

Housing and Urban Redevelopment: Two Case Studies of Community Involvement

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Three theories of the degree of success of community participation in housing development—class/cultural, bureaucratic tasks, and vested interests—are applied to two case studies in New York City. The class/cultural theory is not successful in explaining the case studies, while the bureaucratic tasks and the vested interests theories are useful.

There has been a relatively constant level of tension between principles of centralized bureaucratic control and local, community participation in the process of urban redevelopment. Community groups, almost since the inception of the Housing Act of 1949, have attempted to modify many of the inequities and unintended effects of federal housing policy. The federal government responded to many of these complaints by mandating the formal participation by community groups and sponsors in many of its programs aimed at low and moderate income populations.

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There have been a number of attempts to explain the success or failure of community participation in housing development which have produced competing and often contradictory explanations. The purpose of this paper is to present evidence from two cases of housing development in New York City in order to clarify the relevance of these competing explanations. The two cases are the Upper Park Avenue Community Association (UPACA) operating in a low-income, minority section of Harlem and the West Village Committee (WVC) serving a largely white, working class population in Greenwich Village.¹ Both community groups sponsored and developed relatively large-scale housing developments using federal or state programs over a ten year period. In both cases, principles of local control were restructured or challenged by a variety of bureaucratic and institutional interests resulting

in fundamental alterations in the character of local participation. The history and personalities associated with the two cases are distinctive and therefore may be atypical (Goering, Robison, and Hoover, 1977). It appears, however, that the forces and constraints that shaped each organization's history operated elsewhere. By comparing the experiences of a lower-class, ghetto organization with those of a white, working class group it is hoped that there will be clearer insights into some of the frustrations associated with community participation and management in housing development.

Competing Propositions

Social science explanations of the conditions for successful or unsuccessful community participation in housing development have focused on three distinctive propositions. These propositions offer competing, if not contradictory, explanations for the relative ineffectiveness of local participation.

The first proposition derives from early research on the social class and cultural characteristics of site residents involved in the urban renewal process. Gans, for example, argued that the "person-oriented" character of lower-class life in the West End of Boston incapacitated the residents' ability to oppose urban renewal plans. "The inclination towards selfishness and away from self-consciousness seems to be functional in a low-status group where survival cannot be taken for granted, and where solutions are beyond the control of the individual or the group" (Gans, 1962:102). Suspicion and selfishness were characteristics which impeded efforts by the local community to oppose the urban renewal plans. Wilson (1966A) extended this point by arguing that lower-class communities lack the "public-regarding" attitude which is characteristic of those who care for the city as a whole and who can envisage the long-term benefits of renewal. The educated and better-off resident is presumably

better able to grasp the intentions and scope of housing programs. They would be less skeptical and more obliging. The poor, in contrast, are likely to be short-sighted and contentious. The social class composition of a neighborhood, or at least the level of cosmopolitanism of its residents, is seen as the key to the success of citizen participation. Crain and Rosenthal (1967:984), however, found that ". . . a city with a well-educated population is partly immobilized by high levels of citizen participation which prevent the government from exercising the authority to make decisions." Social class factors may, then, be related to successful citizen participation but to unsuccessful urban renewal programs.

A second proposition suggests that effective community participation depends on creating a balance between technical and non-technical tasks in the development process. Community and bureaucratic interests are presumably engaged in a non-competitive relationship requiring "facilitative interdependence" (Litwak, 1970A:69). Neither the local group nor the public agency can achieve its own goals without the cooperation of the other party. Community groups are important because they are "a more powerful base for handling non-expert tasks" (Litwak, 1970B:47). Neither side needs to dominate the relationship, with the process tending toward symmetrical relations. Non-profit, local housing groups can be cited as one example of this relatively symmetrical balance (Keyes, 1973:351).

Not only has the nonprofit housing industry contributed significantly to the production of critically needed housing, it has also been instrumental in bringing organizations and people into the national housing effort who had never before been involved: minority groups, churches, labor unions, fraternal and social organizations. Moreover, the country has seen the rise of nonprofit housing development corporations which have brought together local business and political leaders, the poor, and members of minority communities in a cooperative effort to seek new solutions to housing problems.

