides its citizens with roles that enlarge their dignity and amplify their humanity will instill enduring loyalty and commitment to that territorially bounded, shared way of life. (1996, p.100)

The need for participation has been increasingly recognized among researchers, policymakers and service providers (e.g. Barrow et al, 2007; Wireman, 2007). One of the project developers in Champaign affirmed the need for participation, saying, “Involvement of the people you’re trying to serve, I think, is paramount, and having them participate, just like you’ve got decision makers, you’ve got funders, and the people that are being served, those three groups could come together.” (18Interview) Indeed, within scholarly and activist writings, there has been an increased push for consideration of homeless perspectives as equal citizens (e.g. “Simply”, 2011; Wasserman and Clair, 2011).

Despite the recognized importance of participation, there remain significant barriers to achieving real participation. The identity marker of “homeless,” as Feldman documents, can remove particular rights of citizenship completely, like those of protest, but there are other less tangible removals as well. For instance, a staff member at Men’s Emergency Shelter made the comment, “I’ve sat here as an individual citizen of Champaign County, not as a homeless person; I’ve sat here as an

individual close to tears...because some people...will not have the availability to seek the services that each and every one of us has a right to access” (CCCmeeting112597). In this case, a person solidified his legitimacy in advocating for shelter funding by declaring himself “not homeless.” Self-advocacy presents as less legitimate than advocacy by others for homeless people. Rhetorical scholar Melanie Loehwing provides a possible answer to why this is the case, saying that homeless individuals frequently are cast as “bodies trapped by an unforgiving and insurmountable present,” and that this focus on their present needs provokes calls for immediate compassionate response (2010, p.382). Loehwing presents this problem as a “vision of homelessness as a present-centered condition, rendering those who suffer it incapable and unsuited for the future-oriented collective life of a democratic citizenry” (2010, p.382).

In Champaign-Urbana’s decisions regarding housing, homeless individuals have largely been excluded, while other groups have fought for power. Perceived legitimacy played an important role in that process. Multiple project developers stressed the importance of appropriate interactions with the city as crucial for the success of a project. As one developer said, “It has to also be a group that’s trusted and has follow through and that has a track record, and I think that gets you further” (18Interview). Another developer remarked, “You have to say the right things, be professional. I never yelled once at the NIMBY people. You just got to bite your tongue and just take it. It’s hard but you have to do it, being professional.” (27Interview) The two failed projects—Springer Center and Safe Haven Tent Community—were both organized by homeless individuals and housing advocates, and both were marked by comments that the groups were not acting appropriately.¹⁰⁵ A member of the Coalition for the Homeless acknowledged the difficulties of challenging the status quo, saying, “I think there was a more bold position we took to go for the Springer Building because like, well what do we have to lose.

¹⁰⁵ It is notable that both projects supported collective action and the voices of homeless individuals themselves. While this is certainly not the only reason, or perhaps even the major reason the projects were rejected, given the strong connections between worldview and policy decisions, I posit that the collective homeless voice demanding recognition was a factor in making policymakers uncomfortable with the proposals.

And I think that's an easy position to take when we don't have anything to lose, 'cause we're not receiving money for social services" (33Interview). This member went on to say, "We're not part of the apparatus, and there's a role for those kinds of organizations, but it doesn't necessarily mean you're going to be friends with the service providers" (33Interview). This group certainly went against accepted methods of engagement. As one news article reported,

McCollum said he is "outraged" that a group with no history, minimal community backing and little evidence of financial or organizational support could be given serious consideration for a building as significant as the Springer Building. Moreover, he said he was concerned that the coalition's ambitions could tarnish ongoing efforts of other social service providers to care for the homeless. This brings the whole homeless effort into disrepute, he said after Thursday's meeting. This is a ridiculous idea and I'm prepared to go to the mat to defeat it. ("Feds", 1990, p.A-3)

Champaign's community participation was also defined by a rhetorical dichotomy between "community members" (read: neighbors) and "power players" (read: project developers and businesspeople), leaving out considerations of homeless perspectives. One angry neighbor declared, "If you ram it down our throats, it looks like class warfare to us. It looks like the rich and powerful on South Neal Street got their way one more time and shuffled something off into our neighborhood" (TIMES opponent, CCCmeeting112597). This framing of "powerful" versus "powerless" leaves homeless people out of the equation and frames neighbors as the only disempowered group. One opponent said, "I respect people being advocates, I respect the caring that people have, but this caring should go across the board to the neighbors" (CCCmeeting112597). Indeed, many of these comments came before or after assertions that homeless shelters would have negative impacts on their neighborhoods, framing the homeless individuals as something placed in their neighborhood because powerful interests were keeping them out of other wealthier areas. In fact, the residents of these neighborhoods have very legitimate complaints regarding the placement of many of the city's social services in their neighborhood, making it a "social service ghetto." My point here is not to delegitimize their arguments

but to expand the discussion of disempowerment to also include homeless members of the community, advancing a more nuanced understanding of the ways in which both housed and homeless residents are marginalized through municipal decisions.

The issue at hand is one that I address in Chapter 4—the perception that people with market-rate housing, particularly mortgage-based housing, have a higher citizenship status than those without housing, that they deserve more of a representative voice. As one opponent said, “Transient people bring baggage. We have enough baggage on the north end of Champaign...If you keep on shoving things down our throat without a decision...then we shouldn’t have to pay equal taxes” (CCCmeeting121697). In intimating this, those home-owning citizens frame themselves as having less voice than citizens with businesses and wealth. At the same time, they are invoking their citizenship status as homeowners over that of homeless people through their rhetorical omissions of homeless considerations. By this, I do not mean that the omission is purposeful. Rather, I believe it is an inherent lack of consideration based on community norms of a separation of homeless people from the rest of the community. As one opponent said,

To most people in the city it’s going to look like that if you’re a business man on Neil Street, you can bend the City Council to do what you want...and if you’re a citizen and a homeowner it does no good to voice your opinion to the Council because the Council will do what they want to anyway, in the interest of, I guess you would call it big money in the city” (CCCmeeting121697).

This exclusive approach to participation is not the only one available. In particular, while the TIMES Center proposal was met with significant neighborhood opposition, supporters’ responses offered a move toward equality. For instance, location was a major point of contention, and while several dozen neighboring businesses and residents spoke against the location, multiple supporters pushed back, arguing that the soon-to-be residents of the TIMES Center should be consulted about the location that works best for them, and that it should not just be a discussion between opponents and

the project developer. One TIMES Center supporter highlighted the prioritization of particular stakeholders and what she felt the ethical prioritization should be, asking,

What is best for the clients of the shelters?...I'm interested in them being part of a task force that is commissioned by the City Council to review the site and come up with decisions and ideas about those two sites. What services do they, as walkers, need to be near?...When will the discussion of the location of the shelter include other voices, and I don't mean other property owners? (CCCmeeting112597). She goes on to offer recommendations, including the following: Create and honor a democratic process where various interest groups involved in this issue come to the discussion table as equals. Redefine the understanding of interest to include more than property interests...[and] Ask those without homes who use the shelter which site they prefer. Form a committee of the homeless clients to visit, review, and comment on the sites (TIMES supporter, CCCmeeting112597).

Conclusion

What a policy of equality looks like for Champaign-Urbana is an unanswered question. While public narratives of equality have circulated in the community, they have not been the central platforms for the majority of city council members, the stakeholders who have the greatest amount of power in dictating local funding and support for homeless housing. While project developers have the greatest amount of power in shaping the housing, they must also work within the political will of the community if they want funding and support. Thus city council members' contributions to the public narrative are of central importance to shaping a politics and policy of equality. Those who have not supported shelter/housing development tend to think that "they're not part of our community," but for those who have supported shelter/housing development, which constitutes the vast majority of city council members over the years, they have largely supported it because they perceive homeless individuals to be problem members of the community and to a lesser extent because they saw them as needing help or becoming reformed citizens.¹⁰⁶ As a result, project developers have largely created spaces that reflect narratives of "problem," "neediness," and "in need of reform."

¹⁰⁶ By the numbers, city council members made 15 assertions of "problem" members, 11 "not part of the community," 9 "need our help," 7 "reform," and 4 "equality" statements.

Moving to *policies* of equality requires elevating *narratives* of equality and implementing the changes they suggest. To bring the right to housing and right to the city to bear on policies of equality, we must enact policies of redistribution and recognition. In terms of recognition, homeless individuals must have a right to participate in the planning of these shelter/housing developments as well as other policies that impact their lives. Rather than try to anticipate needs or develop a false sense of understanding of homeless needs, those who will be most impacted by policies should participate fully in planning them. Second, we must recognize the value and worth of all members of the community, regardless of housing status. Widespread provision of decent, affordable housing is necessary as a form of redistribution, but in reality, most communities are not able to provide the amount that is necessary to house everyone and not all individuals are interested in being traditionally housed. That is why issues of recognition are critical. “Needing our help” gladly grants redistributive policies, as does “reforming,” but neither recognize homeless individuals as first and foremost citizens of the community. As Leonard Feldman (2004) suggests, instead of solely focusing on moving people into normalized housing as a prerequisite of becoming part of “society,” communities need to focus on changing the criteria for being part of society. Thus a politics of equality is not centrally about provision of housing and participation in planning that housing alone, but also granting rights to those who continue to remain unhoused in the community.

CHAPTER 7: MEANINGS AND NEEDS OF “HOME” AND THE CENTRAL ROLE OF PRIVACY

Home is both an idea and a reality. Comprised of one’s emotional relationships as well as the attendant physical structures and dwelling practices, “home” is a complex construct. In one description of the Men’s Emergency Shelter, the author/news reporter quoted a man who called the shelter “The Twilight Zone,” remarking that the term, “given their position in between a normal home situation and the streets, doesn’t seem unfitting” (Kotowski, 1997, p.10). This comment reveals an assumption about what constitutes a “normal” home situation. It is certainly not a group of men sleeping on cots in an open room. But beyond that, what do we really mean by “normal” home?

Home has been mobilized as a particular ideal through government policy, directing and measuring the personal aspirations of Americans. As personal realities, though, the national ideal is tempered, contradicted, or supported by individual nuances resulting from the interactions between one’s personal experience and meaning-making, policy incentives, cultural norms, existing social networks, and available material resources. Environmental psychologists and critical geography scholars have attempted to uncover the personal side of home, particularly focusing on the key aspects of “home” that have personal meaning and relevance for those who are inhabiting the “homes.” I adopt this approach for two reasons: 1) it situates the meaning of home with the person/people who have engaged in home practices, ensuring that the meaning is developed from actual experience, and 2) it has the capacity to decouple meanings of home from the normative ideals advanced by policy and other governmental structures that dictate what home should be. To challenge dominant ideals, researchers must work to bring on-the-ground meanings to bear on these ideals, rather than simply report individual meanings. Phenomenological and environmental psychology approaches to “home” have advanced tremendous insight into individual meanings of home, but with lesser attention to how these individual meanings fit (or don’t fit) into the broader structural framework of “home” in the U.S. This is the

challenge I address in the proceeding pages, seeking to bring technically labeled “homeless” individuals’ understandings of home into contact with policymakers’ and service providers’ understandings of home and how shelters/housing meet various elements of home. Through the juxtaposition of stakeholders’ perspectives, I analyze the social and physical spaces of five of the six shelter/housing projects considered in this dissertation.¹⁰⁷

Defining “home”

“Home” can be described in multiple ways. In terms of function, a home is usually thought to meet daily living needs, including storage, washing/drying of clothing, sleeping, sanitation and waste management, bathing, and securing body and possessions. Psychological needs create a different set of functions for the home, namely performing one’s private self, claiming territory, relaxing, securing peace of mind, maintaining a positive self-identity (pride, respect, dignity), protecting oneself from others, maintaining a sense of consistency in one’s surroundings, providing for self and others’ (independence, self-sufficiency), social support (often family), and maintaining control/ownership over a space.¹⁰⁸ While all of these needs may not be met by many people’s living situations, it is important to consider how people attempt to meet these needs and how this maps socially and spatially onto dominant notions of home, which are most often associated with homeownership in single-family detached houses (for more critique, see Perin, 1977; Ronald, 2008; Saunders, 1990).

Understanding personal needs and how those needs are met by different spaces allows for an evaluation of shelters from the perspective of home needs. Social work scholar Helen Hartnett finds that literature on homelessness lacks “critical examination of the way in which the attitudes regarding

¹⁰⁷ I omit the Springer Center from this analysis because it was never built as a shelter. Each of the other five projects existed as a material reality, though Safe Haven only existed for one year, with three of those months as a tent community.

¹⁰⁸ Interviews with service providers and homeless individuals, as well as existing “home” literature named these needs of home consistently and repeatedly. See Mendoza (1994), Veness (1993), Moore (2007), Wakin (2005) for additional discussions of home.

“homelessness” and “homeless” people relate to the places we call shelter” (2000, p.54). Everyday understandings of homelessness that guide local community decision-making and other community-based efforts often define homelessness as “the absence of what society says is standard, conventional and legal” (Veness, 1993, p.322). An alternative option is to look at homelessness in light of the larger understandings of the definitions and meanings of home, particularly those meanings that are advanced by people experiencing homelessness. For instance, Veness (1993) argues that there are habitats that society accepts as “home” but poor people find unacceptable, such as shelters for the homeless. She also points to the rising standards in housing—without the money to combat insufficient resources—as jeopardizing alternative definitions of home in the name of public safety. Faced with economic conditions that do not allow every person in the U.S. to live in a code-compliant apartment or house, we must come to terms with what developing countries have long recognized—in the absence of government assistance, people have the power to make their own homes in ways that are acceptable and economically viable to them, and that reflect their dignity and resourcefulness (Amster, 2008; Moore, 2007; Wright, 1997). As housing/home researcher Moore poignantly argues, “It may be our discomfort rather than theirs that has led to a focus on the absences in this experience, rather than the presence” (2007, p.152).

Scholars agree that “home” goes beyond just shelter, but what does it mean to provide home? A service provider and developer’s responses in an interview revealed some of the ambiguous areas that need to be addressed more substantively. In response to my question about what stable housing meant and what elements constitute stable housing, one service provider responded, “It meant someplace that they felt they could identify as their home. So it didn’t matter if it was a bedroom that was shared with someone else or an apartment, and we also recognized that people needed different types of housing, so from there we developed a continuum of housing” (36Interview). Yet this response does not indicate a clear sense of what “home” means or how one might go about achieving it in a housing program or

space. Other local service providers and housing advocates have been clearer, with one saying, “People need more than a roof over their heads, he said. They need water, sewer and other utility services. They need a safe place to cook meals, somewhere to wash their clothes, somewhere to store their belongings” (Bauer, 2009). Yet these qualities address only physiological and daily functioning needs, and do not embody the experiences and feelings that many associate with home.

Two homeless participants address their experiences and feelings of home, offering a number of critiques of dominant notions of home as residence, and a starting point for examining the less tangible, yet crucially important aspects of “home.”¹⁰⁹

Home is a comfort, a feeling of -- it's a little bit of what life's about -- everything. Loved ones, environment, the way you're treated in a community -- it's basically interaction with other people. To me that's home. People might be living in New York, but they'll say San Francisco is home. There's a reason why they call the whole city home. It's an accumulation of a lot of things, not just a house. It's the entire structure. I hope my home is bigger than a house, because if all it is a house, it's awful small. (HH1.003)

Homeless means to me that I don't have that roof. But homeless is also where my man is -- my husband. That's my home. I have a home wherever. A home is not four walls. A home is a state of mind. I can have home in a tent. I can have home out in the bushes at the park. It's where I choose to lay. I know that's kind of silly, but that's what it is. A home is a state of mind. (HH1.006)

Elements of “home”

Experientially-based literature describes homeless individuals’ perspectives on “home” at great length, but these studies often lack a grounded framework from which to make sense of the varied meanings and their significance.¹¹⁰ To ground this study’s analysis of shelters as spaces of “home”

¹⁰⁹ Other researchers have also recognized that the notion of home simply as residence misses the broader place relationships involved in “home,” such as social networks, inhabitation, self-determined habits, control, and physical security (Dovey, 1985; Moore, 2007; Reinders and van der Land, 2008; Rivlin and Moore, 2001; Rowe and Wolch, 1990; Veness 1993).

¹¹⁰ For examples, see May, 2000a; 2000b; Mendoza, 1994; Radley, Hodgetts and Cullen, 2005; Wakin, 2005

provision, I turn to the field of psychology, particularly social and environmental psychology.

Psychologist Abraham Maslow's 1946 article, "Theory of human motivation," identified six human needs that he posited as being met in a linear order, meaning that a "higher" need could not be met until the lower needs were fulfilled. In order of importance, these needs include physiological (hunger/thirst), safety (from bodily harm), belonging (affection/love), esteem (positive self-evaluation), self-actualization, and cognitive and aesthetic needs (thirst for knowledge/beauty). In analyzing "needs" statements about and by homeless individuals, I followed Maslow's hierarchy of needs, categorizing these statements into the following types: physiological, safety, esteem, belonging, and self-actualization, leaving out only the highest order need.¹¹¹ These needs form the basis for determining the elements of home that are necessary to support basic human functioning and well-being.

Dearborn and Xu (2007) developed Maslow's needs into a hierarchy of housing needs, detailed in the diagram below. This translation assumes that providing for basic physiological needs is of utmost importance, followed by a need to establish a territory within which a resident can maintain control (2007, p.246). The need for belonging is met by housing as comfort/home, and esteem needs are met by housing that positively represents the self.

¹¹¹ My intention was to determine to what degree and in what level of detail these different levels of needs were discussed by community stakeholders. The results are startling, as public discussion barely touches on any of the needs beyond safety. In sharp contrast, when homeless individuals are asked about their needs, they describe their needs across a variety of areas. The majority of these needs statements were made by homeless individuals.

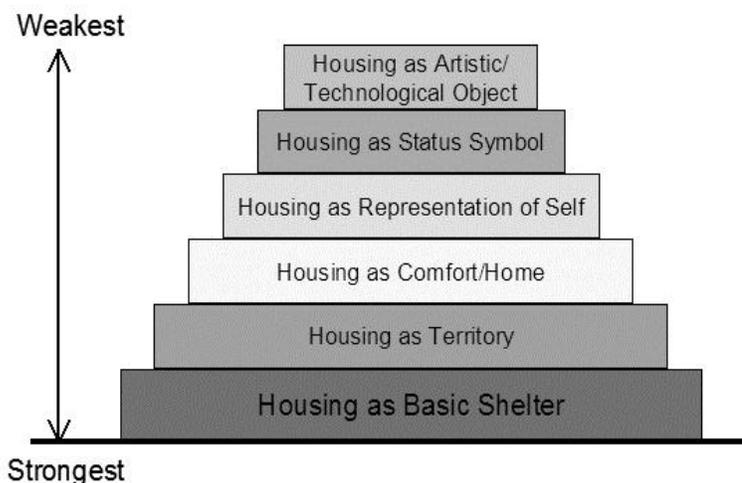


Figure 5: Diagram of the hierarchy of housing needs. Diagram in Dearborn and Xu, 2007, p.246.

This translation of Maslow's human needs to the realm of housing offers an instructive evaluation tool by which to measure the extent to which shelters meet human needs. I work from Maslow's (1943) human needs and Dearborn and Xu's (2007) translation to needs of housing. Peter Somerville articulates five dimensions of home that have corresponding needs in Maslow and Dearborn and Xu's models. These dimensions include *shelter*—material form of home, meeting physiological needs; *hearth*—warmth and comfort, meeting belonging needs; *heart*—emotional happiness and stability through support, meeting belonging needs; *privacy*—power to control one's own boundaries, meeting safety needs, as well as laying the groundwork for meeting belonging and esteem needs; and *roots*—one's source of identity and meaningfulness, meeting esteem needs (1992, p.532-3).

In relying on Dearborn and Xu and Somerville's elements of shelter, hearth, heart, privacy, and roots, I argue that housing does much more than provide basic shelter—it must support the basic human needs of physiological, safety, belonging and esteem.¹¹² Based on scholarly understandings, as well as my own recognition within my empirical data, I find privacy to be a fundamental human need (Altman, 1976; Moore, 2007; Newell, 1995). Privacy is also an essential element in achieving safety,

¹¹² For evidence of the importance of esteem in human development and well-being, and the role that housing plays in meeting this need, see Blokland (2008), Dupuis and Thorns (1998), Hiscock et al (2001), Mee (2007), Mifflin and Wilton (2005), Newton (2008), Padgett (2007), and Vandemark (2007).

belonging and esteem. As such, I address privacy in this chapter, as well as needs of safety and security, as I find them highly related to, and sometimes conflated with, issues of privacy.¹¹³ In the next chapter, I discuss and evaluate each of the shelter/housing projects through the lens of each of the remaining elements of home: shelter, heart, hearth and roots.¹¹⁴

The primacy of privacy for basic human functioning and well-being

Privacy is a basic human need (Altman, 1976). Privacy has been explored, and its importance solidified, across many fields. As environmental psychologist Patricia Newell says,

There is a consensus that privacy has a value. Philosophers see it as a necessary part of human existence. Psychologists emphasize the importance of privacy to ego development and maintenance. Sociologists focus on the value of privacy in sustaining human relationships in general and intimacy in particular. Lawyers and political scientists view it as a basic human right (1995, p.98).

Philosophical perspectives emphasize the links between privacy and personhood. Philosopher Jeffrey Reiman argues, “Privacy is a social ritual by means of which an individual's moral title to his existence is conferred...Privacy is necessary to the creation of selves...The right to privacy, then, protects the individual's interest in becoming, being, and remaining a person...” (1976, p.39, 44). Beyond its facilitation of personhood, environmental psychologists see privacy as necessary for identity and ego

¹¹³ For a full theorization of security versus privacy, see Himma, K.E. (2007). “Separation, risk, and the necessity of privacy to well-being: a comment on Adam Moore’s *Toward informational privacy rights*.” *San Diego Law Review* 44(4), pp.847-856.

¹¹⁴ I do not evaluate how well each project performs its theoretical function of moving people out of homelessness. Each of the five elements of home exists in relation to the others, and focus on moving people “out of homelessness” belies the reality that people may find more elements of home in a shelter or a tent city than they do in their own apartment or with family members, both of which are encouraged as paths out of homelessness. In addition, the focus on moving people out of homelessness negates the reality that human beings have needs at all times, not only at times when they live in environments deemed as suitable “homes.” Scholars frequently use the example of a woman fleeing a violent home environment—in the act, she becomes technically homeless, yet her new living situation is more stable than the ‘homed’ environment (Bowlby, Gregory and McKie, 1997; Gerson, 2006; Klodawsky, 2006; Mallett, 2004). Experienced realities like these call for attention to the provision of each element of home, rather than continuing to rely on and advance normative notions of home that do not adequately account for lived experiences.

development, i.e. the need for esteem. Evans and Eichelman note that environmental psychology studies have found that,

Constant, close exposure to aggregates may be a threat to our individual sense of self and ego boundary. Perhaps personal space functions as a concrete expression of ego boundary...Territory for us may be a symbolic manifestation of the sense of self or of group-identity maintenance...Privacy...seen as one's control over interaction, may be directly linked...When we have the option to be away from the group for even brief periods of time, it seems reasonable that this tension between group and self is reduced (1976, p.110).

Environmental psychologists agree that privacy is "vital for establishing and sustaining ego development... Access to privacy is important to all ages, from infancy through old age" (Evans and Eichelman, 1976, p.98). It is of particular importance in homeless shelters, as Evans and Eichelman document, because of the traumatic moment residents are experiencing. They say, "An important component of persons undergoing identity crisis is the inability to become familiar with the physical or social surroundings" (Evans and Eichelman, 1976, p.112). Indeed, many scholars address this problem, saying that learned helplessness and despondency occur in "chronically uncontrollable settings" like homeless shelters, prisons, and mental institutions (Evans and Eichelman, 1976; Newell, 1995, p.96). Jeffrey Reiman cites Goffman's analysis of "total institutions," i.e. asylums, prisons and other uncontrollable settings, in which Goffman argues that the collection of stigmatizing information upon admission, coupled with collective living and lack of retreat from others, robs individuals of their personhood and self identity (Reiman, 1976, p.40). Thus privacy in homeless shelters is of vital importance to the development and well-being of residents.

The need for privacy has been historically documented. During the time of tenements, municipal lodging houses and residential hotels, the overwhelming choice for hotel residents, when financially possible, was the cage hotel because it provided privacy and freedom, with a door that one could lock (Hoch and Slayton 1989). Individuals only sought the municipal lodging house when they were desperate, even though it provided a free meal and space on a floor (DePastino, 2003). Despite

the large jump in cost (25 cents as opposed to 15 cents for dormitory-style), residents would gladly pay the difference for the privacy and freedom of one's own room. Equating the freedom of a locked door to the freedom of travel, they describe them both as the "freedom to control their own time" (Hoch and Slayton, 1989, p.52). Writing in 1989, Hoch and Slayton foretell the policy implications that remain relevant today--that individuals will continue to choose lodging that allows autonomy and independence, and avoid lodging that does not allow these qualities of living.

Defining privacy

Definitions of privacy abound, but in general, environmental psychologists can agree that privacy is control of one's interactions with others and outside stimuli, and control of information about oneself (Altman, 1976; Dearborn and Xu, 2007; Moore, 2007; Newell, 1995; Sparks, 2010). The ways in which privacy is achieved are numerous, and scholars have examined privacy from a number of perspectives, including focus on person, place, and person-environment interactions (Newell, 1995). As environmental psychologist Barbara Brown notes, biological definitions focus on the demarcation, control and defense of space, while social definitions focus on the organizational benefits of territoriality, bringing to light the feelings and values associated with the space, not just the behavior toward the space itself (Brown, 1987). Peter Somerville (1992) looks at person-environment interactions with a focus on place, defining privacy as control over one's boundaries, ability to exclude others, and ability to prohibit others from surveillance of self, as well as possession of territory. I find Amos Rapaport's definition to be more inclusive and encompassing of the dialectical nature of privacy, as he defines privacy as "the ability to control interactions, to have options, and to achieve desired interactions." (in Lang, 1987, p.145). Irwin Altman points to this dialectic, remarking that, "There are times when people want to be alone and out of contact with others and there are times when others are sought out, to be heard and to hear, to talk and to listen. Thus, privacy is not solely a "keep out" or "let in" process" (Altman, 1975, p. 23). By Rapaport's and Altman's definitions, it is clear that privacy is

not simply retreating from the outside world but involves complex socio-spatial relations in which individuals navigate the control of boundaries, exclusion/inclusion, and security.

Privacy encompasses a number of needs of “home.” As privacy scholar Stephen Margulis notes, “Privacy is neither a self-sufficient state nor an end in itself, but a means for achieving the overall end of self-realization” (2003, p.412). Environmental psychologist Jon Lang identifies four types of privacy: *solitude* (free from observation of others), *intimacy* (being with another person free from the outside world), *anonymity* (being unknown in a crowd), and *reserve* (psychological barriers to unwanted intrusion) (Lang, 1987, p.145). Privacy also serves multiple functions, including *personal autonomy (roots)*, *release of emotions (hearth, heart)*, *self-evaluation* and *limiting and protection of communication (roots)*, as well as aiding in establishing *identity and security (safety, roots)* (Lang, 1987).¹¹⁵ Philosopher Jeffrey Reiman describes the interconnected nature of privacy, saying, “It is sufficient that I can *control* whether and by whom my body is experienced in some significant places and that I have the *real possibility of repairing to those places*. It is a right which protects my capacity to enter into *intimate relations*” (my emphasis throughout) (Reiman, 1976, p.44).

From these types and functions of privacy, as well as homeless individuals’ and other stakeholders’ needs statements, I develop a discussion of a number of motivations and types of privacy in the following sections, including 1) safety and security, 2) solitude / retreat from others, 3) protection from the outside world, 4) territoriality and defensible space, and 5) autonomy and personal control.

Privacy as a means to ensure personal safety and security

The need for safety and security is of utmost importance for human functioning and well-being.¹¹⁶ Safety and security of person and possessions, beyond physiological needs, is the first need to

¹¹⁵ Here I connect Lang’s functions of privacy to the elements of home that I address in Chapter 8. The importance of privacy for each of these elements is addressed at length in Chapter 8.

¹¹⁶ Historians and scholars of contemporary culture argue that “home” has increasingly been associated with a residence, with mounting concerns for the safety and security of the residence and its occupants (DePastino, 2003;

be met by housing. Evans and Eichelman (1976) argue that humans place symbolic meaning on interactions, and in unfamiliar situations, it is the perceived threat(s) to our person that may cause stress to increase. Contrasting this need for security with the need for other types of privacy, legal scholar Kenneth Himma remarks, “The need for personal space is not the same as the need for privacy. My need to have a home of my own is a matter of wanting separation for the purpose of personal space, which is primarily motivated by a desire for security, not privacy” (Himma, 2007, p.850).¹¹⁷ As two TIMES Center residents said, safety means “mak[ing] sure people can't come in there. There's locks and stuff,” and “my own place. I mean there's a chance someone could come in my house and rob me but it's not likely to happen” (TIMES Interview). Privacy and territoriality issues become more important when strangers occupy an open space together. One homeless participant described shared living spaces like shelters as the following:

Everybody has their own private living area, whether it's an open room or not. When they park themselves on their bed, that is their castle. I don't know if you have ever been confined or talked to anybody who has been confined, like if you were in a dorm. Nobody is on your bed or near your stuff. When people would walk through the big room at the [shelter], the people that were institutionalized -- that didn't go over when people were walking in their stuff. More arguments started there because of that. You have to think the way that they are thinking. You're going to steal from me? I'm just trying to get stuff for myself now, and you're going to take it from me? [The best design for that would be] partitions or collapsible partitions. Pull out, plastic partitions would be perfect between private spaces. (VIS.008)

Low, 2008). Here I acknowledge the focus on safety and security but attach it to all dwelling spaces, not just those traditionally associated with a residence.