Community groups, it is said, infuse new vigor and vitality into the process of housing development by insisting on bureaucratic responsiveness and efficiency.

Critics have, however, reacted to the proposition that community groups can effectively collaborate in the process of housing development by arguing that:

The housing production process is too complex, too bound in red tape, decisions, and uncertainties in and of itself to allow for the luxury of community politics and maximum feasible misunderstanding. Non-profits lack the staying power, the expertise, the financial resources and the management capacity to hold on for the 40 year life of a mortgage (Keyes, 1973:353).

Community groups are unable to cope with all the requirements of sustained development and management. Others have added to this argument by saying that community groups are inherently in opposition to bureaucratic interests in the process of development because of their suspicions and short-sightedness. Community groups distrust public officials "because the act of assuming responsibility cuts one off from an understanding of what people need and want" (Starr, 1966:52). To the defenders of bureaucratic rights "there are things more important than giving way to the expressed wishes of the people most immediately affected" (Starr, 1966:274).

One of the difficulties in evaluating this argument is the lack of evidence on the long-term relationship of community groups and public agencies in the process of development and housing management. It is plausible to hypothesize that the informal and non-technical aspects of community input would be transformed or routinized. Principles of community solidarity, flexibility, and "foolishness" (Wilson, 1966B:211) may become inefficient partners of long term project management. The absence of hierarchy and the lack of clear task specialization in many community groups may conflict with the expectations and requirements of funding agencies (Marris and Rein, 1967; Weissman, 1969;

Lipsky and Levi, 1972; Moore, 1972; Helfgot, 1974). The division of responsibilities into technical and non-technical tasks may, then, ignore the form of bureaucratic management which will integrate these tasks. It also ignores questions of scale, assuming that both large and small scale developments can be managed with the same, or similar, division of tasks.

The final proposition that can be derived from research on urban redevelopment efforts concerns the issue of power. For example, Spiegel (1971:18) argues that:

Participation of organized local citizen groups in Federal programs cannot be considered apart from a context of power. Issues of organizational development and survival, power and control become transcendent themes in consideration of specific issues. . .

This point was again stated by Hawley (1968:403) after a review of urban renewal efforts in over 250 cities; "the concentration of power is positively and significantly associated with urban renewal success under virtually all conditions of control." The specific interest groups involved in redevelopment have been discussed by Dahl (1962), Greer (1965), and, more thoroughly, by Hartman (1974; 1976). Dahl's study of New Haven and Rossi and Dentler's (1961) study of urban renewal efforts in Chicago for example, suggest that many efforts at citizen participation were simply exercises in "democratic ritualism" because of the influence of established interests. Local site residents were either not involved in central decisions or were powerless to alter the redevelopment plans established by universities, real estate developers, or by public officials anxious to take advantage of the availability of federal funds. Greer and Hartman describe the enormous importance of real estate interests in the promotion and execution of urban plans. In San Francisco, real estate entrepreneurs initiated the project and sustained it through their political influence against the opposition of site residents and other community groups.

While the urban renewal process is intended to correct market imperfections, through supposedly neutral public intervention and investment, detailed economic analysis makes it clear that there are winners and losers in the process (Hartman, 1974:182).

Urban renewal strategies, as well as housing redevelopment programs, frequently penalize the poor. Federal programs have a tendency to assist housing developers and real estate interests at least as often as they assist low and moderate income households.

These three propositions—class/cultural, bureaucratic tasks, and vested interests—suggest alternative approaches to explain successful or unsuccessful examples of community input into housing development programs. The following two cases will illustrate that none of the approaches is fully adequate to explain the complexities of housing development in New York City. Of the three, the class/cultural explanation offers the least assistance, while bureaucratic and interest group explanations are of use in explaining different phases of the rise and fall of these attempts at community influence.