¹¹⁷ I believe Himma is correct in separating needs of security from needs of privacy, but where his argument falls short is that privacy rights are unnecessary, as he says, “property rights suffice to protect the need for separation in contexts like this. Privacy rights seem superfluous” (2007, p.851). The first mistake in this argument is his assumption that everyone has property rights. His second mistake is to assume that the only need for privacy is to satisfy feelings of personal security or that other needs of privacy can easily be met, as he says, “As long as I have a physical space from which I can exclude other people as a matter of property right, my need for separation is satisfied. Of course, there are some instances in which a need for separation is about protecting privacy. That is why I shut the bathroom door” (Himma, 2007, p.851). Yet he fails to acknowledge situations in which privacy meets other needs and cannot easily be met.

Homeless individuals and those who allied themselves with the homeless discussed safety in terms of protecting people experiencing homelessness from violence to their bodies and achieving a sense of security in their environment. TIMES Center residents primarily focused on the differing backgrounds of people, the dangers of drugs and alcohol, and a general wariness of strangers. Drawing out the dangers of shelters, TIMES Center residents said,

I don't feel secure cause a lot of guys is from the penitentiary and they still have that penitentiary mentality...so safe wise I don't feel safe cause anything can happen at any moment so I'm always watching what I say and what's going on around me and things like that but uh I don't think it's possible to feel safe in an environment like this (TIMES Interview).

You're getting people from all different places and different personalities you know and that's what makes it dangerous cuz you get one person in and he's timid...but you have someone come right behind him and he been in the penitentiary for fifteen years and he come in here and he basically mentally raping the guys around him you know running game on them as we say, you know getting them out of they money getting them out of cigarettes if they smoking cigarettes, or things like that...I mean you know most guys wouldn't feel safe in this environment (TIMES Interview).

Safe Haven members brought the dangers of being homeless to the forefront through their statements in a number of news stories, as well as their interviews. In the news stories, they emphasized the importance of group living as a protection against bodily harm. One of the original members stated, "Each night I set up camp, I was afraid. I ended up hiding all over the city" (Monson, 2009a). One article reported on the experiences of a Safe Haven member, recounting,

David Nash knows how dangerous life can be for homeless people living alone on the streets. While Nash was serving time in state prison for forgery in August 2002, his father was beaten to death by three teenage boys in a grassy area near the Martin Luther King subdivision in Champaign. Robert James Nash, 55, had been living nearby at the TIMES Center, a transitional housing facility for homeless men, but was kicked out for violating the center's rules, his son said. "Sleeping out there in the elements, anything can happen to you," Nash said" (Petrella, 2009b).¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ The dangers of homelessness are well documented in the National Coalition for the Homeless and National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty 2008 report titled *Hate, violence and death on Main Street USA: a report on*

These stories were reinforced in personal interviews with Safe Haven members. One man described getting jumped on his way back to the Safe Haven site, saying, “Now half my body's numb. It messed me up for several days...Not a good location. And I had thought about that before I even said I'd come out here to [the site]” (PT.004). Another couple, both members of Safe Haven, described their decision to leave a place where they were camping solo, saying that somebody destroyed their tent one day while they were gone—“We came back one day and it was on its side with a hole cut in it” (PT1.005 and 007). They had chosen their camping spot because of safety reasons, saying, “What attracted us was that it wasn't so much noticeable by the police or the park people, so we weren't so noticeable” (PT1.005 and 007). When asked why they decided to leave after the person cut up the tent, they replied, “Why waste the money? And just have it happen again? We didn't know exactly who it could've been but we thought if it was a cop, they would've left their business calling card, but who knows” (PT1.005 and 007).

The need for safety in Safe Haven was apparent in their rules and in the way advocates and members discussed the group. Out of ten rules, six of them dealt explicitly with safety and security issues, forbidding physical violence, alcohol/drug use and possession, possession of stolen property, theft, weapons, and verbal abuse and threats. One city councilmember publicly acknowledged, “They have somewhat of a point with tent cities, that being together keeps them safer” (Monson, 2009c). In my own advocacy for the group, my perspective was noted in a news article,

For this group of people, who would normally camp solo around the city, Safe Haven provides an element of law and order. Abby Harmon, 27, a Safe Haven advocate, described the homeless community as a community ruled by might. Imagine if there was no police intervention in your neighborhood and any person stronger than you could come into your house, beat you up, take your possessions, and assume residence in your home...Coming

hate crimes and violence against people experiencing homelessness 2007. The News Gazette article went on to report, “Last year, there were 106 violent acts committed against homeless people nationwide, 27 of which were fatal, according to the National Coalition for the Homeless. In Illinois, there were attacks in Elgin and Peoria and a string of beatings in Rockford” (Petrella, 2009b).

together in community takes away some of that individualistic tendency to protect the self at all cost. People start looking out for each other. It also allows the community to develop expectations and to make and enforce rules. "I don't think people see a tent community as introducing order, but it is," Harmon said" (Dillon, 2009a).

Safety and security are also weighty concerns for women and children. Many news articles and public comments regarding CWIT addressed the high incidence of violence and abuse that led many women and children to seek out shelters. The Housing Authority of Champaign County was quoted as saying that they give preference to women and children under threat of violence from ex-spouses (Diaz, 1991, p.5). However, those environments can also pose threats to personal safety as well. One woman said about the Housing Authority, "They offered me a public housing unit at Mansard Square." While they were there, someone pulled a knife on her son. "There was no way I was going to bring my children into an environment like that, so I refused the offer and requested Section Eight instead"" (Diaz, 1991, p.5). CWIT is largely depicted as a safe and secure environment, though one news article references a former resident's concerns, saying, "Lewis has complaints about the shelter now— possessions disappearing, the lack of privacy" (Bernard, 1991b, p.4). Despite the private bedrooms and nice amenities of CWIT, there are still issues related to shelter living. The psychological impacts of shelter living were addressed in one news article that reported the connection between psychological and physical harm, saying,

"Kids who live in shelters are traumatized," says Michael Marubio, executive director of the Illinois Coalition for the Homeless. "They show a higher incidence of violence, depression and not doing as well in school." The Regional Planning Commission's 1990 homeless assistance plan also cites the psychologically damaging effects of homelessness on children. "Without the security of a home, childhood development is significantly altered or delayed. Children may regress to crawling and bed-wetting, or become either aggressive or withdrawn," the report states. "Their education, school life and social development, along with development of a healthy self-image, are disrupted and often destroyed" (Bernard, 1991b, p.4).

The type of safety and security raised in this article are certainly not the same as those raised by Safe Haven members, but they are equally important in thinking about individuals' long-term

development, functioning and well-being. Across the projects, the one central component of all concerns for safety and security is that individuals need to *feel* a sense of safety and security. These feelings can be achieved through a combination of behavioral and environmental manipulations like having a locked door, surrounding oneself with people who you trust, and enforcing behavioral rules. These are all privacy strategies that have the central purpose of maintaining personal safety.

One final aspect of shelter living deserves attention—the issue of unfamiliar people, or “strangers.” Many of the TIMES Center residents expressed unease about the people who would be drunk at the shelter, saying they never knew what they would do. One resident said the best way to feel safe and secure would be to “quit letting drunks in here...I think everybody who come in here should have to take a breathalyzer right when they walk in because that’s going to lower the number of fighting” (TIMES Interview). Another resident said, “There was a fair amount of drug dealing and you know it didn’t really turn into violence but a fair amount of confrontation; it doesn’t seem to be the case this go-around” (TIMES Interview). Safe Haven members also reflected this unease, but their experience points to the issue of familiarity and strangers in impacting the sense of safety and security. When Safe Haven first exploded in size after moving indoors at St. Mary’s parish center, I recall suddenly starting to hear complaints about gang bangers and other sorts of “dangerous” people coming to the parish center, and I realized that, realities of danger aside, the perception of threat greatly increased when people no longer were familiar with each other. For instance, one of the original Safe Haven members got drunk fairly often and would hit objects and walls or say nonsensical statements to the other members. The group was never scared of him, though, and they didn’t perceive him as a safety concern. Drunk strangers are quite another matter, and this issue of strangers in the shelter is an important one because strangers are seen as unpredictable, and they cannot be socially controlled in the same way as acquaintances, making spatial demarcations even more important. For instance, Level 2 of the TIMES Center has dramatically increased safety, including a key-coded door and restrictions that only level 2

residents can enter the area, so despite the prevalence of strangers, Level 2 residents can retreat to a space in which they feel protected from others.

Impediments to community acknowledgement of safety as a fundamental need

Across the shelter discussions, “safety” was raised as a concern, but stakeholders did not agree on whose safety was at stake with the projects.¹¹⁹ Dramatic differences split homeless and housed discussions of safety. When safety needs were raised by housed members of the community, they generally referred to the safety of others in the community, not the safety of the homeless individuals. Project opponents and others speaking generally about “safety” attribute the violence to the homeless individuals and portray the housed population as the ones who need protection. Safety of surrounding neighbors was a big issue in three of the projects—TIMES Center, Safe Haven, and Homestead Apartments. Regarding TIMES Center, “safety” talk focused on protecting the surrounding neighborhoods and downtown business district from the homeless men—their threatening behavior was variously portrayed as panhandling, theft, urinating outside, and behaviors that remained undefined but threatening. These were often vague statements about protecting women, children, and teens from the men. With Safe Haven, discussion also focused on ensuring the safety of the surrounding neighbors, and their threatening behaviors were portrayed as theft, occupying spaces that were not theirs, and generally making people feel scared to come out of their homes—again, the vague sense that they are unpredictable and dangerous. These same types of statements were made about Homestead Apartments residents—theft and crime were most often cited as problems that the residents would bring with them to the neighborhood.

In the case of Homestead Apartments, project opponents had an additional argument to make about the safety of the residents, one that allowed them to advocate for more restrictive policies

¹¹⁹ Over three quarters of these statements were made by homeless individuals themselves, suggesting that this personal need is more understood and overt for homeless individuals than other stakeholders.

regarding alcohol and weapons. One News Gazette editorial argued that developers needed to introduce “a number of safeguards to ensure that the efficiency apartments provide a safe and secure environment” because,

No one is suggesting that single, homeless individuals are derelicts who can't be trusted. But most would acknowledge that the homeless population has a larger percentage of drug, alcohol and mental health problems than does the population at large. And it will take only one unruly resident at the Homestead Apartments to create a dangerous situation for the entire building. Why allow the potential for even greater danger by permitting alcohol and weapons?” (Garhart, 1997).

But in fact, the argument is exactly that homeless individuals are derelicts who can't be trusted-- they can't be trusted to monitor themselves, to get jobs without external motivation, to not start fights, and to not engage in criminal activity. The opponents' arguments pivot on the notion that homeless individuals cannot be trusted and are likely the root cause of safety issues. To the extent that the community relies on normative assumptions about the dangerous nature of homeless individuals, these individuals' needs for safety and security will not be acknowledged.¹²⁰

Solitude, retreat from others, freedom from observation

Environmental psychologist Patricia Newell describes “privacy as solitude” as being alone and unobserved (1995). Lang argues that “privacy should not be seen simply as the physical withdrawal of a person from others in a quest for seclusion” (1987, p.145). For instance, “isolation” occurs when physical or psychological barriers stand in the way of interactions with others (Newell, 1995). Despite the need for other types of privacy and for balance, the need for seclusion continues to be an important aspect of privacy. My empirical data clearly indicates the need for personal space in which to retreat. TIMES Center residents place a high priority on privacy and its attendant benefits, with several commenting that much of their time is spent with other people and that it is hard to get away by yourself. One resident of CWIT expressed the same need, saying she missed “privacy...and being able to

¹²⁰ I address this particular debate in the proceeding section on territoriality, defensible space and control.

just sit down and relax without any arguing” (Nelson, 1995, p.8). Altman, Vinsel and Brown noted that, “the inability to shut out others is threatening and debilitating. Not only has this research noted that excessive contact is negative, but it has examined how people struggle to regain an acceptable level of inaccessibility from others” (1981, p.114). In my advocacy for Safe Haven, I presented this perspective in one news article, arguing, “We believe that privacy is a part of dignity. And one of the things that happens with emergency shelters or transitional centers, if there is no wall separating you from somebody else, it's very difficult to have your own sense of haven or sanctuary away from people, away from just the chaos of day-to-day events” (Petrella, 2009b).

Across the projects, this aspect of privacy is fairly clear-cut. Homestead Apartments offers a totally private living space, allowing individuals to escape visual observation regardless of their activities in the space, and to remove themselves from others at their will. CWIT offers private bedrooms with communal living spaces, offering much less solitude but still the option of retreating to one’s bedroom at her will. Safe Haven offered private sleeping spaces with communal living spaces as well, offering similar levels of privacy as CWIT, though their auditory privacy is much lower than with CWIT, given the thinness of tent walls. Single women at CWIT have no totally private space, though, and have only the option of going to one’s bunk in a room with other women. Men’s Emergency Shelter and TIMES Center Level 1 offer no capacity for retreating from others, though Level 2 does offer a semi-private room. About Level 1, one of the developers remarked, “It wasn’t very private, but you can’t expect that if you’re sleeping for the night, sleeping on a mat on a floor some place, that’s what we were basing that on, mat on a floor in an open area for the emergency section” (27Interview).

Safe Haven’s progression from tents to indoor living (at the St. Mary’s parish center) provided a unique lens through which residents could look back on their time in tents and compare it to their shared living situation. In reflecting on these changes, one resident said,

When we was at St. Marys, I kept saying, man, I'd rather be back in my tent cause at least I had...it was just canvas sides but it was like I had privacy, you know, you change your clothes in there and not worry about it. And then when we was in st. marys we had the bathroom and if you was laying out in the dayroom if that's what you wanna call it you was under everybody's eye. I'm a real light sleeper anyway and people would just make noise early in the morning and I was like I don't wanna wake up yet, cause once I'm awake I'm usually awake. [The tent] was like my own space, I guess I wasn't really in that tent that long, for a few months, but I noticed when we went to st marys...it was like we were all in like a little fish bowl. (SWT.004)



Figure 6: Safe Haven resident sits in the doorway of his private space. Photo by author

Privacy as protection from the outside world

Shelters are often the only space into which homeless individuals can retreat from the outside world. Though retreat from the outside world is certainly not the only aspect of privacy, it is one that individuals cite as important. I separate this aspect from the idea of retreat, or solitude, in which individuals can separate themselves from all others and from observation. In this aspect of privacy, the important parts are that protection from threats in the outside world are minimized, including police and people who mean to do bodily harm to or create problems for residents, like abusive partners or drug dealers. Each housing project handled this issue differently, based on developers' philosophies and physical constraints. Homestead Apartments developers were able to address the issue most easily, since the physical layout of the SRO complex was like an internal entrance apartment building with

limited exits. One developer said, "We've also got controlled space, and we don't have any exits to the outside that can't be watched" (CCCmeeting010996). The developer demonstrates knowledge of the need for residents to have protection from the outside world, as well as the need for security of one's territory. CWIT also controls unwanted interactions with the outside world by securing the buildings. A news article reported one way these were controlled, "For privacy reasons, the building will have two entrances -- one for residents, and one for new clients or others coming to attend meetings" (Wurth, 2002a). Visitors must go through the main office before being given clearance to go through the buildings, keeping all bedrooms and living spaces away from visitors' eyes. Both CWIT and Homestead Apartments developers placed offices in separate areas from living spaces, increasing this protection. Additionally, Homestead Apartments and CWIT both operate as private residences, requiring police to have warrants to search the premises. The CWIT program manager commented, "If the police are simply dropping by looking for someone without giving us any explanation to what is going on, we won't confirm or deny if that person is here. The police are not allowed to go into any of the houses looking for residents themselves" (K. Sissors, personal communication, 2/21/12).

Men's Emergency Shelter and TIMES Center do not afford the same kind of spatial protection from the outside world. They were designed similarly, with living areas merged with all other areas. These layouts cannot help but expose the residents' living spaces to visitors, as the large room is readily visible from the front door. Men's Emergency Shelter dealt with the protection issue by enforcing boundaries between the shelter and threats from the outside world, particularly the police. One former resident describes the director at the time as trying to "introduce home" to the shelter by treating it as a residence and forcing police to have search warrants to come into the space, invoking the 4th amendment right to protection from search and seizure (17Interview). Prior to this decision, the police were allowed to enter the shelter and walk around looking for people without warrants. This action allowed group territoriality to flourish without the threat of encroachment by outside threats, in this

case threats to their informational privacy in the form of unwarranted police intrusion. By enforcing the boundaries of the entire shelter with police and other undesired individuals, the residents and director together created a level of privacy akin to that of a house. In this case, the “house” lacked privacy inside its doors but operated to control unwanted interactions between the residents and the outside world. In doing so, the shelter supported residents’ rights of citizenship despite the gray area of the law concerning Fourth Amendment rights for people without their own private property. TIMES Center, on the other hand, has an open policy for police. The current director said, “All clients sign a release of information to local, state and federal police at intake, so we can share information with police if they come in and ask” (B. Buldak, personal communication, 03/28/12). Thus it lacks spatial and legal protections since the men’s living area is clearly visible when entering the facility.

Safe Haven offers a unique case because of its illegal nature as a tent city. Safe Haven offered residents relatively high levels of privacy within the site but little privacy from the outside world. They attempted to protect each other from outside threats, which stimulated the development of a sense of community among the members. As Altman, Vinsel and Brown argue, “Groups who established territories functioned better than those who did not structure their space” (1981, p.113). In terms of police, the group worked to minimize issues that might prompt a police presence. They asked some individuals (who were not part of Safe Haven) to leave because, as one member recalled, “they liked to drink every night and holler and argue, and I guess we was worried about them getting the police back here” (SWT.004). They also established a rule that no possession of stolen property is permitted. Despite these efforts, the group was unsuccessful at controlling unwanted interactions with the police. Regardless of their presence on a private piece of land, police patrols moved through the site regularly without warrants. It remains unclear whether or not the police had the right to be on the property,¹²¹

¹²¹ The Fourth Amendment mandates that “[t]he right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated” (May, 2008, p.121). However, the gray area is whether individuals living in tent cities have a legitimate expectation of privacy “when property is

but in the absence of any litigation, they maintained a consistent presence in and around the tent community, which was supported by many of the neighbors, who perceived the group to be troublemakers for the neighborhood.¹²²

Protection from outside threats can be accomplished legally and/or spatially, but the best case scenario would involve both, resulting in private spaces where individuals could go without threat of others intruding and causing them bodily harm. Legal scholar Nicholas May states, “[The] expectation of privacy [in a shelter] is a reasonable one. To reject this notion would be to read millions of homeless citizens out of the text of the Fourth Amendment” (2008, p.130). He goes on to say that “the privacy rights of individuals residing in homeless shelters are now largely uncontested” (2008, p.130). Yet individual service providers can choose how to address police presence, and their decisions can improve or decrease feelings of security. This issue is further complicated when one’s living space is easily visually penetrated, like the TIMES Center and Safe Haven.



Figure 7: Front door to TIMES Center leads into living space. Photo by author

Figure 8: Open living space of Safe Haven. Photo by author

searched, seized, or destroyed in a public area” (May, 2008, p.121-2). In this case, the tent city was on private property, which should strengthen the case for a legitimate expectation of privacy.

¹²² See chapter 4 for description of frames of troublemaker/nuisance.

Territoriality, defensible space, and control¹²³

In order to maintain control over interactions, individuals engage in territorial behavior and spatial marking of territory (Lang, 1987). Evans and Eichelman speculate that “in a space or an area where individuals feel more comfortable or secure, they would have smaller personal space zones...The concept of territory is relevant here, in that one’s control or continued association with a place would afford a compatible relationship to the environment which in turn would lower stress levels” (1976, p.90). As I articulated in the preceding section on safety and security, comfort is negatively impacted by the presence of strangers. In this type of situation, individuals and/or groups of individuals form territories. Jon Lang provides the following characteristics of territories: “(1) the ownership of or rights to a place, (2) the personalization or marking of an area, (3) the right to defend against intrusion, and (4) the serving of several functions ranging from the meeting of basic physiological needs to the satisfaction of cognitive and aesthetic needs” (Lang, 1987, p.148). Lang argues that design of spaces with territoriality in mind is necessary because territoriality helps humans meet basic needs for identity, stimulation, security and a frame of reference.

In translating territoriality to space, Lang relies on Oscar Newman’s concept of defensible space, which categorizes spaces into private space—highly defended, semiprivate space—somewhat defended, and public space—undefended. While Newman’s categorizations of defensible spaces addresses security, environmental psychologist Barbara Brown also links identity functions, arguing that there is a strong association between primary territories and identity functions (Brown, 1987). Sebba and Churchman (1983) also advance a theory of territoriality that includes sociospatial characteristics similar to Newman’s categories. Applying this model to the home, they develop five types of areas within a “home,” including 1) individual area—individual control, but is impaired by visual and acoustic infiltrations, 2) shared areas—more territoriality existed when the space was large enough to be divided

¹²³ Because this category is so large, I delineate each project with its own subheading.

into more personal spaces, 3) public areas—do not offer the opportunity for dominance, is available for use but not for “ownership,” 4) area of jurisdiction—allows social dominance to those who have duties within it (mother in kitchen, e.g.), and 5) activity areas.

In addition to spatial territories, there are also behavioral issues of autonomy and personal control. As philosophy scholar Jeffrey Reiman remarked, “There are two essential conditions of moral ownership of one's body. The right to do with my body what I wish, and the right to control when and by whom my body is experienced” (Reiman, 1976, p.42). Patricia Newell also argues, “The root quality of privacy, whether it is achieved by structuring the physical environment or by virtue of how a person relates to others who are continually present, lies in its capacity to maximize the individual's freedom of choice” (Newell, 1995, p.96). Choice and control play a powerful role in defining one's ownership over oneself and the space s/he occupies. This control also has implications for meeting other needs, in particular identity and positive self-evaluation. As Evans and Eichelman say, “Utilizing one's options to choose, and seeing that one's choice was respected, is an indication of environmental competence and sustains the ego” (1976, p.98). The issues of autonomy and control figure into my analysis of each of the shelter spaces.

Men's Emergency Shelter and TIMES Center



Figure 9: Open, crowded living space of Men's Emergency Shelter. Photo from “Funds”, 1991, p.A-3

The spaces of shelters like TIMES Center's Level 1 and Men's Emergency Shelter fail to provide any private space (see Figure 5), but they differ in the ways residents view the spaces. Residents of the Men's Emergency Shelter treated it as a semiprivate space,

about which Lang says, “they tend to be owned in association, while semipublic are not owned by the users, who, nevertheless, still feel they have some possession over them” (1987, p.150). Men’s Emergency Shelter was low on spatial privacy but high on personal controls. As one service provider said, “I think that there was a spiritual or faith-based belief...that everyone was accepted. There were few rules, but the rules were pretty strongly held, no fighting or dangerousness, that kind of thing” (18Interview). One exchange, reported in a news article, gave evidence that territoriality was exhibited in the shelter. The article recounted one man saying to another, “Excuse me, homes, but you're in my cot, if you don't mind” (Ostrowski, 1991a, p.11). Fifty to sixty- five cots covered the open room of the basement, with mere feet between each one. Every so often, women had to stay at the shelter, and they were afforded a sheet hung between their space and the men’s open space. In the absence of spatial demarcation, residents developed social controls for the space. The “regulars” felt a strong sense of ownership over the space, policing other guests internally. As one man put it, “We run this motherfucker” (17Interview).¹²⁴ The board and director allowed the men to have more control over the space, laying the groundwork for increased resident control over their interactions. This situation is interesting considering that shelter environments are generally considered unsafe if “street mentality—also known as “might makes right—prevails, yet in this case, the respect on both sides made the situation safer possibly than it might have otherwise been.

The spaces of the TIMES Center are perceived more as public spaces, which Lang defines as “areas that may be used by individuals or a group but are not possessed or personalized or claimed by them” (1987, p.150). Unlike the atmosphere of Men’s Emergency Shelter, residents do not control what happens at the TIMES Center. First, the design of the TIMES Center prevents ownership of the space—it

¹²⁴ This approach to space is similar to what Childress (2004) exposes as conflicting models of appropriation of space—ownership model versus use/territoriality. Teenagers are restricted from ownership of property and use different modes of claiming space, based on use, similar to homeless individuals who lack private space to claim as their own through traditional modes of property rights and ownership. In critiquing the ownership model, Childress calls attention to the reality that a large segment of the population does not have access to it.

is a large warehouse space for 50 people with a staff observation and work area that can watch all areas of the space.¹²⁵ Second, the practice of stacking the plastic mats every day and arranging them by night on the floor impedes feelings of ownership over any one space as one's own, since even the sleeping spaces are temporary. Third, the TIMES Center staff exhibit control over residents' behaviors, and threats of bans and signs dictating behavior serve to maintain staff control (see examples below of signs posted in the shelter). This signage reinforces the notion that the space is not under the residents' control, and they or their possessions can be removed at any time. A resident touched on the social aspects of privacy, saying, "You really don't have a sense of privacy to any great extent. It doesn't feel like home since in the sense that you're bound with rules and regulations that aren't necessarily uncomfortable but they're not yours and they're not things you'd be doing if you had your own home" (TIMES Interview).



Figure 10: TIMES sleeping area by day. Photo by author

¹²⁵ One developer said about the design, "At least on the emergency side you can kind of keep your eye. We had people there 24 hours a day. Just so you can sit there at a desk, kind of watch what's going on. Security thing" (27Interview). Yet in this case, security overshadows feelings of personal control and autonomy.



Figure 11: TIMES Center restrictions on possessions. Photo by author

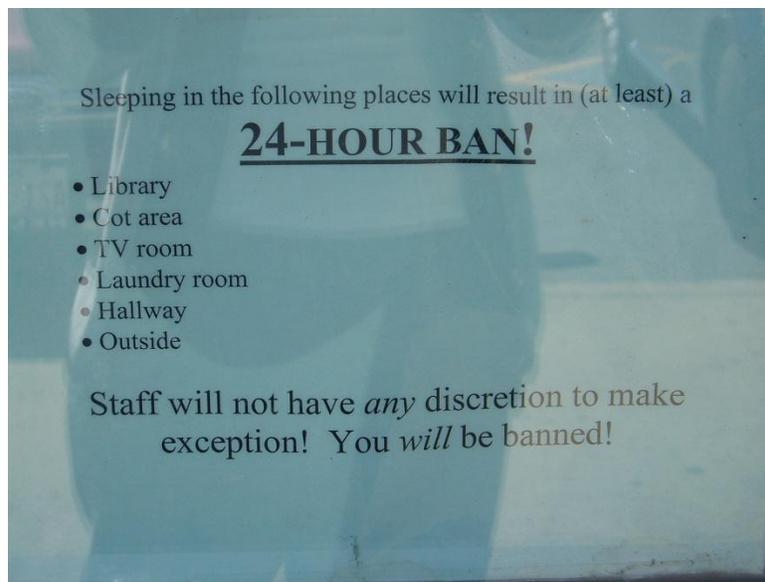


Figure 12: TIMES Center restrictions on behaviors. Photo by author

Level 2 has a significantly greater degree of privacy, consisting of ten semi-private bedrooms, in which residents have a raised platform with a mat, and a small storage area for clothing (see lefthand side of floor plan below. Right side is Level 1). These bedrooms are located in a separate wing of the center, with a keycode-locked door. To enter into the Level 2 program, residents must show progress in Level 1, including gaining employment and being willing to put a certain percentage of their money into

savings each month. However, for the majority of people who stay at the TIMES Center, the space is public. Suggestions from TIMES Center residents for improving the sense of home largely focused on private or semi-private rooms, as residents said, “It’d feel more homely (sic) if we had two or three to a room. Something more like that. I mean it would be nice instead of sleeping out here on these cots,” and “If you could in level two and have your own room, that would probably make it more seem like home. Hopefully I’ll get there soon as I get paid” (TIMES Interview).

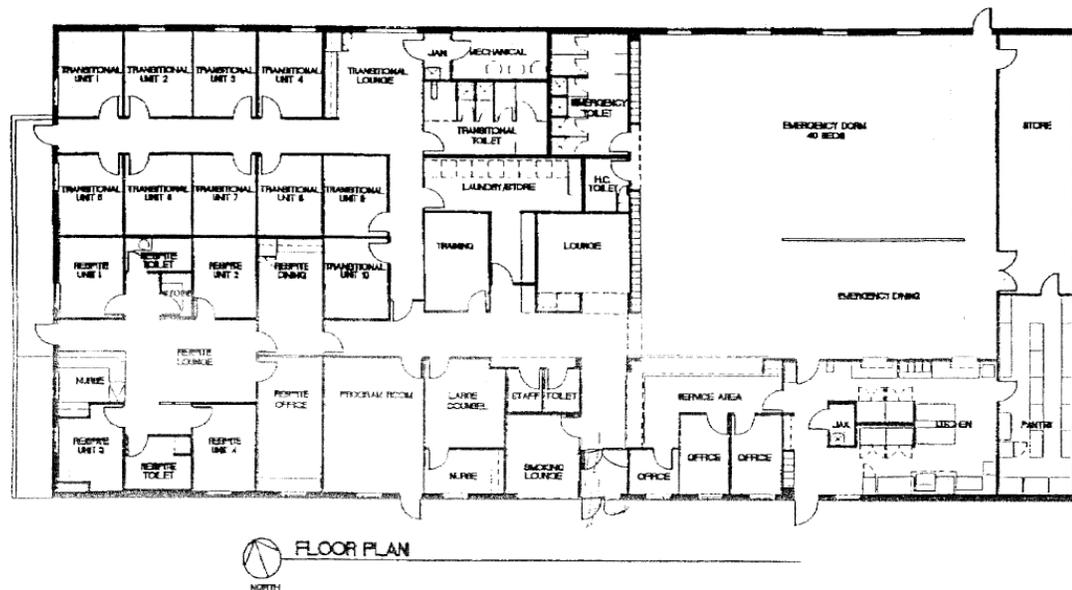


Figure 13: TIMES Center floor plan. From organizational proposal materials

Center for Women in Transition

CWIT residents’ perspectives on privacy differ from the more gendered ways that volunteers and media frame their privacy needs as a need for “haven.”¹²⁶ Their needs are comparable to descriptions made by TIMES Center residents. As one former resident said about living at CWIT, “It was just there was too many people livin’ in that house. [In my new place] everything’s going pretty good. I

¹²⁶ See chapter 5 for in-depth discussion of gender

can come and go as I please. I can cook what I want" (Bernard, 1991b, p.4). When current residents were asked what they missed most about not having a home, women replied,

"to be able to do what you want, when you want...the main thing here is having privacy. You don't really have privacy when you're in the bathroom because you gotta worry about who's going to knock on the door."