Case One: The Upper Park Avenue Community Association (UPACA)

In the summer of 1965, two black women started a block association in East Harlem to improve local conditions. They applied for and received, a small grant of \$13,000 and recognition as one of the City's first Community Action Agencies. Along with this designation came a mandate of responsibility for eight square blocks. UPACA, as the leaders soon named the organization, next sought the assistance of local agencies to help rehabilitate the housing in a model, one-square block area. The director of a new, federally funded program aimed at non-profit housing sponsors agreed to consider their plan if they could find a co-sponsor for their program. The co-sponsor had to be a long-standing, recognized organization which would agree to share in

the decision-making process about subsequent housing plans. Co-sponsors would be neither legally nor financially liable for any debts or problems, but would provide assurance to federal mortgage lenders that the new community group would act responsibly.

After searching for a year, and after many rejections, the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues agreed to become a co-sponsor of UPACA's housing program. A new UPACA Non-Profit Housing Board of Directors was established in which the New York Federation had half of the seats and votes. They insisted on a condition that they be allowed to withdraw at any time and that there would be no financial liability. In return for their cooperation, UPACA was then recognized as a legitimate community sponsor and was granted a seed money grant for land acquisition and architectural fees. The new federal agency also assisted them with the paper work necessary to obtain mortgage guarantees and rent subsidies to assure that rents for the rehabilitated apartments could be afforded by current site residents. Within three years, the UPACA Non-Profit Housing Corporation had sponsored over 300 units of rehabilitated housing, at a mortgage value of over ten million dollars. By 1969, UPACA was known as one of the few successful examples of community sponsored housing in the city. Federal and city agencies willingly admitted that they had adopted UPACA as a model program.

UPACA's leaders decided, with the advice of their Board, to manage the housing in their areas as well as to develop it. As managing agents they were responsible for routine maintenance and repairs, and received a six percent fee. They also obtained the right to select the tenants for their buildings. UPACA's success as a housing sponsor was not, however, matched by success as managers. The deficit on the management side rose from \$21,000 in 1970 to \$200,000 by 1972. There were too many bills to pay and rent receipts covered only a portion of their expenses.

Important additions to federal and state housing programs in 1968 provided UPACA with an

apparent opportunity to both build more housing and to eliminate their deficits. UPACA's co-sponsors, with the assistance of public officials, convinced UPACA's leaders that they could initiate a comprehensive plan of new housing construction which would enable UPACA's management operation to become economically self-sustaining. The HUD Section 236 program, the Neighborhood Development Program and New York State's Urban Development Corporation (Brilliant, 1976) offered the opportunity of acquiring large tracts of land, rapidly obtaining mortgage guarantees, and constructing 1,000 to 2,000 new housing units. The new programs offered the opportunity for UPACA to become a relatively large scale housing developer and project manager. This opportunity would presumably fulfill UPACA's long-term desire to rehouse most of the residents in their eight block area in decent housing at rents they could afford.

UPACA's leaders agreed to go ahead with the plans to construct new housing in a series of stages, including a 32 story high-rise which would dominate the skyline of that portion of Harlem. UPACA would be worth nearly fifty million dollars in mortgage and construction commitments, and would soon be responsible for managing nearly 2000 apartments.

UPACA's co-sponsors became concerned, as plans and commitments were established, that additional professional staff and staff training were needed to assist UPACA's leaders in managing their growing developments. They applied for and received roughly \$235,000 a year from both the Ford Foundation and Rockefeller Brothers Fund to train UPACA's management staff and its tenants in the responsibilities of maintaining their property. The Ford Foundation included UPACA among its selective list of Community Development Corporations as a model of effective locally led housing management.

The roof fell in on community sponsored housing plans when President Richard Nixon declared a moratorium on all federally funded housing and community action programs in January 1973.

Federal, state, and private agencies were obliged to rethink their commitments to community sponsored projects. The relatively abrupt termination of funding guarantees meant that housing plans were unfulfillable and community sponsors lost much of their legitimacy. The moratorium effectively ended federal support for all forms of community involvement and participation. Any housing developments for low and moderate income households that were to survive would have to do it on their own.

UPACA's co-sponsors and the Ford Foundation were concerned about UPACA's capacity to survive this alteration in federal priorities. The Ford Foundation, at least at the level of staff workers responsible for UPACA, began to argue that UPACA and its leaders were not equipped to survive these cutbacks unless there was a drastic reorganization of their management procedures. An outside consultant was hired to prepare a reorganization plan which was presumably to restructure UPACA so that it could become more businesslike and professional. In this plan, it was suggested that UPACA's leaders would surrender operational authority to a new group of professionals, while they became advisors to the Board of Directors.

UPACA's leaders interpreted the proposed reorganization plan as an attempt to eliminate their power, as a "white takeover." A number of meetings were held, with compromises offered, but no amount of tinkering could alter the basic dissatisfaction which was felt by the co-sponsors towards one or both, of UPACA's indigenous leaders. The co-sponsors and the Ford Foundation staff seemed to perceive the black leaders as a major obstacle to the efficient operation of UPACA's responsibilities as a housing developer and manager.

UPACA's leaders resisted attempts to modify their control of the organization. The issue of reorganization was attacked as racist, and all parties associated with UPACA's developments became polarized. Within months UPACA's co-sponsors decided to resign from the Board of Directors and the Ford Foundation decided to ter-

minate its funding of UPACA's operations. The relatively abrupt termination of these sources of support, as well as others which soon were withdrawn, brought the issue of effective management into even clearer focus. The New York State Urban Development Corporation attempted to resolve the tensions and arguments but failed. Sensing a risk to their multi-million dollar commitments, they removed UPACA's leaders as managers for all of the new housing units they helped fund. The Federal Housing Administration also threatened to foreclose on some of the rehabilitated housing. Almost all of the parts of UPACA's carefully constructed project came tumbling down.

It is not clear in retrospect whether any amount of reorganization could have prevented UPACA's eventual collapse. A regression analysis of the causes of federally funded multifamily financial failures reveals that management issues were insignificant in explaining the assignment of a mortgage, default, or foreclosure (Fredland and MacRae, 1979). Large numbers of community sponsored projects have failed for a variety of reasons totally unrelated to the efficiency of project managers. The costs of housing construction, for example, rose from roughly \$11,000 a unit for rehabilitated housing for UPACA in 1968 to over \$50,000 a unit by 1974. Partly as a result of these rising totals, with energy costs adding additional burdens, UPACA's deficits rose from \$200,000 in 1972 to nearly \$500,000 in 1974, with no end in sight to projected losses. As a result of rising costs and deficits, it was necessary to raise rents from roughly \$85.00 to over \$200.00 a month for a one bedroom apartment. In one of UPACA's last developments, apartments were renting for nearly \$400.00 a month. Rents could not rise fast enough, however, to cover deficits, and were generally too high for most of UPACA's local residents. The housing that UPACA built, even if it had remained under the control of UPACA's leaders, would have been mainly for middle-income households or those few families lucky enough to get some form of rent supplement.

In the end, everything that UPACA's leaders and neighbors had set out to achieve had either been priced out of their reach or lost to local control. The escalating costs of housing development and management, and the declining federal enthusiasm for paying for these costly experiments, created a mountain of debts for local groups and for HUD. UPACA's leaders and co-sponsors had willingly accepted every avenue, and agency, for obtaining funds in the expectation that a larger development would ultimately become self-sustaining. They accepted the principle that large scale housing development would solve their fiscal problems. The increased scale of development, however, brought with it a related set of pressures for routinization and professionalization which conflicted with the principles of community participation and influence. UPACA's leaders were told that efficient management procedures were essential for survival, if not self-sufficiency. UPACA's leaders were unwilling to surrender all they had worked for, and did not accept the premise that they were responsible for the confusion that appeared in the wake of post-moratorium scarcities.