"cable t.v. and being able to get (sic) when you get ready to, clean up when you get ready to and just be able to go and come as you want."

"the freedom."

(Nelson, 1995, p.8).

CWIT residents with children have private spaces and also semiprivate spaces of cooking, dining and living. These spaces are semiprivate in that few families occupy each house (up to 5), so usage of spaces is negotiated amongst a fairly small number of people, allowing for feelings of ownership. In contrast to TIMES Center's signs, CWIT signs do not indicate that residents have a tenuous grasp on tenure, but rather that there are rules of conduct that must be followed (see below). In addition, the spaces are appropriately sized for the number of people using them, offering ways for children and mothers to avoid each other if desired (see examples below). Finally, there are different age appropriate common spaces throughout the houses so that toddlers, teens, mothers and single women can all have spaces in which they feel comfortable.



Figure 14: CWIT children's playroom. Photo by author

Figure 15: CWIT living room. Photo by author

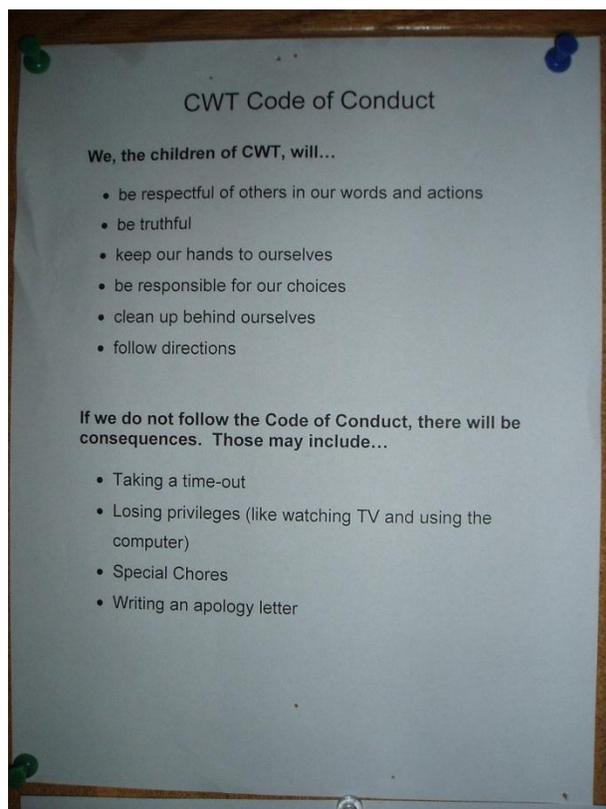


Figure 16: CWIT rules of conduct. Photo by author

Homestead Apartments

Homestead Apartments developers privileged the creation of autonomous, independent living spaces. One of the project developers argued, “If you have a lot of private amenities, bathrooms and kitchens, you have adequate space, you don’t need much management, people aren’t out there in the public areas irritating each other. We’ve got that.



Figure 17: Homestead Apartments units offered small kitchenettes. Photo from Bloomer, 1997b.

We’ve defined that” (CCCmeeting010996). The developers felt that providing those private amenities reduces the amount of undesired interaction, opening up possibilities for positive interactions, something I discuss in chapter 8 regarding the “heart” element of home.

In the SRO development, opponents argued for the need for safety, using it as a justification for their requests to decrease the autonomy and personal control of residents over their private spaces. Developers perceived the neighbors as overly focused on safety and control issues, saying “One of the big issues is how are you going to have security in the buildings. Are you going to have cameras? Are you going to make sure that no alcohol is consumed in the building? And we’re going, “This is an apartment building. We don’t have really programs. We’re going to provide social services, but this is not a prison situation here or jail. We’re going to let people live here and help them as much as we can.” And we tried to emphasize that. We said we’re going to have somebody on site, we’re going to have a staff member, we’re going to have some people who live on site, make sure everything is going well.” (27Interview) Instead of succumbing to neighbors’ demands, developers consistently put residents’ needs of privacy, including personal control, at the forefront of their plans.

One issue in particular arose regarding residents’ rights to privacy, implicating Fourth Amendment rights in the process. Opponents of the SRO took issue with the developers’ stance that

alcohol and (legal) weapons would be allowed in the apartments. One opponent detailed their rationale in a News-Gazette editorial:

The Homestead Apartments offer a tremendous chance as well as a huge challenge for 25 people who have had a rough time in recent years. They are being afforded comfortable housing in a decent neighborhood and the opportunity to make a radical change in their lives. But being part of a neighborhood means trying to be a good neighbor. The people who live nearby would feel greatly relieved if they knew no weapons or alcohol were allowed in this building. It would be tragic to jeopardize the project's success over an issue that should be of little significance to potential tenants. Surely there are more pressing issues in their lives. Will many homeless people turn down a chance to live in the apartments if they can't have alcohol or weapons? Not if their primary concern is a permanent roof over their heads (Garhart, 1997).

This type of logic harkens back to Housing Authorities doing random checks of public housing apartments and other encroachments on privacy in people's lives, as Piven and Cloward (1993) and Vale (2000) have documented. One board member argued, "The Urbana Apartments, unlike some of those cited by Monday-Dorsey [neighbor], aren't intended to be a treatment facility, but rather low-cost subsidized housing. No other public housing in Urbana prohibits legal activities by a person in his or her home...The rule would be difficult to enforce without room and possibly body searches, which raise constitutional questions" (Kline, 1997). One supportive city councilmember drew this argument out, saying,

I'm surprised as I weigh the criticism that has evolved over the last months of this proposal by the fact that so much of the criticism focuses on the ways in which in the proposed SRO differs from either an emergency homeless shelter or a medium security prison. Some of the requirements that some people have voiced might be reasonable to apply to the residents of this SRO and would entail if implemented by government, wholesale violations of the property and personal rights of those that the facility would serve. It is not meant to be an emergency homeless shelter, nor will it deal with the same population that emergency homeless shelters deal with. It's not meant to be a minimum or medium security prison. It is supervised housing for the working poor. (CCCmeeting010996)

In this argument, he makes two claims, one of which he uses to support the other. His base claim is that the population will be different than that of an emergency shelter.¹²⁷ He uses this claim to bolster his bigger claim that every individual has rights of person and property (Fourth Amendment). Yet by associating these two claims next to each other, it seems that he is arguing that the nature of the resident dictates whether or not Fourth Amendment protections should be in place, and that these protections are not or should not be in place in emergency shelters. Furthering the notion of an appropriate population to have permanent housing (prerequisite that they are appropriate), a member of CSPH and Champaign Public Library staff, remarked to Champaign City Council, "These are people who are very appropriate in their behavior in the library," she said. "I'm personally convinced these individuals need permanent housing like an SRO" (Monson, 1995, p.A-1). These arguments frame privacy as a privilege afforded to particular groups of people, further cementing normative assumptions about people who live in shelters.

Safe Haven Tent Community

Safe Haven residents enjoyed high levels of control over their interactions with each other and their territories. Environmental psychologists argue, "Groups who established territories functioned better than those who did not structure their space" (Altman, Vinsel and Brown, 1981, p.113). In the case of Safe Haven, the members created private and semiprivate territories through their spatial layout and rules of conduct. Their tents acted as private spaces that they defended against others' entry/intrusion, and their communal living spaces were treated as semiprivate spaces, where members felt ownership of the spaces and defined it as their own, from which they could exclude outsiders. Because the group was self-organized, no staff was there to dictate the environment, so the shape of the space and the group's rules of conduct changed as the members dictated. Yet one opponent of the tent community—a respected housing policy expert in the community—compared Safe Haven's living

¹²⁷ See chapter 4's discussion of population-based norms

arrangements to “sleeping on an open grate in downtown,” arguing that “the whole concept of defensible space changed dramatically with a tent city” (Bauer, 2009). His argument is contradicted by residents’ descriptions of tent living, particularly in comparison to living arrangements like the TIMES Center or Safe Haven’s time at St. Mary’s parish center, described below.

Upon moving indoors at St. Mary’s parish center, their second long-term location, they lost their private spaces but maintained a strong sense of ownership over their semiprivate space inside the parish center. Because the group was self-organized, newcomers became a part of the group quickly, and those who represented danger to the group were asked to leave. As I described in the section on safety and security, the group’s ownership over the space caused them to become territorial when “strangers” entered the space. Nonetheless, there were still issues with everyone living in an open space, and residents fought amongst themselves a fair amount. Yet the self-organization of the group had advantages, in that the group was able to address conflicts as a group, with voting procedures and open dialogue. As Evans and Eichelman argue, “An important dimension of psychological stress that cannot be neglected is perceived control...Subjects who perceived that they had control over noise were affected significantly less” (1976, p.95).

Cultural considerations and recommendations for privacy

Lang (1987) remarks that behavioral scientists have been able to better inform designers about human behaviors and how they can be taken into account in designs. Yet norms of what constitutes culturally acceptable and appropriate living environments are important in understanding the decisions made about homeless housing projects.¹²⁸ As Lang writes, “While the desire for privacy through

¹²⁸ Standards of living exist on two levels: those associated with physical health standards and those associated with cultural beliefs about appropriate methods of dwelling. Standards of living are determined by policymaking bodies with the intention that everyone would be able to achieve at least a minimum standard. These minimum standards address basic health and safety issues, such as running water, sanitation and waste removal, regulation of temperature and protection from the elements. See “Shelter” in Chapter 8 for an extended discussion of minimum standards of living.

personal space and territorial controls may be universal, its manifestations vary considerably from culture to culture” (1987, p.156). Cultural standards of living address needs beyond basic shelter, for instance, occupancy standards dictate ratio of bathrooms to residents, shared vs. individual spaces, numbers of unattached persons living in one unit, proximity of residences to industrial or commercial facilities, and so on. These standards have been institutionalized through the development of municipal building codes, occupancy standards, and zoning codes. The standards have fluctuated over the history of the U.S. and continue to play an important role in dictating acceptance of certain types of housing as ‘home’ while others are seen as ‘unhome.’

In the early 1900s, reformers and SRO dwellers both shared the concern for privacy. In practice, they arrived at different conclusions and standards. SRO dwellers wanted the privacy of a locked door, hence the popularity of cage hotels (see Groth 1994), but they did not require private bathrooms, kitchens, hallways and other living spaces. Their reliance on space was quite different from the ways reformers thought about space (Hoch and Slayton, 1989). In a sense, their 'home' was stretched over a block, while reformers at the time wanted to condense the home into one space and remove it far away from labor and public leisure spaces like bars and moviehouses, seeking to make both the interior and exterior of residences separate and private. Reformers and public officials saw SROs as dirty, dangerous living environments "unfit for human habitation" (Hoch and Slayton, 1989, p.155). They viewed the living environments as cause for deviant behavior. As a result, they sought to demolish SROs and replace them with dwelling forms that fit middle-class living standards. To the contrary, SRO residents "did not consider the hotels to be dangerous or oppressive environments," focusing instead on convenience of location and security through community ties as the features they most enjoyed (1989, p.156). Their complaints about the physical spaces were far outweighed by these other elements. Today, these cultural standards are still an issue. One housing researcher critiqued San Francisco's policies, saying

SRO units typically consist of one room, with no in-unit kitchens or food preparation facilities. Many bathrooms are shared and thus not compliant with Federal standards for permanent housing units. As described by one advocate: “a hotel room used to be considered ‘substandard’ because it doesn’t have a bathroom or a kitchen facility. The City has since made a conscious decision to place people *with City money* into substandard housing (Murphy, 2009, p.316).

Ambiguity regarding these cultural standards of privacy will continue to create controversy and debate. Despite this reality, I believe that the landscape of affordable housing in the U.S. would vastly improve with a systematic reevaluation of outmoded housing types and encouragement to build some of these housing types back into communities’ housing stock. Federal intervention in the form of grants and incentives, as well as recommendations for zoning and building code changes would speed this process. Regardless of federal intervention, communities will have to determine whether their standards of living, as defined by building and zoning codes, are set at levels that promote healthy, safe dwelling practices without limiting the types of dwelling that can take place within that standard. As one example, in Champaign, zoning codes only allow boarding houses, rooming houses, and SROs in certain zoning districts.¹²⁹ Other communities have removed these forms of inexpensive housing out of their zoning codes altogether. Building codes can also impede their construction if kitchen and bathroom requirements are written to accommodate individual dwelling units rather than living arrangements that dictate sharing of these amenities.¹³⁰ Allowing these types of housing to be constructed will provide poor individuals with options that provide enough privacy to meet their needs of safety, solitude, autonomy, and protection from the outside world, but not necessarily the degree of privacy that the single-family house or apartment provide. Given the expense of living as a single person with one income, it is reasonable to accommodate single persons in these types of residences.

¹²⁹ See Appendix D for a chart that details which zoning districts allow these housing types. Definitions of boarding house, rooming house and SRO are included with chart. Note that these housing types, when allowed, are found either in multi-family districts, an appropriate zone for them, or in commercial and business areas, despite their sole purpose as residential housing. This speaks to norms of what constitutes residential housing.

¹³⁰ For instance, the City of Champaign’s zoning code defines a dwelling unit as “one or more rooms, designed, occupied, or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, with cooking, sleeping and sanitary facilities provided within the unit for the exclusive use of a single-family maintaining a household.”

As this chapter's content shows, shelters have a series of barriers to meeting all the privacy needs of individuals regardless of how well they execute their spatial and programmatic design. Instead of relying on shelters to house single poor men and women, communities should embrace inexpensive, relatively private, permanent housing.

CHAPTER 8: SPACES OF HOME

In this chapter I examine the physical and social spaces of five shelter projects to understand which elements of home are advanced in discourse about the projects, which elements are/were actually operational in the spaces, and how these elements and their operationalization compare to the qualities of home that are most valued by people labeled “homeless.” Anthropologist Jean Williams notes, “there have been relatively few studies that attempt to integrate homeless people's life stories with an understanding of the institutional spaces in which sheltered homeless people reside” (1996, p.79). In this examination, I look not just at the elements themselves, but at the way they are manifested in the physical and social environment. I attend to the variations across projects, seeking to more deeply understand how these variations matter for the goal of providing qualities that are associated with the idea of ‘home.’ Taking my cue from the experientially-based literature¹³¹, I examine frequently referenced elements of home from my interviews with TIMES Center residents and Safe Haven members, as well as other scholars’ research with CWIT and Men’s Emergency Shelter residents. From these concepts, I draw on relevant literature to contextualize stakeholders’ perspectives, as well as the physical spaces themselves.

Chart 8.1 lays out the important factors listed for each element of home. Many factors intersect to make projects effective or ineffective at providing the various elements of home. Based on points raised in the empirical data, I identified the following factors as important to the overall formation of the shelter spaces as lived experiences of home:

- Shelter programming
- Shelter staff
- Decoration of space
- Delineation or partitioning of space
- Overall design and layout of shelter/housing
- Smell

¹³¹ For examples of experientially-based literature, see Mendoza, 1994; Padgett, 2007; Rivlin and Moore, 2001; and Veness, 1993.

- Adaptability of space to individual needs
- Protection from police
- Protection from bodily harm or threat
- Shelter signage and messages
- Protection from weather/elements
- Security of tenure

Chart 8.1: Elements of home	Men's Emergency Shelter	TIMES Center (transitional men's)	Center for Women in Transition (transitional women and children)	Safe Haven Tent Community (adults)	Homestead Apartments (Single Room Occupancy for single adults)
<i>Shelter</i> —material roof over one's head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Basement floods in heavy rains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Dry, clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Dry, clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Little protection from elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Dry, clean
<i>Hearth</i> —warmth, comfort, welcoming atmosphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Uncomfortable sleeping space ↓ Smelled of body odor ↓ Small locker space ↑ Welcome to all ↑ No lifestyle requirements to stay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Uncomfortable sleeping space ↓ Smells like bleach ↓ Unwelcoming signage and policies ↓ Small locker space ↓ Institutional atmosphere ↓ Lifestyle requirements to stay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Lifestyle requirements to stay ↓ Little storage space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Little storage space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ No lifestyle requirements to stay ↑ Individual apartments with private BA/Kitchen ↑ Some storage space ↑ Can personalize space
<i>Heart</i> —emotional stability, social support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ No space to receive visitors ↑ Supportive board and director ↑ Supportive "regulars" ↑ Group fun nights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Fighting among residents ↓ Individualistic atmosphere ↓ No space to receive visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Restrictive visitor policy ↑ Supportive staff ↑ Spaces of communality ↑ Emotional support from community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Spaces of communality ↑ Group atmosphere ↑ Spaces to receive visitors ↑ Open visitor policy; overnight guests allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Space to receive visitors ↑ Spaces of communality ↑ Unrestrictive visitor policy; overnight guests allowed
<i>Roots</i> —source of personal identity and meaningfulness within larger set of social relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Limited constancy ↓ Bleak space reinforces stigma ↓ Food served to you ↑ Fairly secure tenure ↑ "Regulars" culture ↑ No judgment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Insecure tenure (threat of bans) ↓ Living conditions reinforce stigma ↓ Stigmatized existence in community ↓ Food served to you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Positive identity affirmed ↑ Fairly secure tenure ↑ Spaces mimic societally accepted "homes" ↑ Support to succeed ↑ Cook your own food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Insecure tenure (city intervention) ↓ Stigmatized lifestyle ↑ Pride and dignity in self-sufficiency and embodiment of American ideals ↑ Cook your own food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Not ideal American type of "home" ↑ Secure tenure ↑ Residents not labeled "homeless" ↑ Cook your own food

Shelter—material roof over one’s head

Physiological needs—protection from the elements, hunger, thirst, and necessary bodily heating/cooling—can be issues for anyone living in extreme poverty, particularly those who find themselves sleeping outdoors. As an element of home, “shelter” deals with two of these needs: protection from the elements and necessary bodily heating/cooling.¹³² While these needs were primarily discussed during the Safe Haven development, each project had to deal with a certain number of “shelter” decisions and debates about what constituted appropriate “shelter” in each case.

A roof over one’s head, most would argue, is not a home, but it is generally thought of as a necessary condition to create a home. As our nation has codified housing reforms into law, shelter has become a prerequisite in mainstream understandings of home. These understandings of home situate it firmly within a permanent structure, as demonstrated by any municipal zoning code’s definition of dwelling.¹³³ What constitutes adequate shelter is a question that is answered through cultural standards of living, which are legally codified in local building and zoning codes. Even though four of the five projects examined in this chapter provide fairly adequate material structures, per U.S. standards, each project development team had to address certain building standards that varied based on the perceived purpose of the building(s). In this section, I proceed from the most basic structural issues to those that are more impacted by cultural standards than standards set by health and safety concerns.

¹³² Feldman’s notion of bare life would apply here, insofar as a structure was created only to address these two needs and no others. The director of TIMES Center remarked on the need for a winter emergency shelter, saying “People should not have to sleep in the snow. There are some human rights that are basic.” (Petrella, 2009a, p.A-1). His statement exemplifies Feldman’s (2004) critique of the notion that shelters should only provide for bare life.

¹³³ For instance, Champaign County defines “dwelling” as “A BUILDING or MANUFACTURED HOME designated for non-transient residential living purposes and containing one or more DWELLING UNITS and/or LODGING UNITS. City of Champaign defines “dwelling” as “any building or a portion of a building, occupied or designed to be occupied by one or more units each of which is used or designed to be used as a permanent place of abode for human occupancy.” See http://library.municode.com/HTML/10520/level3/MUCO_CH37ZO_ARTIIDE.html

Safe Haven Tent Community certainly presents the largest issues in terms of material shelter. In this case, two conflicting sets of standards—personal and municipal—came into conflict with each other, specifically over the question of whether or not tents and other makeshift structures constitute adequate shelter. In past centuries, U.S. citizens used tents and other makeshift structures like small cabins and teepees as permanent housing, but by today’s standards, these dwelling forms are viewed as substandard. Today, virtually all of the U.S. population lives under a legal structure, and tents are widely considered an unacceptable standard of living, but there is a small but growing population who still resides in tents and other makeshift structures.

It is difficult for tents to meet basic physiological needs in all seasons. In Illinois, temperatures approach or dip below 0°F for weeks at a time, with heavy snows and snowstorms. Under these conditions, living in tents can only be conceived of as bare survival. As one Safe Haven resident succinctly stated, “Wintertime sucks. You'd better be inside for wintertime” (VIS.006). Another local service provider remarked, “Tent communities are acceptable and accessible because all you need is a tent, but what happens when it’s cold outside?” (Dillon, 2009b). People have devised ways to stay warm, but they involve unsafe heating methods that place their physical health and safety at risk. In the summertime, the benefits of a tent city are numerous, when compared to shelters and living outdoors alone, but once it turns cold, the risks become great, and general discomfort easily could be described as unbearable. In responding to proposals by Safe Haven Tent Community to build makeshift structures in place of tents for the winter, a News Gazette editorial opined the following:

A proposal to allow 8-foot-by-8-foot structures to serve as homeless shelters in Champaign-Urbana is a bad idea. Fifty years ago the City of Champaign was amid an effort, termed urban renewal, that aimed to rid the community of dozens of unsafe and unsightly shacks that dotted the city's north side. Firefighters, especially, had had to deal too often with the tragic results of too many people crowded into small, wood-frame shacks. Although the victims often were children, many adults also perished in horrific fires. Prodded by the League of Women Voters and other community groups, it still took about 25 years to remove all of the unsanitary and hazardous shacks in Champaign. Now a group of advocates for the homeless is proposing

a return to such structures in Champaign-Urbana, although they're called "micro shelters," not shacks. No matter the terminology, it's still a bad idea. They'd be unsafe, they'd place the city government at risk in case of a fire or some other tragedy, and they'd open the door to all kinds of requests from landlords for other variances to health and life-safety codes. City officials are right to be reluctant to return to the pre-urban renewal days. ("Micro", 2009)

During public discussions, stakeholders cited the importance of these building and zoning codes. As one city council member stated that they would need to figure out how to regulate tents for "the same kinds of reasons why we have fire codes and safety codes for both permanent fixed structures having to do with ventilation, having to do with set-backs that promote a safe environment for the people that are there (CCCmeeting072109). These codes have their roots in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Reform Movement attempts to improve the sanitary conditions of the poor in the U.S. This movement dealt with real sanitation and health issues, in particular the epidemics of yellow fever, typhoid, and cholera that racked poor populations living in cellar rooms and tenements without light, ventilation or air space (see Plunz, 1990). Their standards persist today in many of our contemporary building and zoning codes, though today's standards are much more stringent. Another councilmember delivered a notable public speech in opposition to Safe Haven, saying,

Our building codes and our zoning ordinances were motivated and original intent is to protect the less fortunate, it's to protect against substandard housing. Wealthy people weren't the ones who needed rules about indoor plumbing and safe electricity and a solid roof over their heads. It was a protective device that communities implemented, so that the disadvantaged could live in the same sorts of safe housing that other people did. So has that become so perverted now that we are hurting the disadvantaged because we expect them to live in a structure that has indoor plumbing and safe electricity and isn't going to be a fire hazard and isn't going to spread disease, are we imposing a condition on poor people or disadvantaged people or homeless people that we expect their homes to meet a certain standard? (CCCmeeting081809)¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Historian Richard Plunz offers a different reason for the original intent of building and zoning codes, arguing, "Until the mid-nineteenth century, those aspects of fire and sanitation legislation that affected the poor were perhaps not intended as much to improve the condition of the poor as to protect the rich from the scourges of poverty" (Plunz, 1990, p.4).

Ultimately, Safe Haven was not allowed to continue, per municipal zoning and building standards. According to zoning regulations, emergency and transitional housing for the homeless are permitted as provisional uses in certain zoning districts,¹³⁵ but their definitions, as well as any other dwelling type definitions, require dwellings to be in “structures,” defined as “anything constructed or made, the use of which requires permanent location in or on the ground or attachment to something having a permanent location in or on the ground.”¹³⁶ This definition precluded Safe Haven from existing anywhere within city limits.¹³⁷ A Safe Haven supporter, also homeless, challenged this definition, saying,

When you're homeless and you don't have somewhere to go, a tent is your home. And when you put it down on the ground and you spike it into the ground, by nature that is your home. By nature a tent, in the eyes of somebody that has a house, is recreational. But to somebody who doesn't have a home, a tent is very permanent. And when you spike it to the ground, it is attached to the ground and it is permanent. (Zoning Board of Appeals 073009)

Safe Haven residents also offered a different perspective. Through their lens of experience, tents serve as adequate structures, though perhaps not desired or ideal. Two Safe Haven residents said the following about living in tents:

I'd rather have had the tent [than sleeping in the bushes or on the porch]. The tent was better, you know, cause when I was back in that little cubbyhole or on the porch there was always the wind where in the tent at least the wind was stopped...I remember the year before I was in the back of a car, sleeping on campus in a hallway, it was even cold there but I was out of the elements...[In Safe Haven] I don't necessarily need a bathroom cause I took showers right here in the driveway. I used to go to 120 [AA Club] in the mornings and clean up there...*if it's a roof over our heads, why complain?* (my emphasis) (SWT.004).

As far as [tents as substandard living] is concerned, people camp out and it's suitable. People go to parks all the time and there's no problem as far as tents are concerned. We kept it down to a certain number in tents. It wasn't like 20 people in one 3-man tent. We had enough to provide for what we needed, and we also had a port-a-potty, so as far as sanitation goes, we

¹³⁵ See Appendix D for zoning district chart. Note that emergency and transitional housing for the homeless is allowed as a provisional use in multi-family districts, an appropriate zone, as well as commercial and business districts, despite their sole purpose as housing. This speaks to norms of what constitutes residential housing.

¹³⁶ For zoning definitions, see http://library.municode.com/HTML/10520/level3/MUCO_CH37ZO_ARTIIDE.html

¹³⁷ Indeed, even Champaign County's zoning code disallows tents as dwellings, as dictated in 4.2.3 Minimum Standards for Dwellings.

kept up on that...we slept in [tents] cause that's what they were for--for shelter at night. We still carried on our daily functions. We had access to the Catholic Worker House as far as cleansing of the body, we had the port-a-potty, and we could also go in the CWH if need be to use the facilities. We had laundry facilities. So we had everything that a normal person would have in life, except for a solid roof over our head (SWT.003).

While these arguments certainly are logical from the perspective of one's experience of living on the street and in tents, legal requirements like building and zoning codes deal with housing in broad strokes, not individual experiences, making it difficult for experience and legal definitions to intersect in constructive ways. Coupled with the cultural standards in the U.S., tent cities have a very difficult time proving that their dwelling practices are acceptable. In the U.S., there is a tacit assumption that no one has to live at such a low standard of living. Yet tens of thousands of Americans have been documented as living in tent cities, demonstrating that despite the perception that Americans have a set standard of living, it is not universal or guaranteed.¹³⁸ As urban scholar Ananya Roy (2003) argues, American standards of what constitutes "safe and sanitary shelter" do not allow for tents and other makeshift structures, even though these forms of dwelling may be the only type that is both available and acceptable to poor people. Without options or codes to address tent cities as dwellings, municipalities, including Champaign, approach tent cities from a code violation standpoint, leveling threats of fines at them unless they disband.¹³⁹ In opposition to this approach, a Catholic priest—whose church took in Safe Haven—argued, "So what if there's a second tier and a third tier? The issue is there are people who have no place to sleep, and we're now getting into the

¹³⁸ As a corollary, in the U.S., lack of indoor plumbing is considered unacceptable, presumably because as a nation, we have largely moved beyond other methods of sanitation. Despite this pervasive standard of living, over one million people in the U.S. do not have full access to sanitation, according to critical sociologist Jennifer Carrera (Carrera, 2012).

¹³⁹ In situations like these, the act of dwelling becomes subject to criminalization I use the term "criminalization" purposefully. Though tent living is often only subject to civil penalty in the form of fines, civil penalties become criminalized when individuals are jailed for failure to pay fines. This problem of criminalization through civil fines has been increasingly documented through critical scholarship and mainstream news coverage, both of which refer to the phenomenon as a return of the "debtor's prison" in the U.S. For examples of mainstream coverage, see <http://thinkprogress.org/justice/2011/12/13/388303/the-return-of-debtors-prisons-thousands-of-americans-jailed-for-not-paying-their-bills/?mobile=nc> and http://www.stltoday.com/business/columns/jim-gallagher/debtors-prison-it-s-back-and-it-s-here/article_4683672a-3be5-11e1-a381-001a4bcf6878.html

cold weather...The city's priority should be meeting the needs of its residents" (Petrella, 2009c, p.A-1). Yet the lack of U.S. and municipal policies regarding informal housing, coupled with staunch cultural norms regarding the necessity of a permanent dwelling structure, preclude many municipalities from addressing tent cities as anything other than substandard housing or urban blight. Despite their substandard physical conditions, tent cities provide other elements of "home" to a greater extent than shelters, as the following sections demonstrate.