The withdrawal of federal funds and guarantees left a large number of UPACA's partners dangerously exposed. They felt an acute sense of liability, and decided to convert UPACA into a professionally managed business enterprise, while sacrificing the principle of community control. UPACA became just another housing developer and manager. A professional management firm replaced UPACA and all plans for further development were largely abandoned. UPACA's leaders continued to manage a few units of rehabilitated housing, scraping together rent subsidies to maintain their buildings and support a few staff.

Clearly none of UPACA's partners in the process of housing development felt that there was much utility in the concept of community participation. In the absence of federal guarantees, the housing had to be managed in a business-like fashion with little or no support for the value, or

ideology, of local input. The partners withdrew their support, creating further pressure for UPACA's collapse. UPACA's leaders were left dazed, and the targets of blame for the failure. No one else was left to share the responsibility for the declining federal enthusiasm for community sponsorship and control.

Case Two: The West Village Committee (WVC)

Unlike UPACA, the West Village redevelopment program began in a confrontation over a New York City plan for the urban renewal of their area. Two days after a public announcement of an urban renewal proposal in February 1961, a group of thirty Villagers opposed the project at public hearings held to authorize a municipal application for federal funding. A group of over 300 residents was formed a few days later and elected Jane Jacobs as co-chairperson of the Committee to Save the West Village (CSWV). The Committee knew all too well (Jacobs, 1961) about the dangers of urban renewal from earlier large scale renewal projects developed in East Harlem and the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

Fearing the destruction of their neighborhood, they were adamantly opposed to the urban renewal designation and to any redevelopment planning which occurred without their approval. Jacobs argued that the proposal was "an irresponsible boondoggle which would gratuitously jeopardize a sound, healthy community." Urban renewal meant the mass sterilization of architecture as well as the destruction of local ties which guaranteed security and neighborhood vitality. The West Villagers felt that their interests were being ignored by unsympathetic bureaucrats.

The New York City Planning Commission and the Housing and Redevelopment Board (HRB) were the principal agencies concerned with the first stages of the urban renewal process. The decision of the Planning Commission on the basis of a public hearing held in June of 1961 indicates its inclination to override the consensus of site residents when they diverged from its interests.

The Commission recognized the opposition of

local residents but claimed the right to proceed with urban renewal despite it.

All indications, including the public hearing, point to an opposition by a substantial majority of the local community. But the argument that community opinion, as expressed at the public hearing, must dictate the Commission's decision misconstrues the function and responsibility of the Commission and the nature of the public hearing. . .

The purpose of such hearing is to afford all interested and affected persons an opportunity to make their views known in order that the Commission may weigh all relevant evidence before coming to a final determination.

Builders, developers, as well as real estate agents were also relevant for the decision as to whether it was necessary or useful to redevelop the West Village.

While agency representatives could afford to appear balanced, and relatively unimpressed by community protest, elected officials could not. Ignored by public agencies, the CSWV sought political influence to support its interests. There was at the time a ground-swell of opposition to urban renewal plans throughout New York City which was forcing elected officials to pause and listen. Community groups promised virulent opposition if they were not heeded. In the September 1961 primary elections for the Democratic nomination for Mayor, then Mayor Robert Wagner needed the support of the West Villagers because of their alliance with reformed Democrats. He was being challenged by regular, machine Democrats and needed to broaden his political base. West Villagers pursued him relentlessly at public meetings during the campaign. Finally, on the eve of the primary election he announced that he would recommend that the Planning Commission withdraw the urban renewal designation and that he would not permit HRB to execute the urban renewal project.

After the designation was lifted some months

for changing lease; and tenant rules. Advantages later, the Committee to Save the West Village began a new phase of activity. It changed its name to West Village Committee (WVC), and, with much of the same leadership including Jane Jacobs and Rachele Wall, launched a drive to prepare its own alternative plans for the rebuilding of the neighborhood. They did this in part to counter the criticism that they were more interested in housing as an issue over which to fight the "establishment" than in housing for its own sake, and partly to preserve the control they had won over their neighborhood's redevelopment. They argued that "we wanted things our way rather than have someone spoonfeed us their particular pabulum which we didn't care for." West Villagers had promised Mayor Wagner that they would propose their own alternative plans when the urban renewal threat was lifted. More importantly, they realized that their victory was temporary, and fragile, and would not survive without consolidation. A community plan was needed, one West Village leader argued, because "while there was a community-sponsored scheme going ahead it prevented any alternative plan because the community had its plan." The West Villagers would offer their own constructive suggestions for the development of the area and these would contrast eloquently with the schemes proposed by City agencies.

West Villagers wanted a plan which would protect their interests; which would involve no residential relocation and which would preserve the "scale and texture of the existing community." The site they chose, one which was first proposed in a community meeting four days after the renewal proposal was announced, was occupied by an obsolete elevated railroad and would involve no relocation. It extended for seven blocks down the center of the West Village. The basic planning model was a freestanding five-story walkup building of ten apartments which ranged in size from one to four bedrooms with ground floor commercial space. The proposal offered a total of 475 apartments, many with balconies or outside patios. The density was high,

and gained by extensive site coverage (approximately 65%) in preference to high rise construction.

Many of these decisions involved a disregard for the ordinances of Municipal and State planning and building codes. Standards for site coverage as well as regulations on size of rooms were, for example, disregarded. West Villagers were willing to assert the priority of their own requirements over building codes and regulations and other considerations given priority by public agencies. They relied on the political power of their concerted demands to gain legal approval of their plan. The architects' minutes of a meeting held on May 17, 1962 recorded these commitments and strategies:

At the suggestion of Jane Jacobs we agreed to design the buildings to solve the kinds of requirements important to families who would live in them first, and then would decide which zoning district the design would best fit.

We also agreed that, since there are so many regulations that we would have to violate to design a desirable group of buildings, we should design the kinds of building we think solve the requirements at hand. The Committee would obtain permission to build them through their own means.

Agency officials had reluctantly accepted that there could be no wholesale demolition of the West Village. The community plan, however, posed a host of other problems. City agencies had to defend the building codes and standards of living the codes were designed to ensure. They argued that the West Villagers' plan was a step backwards. As one official wrote:

This is the most incredible proposal for housing that we have met since the adoption in 1879 of the prize-winning design for housing the poor—the old law dumbbell tenement. What gives us particular concern in analyzing this proposal is the speciousness and irresponsibility of the arguments presented in its favor.

The dumbbell tenement has been called a most "ingenious design for a dungeon" (Kessner, 1977:21), and the comparison with the West Villagers design redrew the battle lines between the community group and public agencies. The agencies argued that the designs were both illegal and unmarketable. No one, they argued, would rent new apartments where they might have to walk up four or five flights of stairs. The Planning Commission also argued that the proposed location was environmentally unsound; that industries and trucking in the area were incompatible with residential use.

It would take almost six years of negotiation, political pressure, and support of Mayor John Lindsay before a modified design was finally approved. In the negotiations to minimize deviation from the codes, the number of units was reduced, a floor was added to each building, and balconies, roof mansards and other design features were pared away to make up the costs incurred by compliance with the regulations. Even with these changes the City Planning Commission only reluctantly agreed to the design. Reflecting the prevailing sentiment of housing and planning officials, one Planning Commissioner stated in 1969:

I am voting for this resolution, not because I believe that this represents a program for good housing. I recognize that the proponents have public support. . . In the process they have slowed down the entire housing program in this City. Once and for all we must give them an opportunity to show the total community what they can achieve in housing.

Political pressure had succeeded and West Village Houses were approved.

Construction of the West Village Housing was begun in 1972 for 420 units of cooperative, middle-income housing. Inflation and rising construction costs, however, forced the increase of monthly maintenance charge from \$29 for each room in 1965 to \$100 in 1974. By the time a marketing campaign was begun for the apartments in 1974, a two-bedroom apartment carried a monthly maintenance charge of nearly \$480.