While certainly providing a more permanent structure than tents, the Men's Emergency Shelter, located in the basement of McKinley Presbyterian Church, also dealt with a number of "shelter" issues. One Daily Illini writer remarked, "It's not much, but at least the church basement is warm and dry, which is more than can be said for the weather outside" (Kersey, 1993, p.15). Another writer, a homeless man, wrote, "The shelter...offers nothing more than the basics – a place to sleep, some hot food, a shower, washer and dryer...But, compared to the street, it must seem like more than survival to the forty or so men who stay there" (Smith, 1983). Yet despite these assertions, the basement had serious drawbacks. The facility director argued, "We have two showers and two toilets and two sinks for all of the guests to share, so it is not a question of adequacy. It is simply a matter of making do with what we have until an alternative solution can be found" (Loury, 1997c, p.A-3). In the fall of 1997, asbestos was discovered in the basement, and residents were temporarily moved to other locations while the asbestos was abated. During that time, the men were unable to access their clothes, prescriptions and personal belongings, or showers and laundry facilities, drawing attention to the importance of these "survival level" services (see Bloomer, 1997a). One TIMES Center developer recalled a comprehensive list of its problems, saying,

the physical condition of the living in the basement and it flooded a lot, and it had other problems...It was tight, cramped. It was nasty, it wasn't that great of a place. It was better than nothing. I mean this one is okay but it's not really doing justice, it doesn't house that many people. It had women and men living in the same place, sometimes with a curtain in

between them. There were a few women who lived there. Every time it rained it flooded. The bathroom was terrible. A small kitchen. (27Interview)

The emergency shelter also only ran at night for much of its existence, offering only partial shelter for individuals. The organization and its volunteers recognized that nighttime shelter did not provide adequate shelter for people's needs in the winter. As such, in 1990, a daytime drop-in center was proposed. One account of the proposed center described its function as, "provid[ing] daytime shelter from the elements for homeless families and individuals; to provide a place to take care of basic hygiene needs," as well as several other functions ("Temporary", 1990, p.A-1). The drop-in center shut down after several years due to lack of funding, but reopened again in 1997. A news article reported, "As temperatures drop, visitors to the Champaign Public Library during the day tend to increase...It's obvious that individuals are here not because they want to use the library but because they have no other place to go" ("Shelter", 1997, p.A-3). While the Men's Emergency Shelter attempted to fill this gap in shelter for years, sporadic funding and an overwhelmed volunteer base prohibited them from effectively meeting this need.

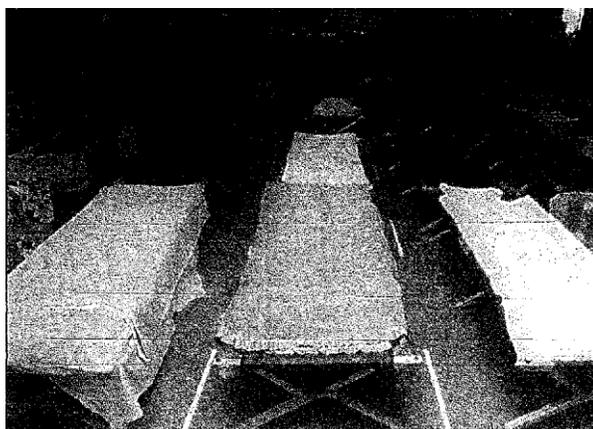


Figure 18: Remodeled shelter shows fewer cots. Photo from Loury, 1997b, p.A-1

A third major issue was capacity. One news article reported that "the shelter had to turn away a man for the first time in its 19-year history last Sunday night" (Bloomer and Loury, 1997, p.A-

1). This action followed on the heels of a reduction in cot capacity from 63 to 50 (Loury, 1997b). News articles reported that “shelter officials worry about what will happen when the weather turns cold in late October and November...Last winter, it was almost common for more than 70 men to be sleeping at the shelter” (Loury, 1997e, p.A-3). The facility director remarked, “We hope to avoid parking people in the lobby of the Champaign police station” (Bloomer and Loury, 1997, p.A-1). This occupancy standard was enforced for safety reasons, yet the basement’s improved conditions meant that people were denied even the most basic of services: protection from the elements. Together, these “shelter” issues detracted from the Men’s Emergency Shelter’s provision of “home” to its guests; however, as following sections document, it excelled at providing other elements of home, despite its unsavory physical conditions.

As I articulated in Chapter 7, the physical layout of the TIMES Center Level 1 closely mirrors the Men’s Emergency Shelter. As one developer said, “We sat down with the architect and said, “This is what we want, this is what we need. We need an area where we can house 50 people” (27Interview). However, strictly in terms of physiological needs, it provides better “shelter” than the emergency shelter. One developer remarked that the first stage of needs involves “get people off the street, into shelter, keep them safe, and keep them off the street” (36Interview). One news article reported, “The new building would have nearly twice the space, with 40 beds for emergency guests and separate rooms for up to 20 guests participating in the shelter’s transitional program...also provid[ing] space for medical, mental health, employment training and other supportive services” (Loury, 1999, p.A-3). The extra space offered room for offices, meeting rooms, storage, kitchen, and showers and restrooms (27Interview). In terms of sleeping space, one developer said, “We put a cement slab in. The floor was going to be again, just a big open space. And the transitional side had 10 units with 20 beds I believe it was, with a little nice area where people could sort of hang out” (27Interview). These improvements ensured that sleeping spaces would always be warm and dry, showers and bathrooms were plentiful

enough to meet the need, and the kitchen could adequately provide for hunger and thirst.

Considerations for the physical conditions reflect a primary focus on upgrading from the emergency shelter by providing the basics of “shelter” as well as supportive services to transition men to independent living. As with Safe Haven and the Men’s Emergency Shelter, cultural standards of living did not factor into the physical design.

With CWIT and Homestead Apartments, public discussion and developers’ considerations begin to rely heavily on cultural standards of living to define their provision of “shelter.” In fact, I would argue that in both cases, the provision of “shelter” was never the only consideration. Certainly, as the director of CWIT said, “There is humanity amongst people to say, you know, housing is a basic need. Kids need a roof over their heads in order to get to school the next day” (29Interview). Yet CWIT provided much more than a roof over heads. From its inception, CWIT sought to provide physical spaces that went beyond the basics of shelter. In the case of CWIT—even in its early incarnation as the Women’s Emergency Shelter—from the beginning, it offered shelter both day and night in a single-family house that was converted to accommodate the shelter. One news article documented their considerations in a site, quoting one developer as saying, “the next problem was finding a suitable home...We looked at I don't know how many houses before we found one that would be appropriate — close to the bus line, had the right zoning, was large enough” (Pringle, n.d.). The provision of 24 hour shelter in a house covers the basic needs of shelter. With physiological needs clearly met, the city and developers focused on more aesthetic concerns regarding the shelter. In particular, during the acquisition of the Forbes house, which was a historic preservation house, CWIT was told that they could only have the house under certain conditions: “that the Forbes house sit on the site next to the existing shelter at 506 E. Church St.; that the house fit there without any variances; and that the Preservation and Conservation Association be involved in the restoration” (Bloomer, 1993a, p.A-1). In addition, as CWIT added more houses, requirements went up, adding new expenses and amenities. For instance, one news article

reported, “The original project estimate was closer to \$300,000, but construction costs quickly mounted. Because it will be a public facility, the building must have sprinklers and alarm systems — and a \$40,000 elevator so it's accessible for people with disabilities” (Wurth, 2002a).

With each new CWIT house, the language became more nuanced, moving away from discussing shelter and toward language of creating opportunities. As the director remarked, “You can't address any of those [self-reliance issues] unless you've met those basic needs and once they have food and housing, bottom line, so that's where, we were hoping that we could move towards education, trying to develop the business that could be used as a training vehicle” (29Interview). This focus was reflected in the organization's growth, as more training spaces, computer labs, and other future-oriented amenities were added with each house. Certainly, each house provides basic shelter, but the early and increasing attention to other needs have resulted in spaces that provide for much more than just shelter.

For Homestead Apartments, since shelter concerns were clearly met, issues focused more on the character of the units, in particular the size of each unit and the amenities contained within it. As one developer remarked,

They're really small, but adequate. Small but adequate. Each one has its own bathroom. A lot of the facilities up in Chicago have shared bathrooms, but we didn't want that, and a kitchen, a nice place where people can cook their own food. We just thought it would be a nice thing for people to have their own bathroom. And actually it came out of the people up in Chicago, said if they ever did it over again they wouldn't do shared bathrooms. They just didn't think it was...it's okay in some circumstances, but not for people, *I mean just not for permanent homes. People, they want more space, or they want their own space* (my emphasis). (27Interview)

Implied in this statement is the idea that a permanent residence should not just provide basic shelter and instead deserves particular amenities. As one news article pointed out, “A community room sits off a first-floor hall, but that's about it for the amenities. Each resident will have about a 250-square-

foot rectangular room with kitchenette and private bath” (Bloomer, 1997b). The project developer overtly addressed this implication, saying,

[Men’s Emergency Shelter] is not a good situation for people to be making this their permanent housing solution. And some of the people had been there for years, they never left, but it was an Emergency Shelter, but you don’t want to just say, “You can’t be here anymore.” But it became permanent housing for them, that’s where they lived, and we said, “We got to come up with a different solution, this is not a good thing.” (27Interview)

This notion separates the SRO project from the shelter projects and allows for different types of debates to occur. One debate was over the legitimacy of this type of housing as a permanent residence. The complex was referred to as a 25-unit dormitory and a flophouse multiple times in news coverage (e.g. Bloomer, 1996, p.A-1). Developers attempted to combat these terms, with one saying, “We’re going to try to lose the title ‘SRO.’ It has a lot of negative connotations” (in Loury, 1996). The article cites the developer further, saying, “He said this SRO will be nothing like its predecessors, where residents often shared kitchens, bathrooms and living areas. Residents of the Homestead Apartments will live independently in efficiency-style apartments each with their own kitchen and bath” (Loury, 1996). Another issue was that permanent residences should have more amenities and square footage than the SRO units. For instance, one opponent of the project negatively compared the 275 square foot efficiencies to small houses, saying,

Each apartment will cost the taxpayers about \$65,000. For \$65,000, we could build each homeless person a new house with three bedrooms, with a family room and a fireplace. We could buy 32 houses that would cost \$50,000 each for the same money this building will cost. Something is very wrong here. Are we being cheap by providing only a small apartment for the homeless when we could provide them with a whole house? (Whelan, 1997, p.A-4).

The portrayal of the Homestead Apartments as permanent housing implicitly guaranteed the provision of “shelter,” leaving other areas open for debate and discussion. Despite the reality that men had used the emergency shelter for years as permanent housing, the basement of McKinley Presbyterian Church was not viewed in the community’s eyes as “permanent housing,” and its space reflected a commitment to providing basic shelter, which carried through to the design of the TIMES

Center as well. But Homestead Apartments' perception as permanent housing matched its use, allowing the developers to focus on higher-order provisions beyond just basic shelter.

Hearth—warmth, comfort, and welcoming atmosphere

Of all the elements of home, hearth is most likely to be associated with the design and decoration of spaces, but also the more intangible sense of a welcoming atmosphere. As Peter Somerville says, “hearth connotes the warmth and coziness which home provides to the body, causing one to relax in comfort and ensuring a welcoming and ‘homely’ atmosphere for others” (1992, p.405). As I also note in the “heart” section, the elements of hearth and heart often are difficult to disentangle from one another, but holding strictly to Somerville’s description, it is clear that hearth is often spatially wrought and more about personal comfort than social relations, though feeling familiar and comfortable with those around you certainly improves the provision of hearth. One homeless participant described the feeling of being able to “sit down in comfort and take a deep breath and exhale,” saying that this feeling was the start of becoming at home somewhere (VIS.003). In each project, I evaluate physical and social atmosphere, evaluating the degree to which they provide hearth, and whether they are in conflict.

Physical and social promotion of hearth—Of all the projects, CWIT had the most defined and well-documented sense of hearth, and its physical attributes were closely tied to mainstream American ideas of what a ‘home’ looks like (see Figure 3). CWIT is comprised of a campus of houses (See Figure 2.



Figure 19: Newly decorated CWIT bedroom. Photo from Wurth, 2008



Figure 20: Homey exteriors of CWIT. Photo by author

Four total houses—only two shown here) with 5-6 bedrooms apiece. The architect of the third house commented, “The two-story building, with beige brick, blue-gray siding and white trim, has a comfortable Craftsman-style feel, though its design is more eclectic. What we tried to do is tie it in with the residential character of the neighborhood” (Wurth, 2006, p.A-3). These structures give every appearance of being single-family detached houses, evoking a sense of normalcy and mainstream acceptance. Inside, the houses are decorated in a similar manner, with aesthetically pleasing paints and wallpapers, comfortable furniture and many posters and plaques with welcoming words on them (Power, 1996). Reflecting on the houses, the long-time director remarked,

I loved the houses ‘cause it was a house. When you walked into A Woman’s Place, in terms of that structure, it just didn’t have the same feel. They had some other amenities I totally envied and coveted, their kitchen facilities, etc., but in terms of how it felt, it felt like an organization, it felt like a... I don’t know, it didn’t feel like a home. So I liked that we were building houses, even though it might be inefficient and one big building might have been adequate, but of all the places I had visited I still felt, I still remembered the one in Boston, the little nun’s house that was a beautiful home, and you walked in, and you felt it. What a difference that makes to people who need to heal, who need to feel and understand what that means to them, in terms...there’s a difference. There’s a difference between homes and there’s a difference between house, there is.” (29Interview)

Residents held similar feelings about the houses. One News Gazette article (of many) reported, “Already, [the new house] is lifting spirits among current residents, though Sims [the director] isn't sure yet who will be moving into the new building. Just looking at it, one resident said, is "like, seeing a sunny day." "It's beautiful," said Mary Humphrey, chatting with two other residents in the shelter house next door. "A lot of people being homeless have never lived in anything so nice. I know I haven't." (Wurth, 2006, p.A-3) For others, the houses remind them of other places they have lived, as another resident remarked, "I grew up in a big house like that” (p.A-3).

Physical design elements do not necessarily create “hearth.” Describing the houses as having “homey details” means things like leaded glass, front porches and skylights, yet a beautiful physical

space can still lack hearth. Sherry Ahrentzen contributed a feminist critique of ideas of home as haven, arguing that the same home space could be haven for one and oppression for another depending on the power dynamics of the household, which are frequently gendered (1992).¹⁴⁰ The director briefly raises that issue when asked if the shelter has "created" more homelessness, saying that people may have been staying in unspeakable situations before they had this option. As one resident said, when asked what she missed most about not having a home, she replied, "nothing really, because there was no love in my family. My family lived in anger and hatred" (Nelson, 1995, p.8). Yet mainstream media portrayals largely focused on aesthetic features of "home". One article does point out the connection between physical and social attributes, saying, "Kathy Sims met us at the lovely, uplifting Forbes House. It must be an oasis for those women and children who desperately need a transition and lift...The many volunteers and planners have done a superb job in creating an aura of simplicity, cleanliness yet with warmth and beauty; showing someone cares!" (Everett and Taylor, n.d.)

Feminist critiques are useful in attending to power and interpersonal dynamics, but in the case of CWIT, their organizational values are as welcoming as their physical spaces. The long-time director consistently placed comfort, respect and compassion over regulations and restrictions. Shelters often implement procedures like breathalyzing and drug testing as preconditions for entrance to the shelters.¹⁴¹ CWIT's director took a stand on this point, saying, "Someone wanted to bring a breathalyzer and I was adamant. I just felt, you know, who can't smell alcohol? We had a policy in place. We had the ability to just compassionately deal with it. Not accept it, not tolerate it..." (29Interview). In refusing breathalyzers, she maintained a sense of welcome and comfort in the center, choosing not to sacrifice these feelings for more institutional methods of maintaining safety and security. The director also felt

¹⁴⁰ Refer back to Chapter 5 for an in-depth examination of the gendered issues within this project and others.

¹⁴¹ For instance, the Salvation Army Stepping Stone Shelter in Champaign uses breathalyzers.

strongly that residents deserved the same amenities as other American households. Recounting a past debate with the Board of Directors, she noted,

My first week there, one of the first issues was they didn't have a television and it's like, can we get a television, and some people felt no, we'll make it too comfortable. They'll just sit around watching TV. And it's like, we could build some structure and some expectations around that, but television is part of most American households, for good or bad. (29Interview)

Sims' lack of concern about making a place "too comfortable" allowed her to create spaces that offered high levels of warmth, comfort, and coziness. Shelters are typically considered to be transitional spaces, and the concern is frequently raised that "if it's too nice, they'll just stay." She rejected this belief, saying, "I remember that the discussions getting rid of the 3 strikes and you're out, that was huge. [That] feeling that if you make it too comfortable then people will just want to stay" (29Interview). Instead, she follows the belief that "You provide them with a service and motivation and you have somewhat monitoring, and you're working with them, and you're hopefully engaging them in moving in that direction" (29Interview). This philosophy played a central role in the creation of a comfortable, welcoming atmosphere, both physical and social.

Physical and social allowance of hearth—The aesthetics of home are not emphasized much in the public discourse about Homestead Apartments--the rooms are described as "efficiency-like," with kitchenettes and bathrooms. One News Gazette article reported that a "homey touch" was added--in this case, the homey touch was "a basket with pens, envelopes, pads of papers, and a to do list pad" (Bloomer, 1997c, p.A-4)—quite a different story from the homey touches in CWIT's rooms. Despite the lack of attention to decoration, individual apartments offer a more comfortable atmosphere by their very nature as one's own space, though that is certainly not guaranteed. The spaces are personalizable, though, and residents can make the space their own, increasing feelings of comfort. The developers and board were very pragmatic as well. As one board member said, "we don't get fancy about, you know, a

more sense of community that could be found in a smaller unit [building], we have to be very opportunistic" (19Interview). When asked directly about the physical elements, this board member responded, "The single most important physical variable was that it was bus routes, we had a hospital right across the street, easy walking distance to downtown. It was just a really great location and location seemed to us to be very important. None of these people have cars and so it was, and the other thing is we would have a totally physical positive effect on the neighborhood... we were aware that people would be antsy and worry about us affecting the value of their property and the safety of their home, and so we wanted it to look nice, as nice as we could afford" (19Interview). In this case, the developers saw the importance of creating a beautiful space to impact the neighborhood, but they used no language of comfort or welcome to describe the living spaces. Much of their language was pragmatic, discussing the importance of private amenities. This approach leaves it up to the resident to create hearth through their own homemaking practices, but it also does not create barriers to residents achieving hearth, as there are no restrictions on decorating, no requirements to receive supportive services, and no time limit on residents' tenure. Combined with the privacy of the units, hearth is very attainable.

Physical/social conflicts in providing hearth—Men's Emergency Shelter and TIMES Center do not offer nearly the physical comfort and warmth of CWIT and Homestead Apartments, though their different social atmospheres impact the degree to which hearth is met by each shelter. The founders and board of Men's Emergency Shelter consistently subscribed to guiding values throughout their 20 years of providing services—the shelter was to offer warmth, food, and safety with no conditions on the individuals who came into the shelter. They considered this value to be doing as good Christians should do, according to one board member. "Jesus didn't say we need to change these people. He said we need to serve these people" (34Interview). The board defined themselves in opposition to Salvation Army Stepping Stone Shelter, the other men's shelter in town, arguing that at Stepping Stone, "We

discovered that they were very militaristic. They had a lot of rules. They kicked a lot of people out" (28Interview). The differences between the shelters' approaches are apparent in a mid-1990s news article that quoted the Men's Emergency Shelter director as saying, "It is not incumbent on us as social-service providers to decide who is fit to receive services," while Stepping Stone's director said, "We have a lot of people caught up in the homeless system. If we are a homeless shelter providing services—laundry facilities, showers, meals—that's fine, but when you provide services for these people that allows them to stay the same, is that doing them any favor?" (Bauer, 1995, p.A-3). The board struggled at first with this open principle. As one board member said, "When the shelter first moved in, the homeless were turned out during the day. They were dirty, smelled bad and got in the way. About a week later, we realized how prejudiced that policy was, and we changed it immediately" (Smith, 1983). The board's guiding values meant that no one was turned away, a value that went far in creating a welcoming atmosphere. One past resident recalled the philosophy of Sheila Ferguson, the director in the early 1990s, as "Instead of saying "you're drunk, get out," it was more like, "you're drunk, get in here" (17Interview).

Despite the positive values guiding the program, the physical space of the dank, smelly basement was not particularly comfortable or cozy. Program director Ted Apy vividly described the space of the Men's Emergency Shelter, as the following: "A volunteer once said this place smells like ass. I said I beg to differ, ass smells better." (Livengood, 1998, p.1). Some physical improvements were made, but these improvements coincided with a shift to a transitional program, which occurred after Mental Health Center assumed ownership of the shelter. Staff members reported on the changes, saying, "[MES] will still provide bare bones emergency shelter services like laundry, a cot and a meal. Everything else is a privilege" (Loury, 1997a, p.A-1). In the same article, the reporter says, "The shelter has also spruced up the interior of the church basement, covered the institutional green paint on the walls and given the place a more comfortable feel" (Loury, 1997a, p.A-1). Given that physical

improvements were made in the moment that the program became more restrictive, it is difficult to say whether “hearth” was actually increased by the physical improvements.

Physical and social lack of hearth—From the time that the Mental Health Center acquired Men’s Emergency Shelter, around 1997, they began to plan for a new facility, recognizing that the basement



was not an ideal space. In this transition from Men’s Emergency Shelter to the TIMES Center, I am struck by the attention to delivering better supportive services without an attendant focus on a more supportive physical environment for the emergency section, what is now known as “Level 1.”

Figure 21: Open living space of TIMES Center. Photo by author

One developer said, “We didn’t simply want to replicate an emergency shelter. We wanted to provide whatever supports were necessary to help people move out of being homeless into self-sufficiency,” going on to say, though, “We really didn’t have a lot of preconceived notions as to what it would look like” (36Interview). Another developer said more plainly, “it was going to be just a big open area...that’s what we were basing that on, mat on a floor in an open area for the emergency section” (27Interview). Combining an open warehouse space with mats on the floor, industrial lighting, the persistent smell of bleach, and a lack of any non-industrial/commercial furnishings, the TIMES Center does not provide hearth to its fifty Level 1 residents (See Figure 4). One resident made some recommendations for making the center feel a bit more like home, saying,

Physically just getting beds or cots or something would make a big difference. It’s funny – just being another 6 inches off the floor makes the difference... And I can see some advantages to the mats. We are able to clean the floor every day. But I don’t know. At the Salvation Army nobody got any sicker and it just gave you something that you could kind of feel was yours.

Food being better. Dinner here is a little rushed. Meals are limited to ½ hour. At the Salvation Army, I don't know, we had a couple hours to eat. Got more of a buffet style serving environment. I don't mean to make it sound as miserable as this is going to make it sound but I mean it does feel kind of like a prison environment or what I would imagine a prison environment to be sometimes (TIMES Interview).

Another resident remarked,

“I think these places tend to be too institutional. I think it would do a lot to get rid of some of these institutional off white walls and to add some color to the place or at least neutralize it with some warmer grays or warmer colors...to get some colors on the walls. I don't know if it be poster art or something that was a little vibrant...It has kind of a sterile feel to it. The other thing that would be nice and the other thing that was nice while I was at the Salvation Army was they had the full sized lockers so you could actually hang clothes and have a nice pair of clothes if you needed to go somewhere and interview or something. These are pretty, pretty cramped (TIMES Interview).

TIMES Center Level 1 continues to have the same restrictions as those that were imposed toward the last years of the Men's Emergency Shelter—requirements to commit to the program and to show progress on certain goals. Coupled with the persistent messages that threaten bans¹⁴² and the physical space of Level 1, TIMES Center does not provide a high degree of hearth to residents. Instead, Level 1 symbolizes the notion of a temporary space with little attention to the present, as present living conditions lack any sense of hearth, yet services aim to move men out into 'homes'. As I articulated in Chapter 5 on gender, this differs greatly from CWIT, where the director and community supported the approach of creating a comfortable environment to facilitate residents' comfort until they could secure their own housing. The Level 1 space is much more in line with the fear of “if it's too nice, they'll stay,” regardless of the intentions of the developers. This illuminates the paradox of espousing priorities of transitioning individuals to better situations while providing them with living conditions that serve only physiological needs.

¹⁴² See Chapter 7 on privacy for examples of these messages

Physical and social promotion of hearth—TIMES Center Level 2, on the other hand, offers a great deal of hearth to its twenty residents. Residents live in semi-private rooms with one roommate, and each person is provided with a bed, nightstand, and small wardrobe. When these residents return to the center after a day of work, they are able to go through a locked door to their semi-private room and shut the door or interact with other residents. These choices make for a situation in which residents can feel relaxed and comfortable. Many Level 1 residents expressed wishes to have accommodations more like Level 2, with one person saying about sleeping on mats on the open floor, “This shit sucks. It really does” (TIMES Interview). In addition, Level 2 residents have a small communal space just for them where they can relax and watch television. In addition, through my time spent volunteering and observing at the TIMES Center, Level 2 residents consistently expressed satisfaction with their relationship with the Level 2 case worker, who was frequently described as “fair and nice.”

Social and limited physical promotion of hearth—Based on my observations in my time spent working with Safe Haven, I can provide the following points about hearth. Physically, the space lacks the comforts of a bed and other amenities in traditional housing. However, people arranged their tents in



Figure 22: Personal tent interior. Photo by author

ways that promoted comfort (see Figure 5). Many of the members used blow-up mattresses and other structures to raise their sleeping areas off the floor of their tents. Their interiors largely resembled small bedrooms, with clearly delineated areas for sleeping, storage, and display of symbolically important items.¹⁴³ The external living

space was dotted with chairs, arranged for hanging out and accepting visitors. Beyond the physical

¹⁴³ For instance, one of the members brought his wife’s ashes to the site after he had been there several weeks. He conveyed to me that he felt like he finally had a home where he could keep her ashes for the first time since she had died the year before.

comforts, the group also created a welcoming atmosphere through their open door policy. The group's guiding values dictated acceptance of all. Many of the individuals who came to Safe Haven after the initial set-up made statements that they had nowhere else to go and that Safe Haven was available at a time when they were out of options. The presence of Safe Haven provided a space of relaxation, both physical and mental, for those who were out of options upon their arrival. One member commented that Safe Haven allowed him to "sit down in comfort and take a deep breath and exhale" (VIS.003). One of their rules also dictated, "No behavior that disrupts the peace and well-being of the community." Safe Haven's policy of turning no one away (over age eighteen) created a welcoming atmosphere but also led to problems at times with the leaders in the organization feeling overwhelmed and unable to manage the group. This problem is one that is unique to self-organized groups, where other service providers have staff to handle these stresses. For those individuals, their comfort, relaxation and well-being may have been in constant flux.¹⁴⁴

Evans and Eichelman (1976) focus on issues of familiarity and feelings of security in thinking about decreasing stress. In doing so, I believe they offer a number of important points of consideration for homeless shelters/housing in terms of improving "hearth." They document the stress of unfamiliar environments, saying, "When on unfamiliar turf or in a new situation much of our information processing capacities initially are taken up in exploring and acclimating to the situation...thus, unfamiliar environments ask us to make more decisions because we do not know what information is important" (Evans and Eichelman, 1976, p.97-8). They suggest that increased familiarity with both people and place can increase feelings of comfort. "Hearth" is generally thought of as a physical aspect, but thinking about comfort in terms of interpersonal interactions provides a different set of sociospatial recommendations. For instance, shelters and transitional centers often create a set of relationships

¹⁴⁴ Despite these stresses, I believe these leaders also had an enhanced sense of self and pride, as I discuss in a later section on roots.

between case workers and clients, without attention to encouraging relationships between residents. Taking the importance of familiarity into account suggests that attention to the interpersonal relationships—limiting negative and stimulating positive—could result in greater feelings of comfort. There are certainly spatial/housing methods to encourage this as well, such as shared cooking/dining spaces, but social changes could also facilitate greater comfort. Safe Haven and Men’s Emergency Shelter both offer models for achieving comfort through improved social relations—in both cases, resident ownership over the space allowed those residents to welcome others into the space and police it for threats, demonstrating the connection between territoriality/defensible space and hearth.

Heart—emotional security, social support, loving and caring social relations

Social support, emotional stability, loving relationships and happiness are all important parts of a positive sense of home. While “heart” is somewhat intangible, it is no less important than the other elements of home, as many people experiencing homelessness have reminded me. One person remarked, “So many people live in beautiful homes -- houses -- but they never consider it home, because there's nothing there that makes them feel good” (HH1.003). This same person went on to answer my question “What does home mean to you,” saying,

For me, [home would be] my family with me. A structure would be nice -- I'm not gonna lie about that. The community in which I am in, and the people with whom I surround myself -- that would be the ideal home...You really own nothing here except for your own body -- other than that, the perfect home would be friends, loved ones, a support system. Your church, if you're into that -- those things keep you sane and make your life worthwhile...Most important is to be with someone, someone to share it with. We are here, that's what we're looking for. You know like animals -- some like to be with groups. We are social people. Without that socialness or people to share it with, we come back to homelessness. Homeless people have no one. They have no one to share their happiness, even if they had good times or bad times. (VIS.003)

Heart was discussed more for some projects than others, as well as the degree to which this element was met by each project. As Mifflin and Wilton put it, “Home is a key site for social relations”

(2005, p.405). It can be argued that for any shelter or group housing, there are a number of figures who play a role in meeting this element of home. Not all may apply to each project, but generally, the figures are directors, staff, involved community members, and other residents. Each of these figures plays a role and some may counteract each other. For instance, a director may be cold and distant from residents, while staff members form close, caring relationships with residents, or vice versa. Similarly, residents may find that staff is unsupportive but other residents support each other. Organizational policy on visitors plays a significant role in the support of residents' external relationships. Finally, capacity for privacy—as defensible space—positively impacts the facilitation of heart. I evaluate each project based on these criteria.

Large capacity for heart—In the Homestead Apartments project, heart is not a large element, but the project certainly provides the groundwork for it. Project developers understood the role of social support in people's lives, but the voluntary social services meant that staff would be fairly hands-off with residents. Developers hoped that the shared hallways and communal spaces would spur residents to talk with each other. As one board member said, "They're going to get to know each other. They're going to see what they have in common. They're going to support each other (19Interview). While creating a positive social environment was their intention, existing research on SROs and social relations varies considerably about whether or not people do form positive social relations in SRO environments (e.g. Hoch and Slayton, 1989; Rollinson; 1991). Beyond resident relationships, the organizational policy on visitors supports residents' external relationships. According to the current director,

Our policy is that residents can have up to 2 adult visitors at any one time and those visitors can stay overnight up to 2 nights, if they wish to have visitors stay longer than that they need to register the visitors with the main office. if they register the visitor with the office they can stay up to 5 nights. residents are responsible for their visitors at all times when they are on the premises and visitors are not to be in common areas of the building unattended (A. Smith, personal communication, February 9, 2012).

Given a lack of interviews with residents of Homestead Apartments, I only draw from board members' statements, but one board member believes that the SRO spaces have allowed a number of the residents to reconnect with their families in reciprocal relationships, in contrast to past relations where they relied on families to house them, placing a strain on the emotional aspect of the relationship. This board member felt that having a space of one's own in which to entertain family and friends greatly improved the quality of those relationships (19Interview). Here the importance of privacy becomes apparent. The individual nature of the private apartments allows residents to seek as much or as little social interaction as they desire, reducing the strain and tension that comes with too much unwanted social interaction and enhancing the quality of desired social interactions. In fact, one of the project developers acknowledged this in a statement to Champaign City Council, in which he argued for the need for an SRO, contrasting them with other environments: "Emergency shelters are actually detrimental environments to the stability and normalization of the homeless. They are the most stressful of group living arrangements. They cannot provide the totally nonthreatening order supported environment" (CCCmeeting010996). Defensible space allows for territoriality over one's private space, supporting residents' capacity to have positive social relations.

Internal social support—Men's Emergency Shelter provided heart to an extent, though social relationships were more insular, less linked to individuals outside the realm of homelessness. The basement space certainly did not lend itself to receiving visitors, like family and friends, but the director's programming and support of group activities like movie nights, card playing, and other events served to create a familial atmosphere (17Interview). In addition, a number of residents were "regulars," who took newbies under their wings, protecting them and offering friendship and social support (17Interview). One news article opined, "When the homeless reach out, they touch other homeless people. That can lead to unexpected displays of generosity from people who haven't been given much by life...They won't hesitate to give up money or their last cigarettes" (Ostrowski, 1991b,

p.3). The news article gives an example of a homeless “kid,” who said, “I gave away my gloves because somebody needed them more than I did” (1991, p.3). The board of directors also felt strongly that residents were guests and had the right to respect and supportive treatment by staff (28Interview, 34Interview).

In terms of community support, the male residents were at a disadvantage. As one example, the basement space also housed a daytime drop-in center for a period of time, during which a *News Gazette* article suggested that community members could help by taking a homeless mother and child home for dinner. The same suggestion was not extended to include bringing a homeless man home for dinner, suggesting a lack of understanding, or at the least, lack of provision for the social needs of the men. Certainly this approach to women and children as charitable subjects and men as threatening figures has deep roots. Scholars have documented these assumptions, including fears of men lacking social ties and representing unbridled sexual desire, while women were seen as mothers, attached to the home and embodying chaste familial love (DePastino, 2003, p.29-36).¹⁴⁵ In a self-fulfilling prophecy, fears of men’s lack of social ties prevent them from gaining social ties outside the homeless community. As one resident remarked in a news story, “A lot of people don't take this serious: They think it's a joke. They think we're here because we wanna be. A lot of us don't have family to rely on” (Ostrowski, 1991b, p.3). He went on to say, “Many homeless yearn for companionship. A lot of guys in here are love starved. They’re reaching out” (Ostrowski, 1991b, p.3).

Lack of support, connection to community—The transition from Men’s Emergency Shelter to TIMES Center was marked by a decrease in the provision of “heart” to residents, though I am unaware of whether this change happened before, during, or after the opening of the TIMES Center.¹⁴⁶ Like the

¹⁴⁵ See Williams (2003) and Passaro (1996) for further critique of these gendered biases.

¹⁴⁶ The Mental Health Center assumed control of operations of the Men’s Emergency Shelter at least three years before the TIMES Center opened. There is some evidence that shifts in approaches to the residents began before the TIMES Center, but I can only speak with certainty about the TIMES Center based on interviews conducted in

Men's Emergency Shelter, there are not spaces to receive visitors, so residents must leave the center to pursue their external relationships. As one resident said, "I guess what would really make it feel more like home is if I could have friends spend the night with me" (TIMES Interview).

Beyond physical conditions, the TIMES Center staff and community relations also do not appear to provide "heart." Begun as partially emergency space (Level 1) and partially transitional space (Level 2), the TIMES Center falls prey to common problems of emergency shelters. Hoch and Slayton document one of those problems, stating, "Caretakers and advocates...overlook how the punitive caretaking practices needed to maintain order in a dormitory setting with a large number of strangers undermine efforts to offer compassionate counsel and attention" (1989, p.220). One resident echoed Hoch and Slayton, saying, "I think the staff here can be a little domineering at times - a little power hungry. And I'm not sure that's intentional. I think maybe it just comes with the territory and the experience and again just having to manage so many different personalities" (TIMES Interview). Certainly, the staff has to deal with many negative issues. For instance, many of the men expressed that drug use in the shelter and fighting among residents were common and kept them from wanting to interact with other residents. The residents display a keen understanding of presenting strong fronts as a way to protect oneself. Despite these understandings, residents expressed desires to have better relationships with staff. Two residents reflected,

Well I wish [staff] didn't come off as so rigid and they at times seem unfriendly and just saying that, I realize that's kind of unfair. I don't know that they are, it's just kind of the persona that maybe they have to keep up. I think they have to be pretty tough around here or they get walked on. There are people here that would take advantage of them and of the people in the center if they're not rained (sic) in a little bit. That transfers and flows over to everybody (TIMES Interview).

When you wake up [in your home], say hello to your dad, say hello to people in (sic) top of you. Right, but here we have a role, we have a staff. The staff members are running the

2008. In one news article in 1998, the program manager reflects a negative attitude toward residents, saying, "These people have hustled for so long, they don't know anything else" (Livengood, 1998, p.1).

place...once I woke up, I go to the desk, say morning, but that (sic) the only way I can make this feel like a home to me. But the rest is...I'm not going to blame everybody but it's everything except a home" (TIMES Interview).

Residents also do not benefit from positive relations with community members. The public rhetoric (from media coverage and city council meetings) surrounding the TIMES Center is focused on getting homeless residents out of their present circumstances. Given this focus, it is hard to imagine or justify happiness while living in that space. Particularly because so few positive comments are made in community discussions about the TIMES Center, the space does not represent (or offer) positive social relations with surrounding community members. When the center shifted to a fully transitional model, they added a community service requirement, with the rationale, "We just feel that that prepares the guys more for re-entry into the community. They gain more contacts, they know more people, they're more comfortable in society" (Wurth, 2004). However, to my knowledge, this component is no longer in place, and the residents did not express that they were able to connect with the community in positive ways. One resident acknowledged the lack of connections, remarking,

I think this place tried to be or tries to be supportive at least in, well, I think in terms of trying to be encouraging. I think it would be helpful for both shelters to have stronger ties with the community, particularly in terms of finding housing. I don't think that either of them is very strong when it comes to having contacts and links with real estate companies in the area and that kind of thing so that you can transition out of here pretty much on your own when it comes time to find an apartment or a place to live (TIMES Interview).

TIMES Center residents face a number of obstacles to achieving "heart." As with Men's Emergency Shelter residents, they are stigmatized and segregated from the broader community, precluding positive social relationships outside the shelter. The lack of privacy at the center does not support their existing external relationships, and the presence of strangers—as described in Chapter 7 on feelings of safety—keeps residents on their guard. Coupled with negative staff interactions, these factors result in a decreased provision of heart.

Internal support, limiting of external relations—CWIT presents a cohesive approach to providing love, care and support to its residents but still places some restrictions on residents' own abilities to maintain social support. CWIT offers a physical environment that encourages residents. A student researcher remarked about the center's use of "bulletin boards with a moorage (sic) of information from house rule reminders to words of encouragement. In both homes one is greeted in many directions with plaques and posters of phrases of encouragement and "words of wisdom"" (Johnson, 1996). Newspaper articles commonly used the words "emotional support" to describe CWIT's services, alongside more pragmatic services like job counseling (see "Women's", 1995, p.E-3). Across media coverage, the language of success and achieving dreams invokes a feeling of support and care that does not exist in the language about the other projects. As one reporter wrote, "This place seems to be offering more stability for people, a place to really get to know and be at home with so you can get your life together, which I really admire." (Wurth, 2002b)

The long-time director of CWIT, Kathy Sims, played an instrumental role in crafting the center's approach to residents. Early public discussions revealed that she was thoughtful and clever in her approach to community concerns about residents. In one heated discussion about CWIT acquiring a small house to use as transitional housing, Sims navigated questions about monitoring of residents, crafting her answers in ways that both assuaged fears but also did not perpetuate stereotypes about the residents, saying, "weekly visits will be conducted to ensure maintenance of the house and emotional well-being of the family." (Vaughn, 1991, p.A-3) She also recognized the role of design in contributing to positive social relations. Referencing one of the new additions to the shelter, she called attention to the comfortable front porch and back deck, saying, "You've got to have porches...they're the "social center" of the houses" (Wurth, 2002a). Residents describe the center in much the same way. A News Gazette writer reported the following: "About four years ago, Odem-Park came to the facility as a homeless woman. She said that she made some bad decisions that, in her mind, alienated Odem-Park from her

family. The alienation that she felt was compounded by an illness. So she decided to seek the center's help, remarking, "It was a support system for me" (Wilson, 1995).

Yet CWIT's visitation policy presents some barriers to the maintenance of residents' external relationships. Unlike Homestead Apartments, where the visitation policy is fairly loose but does prevent visitors from moving in with residents, CWIT maintains a strict visitation policy. The current program manager explained the visitation policy as the following:

Residents are permitted to have visitors during the following days/times: Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday between the hours of 1pm-7pm for a total time of 2 hours per each visiting day. Residents can have visitors in common areas only, not in private bedrooms. Overnight visitors are not allowed, except for a woman's children. (K. Sissors, personal communication, 02/21/2012).¹⁴⁷

These restrictions force women to largely pursue their external relationships outside the center. In addition, anthropologist Jeanne Williams argues that "the rules disallowing visitors at most shelters, or the lack of private space in which to entertain them should they be permitted on site, suggests that homeless people do not need privacy, self-expression, friendships, and sexual relations, or at least that these needs should not be taken seriously" (Williams, 1996, p.85). Cultural anthropologist Joanne Passaro recounts an event in New York City where women shelter residents staged a protest against rules that barred male visitors. In this protest, they argued "we're not just mothers, we're women" (Passaro, 1996, p.61). As Passaro argues, "Protectionism has a price" (1996, p.62). Thus, despite high levels of community support for the residents and an encouraging and supportive environment, not all aspects of heart are met at CWIT.

Internal and external social support—For Safe Haven, "heart" featured prominently as a guiding value of the group. Residents described Safe Haven as a communal home, embodying the element of

¹⁴⁷ There are safety and security reasons for regulating visitors. For instance, the program manager remarked that the staff wants to avoid indicating that a woman is living at CWT for the resident's safety (K. Sissors, personal communication, 02/21/2012).

heart—social support, close and caring relationships, and emotional stability, as much as can be had in an unstable living environment. One resident reflected on his experiences in the tent community, saying, “I tried to interact with the people around me, try to build some kind of rapport, so with Safe Haven, you get a sense of sharing -- that you have someone to share it with. So it's brought some of that sense of family and home to me” (VIS.003). His belief was seconded by another resident, who said, “I do kinda like the communal living; I read about it before where people were banding together to use all their resources together for the input of the good instead of like single families living individually” (SWT.004). Two other residents expressed the role of Safe Haven in providing social support, saying,

After [my wife] passed away I met some friends on the streets who were good people... had it not been for Safe Haven, for the whole idea, for the whole start of it I wouldn't have anything worth staying alive for because after my wife passed away, I really felt like I didn't have much to look forward to, and thanks to them, they actually gave me something worth looking forward to, brought me up, gave me something worth fighting for. (Safe Haven member, CCCmeeting070709).

As a group we were able to provide each other with a dignified living situation based on mutual respect. We helped each other when there was no other help available. One of the men came to us after his life unraveled following the loss of his wife. He held her in his arms as she passed away. He was only 30. In his grief he lost his home and his job and his hope. He came to us looking for shelter, community, and support, and he found that. (Safe Haven member, CCCmeeting080409).

The open door policy of the group informed their visitor policy—anyone was welcome who did not violate the group's rules, and if the guest wished to become a member, there was a two week “trial” period, after which members voted on whether or not to accept the guest.¹⁴⁸ If visitors wished to remain guests, there were no rules placed on visiting or overnight stays, resulting in a flexible social environment. In addition to internal support and support of existing relationships, the group also enjoyed a fair amount of support from the faith and activist communities, with many people offering some combination of monetary support, resources, and acts of companionship. Safe Haven also bore

¹⁴⁸ During the life of Safe Haven, no guests were denied membership if they stayed during the two week period.

much criticism from the housed community, but this criticism actually resulted in an internal strengthening of group consciousness against what was perceived as external attacks. As the group moved locations, group structure became more rule-bound and the number of residents quadrupled. These changes resulted in a decrease in internal social support and fracturing of group consciousness, pointing to an unfortunate side-effect of institutionalization. Tent city researcher Chris Herring addressed these issues, remarking that tent cities across the country seem to naturally fracture into groups of 4-10 individuals, and forced groups of more than that number tend to result in conflicts (C. Herring, personal communication, 06/20/2011). Despite these issues, the unique living situation of Safe Haven required the group to work together and garnered much attention from the community, and in the process, much support from housed community members, resulting in a high degree of heart.

Roots— source of personal identity, sense of self and meaningfulness within a larger set of social relations

Roots, or ontological security, as many scholars refer to it, indicate a deeper, unconscious sense of continuity and constancy of self and surroundings (Dupuis and Thorns, 1998). Hiscock et al (2001) add to this a confidence in the social order and one's place in society, remarking that shame and anxieties about self are significant barriers to feeling ontological security. Citing past scholarship, Kathleen Mee argues that ontological security in the home is achieved when the home is a site of constancy, a place for living routines, free from surveillance, and a base "around which to construct identities" (2007, p.210). One homeless participant summed up this feeling in his definition of home, saying that home means,

One word: the world. Because everything you do or think about revolves around that. You say, I'm going to get up and go to work, but you don't worry about going to the bathroom and where your cosmetic stuff is. You feel comfortable, because you don't have to worry about pulling your curtain back and if somebody is there. When you get ready to leave, there's just something about feeling more happy about things when you leave out that door. You're like, okay, the bus will be coming and that is the world back there. You relaxed, you ain't worried

about nothing -- that's everything. When you get done with your class, or I get off work, a sense of "I'm heading home," and you get happier. You get to see your significant other or your little ones. It was always beautiful to see my kids. I pull up and they run to the fence and say "hey daddy, hey daddy" (VIS.009).

Dupuis and Thorns (1998) argue that the environment itself is not as important as the meanings attached to it. These scholars and others (see Hiscock et al, 2001; Saunders, 1990) have linked ontological security to home ownership, less because the financial state of paying a mortgage provides roots and more because home ownership is perceived as a superior form of dwelling and more stable than renting. These cultural norms celebrate the single-family detached house, allowing those who dwell within them to gain a stronger, more constant sense of personal identity and trust in the constancy of the world around them. In a society that labels and judges based on the housing forms individuals occupy, shelters that provide more mainstream trappings of home, like hearth and privacy, may offer a spatial context that is better equipped to aid individuals' positive personal identities. Certainly, shelters and other homeless housing are temporary in terms of time spent living in them, but their temporary status does not negate the need for and possibility of providing a supportive environment for development of one's sense of self and place in society. Yet shelters cannot create this sort of environment internally. More than any of the other elements of home, roots are tied to societal perceptions, and the spaces of shelters can only provide roots if the surrounding community is willing to value the spaces and those who live in them. As one man said, "Society says since you don't have a home you're homeless. No, I don't have a structure to live in...but yeah, I'm homeless, if the whole town -- the whole city I lived in -- treats me like a dog" (HH1.003).

To achieve roots, the environment must support pride, dignity and self-esteem. Looking back to Chapter 4, recall the extensive norms advanced about "homeless people" and the role of shelters. In many people's minds, living in a single-family house and living in a shelter are polar opposites—one is "homed" while the other is "homeless." Yet the rhetoric of "transitioning out of homelessness"

assumes that people will leave shelters for future homes. What remains largely unexamined is the period of time when someone is in transition. Padgett (2007) points out that the literature often draws hard distinctions between housed and homeless, belying the state of flux in which people live out their daily lives. The question then, is how shelters can begin to provide the culturally and societally afforded dignities that accompany home ownership.¹⁴⁹ Stigma and social exclusion remain significant barriers in this quest (Padgett, 2007). As one proponent of Safe Haven stated, “It is hard to structure a personally dignified life at a shelter. Despite strengths, shelters are not as conducive to either serious job hunting or maximizing a sense of normalcy and personal dignity” (Oyer, 2009). Because of the encompassing nature of roots, my descriptions and illustrations of the other elements of home offer a build-up to this discussion. I sought to clarify and isolate the elements of privacy, shelter, hearth, and heart, to the extent possible, and this section weaves those elements into an examination of the shortcomings, achievements and possibilities of roots. In each project, I look at the degree to which the community stigmatizes or accepts the project and residents, and the degree to which the physical and social elements of the project support constancy, routines, freedom from surveillance and positive identity construction.

Community stigmatization—TIMES Center residents face harsh barriers to developing a positive sense of self. As Lois Takahashi (1998) theorized, over time, negative perceptions of people become attached to the spaces those individuals occupy, particularly if those spaces are highly segregated/marginalized from other spaces in the community. In the case of the Men’s Emergency Shelter and TIMES Center, perceptions of the residents’ criminality and troublemaking have transferred stigma to the shelter itself, resulting in what Takahashi calls “sociospatial stigmatization” (1998). I would argue that the TIMES Center was more negatively impacted by sociospatial stigmatization than the Men’s Emergency Shelter because the emergency shelter was created with little fanfare in the 1970s

¹⁴⁹ The goal of this challenge is to promote shelter residents’ development of positive personal identities and feel confident in their place in society.

and operated largely without government funding, skirting the need for city council to address it overtly. The TIMES Center, on the other hand, was the focus of much community discussion and bore the brunt of the community's frustrations with the emergency shelter, with panhandlers, and with publicly drunken men. In a sense, the space of the TIMES Center was a dumping ground for stakeholders to articulate their fears and frustrations. Even supporters used comments that stigmatized the men's actions, saying it would keep panhandling down and get community problems off the street. This sociospatial stigmatization is made greater because of the notions of poor, homeless single men as personally flawed (see DePastino, 2003; Passaro, 1996). As a result, the space was stigmatized from the beginning of its development, making it questionable as an environment where residents could develop a positive personal identity or confidence in their place in society.

Space impacts internal support—In addition to the lack of community acceptance, Level 1 residents face physical and social barriers to achieving a sense of roots as well, in ways that Level 2 residents do not. Some residents clearly appreciated the TIMES Center, with one man saying, "It's not a lock down facility—you can come and go as you please. You still have your life but you're here trying to get your life together and this is the place to do that" (TIMES Interview). Level 2 sociospatial characteristics support that. Residents have constancy in their physical space and security of tenure, and turnover is lower than Level 1. To boot, they can retreat to their room and escape constant staff surveillance. The physical and social atmosphere of Level 1 living detracts from many of the necessary elements of ontological security. As I articulated in Chapter 7, there is no freedom from surveillance in Level 1. In addition, constancy is low on several fronts. For one, mats are picked up every morning and stacked, with no capacity to lay claim to a space for more than one night. Two, turnover is high, so the social environment is shifting on a weekly or even daily basis. Three, threats of bans lower one's sense of constancy, as their security of tenure at the center is flimsy. At the same time, while the TIMES

Center institutes certain routines, these can get in the way of individuals' personal routines and responsibilities. One resident said,

Yesterday morning...I had to go to work, I had to be there at 8 o'clock in the morning. And the guy got on me real bad about me not doing my chores. I told him I had to go to work, but he told me I still had to do my chore. And I was thinking to myself, why are you getting on me...I'm in my work uniform and I'm halfway in the car getting ready to go to work. So maybe layoff on the people who are trying to do something with their life (TIMES Interview).

Drawing together the sociospatial stigmatization by the community and the physical and social barriers, TIMES Center Level 1 residents would have a difficult time constructing or maintaining a positive identity. Hiscock et al (2001) cite shame and anxiety about self as barriers to ontological security. One former resident of the TIMES Center Level 1 program questioned the TIMES Center's ability to provide a positive sense of self or constancy, saying,

Some places say they have this and this to offer you, but once you get in there, they treat you like crap. So if you get somebody in there and you say you're helping them, but every time you turn around they're upset or mad at you, but only because you're human, you can make mistakes, that becomes like a bad marriage. Every time you turn around, something is wrong. It's not helpful at all -- not the slightest bit. Even when the TIMES center was going, as soon as summer comes, people move out and sleep on the tracks. There's a reason for that. Ask yourself this question: why would people sleep under a tree rather than sleep in a bed? (HH1.003)

Yet a TIMES Center developer said,

"Here again, I think it's a value of Mental Health Center and the people who work within the Mental Health Center, that we really did value the persons that were coming in for services, and we believed that they deserved only the best...I would have individuals come up to me and say, "You're running the Club Med for homeless people" as if they didn't deserve that level of quality of life...*People get better and people recover because you have changed the context of who they are* (my emphasis), and how do you do that? Sometimes it's by the external surroundings. I can't imagine getting better in a place that is very depressing." (36Interview)

I would argue that Level 2 has the capacity to change the context of who they are, to the extent that the residents can escape the stigmatization of living at the TIMES Center. Level 1, though, despite

the developers' positive intentions, combines community stigmatization with negative spatial and social elements, all of which preclude residents' development of a positive identity.

Internal support—Men's Emergency Shelter displays some differences from TIMES Center in terms of roots. Men's Emergency Shelter had some capacity to support ontological security because of their policy to accept all people with no conditions. This provision extended respect to each guest to make their own decisions in their lives and still have access to the basic services. It also offered a healthy measure of constancy to the guests--they would have a place to sleep, eat and stay warm every night, regardless of whatever else was going on in their life. From the outside, an emergency shelter would seem like the last place to afford a sense of constancy, but the Men's Emergency Shelter met this element of home better than would be expected. One former resident said about Sheila Ferguson, director in the early 1990s,

She also started movie nights as a way to give the guys some entertainment and to create a sense of community. She just had compassion and personal respect for the people staying there. She insisted that the men were all equal human beings and demanded that the staff act accordingly, though this didn't always carry through to staff behavior, but she tried to set a tone for the place (17Interview).

Another former board member said,

I think that there's some of the population that still needs some of the basic services without being judgmental of their lifestyle... I understand the need to try to help people improve their situation. But I think at the same time there's also a need to just let people be...I think it's kind of a human dignity issue to some extent (20Interview).

News descriptions and quotes from the men point to these elements of respect as well. One author critiqued the shelter's amount of respect, saying, "The shelter at McKinley is, if anything, a bit too nice on one point: If a man comes in with a bottle of booze the staff will take it away from him and return it to him the next morning" (Kersey, 1993, p.15). Acceptance of the men included respecting them, supporting a positive sense of self and creating an atmosphere of positive, equal relationships. One news reporter states,

Most of all the shelter is home for the guests. They come not only for the meals and the roof over their heads but for the friends they find. At the shelter the homeless men are accepted with no questions asked and no foul looks. They don't have to worry about being rejected because of their troubles with alcohol or drugs or for the time they may have spent in prison. The shelter is also a place where they can ask for help without feeling ashamed. "This is the only place we've got," Ron said. For that reason, he said shelter guests share a camaraderie and a level of respect for the shelter and the volunteers. Sometimes they help one another develop the proper respect. "We police our own," he said." (Loury, 1997g, p.A-3)

Community stigmatization—Despite the internal support for dignity and positive identity, Men's Emergency Shelter residents faced stigmatization by the community. Two residents addressed their treatment by the community. One resident said, "Hey, I'm here, man. This is me. I've got feelings and emotions," while another said, "People on the streets like to be treated the way you like to be treated. They got hearts, they got blood, just like people who own houses" (Ostrowski, 1991b, p.3). He went on to recount his experiences with panhandling: "I said, 'Please, sir, Will you" help me out?' Somebody told me, 'You can just get out of my face.' That's how mean people are" (Ostrowski, 1991b, p.3). While residents had support within the shelter, they were always negotiating the stigma of being homeless men as well. Yet the commitments of the board, director and staff to treating each resident with respect offered a crucial corrective to the stigmatization experienced outside the shelter doors.

Mixed community feelings—Safe Haven members and supporters espoused rhetoric of pride, dignity and self-sufficiency as a way to set Safe Haven apart from shelters, framing it as a different and more acceptable option for the members. These assertions were unique in the community's history of homeless discussions because it was the first time that "higher order" needs were frequently referenced in support of a development. Despite the members' assertions that they were proud of their self-sufficiency, the group drew heavy criticism from neighbors, the *News Gazette*, and city staff and officials. Members were variously portrayed as partiers, troublemakers, thieves, and illegitimate members of the community, if they were recognized as members at all. Counter to these stigmatizations, the group enjoyed support from the faith and activist communities, and they certainly

were provided with positive reinforcement for their feelings of pride from these groups. Alternative and main news sources provided heavy coverage of advocates' and members' assertions of their right to dignity and self-esteem. Prior to this time, there was limited discussion of self-esteem associated with CWIT, but the discussion had no points of conflict. It was stated much more matter-of-factly, that of course women and children needed a positive, supportive environment. The difference with Safe Haven was the assertion that members had a right to a dignified life.

Self and group support— The group's feelings of pride extended to their self-organization. Shelter environments are managed and controlled by staff, whereas tent cities are internally managed, allowing for each members' individual routines to flourish, as well as avoid surveillance by others. This internal organization was a source of pride and positive identity for Safe Haven residents. In addition, they tied their dwelling practices to pride about their self-sufficiency, challenges to the idea of "home" as a status symbol. One resident who had been on and off the street for 20 years said,

I would consider myself very stable [at this point in my life]. The car is -- I've had all of that, but so what? They're only good for getting women. It's true. Bling -- a lot of the things in the world today are just bling. You can only drive one car at a time. Anything more than that is unnecessary. That's how I look at it. It's not all that. A lot of people put too much emphasis on the material world...To walk up to somebody and say you aint shit, because you don't have a house, is so weak. Very primitive thinking. (HH1.003)

When asked about her ideal home, another resident remarked,

If you don't have a lot, and you've never really had a lot then you're happy with what you have. My thing would be just give me a picket fence. The whole scenario of "you can't be happy, unless you have 2.5 kids and a picket fence and a dog and a nice car and a nice white shiny house with black shutters". Please, please. I would be happy in a doghouse. Just give me some place where I can be with my husband, where he's not in my ass and I'm not in his all the time. That would be home. It doesn't have to be the four walls. Just give me an area where the wind blows, and it's so nice and peaceful and quiet. (VIS.006)

Another Safe Haven resident illuminated the importance of constancy, describing several members' decisions to leave unsafe housing environments to sleep outside (CCCmeeting080409). In his

description, he relies on the belief that physical safety, peace of mind and constancy are more important than a roof. In terms of constancy, he situates Safe Haven as a solution to the displacement that characterizes experiences of living on the street. While we often think of homelessness as displacement itself, once someone is dwelling on the street, he/she is subject to more actions of displacement, frequently by police enforcing city ordinances. Safe Haven, to this resident, represented a halting of that cycle of displacement. While the physicality of the dwelling was not terribly different than sleeping somewhere alone, the benefits of the entire dwelling space created a substantively different experience for those living there. Despite this belief, in reality, residents did not achieve constancy, as the tent community was served zoning violations soon after beginning.

Ultimately, the tent community's combined impermanence, illegality, and stigmatization could not allow for roots to develop, though to the extent that residents rejected societal framings of themselves, the tent community acted as a source of positive personal identity formation. In this case, individuals' positive senses of self were in direct conflict with community efforts to shut down the tent community.

Community stigmatization, then incognito—For residents of Homestead Apartments, barriers to positive personal identities centered on attributions of laziness. During the development of the project, many opponents wanted assurance that residents would have to find employment and that they would not be permitted to stay without that condition. Stigmatization of the residents was hotly debated, with developers and supporters vehemently defending potential residents' identity, while opponents sought to discredit residents and developers. In terms of residents' identity formation, negative attributions create barriers to residents' capacity to occupy a valuable status in the community. In a similar situation, Blokland (2008) describes residents' attitudes toward public housing projects, noting that the stigma of living in public housing discouraged people from developing emotional attachments to their homes and neighborhoods because they did not want to be identified with/as the type of person the

projects are for, i.e. worthless and lazy. Associating with a place requires a degree of identifying with the assumptions about the people in that place. Today, the stigmatizing debates from the project development have dissipated. Homestead Apartments keeps a low profile in the community. It operates as a small, well-managed apartment complex, and the apartments are highly sought after as one of the few truly affordable housing complexes in the community.¹⁵⁰ The private physical design, lack of case manager oversight, and permanence of the SRO allows residents to develop roots—it is a home environment in which they can feel constancy and security, and the low profile of the complex reduces the stigma of living in a subsidized housing unit. Even before the stigma had dissipated, residents expressed their happiness with the living situation. One resident remarked, “I felt like a new person when I got my apartment. It’s a home to me, makes me feel like I’m somebody. Since I moved in I started working at the food bank. I sort and check labels, do quality control and stocking. I love it. I’m happy” (“Affordable”, 1998, p.5).

Community acceptance and internal support—CWIT is able to provide a high degree of roots, through its combination of the following provisions: privacy, supportive relationships, comfortable and constant accommodations, few rules that dictate residents’ schedules, high levels of community support coupled with low levels of stigmatization, and the physical trappings of a mainstream American “home,” i.e. nicely decorated single-family detached houses. These provisions are possible in large part because of the gendered identity of its residents, as I describe in Chapter 5.

One researcher reported the following after her evaluation of CWIT:

What impresses me is the agency name and the manner in which it is talked about, as a place of transition, and not a permanent way of life. In this way, the image is of one who is experiencing homelessness, and not one who is simply labeled as 'homeless'. Hopefully, this gives the shelter tenant and the general public a positive outlook on what, in many cases, is a temporary and reversible situation. (Uhl, 1996)

¹⁵⁰ I base this assertion on conversations with residents of Safe Haven and TIMES Center, who have expressed desires to “land” an apartment at the complex.

CWIT enjoys a great deal of support from the community, particularly church and women's groups, who have adopted rooms and gardens over the years, transforming spaces into, as one volunteer put it, "room[s] that the mothers will want to be in." (Wurth, 2006, p.A-3) The long-time director is quoted as saying, "What the community did when they came in and adopted these rooms is just the most amazing, inspiring, humbling and generous act of love that could ever happen. You can't help but walk through these buildings and know that there is thoughtfulness in the details" (Schmidt, n.d., p.17). This financial and emotional support from community groups creates a sense that CWIT is worth their investment, including the residents, merging the creation of warm, comfortable spaces with the caring relations between volunteers and residents, and supporting a positive sense of self on the part of the residents. Yet stigma still exists, as one resident pointed out in a news article. She requested that her full name not be used, saying, "It's embarrassing. Who wants the stigma of homelessness? Do you? Let the homeless maintain their dignity, too. If you're a human being, you should understand" (Bernard, 1991a, p.7). She went on to say, "When people think about helping the homeless, they have to ask themselves, what would they do for themselves in that position, instead of treating them like 'the other'" (1991a, p.7).

There are other factors that remain in flux and are dependent on the relationships between director/staff and residents and simply the reality of not having housing of one's own. One news article reported a social work graduate student as saying, "People are under stress when they're in a place like this. Because their lives are in a mess and they know it, or else they wouldn't be here. And the children pick up on that" (Bernard, 1991b, p.4). Some residents have expressed concerns about their life at CWIT. One resident said, "It's confusing to the kids. Instead of one family, here there's all sorts of mommies and daddies running around. Some of the kids call the staff 'mommy.' I don't like that" (Bernard, 1991b, p.4). This same resident commented that young staff members interfered with her parenting practices when they had no children of their own, offering an example of encroachment on one's

identity (Bernard, 1991b). Another resident pointed out the importance of maintaining routines, saying, “Simple routines like washing up together in the morning take on great importance” (Bernard, 1991b, p.4).

Ultimately, CWIT offers a great deal of ontological security to residents. A researcher commented on the client-centered approach of CWIT, saying, “Clients are encouraged to take action to influence the systems which affect them...includ[ing] posters advocating voter registration and a resident advocacy council, consisting of present and former clients to comment and offer suggestions for changes in the agency (Henry, 1996). In addition, despite other issues of constancy, residents do not have much worry about their security of tenure. In describing positive changes to CWIT, the long-time director commented that they learned, “we can’t be punitive...the structure has to also have the flexibility to allow people to learn how to adapt to expectations and responsibility” (29Interview). Today, their resident eviction process is filled with checkpoints to ensure that every effort has been taken to work with a resident before she is asked to leave.

The importance of roots

My examination of these shelter/housing projects illuminate how individuals’ ontological security is impacted by the physical and social atmosphere, programming, rules and regulations, security of tenure, and community acceptance or rejection of homeless housing and its residents. Shelter, heart, hearth and privacy all lay the groundwork for the development of roots. Ultimately, it is the stability of self, and confidence in one’s surroundings and his/her place in it that will allow someone to flourish as a human being. The points raised in this chapter are not conventional ways to frame homeless shelters/housing, but I argue that they are critical elements that designers, planners, developers, and communities as a whole must begin to consider if we are serious about supporting individuals in achieving well-being and positive functioning in all types of housing situations, not just those associated

with mainstream notions of “home.” Further, I reference the TIMES Center developer’s statement that “people get better and recover because you have changed the context of who they are” (36Interview). Insofar as shelter spaces reinforce one’s homelessness, s/he will remain homeless. It is our task as a society to change the context of who shelter residents are, and in the process, support residents in seeing themselves as valuable members of the community.

Recommendations for providing self-defined “homes”

Focusing on positive identity construction reframes discussions of the role of shelters and other “homeless” housing. Certainly the goal of transitioning people into permanent housing remains a central goal, but focusing on human functioning and well-being offers different methods of reaching that goal. A small body of literature addresses the importance of dignity in housing and other social services. Three main recommendations emerge from this literature. First, these studies urge other researchers to incorporate dignity as a key facet to understanding other variables like mental health and housing outcomes, a recommendation I also advance (Hoffman and Coffey, 2008; Kryda and Compton, 2009; Miller and Keys, 2001).¹⁵¹ Two, these studies recommend the incorporation of dignifying practices in social service programs, as well as in homeless policy, to achieve positive results for individuals (Hoffman and Coffey, 2008, Kryda and Compton, 2009; Miller and Keys, 2001).

Finally, these studies recommend consumer participation in ending homelessness, arguing that it’s not only the smart thing to do, but that it’s also the right thing to do—it is ethical and committed to social justice (Barrow et al, 2007; Wireman, 2007). As I articulate in this chapter, dwelling is less about *what* a physical structure is, and more about *how* we engage in homemaking practices (Dovey, 1985; Saegert, 1985; and Saile, 1985). This process of homemaking involves much more than material creation, including seeking status, dignity and respect (Kellett and Moore, 2003), increasing

¹⁵¹ In each study, (in)dignity was found to represent a significant aspect of the experience of homelessness.

independence and physical security (Rivlin and Moore, 2001), maintaining social support (Rowe and Wolch, 1990; Toro, Tulloch and Oullette, 2008), and developing a sense of active agency and personal control (Padgett, 2007; Wright, 1997). Residents' participation in housing and services means that their meanings and experiences will be included "in the process of determining how resources are distributed and diverse identities are valued" (Barrow et al, 2007). It also privileges their active engagement in shaping their own environment. I revisit the practical concerns of participation at length in the conclusion, but in this section, I advance some recommendations for what dignified housing models might look like.¹⁵²

Main Street Housing in Baltimore, Maryland, offers one housing model. Kenneth Wireman, director of Main Street Housing, recommends separating services from housing, arguing that service-linked housing places requirements on residents and can give the housing an institutional feel. He remarks, "From a consumer perspective, anything short of housing that has a landlord/tenant structure and is within the framework of mainstream housing options does not provide the essential foundation for a consumer's growth and recovery" (Wireman, 2007, p.206). Main Street Housing uses a housing-only model, and operates much like a rental agency for individuals with a documented disability, which is the only requirement for tenancy. In this relationship, he argues that, "consumers assume a role that is outside the traditional role of mental health patients. This brings about a dynamic change in an individual's self-perception and [forces the system] to see and treat consumers in a new and different way" (2007, p.211). The "mainstreaming" of housing reduces real stigmatization by the community and feelings of stigma on the part of residents. While this housing is still geared toward those with disabilities, as it could be geared toward unhoused individuals, the organization adopts a tenant-landlord model that normalizes the housing situation.

¹⁵² Though I do not discuss it here because it has been examined at length in the chapter, I want to emphasize that I consider Homestead Apartments to be an excellent model for dignified housing, as it provides all the important elements of home, including allowing residents to define their own ways of making "home."

SHARE/WHEEL is a second housing model that operates shelter-style housing, but from a consumer-run model.¹⁵³ SHARE/WHEEL offers an example of a long-term consumer-run model.

Located in Seattle, Washington, SHARE/WHEEL are partner organizations comprised of homeless and formerly homeless men and women. These organizations operate thirteen consumer-run shelters and two tent cities in King County, WA (Sparks, 2009). Geographer Tony Sparks explains the structure of SHARE/WHEEL:

Each shelter and the two tent cities send one or two representatives per week to the SHARE/WHEEL “power lunch” board of directors meeting. The board is made up of entirely of SHARE/WHEEL shelter and tent city residents. The main purpose of the board is to make funding and political strategy decisions that affect all the shelters and tent camps. However, it also provides an oversight function in which the board as a whole listens to, comments upon, and occasionally intervenes in, issues or decisions of a particular camp or shelter. The SHARE/WHEEL organization itself has three paid (non-elected) employees who serve in an advisory, organizational, and support capacity. These employees, referred to as “organizers” attend, record, and often institute or organize activities or policy changes instituted in the camp, shelter, and power-lunch meetings, but they are not allowed to vote. (Sparks, 2009)

These two models are notable examples of dignified housing, not because of the physical conditions of the housing, but because of the relationships within the organizations. The preceding sections in this chapter detail physical and social barriers to achieving a sense of “home,” which I would recommend using as a framework for constructing any “homeless” housing. In addition to those considerations, I advance these two models as cutting-edge frameworks on which future housing efforts should be based. The advancement of dignity and well-being is critical to our overall aims of ending the experience of homelessness, not just the absence of shelter.

¹⁵³ SHARE stands for Seattle Housing And Resource Effort. WHEEL stands for Women’s Housing, Equality and Enhancement League. For more information, see their website at <http://www.sharewheel.org/>

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

My personal belief is that people who go into a profession of helping people do so because there is a high level of true love and compassion for another person...the reality is public policy is developed so that we can provide for the best quality of life...for those who can't achieve that themselves."

TIMES Center project developer

Homelessness in the U.S. social imaginary is frequently a convoluted construct that pivots on the behaviors and outcomes of a handful of people representing the greater population. Popular media and blockbuster accounts further the national consciousness about homelessness. I offer a few examples from the past six years to illustrate this point. A 2006 film titled "Pursuit of Happyness" stars Will Smith and his son, as they portray a "based on a true story" account of a man who takes a risk with his career and fails. His wife leaves him, and he and his son are left to pick up the pieces of their life, including securing a job and housing. Their experiences in the film highlight the uncertain nature of emergency shelters, but more damaging is the portrayal of the man and his son as different from many of the other shelter users. As they wait in line for a spot in an emergency shelter, the protagonists are surrounded by dirty men, some mumbling to themselves, some fighting, and in contrast, Will Smith and his son appear put-together and purposeful, and also as victims of circumstance. Of course, this blockbuster ends with the father securing a job and then housing, but what is the lasting impression for the viewer? I would argue that this film depicts the protagonists as possessing unique qualities for "homeless" people—hard working and victims of circumstance. The real damage, then, is done to the image of the "typical" homeless, as they are the undeserving backdrop for the protagonists.

Similarly, two other recent accounts reinforce our national consciousness about homelessness. A 2009 film titled "The Soloist" portrays Jamie Foxx as a homeless 'savant' ravaged by mental illness. Also based on a true story, this film calls up another image of homelessness that maps onto and reinforces our collective understanding of "the homeless" as tragic figures, not because they had no

opportunities in their lives but because their lives have been ravaged by some sort of disease, often mental illness, drugs or alcohol. Most recently, the 2011 discovery of Ted Williams, the “man with the golden voice,” represents a real-life Hollywood-style story. When I flipped the news on and saw the story, my immediate thought was “If this ends badly, this will be more damaging to homeless representations than not having reported it at all.” By ending badly, of course I mean that Ted Williams may not have kicked his drug habit, and even if he did, what will this traumatic amount of attention do for his psyche and resolve? My suspicions were correct, as he entered rehab soon after his meteoric rise in the national spotlight.

This conclusion serves as a response to the many incomplete and misguided narratives about homelessness, of which I have highlighted just a few. Each of these examples highlights people with talents but other “tragic” factors in their life that caused their homelessness. “Pursuit of Happiness” shows an end to homelessness but only in juxtaposition to the many who are framed as being permanently homeless. Where are the stories of men who had good jobs in 1960 but have since not been able to get another one? Where are the stories of women without high school degrees who can’t get a job, and if they can, can’t afford childcare? These are the 3.5 million homeless people who form the backdrops of these white-washed stories that receive national attention. The popular narratives circulated about these individuals lack the capacity to question how the system failed or how, in the absence of a miraculous personal transformation, homeless people are allowed to engage in the broader community. Setting aside “feel good” stories and damaging assumptions about homelessness, we are left with this central question—how do we, as a society, collectively solve issues of housing and homelessness in ways that support equal citizenship status for all and allow for accurate identification of needs and solutions?

In this chapter, I advance a set of recommendations that are meant to address overarching issues of affordable housing and homelessness, as well as some of the thornier details. To do so, I first

revisit the state of “home” in this country, tying local concerns to broader national trends in thought and policy practice. I then turn to a summation of the link between participation and full citizenship, a notion advanced in both the introduction and Chapter 6. I then advance a series of recommendations set in the context of Champaign-Urbana, but it is my hope that they will serve as directional points for future research and for future municipal approaches to decision-making about “homeless” housing, affordable housing, and social services.

The U.S. home ideal

Homeownership has enjoyed a place of prominence in the American consciousness since the founding of the country. As architectural scholar Lynne Dearborn states, homeownership has been the ideal in the U.S. since Thomas Jefferson (2006, p.40). This early belief in self-sufficiency supported the bootstrapping mentality that has persisted through centuries of U.S. housing policy. Historian Lawrence Vale remarks that in the mid-19th century, westward migration of the poor was considered the best way to thwart urban poverty, with the assumption that it would “provide the poor with an outlet that could give them economic independence, [and] transform them from dependency into prosperous yeomen...” (2000, p.102).

Bootstrapping ideals have persisted, with contemporary presidents uttering similar statements. Housing policy researcher Richard Ronald quotes George W. Bush as saying, “Owning a home lies at the heart of the American dream. A home is a foundation for families and a source of stability for communities. It serves the foundation of many Americans’ financial security” (2008, p.138). Bush also stated in 2002, “My approach to broadening access to home ownership focuses on empowering people to help themselves and to help each other. ...The strength of America lies in the honor and the character and goodwill of its people. When we tap into that strength, we discover there is no problem that cannot be solved in this wonderful land of liberty” (Ronald, 2008, p.151).

The notion that homeownership opens opportunities has also persisted. TIME contributor Barbara Kiviat documents past presidents as saying: "Herbert Hoover argued that homeownership could "change the very physical, mental and moral fiber of one's own children." Franklin Roosevelt held that a country of homeowners was "unconquerable." Homeownership could even, in the words of George H.W. Bush's Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Jack Kemp, "save babies, save children, save families and save America." (Kiviat, 2010). Ronald quotes Clinton as writing an open letter to the HUD secretary, stating, "Today I am requesting that you lead an effort to dramatically increase home ownership in our nation over the next six years...Your program should include strategies to ensure that families currently underrepresented among homeowners—particularly minority families, young families, and low-income families—can take part in the American dream" (p.148). These beliefs were reflected in program names even, with the American Dream Down-payment Act introduced in 2002.

Homeownership is also implicated in the project of nation-building. As one editorial from a 1918 issue of the *National Real Estate Journal* stated, "A nation of renters will always be lacking in patriotism" (Lands, 2008, p.951). Peter Marcuse and Lawrence Vale both cite Andrew Johnson's defense of the Homestead Act of 1860 as one of the strongest statements of the linkage between homeownership and citizenship. Johnson argues, "The enactment of the Homestead Act would create the strongest tie between the citizen and the government...At the first summons of the clarion note of war...with a heart full of valor and patriotism, he would with alacrity rush to his country's standards" (Marcuse, 1986, p.46; Vale, 2000, p.100). Less eloquently, but with no less implied importance, Franklin Roosevelt declared, "The broad interest of the nation requires that special safeguards should be thrown around homeownership as a guarantee of economic and social stability" (Marcuse, 1980, p.46). "In the 'Red Scare' that followed the Great War...home ownership [was touted] as a means to politically shore up American society against the evils of socialism and communism," with Herbert Hoover taking special interest in home ownership as a moral issue (Ronald, 2008, p. 139). Propaganda promoting home

ownership proliferated in the 1920s. Ronald documents the use of “newspaper ads; essay competitions on the ‘merits of home ownership’; buttons and badges for schoolchildren; even the composition of waltzes and songs” (2008, p.140). He argued, “While there were few policy changes supporting the tenure, the government distributed more than 2 million promotional posters to workplaces” (p.140). Ronald argues that these pro-home ownership policies have centrally stemmed from a need for “the maintenance of the economy and the interests of private enterprise” (2008, p.138). Historian LeeAnn Lands documents the following:

“[Following the Great War], federal desires to use property ownership to calm political turmoil and buttress and reinvigorate land markets combined with private land interests to encourage new cultural constructions of the *homeowner* and *homeownership*. By imbuing homeownership and homeowners with particular meanings, federal and private interests were able to entice Americans into adopting practices and frameworks that served a number of national interests, including the stabilization of land markets and the adoption of specific political frameworks...Rhetoric imploring men to protect their families through homeownership was carefully deployed and reinforced. Homeowners were held up as patriots and family providers, the bulwark of the nation-state. National and local real estate interests and organizations followed, and then aligned renting and the renter with negative imagery, such as bolshevism and radicalism.” (p.943)

Since the housing crisis began in 2007, media and government agencies alike have been paying increasing attention to the problems of the U.S. mono-tenure housing policy. One TIME contributor writes, “Homeownership has let us down. For generations, Americans believed that owning a home was an axiomatic good. Our political leaders hammered home the point” (Kiviat, 2010). Yet recently government officials have begun to acknowledge problems. Raphael Bostic, assistant secretary for policy development and research at HUD, publicly stated, “There is this notion that being housed well is synonymous with being a homeowner. That narrative has got to change.” (Kiviat, 2010) Demonstrating the unequal tax advantage of homeownership, Dearborn reports that in 2000, homeowners received a \$103 million subsidy, while just \$30.8 million was spent on rental subsidies for low-income housing

(2006, p.43). More recently, Ronald documented that, “Mortgage-interest tax-deduction... disproportionately benefits the richest homeowners and costs the government \$76 billion a year (in 2006). Essentially, it supports higher house-prices rather than entry into home ownership. The government however, has been reluctant to erode the advantages of the social ideal of home ownership.” (2008, p.151). Cushing Dolbeare explicitly states,

There is a myth that low- and middle-income homeowners are the chief beneficiaries of homeowner deductions. The facts do not support this. Although about two-thirds of all households are homeowners, only 28 percent of the tax returns filed in 1981 claimed homeowner deductions...Incomes and marginal tax rates are so low that it does not pay them to do so (1986, p.269).

There are many homeowner societies in the world, but the differences lie in the connections between ideology and economic incentive. Richard Ronald states that Anglo-Saxon societies like the U.S., Britain and Australia, are “economically liberal capitalist regimes,” noting that these types of regimes “give ideological advantages an economic dimension,” while other capitalist regime types, like Denmark and Sweden, use more “collective or egalitarian values...in the organization of housing,” with the end goal of “greater social equality” (Ronald, 2008, p.7).¹⁵⁴ Speaking about the U.S., Ronald maintains that ideological leanings were not enough to stimulate growth of home ownership. Instead, “while home ownership has always held a central course in the housing system, it has only proliferated when it has been pushed by government manufactured incentives and where conditions have been favorable” (2008, p.151). Both Britain and Australia have used similar measures to increase homeownership, offering mortgage relief and increased accessibility to borrowing (2008). In the early 1940s, the Australian Prime Minister took on home ownership as a political issue, using similar

¹⁵⁴ Ronald defines three types of capitalist welfare regimes: 1) social democratic, where united working-class interests work to keep conservative forces at bay (e.g. Sweden), 2) corporatist, where power systems are deadlocked and no dominant interest wins (e.g. Germany), and 3) liberal, where united capitalist interests work to keep working class interests at bay (e.g. United States) (Ronald, 2008, p.85). These regime types dictate the organization of housing tenure, “with privatistic societies being dominated by private home ownership and collectivistic ones more orientated towards social housing and particularly social renting” (2008, p.89).

arguments as those in the U.S., “One of the best instincts in us is to have one little piece of earth with a house and garden which is ours, to which we can withdraw, in which we can be among friends, into which no stranger may come against our will... patriotism springs from the instinct to defend and preserve our own homes” (2008, p.154).

Fears of dependency

Governmental provision of housing in the U.S. historically has been marked by a fear of resident dependency. Roosevelt asserted in his 1944 State of the Union address that “the United States had accepted a “second Bill of Rights,” including the right of every American to a decent home” (“Simply”, 2011, p.16). What that meant in practice was far different than his statement. Even at the inception of public housing, it was conceived as a stepping stone to homeownership and was never seen as simply a type of housing that was necessary as a social welfare provision (Wright, 1981).¹⁵⁵ This fear of dependency is not exclusive to the realm of housing—it pervades all welfare systems in the US, as the ideological underpinnings of these systems and their treatment of the poor speak volumes about the national attitude toward the poor and the tangible impacts on the poor as a result of these systems. Piven and Cloward argue, “Welfare state programs, like all institutional arrangements, can be understood as a text from which people derive meanings” (1993, p.448). For instance, Piven and Cloward report that, “Between 1977 and 1992, the poorest tenth [of the nation] lost 20.3 percent of its post tax income. The top tenth gained 40.9 percent, the top 5 percent gained 59.7 percent, and the top one percent gained 135.7 percent” (1993, p.363). Yet against this backdrop of increasing poverty and reordering of the US class structure, national attention was on poor relief, as politicians and scholars alike argued that poor relief led to devastating cultural patterns, pinning blame for increasing poverty on

¹⁵⁵ Richard Ronald argues that public housing was never seen as a viable method of housing, since it never constituted more than 2% of housing stock in the U.S. and “was largely initiated as a measure to stimulate the construction sector” (2008, p.139).

the “nonworking poor” (1993). Indeed, poor relief programs are contrasted from social security policies because they are means-tested, while social security policies are “citizenship entitlements, because they are rooted in law, embedded in bureaucracy, and supported by mass opinion and class or interest group organizations” (1993, p.410). Likewise, Michael Katz points to the popularity of the term “welfare” in the 1940s, but by the 1950s welfare meant only public assistance—social insurance (and its positive connotations) had been disassociated from its needs-based counterpart (2001, p.4). While Katz points to the distinctions of “deserving” with social insurance (and “undeserving” with public assistance), he locates the degradation of the welfare state with its linkages to socialism and the fears of the cold war era (2001). Socialism was tied to lack of freedom and a rise in servility. Attempts were made in the 1960s to equate welfare with civil rights to disassociate from the stigma of charity and poor relief, and the Supreme Court supported this attempt. Yet the stigma remained, and the Supreme Court did not make welfare a permanent right. In the 1990s, market logic reigned, and “Entitlement fell...once a term that signified the solidarity of an expansive welfare state that extended the rights and meaning of citizenship, in the 1990s “entitlement” became a term almost as negative as “welfare”” (Katz, 2001, p.325).¹⁵⁶

The fear of dependency and attendant stigmas has led to public policies that defy economic logic. Political theorist Kathleen Arnold argues that fear of dependency has led to the use of emergency shelters “rather than housing subsidies (which pay for rent) despite the fact that emergency shelters can cost three times the amount of a housing subsidy. The costs of jailing and policing the homeless must be high also, but this is never the focus of public debate. The degree of criminalization and authoritarian policies toward the homeless arguably demonstrates that citizenship and political power places identity over interest in that unconscious fears and irrational behavior inform our policies and reactions to the

¹⁵⁶ Beyond those works cited here, for further reading on the notion (and importance) of dependency in U.S. welfare policy, see Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon’s (1994) “A Genealogy of dependency: tracing a keyword of the U.S. welfare state,” *Signs* 19(2): 309-336.

homeless" (2004, p.116). Hoch and Slayton also document the reasons for lack of political support for low-income housing at the same time that support for homeless housing and services increased. They argue that between a politics of compassion and a right to shelter, politicians supported a politics of compassion because it allowed them to remain in favor with voters and demonstrate their generosity. Conversely, supporting low-income housing as a right to all citizens of a community "not only places blame on government and politicians for having failed to respect these rights, but on fellow citizens as well." (1989, p.211). Further, echoing Piven and Cloward, "the belief that normal citizens deserve by right only those social benefits they have earned remains a formidable ideological obstacle to the reform efforts of the advocates" (1989, p.211).

Housing scholar Charles Hoch argues that in the US the narrative of social dependence dominates classification and treatment of the homeless by shelter providers, social workers, advocates, and others" (2000, p.865). With Slayton, he remarks, "The public seems willing to help the visibly dependent and vulnerable, but it stops short of supporting policies that would subsidize housing for the poor. Ironically, the result has meant increased funding for emergency and transitional shelters, whose residents are likely to find it increasingly difficult to leave" (Hoch and Slayton, 1989, p.211). Hoch advocates for a refocusing from social improvement to shelter security. In evaluating whether social improvement actually happens, Hoch found that only 1 in 10 shelter users manage to obtain private-market housing and most obtain subsidized housing, representing a major improvement in quality of life for the individual but not living up to the ambitious aims of those who believe that social improvement to leave poverty is possible (2000). He argues that, "overemphasis on social improvement gravely underestimates the economic realities of local rental markets in the US" (2000, p. 871). This assertion offers further evidence that the explanation for relying on social improvement as a strategy exists outside of economic (or effectiveness) reasons.

Implications of the narrow home ideal

The shrinking home ideal in the U.S. has resulted in a homogeneous housing stock and decreased capacity to accommodate the number of people who have little to no money to spend on housing, as well as a system that systematically disadvantages renters and poor households. As Richard Ronald says, “If there is a hierarchy of tenure, renting sits just above homelessness and marks a graded boundary of social exclusion” (2008, p.10). Further, housing scholar Charles Hoch argues,

“The residential real estate market remains tied to social values organized to overprotect a rigid hierarchy of homogeneous subdivisions segmented by tenure, income and narrow lifestyle affiliations. The prosperous expect residential infrastructure to meet minimal middle-class standards, but scrimp on raising tax revenues sufficient to make these expectations a reality. The result is the uneven application of standards that stigmatize lower-class residential communities that fail to measure up. The combination of misplaced standards and segmented market hierarchy simultaneously constrain the economic options of the poor as it squeezes their way of life toward the margins. The problem is not regulation itself, but the organization of regulatory standards that unfairly burden the poor with middle-class expectations” (Hoch, 2000, p.874).

As a result, the shelterless population has increased, and people living in certain forms of housing are now considered homeless. In this tumultuous time of economic and housing crises, the U.S. has a chance to again redefine its home ideal. One project developer points to the need to expand types of housing, saying, “There are people who absolutely cannot or as a choice will not spend their time on earth managing their housing. They have other fish to fry, and I don’t care if it’s contemplating their navel or what, it’s just not them.” What an SRO provides...is a place just big enough but still private enough and rewarding in being a tenant in a permanent place for them, and they couldn’t do anymore if they wanted to. They don’t want to and they can’t. They can’t manage all that stuff, but this they can.” (19Interview). Reliance on overly narrow “home” ideals has proven to be ineffective for housing our national population, and it has produced a glut of unused housing in today’s market. At this time, it is appropriate to look back to past eras and rediscover the ways in which cities accommodated their poorer citizens.

Approaching shelter development as an act of community planning

As a community, and as planners and policymakers, we need to embrace the necessity of housing. As a necessary service, the development of shelter/housing should be seen as a community planning process, subject to the same careful attention that other community planning processes receive. As I articulate in Chapter 8 regarding the TIMES Center, many homeless men choose not to utilize their housing and services, arguing that other personal priorities are more important than a roof over their heads. In this way, the TIMES Center is like a city park that no one uses—as planners, we should attend to shelters in the same way as city parks, asking questions of those for whom the space is intended, and taking care to fully understand the needs of that portion of the community. This process ensures that the spaces and programs will indeed be a relevant and effective service to the community.

Homeless citizens' participation is crucial to the success of this process. Critical geographer Steve Herbert asserts, "The homeless are not just voiceless and hapless victims of state oppression... We can and must recognize the homeless as active agents" (2011, p.258-9). However, as Sherry Arnstein points out, "There is a critical difference between going through the empty ritual of participation and having the real power needed to affect the outcome of the process" (1969, p.216). Herbert supports this, saying, "Even if governments seek to create mechanisms for inclusiveness, they inevitably act to reinforce a range of cultural and economic distinctions" (2011, p.258). Sharing power requires valuing the perspectives of homeless individuals and incorporating them as equal members of the community and of the decision-making process.

In some cases, the city has been very involved in shelter development, particularly with the Center for Women in Transition. I asked the project developer if she felt that the city staff or council cared about what was happening in the different shelters on that level, and she responded,

I think that people did, I do, at the city level. I think they had a recognition of that. I think, you look at our adopt-a-room program and how crazily wonderful that went...That was [a city staff

member]. That was a brilliant idea he brought back from some other place, but we used it in the Forbes House, then we took it back to the Evans House... I mean it was beautiful. What a beautiful, beautiful thing that rallied people who said, "This is what we we're going to do. We're going to create these gorgeous rooms."...When people saw that people understood how that environment affects people, and I think many people on the city level understood that as well. I think the city did something. (29Interview)

In advocating for more community attention to homelessness and housing, I do not have the unrealistic expectation that all city councilmembers would become experts in the area of housing. Practically, designated city staff would handle most issues, as they currently do. However, I do think that a certain level of knowledge is necessary for a municipal voting body to understand the local situation of housing and shelters. For instance, in a late 1990s City Council meeting, a very long-term council member, one who has consistently devoted attention to homelessness and housing issues in the community, asked the following question: "In 1985 when I first started visiting this issue, there were a group of women who were interested in establishing a women's emergency shelter and were right on the verge of doing so...and the need that you're speaking of now was being spoken of then. That need was responded to by the establishment of the Women's Emergency Shelter, which has since evolved into the Center for Women in Transition. Am I to gather from what you're saying...that the Center for Women in Transition is no longer performing the function of an emergency women's shelter?" (CCCmeeting022399). For this person, the reality that women had nowhere to go without entering a program, often with a wait list, was unknown.

Establishing community criteria

As I have articulated in the preceding chapters, many of the public debates were over values. In the 1990s debates, a few city councilmembers consistently asked for more evidence of numbers of homeless individuals to make better decisions. They wanted evidence about populations, disabilities (MI/SA), local versus out-of-towners, and the like. Despite their biases in the types of numbers they requested, I applaud these councilmembers for asking for data. Champaign officials have consistently

shown that they want to use their money effectively for positive outcomes. This pragmatic approach may seem devoid of compassion, but in our current economic conditions, pragmatic approaches make sound economic sense and, given the number of normative assumptions used in homelessness decisions, the pragmatic use of facts may very well be an improvement.¹⁵⁷ Taking a pragmatic approach, the cities of Champaign and Urbana must establish a way to identify the most pressing needs of their homeless members. Establishment of community criteria for housing needs must advance on two fronts. The first involves the larger scope of housing in the community, while the second involves details of shelter/housing design. For the larger scope of housing, Champaign-Urbana must reconfigure the way they identify needs. The first step in achieving this shift is incorporating homeless individuals into the overall planning process. If homeless individuals themselves are involved in defining the biggest needs in the community, the overall housing strategy, as reflected in the Consolidated Plan, will more accurately reflect community members' needs as filtered through their own experiences, allowing them to prioritize what is most important to stabilization of their housing situation.

To effectively incorporate homeless individuals, standard methods of public input will not suffice, as they too easily fall prey to Arnstein's warnings of tokenism (1969). The founder of a self-organized homeless advocacy group offers an account of the importance of participation, saying, "It really boils down to self interest. Sometimes homeless people's best interests diverge from service providers ... when homeless people are the voters and are the decision makers, it changes the dynamic in an important way" (Sparks, 2010, p.857). Similarly, housing specialist Kenneth Wireman remarked, "It is not enough to simply ask for consumer input after making efforts to develop a system of care to prevent homelessness" (2007, p.210). He goes on, saying, "Consumers need to be at the planning table to help conceptualize these efforts. They need to have a say in the way things are thought through,

¹⁵⁷ See the Brookings Institution's commentary on the rise of the Pragmatic Caucus as an answer to the dual problem of tough economic times and political grandstanding:
http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2011/1026_pragmatic_caucus_katz_rodin.aspx

designed, and accomplished” (Wireman, 2007, p.210).

Achieving this full participation is not a simple task. One developer commented on the difficulties of getting people involved employing standard methods, saying,

Just the nature of being homeless...It was more difficult. I remember even delivery of mail, I used to take mail to the tracks and try to find people. It just was a lot harder...don't expect that people will fit into the traditional ways of communicating or having meetings, or not meeting after 5:00. There's lot of committees that would refuse to meet after 5:00 or never on the weekends, so makes it a little bit difficult for anyone who's working or possibly not available...Some people wrote letters. Those were really helpful to bring forward, but it was pretty rare to have a big group, it was always like 1 or 2 people that would be involved and vocal. (18Interview)

Instead of using public meetings or focus groups, a variety of methods could accommodate the different information needs of the planning bodies. On the less time intensive end, a survey with a rating system could allow homeless individuals to indicate preferences and needs. This sort of method does not preclude the need to have homeless and precariously housed individuals hold a representative number of seats on planning bodies and committees though. As members of the planning bodies, individuals could consider different housing projects by providing personal cost-benefit analyses.¹⁵⁸

Two significant barriers preclude actual identification of needs. The Consolidated Plan is one barrier. The plan artificially separates affordable housing and homelessness needs. Incorporating the people most impacted into the planning process allows for housing and service needs to come out as necessary and not as a matter of standard form. For instance, one former men's emergency shelter user indicated that the other users' most commonly expressed needs were for housing that featured inexpensive rents, no background checks and no proof of income (17Interview). The way that these men are framed by the community has an impact on how their needs are conceptualized. If they are

¹⁵⁸ By personal cost-benefit analysis, I mean that someone could determine for her/himself if it would be preferable to have a 250 square foot room with no amenities for \$100/month versus a two room apartment with kitchenette for \$150/month, and so on. In my interviews with homeless individuals, the interviewees consistently proved that they were highly capable of reasoning through options using personal cost-benefit analyses.

framed as “homeless,” the need appears to be shelter beds. If they are able to frame themselves as people in need of inexpensive housing, then the need is framed as inexpensive housing. The second barrier to needs identification is the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Tony Sparks documents the problem with HMIS, saying,

In addition to personal information, [Seattle’s HMIS] also tracks which services a person uses and how often. Although this aspect of the program is intended to help officials and service providers better understand the “needs” of the homeless, the system only records whether a person has accessed a given service and the frequency of access...No actual input is sought regarding whether users view the service as useful or important. Rather, the “needs” of the individual are only determined vis-à-vis the services already offered. Thus, contrary to the promise of better assessing the needs of the homeless, this multiple-choice method of service evaluation combined with its site-specific data collection ultimately excludes the homeless individual from the determination of his or her own needs. (2010, p.852-3)

The second level of community criteria is trickier but equally important. For the housing that is built or has already been built, whether it is labeled “shelter,” “transitional center,” “permanent supportive housing,” or “subsidized housing,” the community has a responsibility to provide more than shelter (read: roof over one’s head) if it is to be serious about improving people’s lives and opportunities and not simply providing beds. These criteria include those raised in Chapters 7 and 8: shelter, hearth, heart, roots and privacy. As I outline in these chapters, there are both spatial and social methods of achieving these qualities of home, and they can be achieved in inexpensive housing, as Homestead Apartments demonstrates.¹⁵⁹ Center for Women in Transition also performs well across these criteria. In both instances, project developers determined that they were building housing and homes, despite their different labels of “permanent supportive housing” and “transitional center.” These criteria can also be identified and prioritized by homeless individuals, as long as they are provided with a venue in which to provide their perspectives.

¹⁵⁹ Homestead Apartments was an expensive project, but the expense came from federal requirements that ruled out less expensive options, not because building an SRO is necessarily an expensive venture.

Broader housing implications

Shifts in national housing policy are critical to expanding actual housing options for poor people. A 2011 report by the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (NLCHP) outlines recommendations for achieving a human right to housing in the U.S.¹⁶⁰ The report is careful to note that “implementing the human right to housing would *not* require the government to immediately build a home for each person in America or to provide housing for all free of charge. But it does require more than some provision for emergency shelter—it requires an affirmative commitment to ensure fully adequate housing” (“Simply”, 2011, p.8). It elaborates, stating, “The government can use a wide variety of measures, from market regulation to subsidies, public-private partnerships to tax policy, to help ensure the right” (p.8). The most obvious expansion of this right would involve an inversion or “flattening out” of the current government subsidization model, including movement away from subsidization of home ownership (in the form of Mortgage Interest Deductions) and toward greater subsidization of rental relationships. The federal Housing Choice Voucher program would be the simplest avenue to provide more rental subsidies.¹⁶¹ Relatedly, local communities must rethink their use of HOME funds for home ownership programs, using the community planning process outlined above to identify housing needs that are free of normative assumptions about “home.”

Beyond subsidization, the physical housing stock must shift as well. The current landscape of housing in the U.S. is dominated by single-family detached houses, though townhouses and apartment complexes figure prominently as well. Expanding this housing stock requires shifts in new construction, rehabilitation of old structures, and building/zoning regulations. On the local level, municipalities can modify their building and zoning codes to accommodate construction and/or rehabilitation of structures

¹⁶⁰ For a full description of U.S. housing inadequacies and recommendations based on the International Declaration of the Human Right to Housing, see the recent report “‘Simply unacceptable’: homelessness and the human right to housing in the US.” (2011). Washington DC: National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty.

¹⁶¹ Commonly referred to as “Section 8,” with each federal budget since the late 1970s, the HUD Office of Public and Indian Housing has been allocated fewer funds, resulting in fewer available vouchers. For more information, see http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/housing_choice_voucher_program_section_8

into less expensive forms of housing, such as SROs, rooming houses and/or boarding houses.¹⁶² The important features of these styles of housing are their low weekly or monthly rents, already furnished rooms, and lack of security deposits. With health and safety regulations in place, these forms of dwelling offer inexpensive, suitable alternatives to apartments and other forms of dwelling that require savings and/or overhead. Additionally, federal funding would encourage the construction/rehabilitation of these less expensive forms of housing, for instance, an expansion of the HUD-based SRO Moderate Rehab program.¹⁶³

A third area of expansion involves providing housing for single men without relying on normative assumptions of “home.” As I show in preceding chapters, men are systematically excluded from notions of “home,” and their living environments are often labeled as homeless or as temporary housing. They also have limited access to many living environments. Transitional centers and emergency shelters often are the only housing types that consistently house poor single men. Men do not qualify for public housing unless they are elderly or exhibit a disability. I believe that expansion of funding streams to provide other forms of subsidized housing for single men, coupled with construction of less expensive forms of housing, would drastically reduce the number of single men who are forced to rely on emergency shelters and transitional centers as a primary mode of housing. It would also provide longer-term stable “home” environments for these men. The normalization of less expensive forms of housing as “home” environments would expand the ideal to include single men as equally deserving of a home.

¹⁶² I use the term “inexpensive” purposefully. The term “affordable housing” is used in public discussions, but federal definitions of affordability merely mean that housing does not cost more than 30% of one’s income. “Affordable,” then, does not indicate that housing is affordable to poor households. I use “inexpensive” to indicate that the housing is affordable to all.

¹⁶³ For more information on this program, see <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/programs/sro/> and <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/hudprograms/sro>

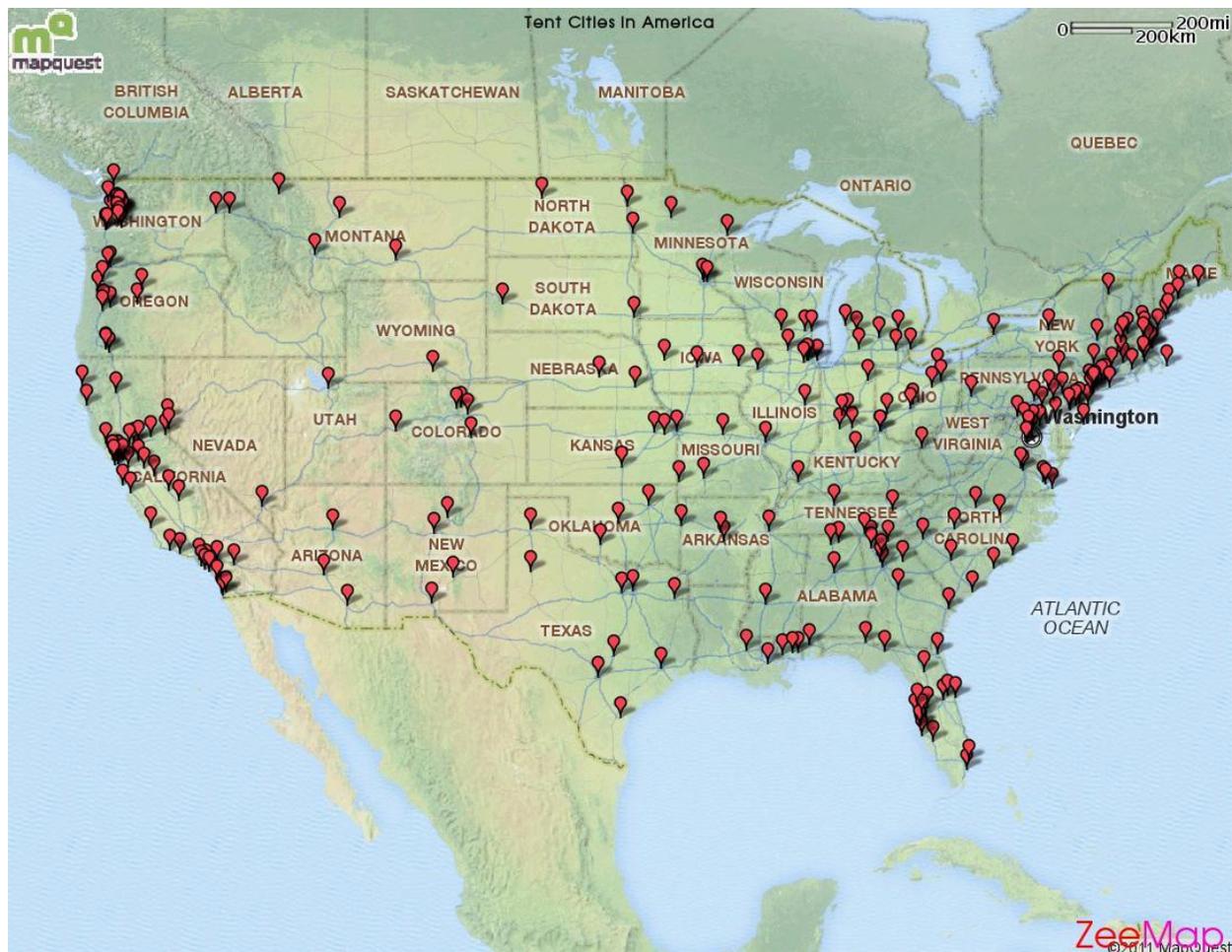


Figure 23: Municipalities in which tent cities have been documented. The map does not show numbers of encampments in each municipality. Map by author.

A fourth area of expansion, and certainly the most complicated in terms of U.S. society, is in the informal housing sector. Tent cities and other “homeless” encampments are proliferating across the U.S. landscape,¹⁶⁴ without municipal policies to address the phenomenon, and no federal policy whatsoever. In lieu of constructive policies, the dominant practice of municipalities has been to frame tent cities as land use issues, labeling them substandard housing at best, and more often, simply as urban blight or garbage.¹⁶⁵ When tent cities are framed as urban blight, the solutions appear to be

¹⁶⁴ I have conducted internet searches to achieve a (limited) comprehensive look at tent cities and informal settlements in the U.S. This search produced numbers in the tens of thousands.

¹⁶⁵ For examples, see Woodrow, M. (2011, February 7). “Homeless “tent city” violates zoning: property owners have 30 days to respond.” Retrieved from http://www.fox43tv.com/dpps/news/local/va_beach/homeless-tent-city-violates-zoning_3714088?CMP=201102_emailshare and Mizutani, R. (2011, September 15). “Homeless

clear-cut—demolish the blight to protect and enrich the life of citizens of the city. Yet this framing of tent cities disguises the reality that the tent groupings act as people’s homes and as a broader community of social support.



Figure 24: Fresno tent city demolition—“disposal of blight”. Photo by Mike Rhodes



Figure 25: Fresno tent city residents comfort each other—“loss of homes”. Photo by Mike Rhodes

campsites torn down and air-lifted off Diamond Head.” Retrieved from <http://www.khon2.com/news/local/story/Homeless-campsites-torn-down-and-air-lifted-off/HJPBXkei4UO-N8tkwBdV2w.csp>

Many opponents of tent cities have argued that they constitute substandard housing and thus should not be allowed to exist.¹⁶⁶ Urban scholar Ananya Roy describes this U.S. approach to housing as a “paradigm of propertied citizenship,” in which everyone has a right to safe and sanitary shelter. This right “eliminates the vulnerabilities of informal housing” (2003, p.474). This right has a dark side, she argues, saying,

The American right to safe and sanitary shelter paradoxically supersedes the right to shelter. Put bluntly, American cities are free of the populist volatility of squatting and other forms of informality, but they are fraught with the humiliations of homelessness...City officials conceded that the homeless would not be “safe” out on the streets but that when within the settlement, they were the responsibility of the city, the implication being that once outside of the housing sector, the homeless no longer provoke concerns. In being propertyless, they forfeit their right to safe and sanitary shelter (2003, p.474-5).

The informal housing sector poses complicated questions. As Roy points out, “On one hand, there is recognition of the need to tolerate, even promote, informality; on the other hand, there is concern about the institutionalization of unsafe and unsanitary living conditions for the poor” (2003, p.482). To put it more succinctly, “If informality is inherently exploitative, then formality is inherently exclusionary” (2003, p.475). For instance, developing countries have allowed squatting, thereby embracing the informal housing sector, but these squatter settlements exploit the occupants, as governments use them to forego their own responsibility to adequately house their citizens, including provisions of running water and other health and safety measures. Yet in the U.S., the informal housing sector largely has been outlawed through formal building and zoning codes, excluding and criminalizing those without access to the formal housing sector. Roy quotes one squatter in Calcutta as asking, “I have heard that there are lots of homeless in America. How can that be the case? Why doesn’t the government simply allow them to simply take over vacant land like we have? Aren’t they citizens? Don’t they have rights?” (2003, p.469). Yet in Calcutta, this man does not have the right to safe and sanitary

¹⁶⁶ See comments from Chapters 4 and 6 for examples

shelter. These questions cut to the heart of what it means to be a citizen in the U.S. and how that right to safe and sanitary shelter gets realized for “homeless” individuals.

I believe two avenues of recommendations follow from these competing notions of rights and citizenship, and these recommendations are not mutually exclusive. One is that in the U.S. context, safe and sanitary shelter must be more than sleeping space on the floor of a shelter if it is to be considered a real alternative to tent cities. As I have shown in the preceding chapters, shelters do not necessarily act as homes, while many tent city residents do consider their tents to be homes (Herring, 2011; Sparks, 2009, 2010).¹⁶⁷ Municipalities often invoke the existence of shelters to argue for the demolition of tent cities. This rhetorical move employs two smokescreens to accomplish city officials’ goals, neither of which may be intentional but are nonetheless highly detrimental to tent city residents. First, invocation of other shelters’ existence is almost always delivered without the presentation of a hard number of vacant beds compared to the numbers of people in the tent city, so the public is left with the sense that there are always enough beds for everyone, when that might not be, and often is not the case. The second and more important point is that shelters are painted as a blanket “public good,” with no attention paid to how well these shelters provide heart, hearth, roots and privacy, so the public is left with the sense either that shelters provide for whatever a person may need or that a person’s needs, beyond physical, are unimportant as long as they are homeless. Tent cities have been proven to meet these other needs quite well, but the constant threat of police raids and demolition of tents counteracts these positive elements of home (see Sparks, 2009; Herring, 2011). Thus, if communities, local and national, are to take seriously the idea that tent cities are unacceptable forms of dwelling, they must

¹⁶⁷ Writing about an early 1990s camp in Lane County, Oregon, Cindy Mendoza aptly noted that the campers could choose to go to a mission where they slept in bunk beds in dorms with up to 100 people. Instead, they chose, “a lifestyle that more closely replicates American socio-cultural norms for homes...[they] invested their limited income into a freestanding, single-family structure, located in a small, close-knit neighborhood, where pets could reside and children could play. Residents could personalize, decorate, build-on, or otherwise improve their dwelling and their living conditions. They found or created a home-like place, based upon their ideas of home, but not of housing” (1994, p.50). Descriptions like this illuminate the capacity for “home” in temporary living situations.

take seriously the design and planning of the spaces in which they would ask tent city dwellers to live instead.

A second recommendation extends from this quandary. As political theorist Leonard Feldman states, "Given the cultural, political, and economic injustices of homelessness, recognizing and enabling the dwelling activities of the displaced is a worthy goal, neither self-defeating nor antidemocratic" (2004, p.148). Tent cities can be accepted by municipalities and assisted in meeting their health and safety concerns. Legal scholar Zoe Loftus-Farren argues for an approach to tent cities as an interim solution while municipalities work to create inexpensive housing for those in the tent cities (2011). She cites Michael Stoops, Director of the National Coalition for the Homeless, as stating, "[t]he argument against [tent cities] is that people need permanent homes and we should focus on low-income housing, but that takes years and in the meantime, homeless people have a right to set up their own societies" (2011, p.1041). To facilitate this improvement, she advocates that municipalities "change local ordinances, rezone certain lots for camping, and assist tent cities to attain living conditions that satisfy local health and safety codes" (2011, p.1041).

Meeting health and safety needs is a crucial element in accepting tent cities as interim solutions. Sanitary and health issues can present a serious danger to tent city residents, and act as a constraint on local acceptance or sanction of encampments" (2011, p.1049). Loftus-Farren compares tent cities to colonias in southern Texas and Arizona, which are remarkably similar to tent cities, with their "lack of potable water supply, inadequate sewage systems, and a shortage of decent, safe and sanitary housing" (2011, p.1047). The difference between these settlements, though, is that colonias have been developed in areas that lack zoning and building codes, so they exist legally, despite their absence of water and sanitation. She remarks, "Just as colonias have had to address substandard health, sanitation and safety conditions, local government actors have expressed concern about conditions within tent cities as they contemplate the suitability of encampments as a temporary housing solution" (2011,

p.1049). Colonias increasingly are regulated by public health standards to create safe environments for residents; however, in terms of standards of living, regulations cease at the point of safety and sanitation, rather than continuing into the subjective area of aesthetics and respectability. This level of regulation and assistance allows residents to live in an affordable, physically safe dwelling, and I believe this approach is a viable one for municipalities attempting to deal with tent cities.

Directions for future research

The scope of this study was large, stretching across multiple types of “homeless” housing projects and multiple community stakeholders. As a result, its findings offer a number of avenues for further exploration. In examining the specific elements of home, I acknowledged that my data was not strong for some of the shelter projects. Using the elements of home as a guide for structured interviews, systematically interviewing shelter users across the shelters would enable scholars to learn more deeply about the differences in programs and spaces from the perspectives of the residents.¹⁶⁸ These research findings also suggest that studies of individual shelter programs would benefit from the use of a “home” framework as an evaluation method. Social work program evaluations would benefit from the socio-spatial framework advanced in this research.

As a second avenue of research, studies of tent cities across the nation have not yet been produced, offering many fruitful and necessary avenues for future research. As legal scholar Zoe Loftus-Farren remarks,

The gap in research and analysis of the legal, economic and social contexts surrounding tent cities is startling. It leaves local government actors largely empty handed as they consider various policy options and, as a result, it may deny encampment residents the careful contemplation, consideration, and attention that they deserve (2011, p.1044).

¹⁶⁸ As it is, I am unsure of how Homestead and CWIT residents felt about the spaces of the shelters other than what I could glean from media coverage. I am also unsure, beyond the insights of one individual, how the men felt at the Men’s Emergency Shelter, though I do have quotes from over a dozen men but the quotes are isolated and not always relevant to my questions.

Study of tent cities is necessary from a number of perspectives. In the realm of design and environmental psychology, we need to ask if environmental factors play a part in residents' abilities to provide for themselves or their perceived satisfaction with their method of dwelling. From a policy perspective, there are many questions to be asked about municipal and state policies that create barriers or pathways to legal, safe tent cities, particularly asking about which policies are producing the most effective and personally satisfying means of housing people. Given the prevalence and continuous proliferation of tent cities in the U.S., I believe that this dwelling phenomenon must be addressed by the federal government, particularly in light of the overwhelming lack of municipal willingness/capacity to address tent cities as anything but urban blight.¹⁶⁹ This study's "home" framework introduces new ways to conceptualize tent cities, with the promise of future research further increasing our understanding of this method of dwelling.

Finally, the fields of geography, urban planning, social work, and design all require more research on homeless individuals' perspectives—particularly about housing, home, urban policies, and social services. DeVerteuil, May and von Mahs call for more research that focuses on personal housing preferences, arguing that we "frequently hear the views of those seeking to banish homeless people from the city, homeless people themselves are rarely given voice in such accounts – even in mediated form. As a result we learn next to nothing about their circumstances" (2009, p.659). In this call, I find support for municipal practices that incorporate homeless perspectives, as well as support for research that examines more closely the differences in the homeless population that do not focus on disability, and instead look at, for instance, length of time homeless, past living situations, age, race, gender, and more. I believe, as DeVerteuil, May and von Mahs argue, that these differences "are crucial to developing better public policy responses to the problems of homelessness, whether affordable housing

¹⁶⁹ There are isolated instances when cities have allowed/encouraged tent cities and other semi-permanent living structures. Most notable are Fresno's (CA) Village of Hope and Community of Hope, Portland's (OR) Dignity Village, and Los Angeles' (CA) Dome Village.

programs, tenancy support packages, rehab programs, or a more diverse array of emergency shelters designed to serve an equally diverse homeless population” (2009, p.660).

My research opens the possibilities for developing housing models based on the tenure relationship / program type, rather than basing it on assumptions about the population. For instance, comparing TIMES Center and Center for Women in Transition (Chapter 5) demonstrates that population norms dictate the shape of a shelter far more than any design principles associated with particular types of programs or tenure, like emergency shelters or transitional centers. I advance design principles based on the tenure/program relationship in Appendix E, not as final recommendations but rather as the beginning of a conversation that encompasses a new set of considerations for design, one that better reflects a response to the needs of residents, as well as constraints of different types of shelter programs. My future work in this area will focus on further developing these design principles and considerations in concert with residents and service providers, attempting to negotiate between meeting residents’ needs and working within programmatic needs of the service providers. This avenue of work has the potential to mitigate the significant effects of gender, perceived substance abuse and mental illness, and prognoses of deserving/undeserving on shelter forms. This mitigation can occur on two mutually reinforcing levels, as shelter developers/providers will have principles on which to rely regardless of community conversation, but also the language of “resident needs” can expand the community conversation to include more fruitful considerations for shelter development. Finally, advancing design principles and more home-based models for shelter has implications for policymaking on all scales, as local, state and federal policymakers consider that providing for residents’ “home” needs can produce more effective outcomes. While my research cannot show positive outcomes, it creates the framework for testing these models to determine if they do in fact lead to more positive outcomes. National policy is increasingly supportive of Housing First models, which successfully meets many of the residents’ needs I advance in my research; however, smaller communities like Champaign-

Urbana will continue to operate emergency and transitional programs because of the practical problem of an absence of funding for new models. Given this reality, researchers, policymakers, and providers must continue to consider how all homeless housing and programs can better meet needs rather than only focusing on new programs as the answer.

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APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTION OF SHELTER/HOUSING PROJECTS

Name	Men's Emergency Shelter	Center for Women in Transition	Springer Center	Homestead Apartments	TIMES Center	Safe Haven Tent Community
Years of operation	1977-1998	1985-present	Never opened	1997-present	1999-present	2009-2010
Type of housing	Emergency shelter	Transitional center	Proposed drop-in and transitional	Permanent supportive housing	Transitional center	Tent city
Major changes to operations	X	1993—From emergency to transitional	X	X	2004—Shifted to only transitional	Moved indoors to open room
Maximum Occupancy	65	12 families; 7 single women	Never determined	25	Level 1—50 Level 2—20	None
Developing organization	Volunteers	volunteers	CU Coalition for the Homeless	Mental Health Center	Mental Health Center	Self-organized
Operating organization	McKinley Board	Center for Women in Transition	Never opened	Homestead Corporation	Mental Health Center	Self-organized
Type of structure	Church basement	Converted single-family houses	Old U.S. Post Office	Converted apartment building with SRO units	Complex of open room, offices, semi-private rooms	Tents
Time limits on stay	30 days; not enforced	2 years	Undetermined	None	2 years	None
Primary living space	Cot in open room; 2x2 locker	Private bedroom for women with kids; dormitory style for single women	Undetermined	Private apartment with kitchenette and private bathroom	Level 1—Mat in open room; 2x2 locker Level 2—semi-private bedroom	Individual tents or shared tents for couples
Communal space	Small area with tables and chairs	Cooking, dining, kids play, living rooms, library	Undetermined	Lounge/Computer room	Library/Meeting room, dining	Cooking, dining, common lounge space

APPENDIX B: CHAMPAIGN AND URBANA DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics and Poverty Levels

Year	Champaign Population	% Increase	Urbana Population	% Increase
1970	56,632	14	33,976	19.7
1980	58,267	3	35,978	5.6
1990	63,502	8	36,344	1
2000	67,518	6	36,395	.14
2010	81,055	20	41,250	23.6

Table B.1: Champaign-Urbana Population Growth 1950-2010. Data from City of Champaign Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy: FY 1992 – FY 1996, City of Champaign Consolidated Plan 2010-2014, and Census 2010

Year	Champaign			Urbana		
	MFI	MHI	% Families Below Poverty	MFI	MHI	% Families Below Poverty
1980	25,267	18,880	*			*
1990	36,767	22,967	9.4%	31,133	21,705	12.7%
2000	52,628	32,795	8.2%	42,655	27,819	13.3%

Table B.2: Champaign-Urbana Median Family Income and Median Household Income 1980-2010. Data from City of Champaign Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy: FY 1992 – FY 1996, and City of Urbana Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy: FY 1992-1996

As of the 2000 census, the City of Champaign's racial breakdown is as follows: 73% white, 16% black, 7% Asian, and 4% Hispanic.

Race	# Families	# Families Below Poverty	% Families Below Poverty
White	9434	349	4.2%
Black	1722	472	27.4%
Asian	141	9	6.4%

Table B.3: Champaign Poverty by Race, 1980. Data from City of Champaign Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy: FY 1992 – FY 1996

Housing

Year	Total Housing Units	% Owner occupied	% Renter occupied	% Vacant
1990	25,996	44%	56%	7.0%
2000	28,556	47%	53%	5.0%
2010	34,434	45.7%	54.3%	6.5%

Table B.4: Champaign Housing Data 1990-2010. Data from City of Champaign Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy: FY 1992 – FY 1996, City of Champaign Consolidated Plan 2005-2010. In 2000, controlling for university districts raised owner occupancy to 59%.

Year	Total Housing Units	% Owner occupied	% Renter occupied	% Vacant
1990	14,006	40%	60%	5.7%
2000	15,311	37%	63%	6.4%
2010	19,090	35%	65%	11.1%

Table B.5: Urbana Housing Data 1990-2010. Data from Census 1990-2010

Public Housing	Address	Type	# Units	Year Built	Status (2012)
Burch Village	504 E Bradley, Champaign	Family	71	1952	Demolished in 2005
Columbia Place	503 E Columbia, Champaign	Elderly	16	1963	Operational
Joanne Dorsey Homes	1301 N McKinley, Champaign	Family	67	1953	Slated for 2012 demolition
Skelton Place	302 S Second, Champaign	Elderly/ Disabled	84	1967	Operational
Washington Square	108 W Washington, Champaign	Elderly/ Disabled	104	1981	Operational
Scattered Sites	Scattered Sites	Single-Family, 5BR	16	1974	Operational
Dunbar Court	1208 N Wright, Urbana	Family	26	1952	Slated for 2012 demolition
Hayes Homes	401 E High, Urbana	Elderly	6	2007	Operational
Oscar Steer Place	1202 E Harding, Urbana	Elderly	104	1972	Operational
Lakeside Terrace	206 E Lakeside Terrace, Urbana	Family	99	1952	Demolished in 2005
Youman Place	308 N Maplewood Dr, Rantoul	Elderly	20	1966	Operational

Table B.6: Public Housing in Champaign County. Data from City of Champaign Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy: FY 1992 – FY 1996, City of Champaign Consolidated Plan 2000-2004, and City of Urbana and HOME Consortium Consolidated Plan 2010-2014

CDBG and HOME Spending

Annual Action Plan	Owner-occupied households	Renter-occupied households	Homeless services	Unspecified households (renter or owner)
1995-96	496,955	22,500	8500	296,250
2000-01	1,043,752	119,527	155,400	25,000
2005-06	625,874	520,000	54,605	100,000
2009-10	684,000	140,000	0	0
Totals	2,850,581	802,027	218,505	421,250
Percent of total housing dollars	66.4	18.7	5.1	9.8

Table B.7: City of Champaign CDBG and HOME priorities, based on funding allocations

Annual Action Plan	Owner-occupied households	Renter-occupied households	Homeless services	Unspecified households (renter or owner)
1995-96	243,400	140,000	0	0
2000-01	195,634	0	134,555	2000
2005-06	423,980	105,336	127,200	0
2009-10	438,283	152,108	19,012	0
Totals	1,301,297	397,444	280,567	2000
Percent of total housing dollars	65.7	20	14	.1

Table B.8: City of Urbana CDBG and HOME priorities, based on funding allocations

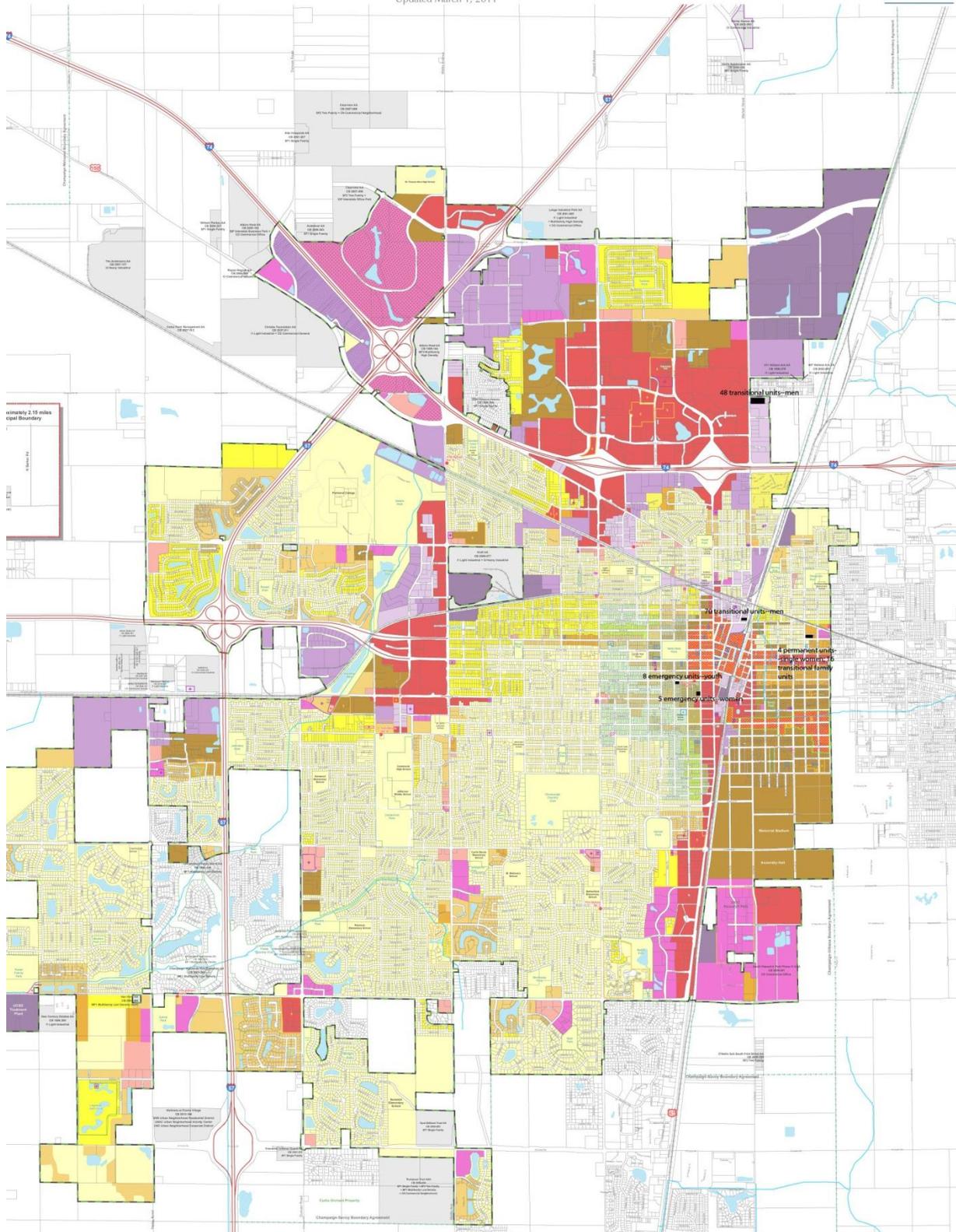
Social service spending

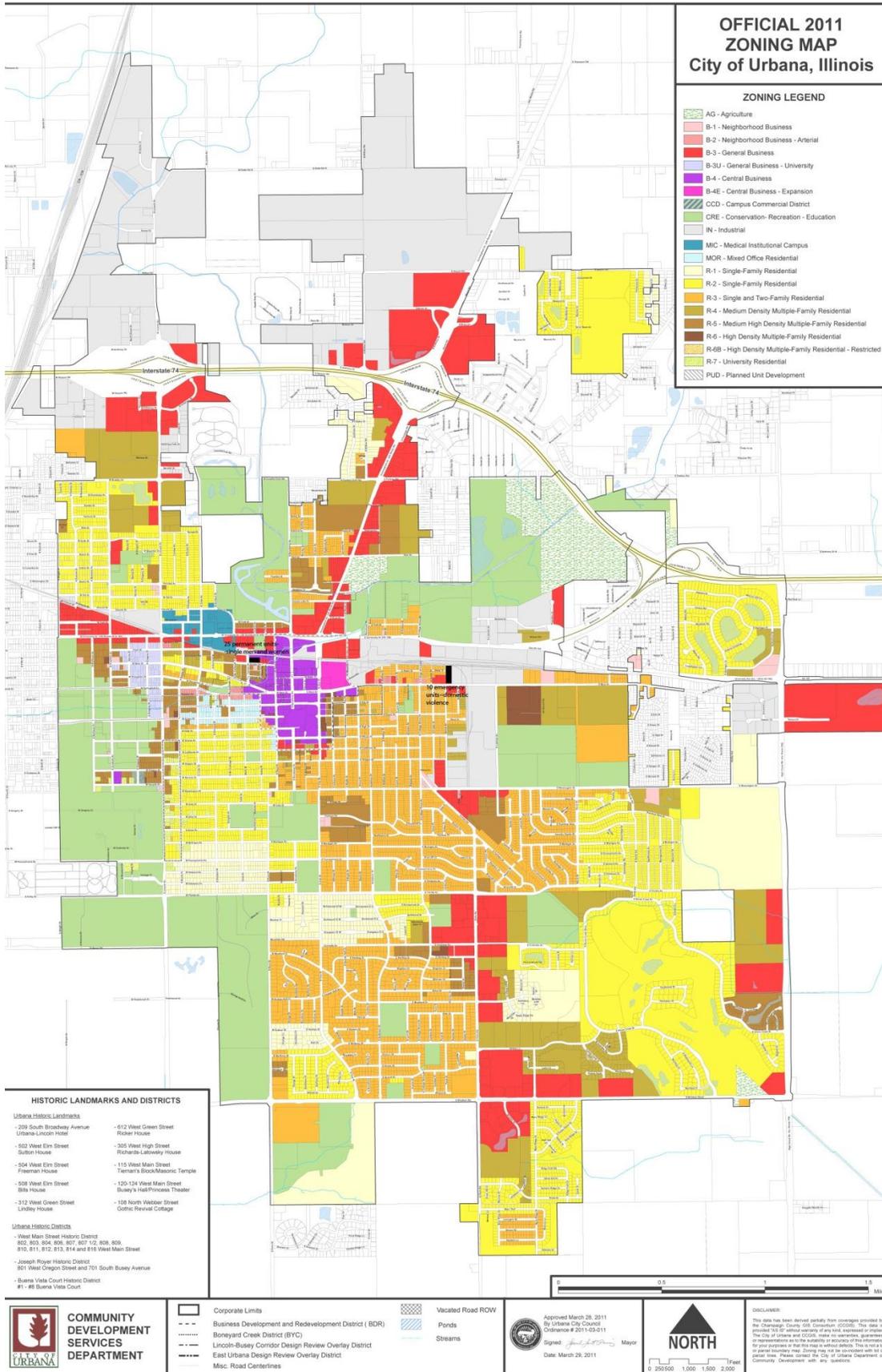
	Total Municipal Population	Town Fund (grants to social services)	General Assistance Fund
Champaign Township	81,055	0	62,947
Cunningham Township (Urbana)	41,250	83,500	307,579

Table B.9: Township funding for social services and general assistance for FY2010. Figures from both townships' proposed FY10-11 budgets

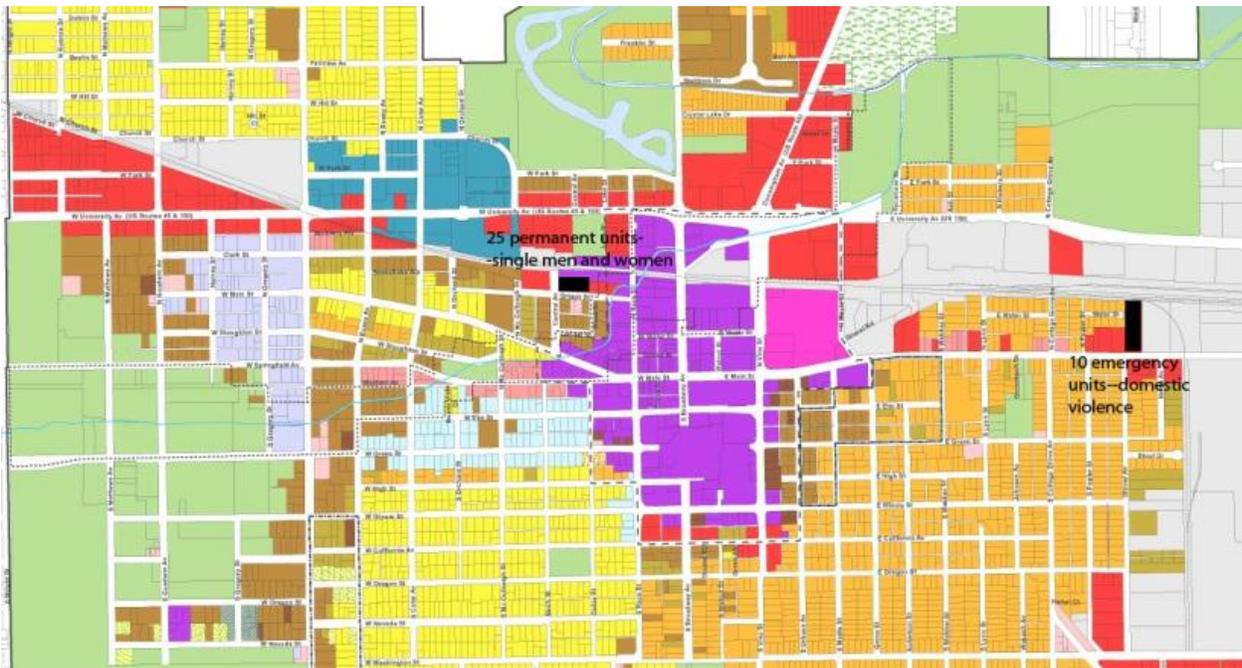
Official Zoning Map 2011

Updated March 1, 2011





Service area within Urbana (zoomed and cropped from larger Urbana map)



APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Housing History Interview (Designated HH1.00# in-text)

1. What type of place were you living? Close your eyes and describe what you remember.
2. Where was it? Describe the surroundings
3. What was your reason for coming to this place?
4. Tell me about your life there.
 - a. What do you remember most about this place?

Prompts: Living with anyone?

What'd you do most days? How'd you get there?

Anywhere else you liked to go or had to go?

Who did you spend time with?

Others you relied on or who relied on you?
5. How did you pay for the place (if applicable)?
6. How secure did you feel that you would be able to continue staying there?
7. Where were each of the people important to you living at the time?
8. How long did you stay in this place?
9. Tell me about your reasons for leaving this place.
10. If you were to fill in the blank, "How I feel about this place is _____", what would you say?
11. If you could speak to that place as if it was a living, thinking being, what would you say?
 - 5a. What would this place say to you?

At the very end of the interview, when finished with all living spaces, ask:

What does the concept of 'home' mean to you? Can you define any elements of 'home'? How does it differ from housing? Are there elements that overlap for you?

Home Visioning Exercise (Designated by VIS.00# in-text)

**This home visioning was adapted from Clare Cooper Marcus's (environmental psychology and landscape researcher) techniques. This exercise will take place in a quiet space that will not be interrupted by noises or visitors. The exercise is designed to let the participant's mind wander through an ideal location that she/he creates in her/his mind. At the completion of the mind exercise, the participant will be given a crude drawing instrument like crayons or pencil and a piece of paper. At that point they are encouraged to draw and/or speak about the place that they've imagined. This portion of the exercise will be digitally recorded to capture the participant's oral comments on the space. The drawing will also be used as a piece of data.

Orientation to exercise:

Last time we talked about your past and where you've lived before. Now we're going to talk about where you want to live ideally. Please get comfortable before we begin. This exercise is also easier if you close your eyes—feel free to do this.

Imagine that you're sitting in a sunny field and that the air is warm and clear.

And that you can feel this warm air filling your chest and stomach when you inhale...and leaving as you exhale.

Beside you in this field is a big hot air balloon...waiting for you.

You climb into the basket of the balloon...and it starts to lift away.

You rise up above the field...everything is getting smaller and farther away.

The houses, the cars, the field, all just little spots way down below.

And you fly through the blue sky

Over rivers and hills

Over grass and prairies

And in the distance you start to see a town

As you get nearer to it, you see that it is the place you've always wanted to live

It might be as big as a city or as small as a village

But it's your perfect town to live in

You're a little lower now, and right over the town

Looking down on it as if it were a map

You slowly descend into the town and eventually land in the town

Get out of the balloon and explore this spot where you've landed

What is here? What is around you?

What is the ground like? Is it mostly paved and full of buildings, or is it mostly green?

What can you hear around you?

What do you smell?

What do you see?

You begin walking toward your home

Once you have reached your home, think about what you passed on the way.

You're at home--stop and observe.

Where is it? What is it like?

Step into the space of your home.

What do you see? What do you smell? What do you hear?

Are there any of your things that you see there? What are they?

How can you tell that this space is your own?

Is anyone else there? If so, who?

If no one is there, is there anyone you would like to invite? Who?

What do you do in this space?

How do you feel when you're here?

You start to leave your home now and walk elsewhere. Visit a place that's important to you.

You are at the place where you want to go. What are you doing here? Who do you see?

Is there anywhere else that you like to go? People you want to see? Walk there.

As you leave this place, nod yes if you are ready to go to the hot air balloon. Nod no if you want to go somewhere else in the town.

NO: Walk to the place you want to go. What are you doing here? Who do you see? (repeat)

YES: Walk back to the hot air balloon. What are you passing on the way?

Climb into the basket of the balloon

And you start to rise, slowly, above your town

The town gets smaller below you

Looking like a map

You can see all of those places where you were:

The place you landed

Your home

The places you visited

The people you saw

They're all below you, getting smaller and smaller

The town is fading away in the distance

Only a small dot on the land

And you breathe in the warm air

And let your shoulders relax

And you start to hear the sounds of this room again

And you're back, sitting here at the table

Open your eyes.

Take these pencils or crayons if you would like. Begin to talk, draw or both about what you just experienced, focusing on the most important parts. If you feel stuck, I can guide you with some questions. If you would like me to be silent, just say so.

Is there anything you want to tell me about your experience?

Prompts: What did you feel?
 What was the experience like?
 What made you feel the happiest/what was your favorite part?
 Was there anything that made you feel sad?
 Specifics:
 Where did you land?
 What did you pass on the way to the home?
 What about the home?
 Where did you go? Who did you see?

Personal Tour (Designated by PT.00# in-text)

The purpose of this tour is so that you can show me your living space and tell me about how the space functions for you. As you are giving me the tour, just point the video camera to the parts that you're talking about. Feel free to point out important parts of this space, and talk about what they mean to you, and how you feel about them. These thoughts can be positive or negative; there are no restrictions on what you say or what you show me. If there is a part that is important to you, I also have a camera and I would like to snap a shot of those pieces so that I can have photos as well as video.

Prompts:

Go into detail about: Things you've made

Personal possessions that seem important

How did you make the space your own when you got here?

At end, ask:

What, if anything, makes this space 'home' to you?

Can you think of other places that you would call 'home'?

Compare this space to it/them. What is the same? What is different?

Site Walk-Through Guide (Designated by SWT.00# in-text)

The purpose of this tour is so that you can show me Safe Haven and tell me about how the place functions for you. As you are giving me the tour, just point the video camera to the parts that you're talking about. During this tour, I would like you to tell me a few things: 1) what happens in the different spaces, 2) how you use the spaces, and 3) how you feel about the different spaces. I encourage you to point out important parts of the spaces, and talk about what they mean to you, how you feel about them. These thoughts can be positive or negative; there are no restrictions on what you say or what you show me. If there is a part that is important to you, I also have a camera and I would like to snap a shot of those pieces so that I can have photos as well as video.

Prompts: How did you make the space your own when you got here?
 How did you situate yourself in the space? Were there reasons for that?
 What did you like about living here? What did you not like?
 Were there difficulties with living here?
 How did people lay claim to different spaces? Were there obvious territories?
 Were there issues of power with people and the space? Describe them.

At end, ask:

What, if anything, made this space 'home' for you?

Can you think of other places that you would call 'home'?

Compare this space to it/them. What is the same? What is different?

Policy Interview Protocol (Designated by ##Interview in-text)

Please provide your organizational and/or personal perspective on the following:

1. How was “need” regarding homelessness, housing, and/or shelters understood and defined...
By the City of Champaign? City of Urbana?
By project developer / service provider?
By homeless themselves?
2. What were the identified needs?
3. During the development process, please detail conflicts that occurred, including what they were regarding, when in the development process, and between which community stakeholders.
4. Regarding the shelter/housing development, what was the discussion of each of the following:
 - a. Physical design
 - b. Siting/location
 - c. Population to be served
 - d. Number of units / overall size
 - e. Services to be offered
 - f. Project goals
 - g. Desired outcomes

APPENDIX D: CITY OF CHAMPAIGN ZONING DISTRICTS AND DEFINITIONS

	SRO	Boardinghouse	Roominghouse	Emergency shelter	Transitional housing
MF2	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Provisional	Provisional
MF3	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Provisional	Provisional
IT-MF		Provisional		Provisional	Provisional
IT-MX		Provisional		Provisional	Provisional
CG	Permitted			Provisional	Provisional
CB	Permitted			Provisional	Provisional
CI	Permitted			Provisional	
UN-AC	Permitted				

Districts

MF2—Multifamily Medium Density District

MF3—Multifamily High Density, Restricted Business District

IT-MF—In-Town Multifamily District

IT-MX—In-Town Mixed Use District

CG—Commercial General District

CB—Central Business District

CI—Commercial Industrial District

UN-AC—Urban Neighborhood – Activity Center District

Definitions (see http://library.municode.com/HTML/10520/level3/MUCO_CH37ZO_ARTIIDE.html)

Sec. 37-19

Emergency shelter for the homeless shall mean a structure utilized for temporary housing of persons in a dormitory-style setting in which each resident lives at the shelter for a period not to exceed sixty (60) consecutive days

Sec. 37-20

Family shall mean a person living alone, or two (2) or more persons living together as a single housekeeping unit in a dwelling unit, as distinguished from a group occupying a rooming house, motel, hotel, fraternity, or sorority house, provided, however, that for the purposes of definition, “family” shall not include more than four (4) persons unrelated to each other by blood, marriage, or legal adoption. “Family” shall include members of the service dependent population living in community living facilities and recovery homes as herein defined.

Sec. 37-21

Group quarters shall include the housing types listed in group housing university, and also boarding houses, rooming houses, and buildings originally designed as single family dwellings which have been converted into multi-family uses.

Sec. 37-32

Roominghouse shall mean a structure that meets the definition of a detached dwelling unit, except that it is occupied by more individuals than meet the definition of family in the Zoning Ordinance. Only a building originally designed and constructed as a detached dwelling unit before 1965 may be used as a rooming house.

Sec. 37-33

Single room occupancy units (SRO) shall mean a residential unit, with only one room, occupied by only one person, with lockable exterior doors that are accessible from outside the unit. Kitchen and bathroom facilities may or may not be communal.

Sec. 37-34

Transitional housing for the homeless shall mean a structure utilized for the semi-temporary housing of persons in a dormitory style setting in which each resident receives training and/or counseling on a regular basis as a requirement of residing within the facility. Residents shall not live at the facility for a period longer than two (2) consecutive years.

APPENDIX E: DESIGN MOTIVATIONS, CONSIDERATIONS AND PRINCIPLES

Emergency shelter design principles

Service provider considerations:

- Bathrooms can be sites for drug use and intimidation of others
- Low staffing, often volunteers
- Rapid turnover and presence of strangers increases problems associated with violence, substance abuse, mental illness
- Housing people who have been on the street increases need for hygiene processes and storage

Design motivation/philosophy:

- Balance the need for safety and meeting basic needs of food, hygiene, sleep and storage in an environment with high turnover and traffic with residents' "home" needs of safety, freedom from surveillance, protection from the outside world, ability to have one's own territory to defend, support for positive self identity, relaxation/comfort, security of tenure, and emotional stability and positive social relationships.
- **Invest in human dignity.** A 30-day stay will not create a home for someone, but it should offer as many qualities of "home" as possible for that individual while they are there. Leave behind the idea that if it's too nice, people will stay.

Design principles:

- Eliminate "mass" feeling—individualize spaces
 - Place storage cabinets/locker with each sleeping area rather than all together
 - Provide area for personalization, like a white board, peg board area, etc.
- Protect residents from the outside world, particularly with the Fourth Amendment (protection from search and seizure)—treat the shelter like a residence with the same protections as other residences
 - Police cannot enter, search or question without warrants
 - Keep living area visually obscured from front door / visitor area. People should feel that they have a private living area separate from the outside world.
- Provide safe environments without breaching privacy (balance)
 - Bathroom sink area could be open, while separate areas with one toilet and shower in each could be behind locked stalls that extend to the floor
- Acknowledge the importance of claiming a territory—if you remove physical markers of territory, people will act it out socially, being more aggressive
 - Use permanent "bed" areas, e.g. cots or platform beds with plastic mattresses—keep it easy to clean but with a sense of territory. Placing storage area in same area increases feelings of having a space of one's own

- Consider small groupings of bed areas to create “suites”—this could be accomplished through the use of separate beds, like dormitory models, or within a single space by using partitions. People need to be able to let their guard down while they sleep and relax.
- Destigmatize the space, both interior and exterior—people know they’re homeless and don’t need to feel it when they enter the space where they currently live
 - Use positive, instructive signage. Avoid negative signage that reinforces the stigmatized environment.
 - Approach visitor tours sensitively. Do not discuss residents’ issues with visitors and do not show spaces if residents are in them.
- Deinstitutionalize spaces—create a welcoming environment with some perceived comforts
 - Use warm, bright colors on walls
 - Use nice smelling cleaning supplies
 - Provide buffet style meals instead of cafeteria style serving
- Balance time alone and time spent with others—create spatial options for both
 - Provide a few small rooms for residents to receive visitors away from their living space and other residents. These rooms can also be used for people to get away from others by themselves

Transitional center design principles

Service provider considerations:

- Wear and traffic remain considerations but are less so than emergency shelters
- Regulations on lifestyle, savings, and employment
- People stay up to two years—that creates time for relationship building and input on center’s operations

Design motivation/philosophy:

- Balance the need for regulations and services and promotion of individual goals in a long-term living environment with residents’ “home” needs of safety, freedom from surveillance, protection from the outside world, ability to have one’s own territory to defend, support for positive self identity, relaxation/comfort, security of tenure, and emotional stability and positive social relationships.
- **Invest in people—you are making a two year commitment to an individual.** Residents stay for up to two years—that time period is comparable to a stay in an apartment, offering plenty of time for residents to put down roots. Do not approach the environment as “transitional”—it is a home.

Design principles:

- Self-sufficiency should be valued
 - Provide cooking areas for residents to prepare their own meals. Can have communal fridges in kitchen, small fridges in private rooms, or both.
 - Provide communal living areas that are not also used for programs/services.
- Approach living spaces as personal territories
 - Use beds with mattresses. If someone is staying long-term, the need for plastic mattresses is lessened.
 - Use locking doors on private living spaces. Staff maintains master set of keys but asks/informs resident before entering
 - Living spaces should be private rooms in “suite” styles with shared bathroom—number of units sharing bathroom can vary.
 - Allow residents to decorate walls and rooms—personalization and choice are important.
- Destigmatize the space, both interior and exterior—people know they’re homeless and don’t need to feel it when they enter the space where they currently live
 - Use positive, instructive signage. Avoid negative signage that reinforces the stigmatized environment.
 - Approach visitor tours sensitively. Do not discuss residents’ issues with visitors and do not show spaces if residents are in them.

- Incorporate residents' perspectives in the center's operations. This could be through a representative program, grievance committee, or the like.
- Deinstitutionalize spaces—create a welcoming environment with some perceived comforts
 - Use warm, bright colors on walls with pictures and art
 - Use nice smelling cleaning supplies
- Protect residents from the outside world, particularly with the Fourth Amendment (protection from search and seizure)—treat the shelter like a residence with the same protections as other residences
 - Police cannot enter, search or question without warrants
 - Use exterior locking doors and provide residents with keys

Permanent supportive housing design principles

Service provider considerations:

- Need to offer services but not require them
- Permanent living spaces need to be safe, secure and self-sufficient

Design motivation/philosophy:

- Balance the need for regulations and services and promotion of individual goals in a long-term living environment with residents' "home" needs of safety, freedom from surveillance, protection from the outside world, ability to have one's own territory to defend, support for positive self identity, relaxation/comfort, security of tenure, and emotional stability and positive social relationships.
- **Invest in people.** Residents can stay permanently—it is a home where they will put down roots and invest in the space as their own. The design should support that investment.

Design principles:

- Self-sufficiency should be valued
 - Provide cooking areas for residents to prepare their own meals. Can have communal fridges in kitchen, small fridges in private rooms, or both.
- Approach living spaces as personal territories
 - Furnish each unit, using beds with mattresses. If someone is staying long-term, the need for plastic mattresses is lessened.
 - Use locking doors on private living spaces. Staff does not enter rooms without consent of resident.
 - Living spaces should be private rooms in "suite" styles with shared bathroom and kitchen—number of units sharing bathroom and kitchen can vary. Units could be totally private but is not necessary (cost consideration)
 - Allow residents to paint and decorate walls and rooms—personalization and choice are important.
- Destigmatize the space, both interior and exterior—people know they're homeless and don't need to feel it when they enter the space where they currently live
 - Use positive, instructive signage. Avoid negative signage that reinforces the stigmatized environment.
 - Approach visitor tours sensitively. Do not discuss residents' issues with visitors and do not show spaces if residents are in them.
 - Incorporate residents' perspectives in the center's operations. This could be through a representative program, grievance committee, or the like.
- Deinstitutionalize spaces—create a welcoming environment with some perceived comforts
 - Use warm, bright colors on walls

- Protect residents from the outside world, particularly with the Fourth Amendment (protection from search and seizure)—treat the housing like a residence with the same protections as other residences
 - Police cannot enter, search or question without warrants
 - Use exterior locking doors and provide residents with keys