The rising costs of construction and electricity made it impossible to market the apartments at rents which were feasible for middle-income families. After more than a year only fifty apartments had been sold and the marketing campaign for West Village houses was halted. The payments required by the community sponsor for taxes and interest on the mortgage had to be made and the public agency which held the mortgage moved for foreclosure rather than adopting financing arrangements which had been used to "save" housing projects built by other kinds of sponsors. The City's Housing and Development Administration (HDA) took over the operation of the West Village housing. At the same time, a large number of other City financed middle income housing projects began to experience financial difficulties. West Village Houses had become another part of the City's fiscal nightmare. HDA assumed ownership and appointed a private real estate firm in 1976 which rented the apartments for roughly \$100 per room.

Discussion and Conclusions

Evidence from the UPACA and WVC cases suggest a number of conclusions regarding the relationship between community and bureaucratic interests in the process of housing development. The evidence suggests, firstly, that neither a public nor private regarding attitude insured successful citizen participation or cooperation between community groups and public agencies. Unlike Wilson's assumption, UPACA began as a relatively compliant, public regarding group but ended in conflict with its partners. The WVC, a more middle class group, began in a militant, private regarding fashion and alternated between confrontation and negotiation for the next ten years. Neither the class or racial composition of the two community groups appears to have had a substantial effect on either their style of relationship or the success of their contacts with the public sector. This first proposition, therefore, explains very little about the conditions affecting the growth, development, and failure of either com-

munity organization.

The second proposition, on the non-competitive integration of technical and non-technical tasks, appears to apply to only certain stages of UPACA's development. In its first years of growth, UPACA's leaders did offer non-technical advice and community support to the professional skills of their co-sponsors and federal agencies. This level of cooperation, or interdependence, occurred under the auspices of a federal mandate to develop and maintain community sponsored housing. Federal resources were available to insure all parties against any losses associated with the process of using community groups as partners in the process of developing housing for the poor. The WVC engaged in a more reciprocal exchange of technical skills, frequently offering alternative plans for the technical details of housing construction. Their attempt to selectively deal with technical details resulted, however, in competition, and even conflict, with public agencies which were mandated to administer regulations and codes associated with the production of housing. Bureaucratic controls and regulations could not be superceded and the result was antagonism and delay. The delay associated with attempting to negotiate the details of housing plans for the West Village meant that costs continued to rise. For both community groups, the rising costs of housing development meant that original site residents could no longer afford to live in the housing that was originally intended for their use.

The WVC also illustrates the importance of using political influence to override the demands of local public agencies. They gained the support of the Office of the Mayor on two crucial issues, defeating the agencies' original urban renewal proposal and in establishing their own plan. UPACA's leaders, however, failed to mobilize the support of political officials, and were left alone to fight against the combined interests of its co-sponsors and private foundations.

The two cases also reveal that elected political officials could do little to prevent the eventual

collapse of local community control over the two housing developments. Political influence achieved strategic gains for the WVC but failed to forestall its eventual defeat. Both community groups had less influence, and were more dependent, than either realized. There was ultimately little symmetry or facilitative interdependence when the issue of scarce resources arose to confront all parties.

The community groups as well as public agencies were dependent on federal resources in the form of loans, mortgage guarantees, and rent subsidies in order to fulfill the goal of effective community sponsorship and management. In each case, control was given to private sector profit-making rental agents to manage the housing in a professional, cost-effective fashion. As the federal government withdrew, the private sector was the only apparent alternative for the ownership and management of the housing. The effect for site residents, not unlike the experience in the earlier urban renewal program, was to price the new housing in their area out of their reach.

There appears, then, to have been a continuation of the "inner contradictions" (Friedman, 1968:170-171) in federal housing programs. The federal experiment in community sponsored housing appears to have been flawed in two major respects. First, there was little consideration given to designing a method for the long-term participation of community groups in the management of housing. The programs insured co-sponsors against liability, provided a fixed rate of profit for banks, architects, and construction firms, but failed to offer any protection or support for community groups. Little consideration seems to have been given to the consequences of increased scale or the desire of local groups to share in the technical aspects of planning.

The policy was also flawed in that it subordinated "the needs of the housing consumer to the interests of the housing producer" (Solomon, 1974:2). Site residents could not afford to live in the housing built in their area. The tension, and

contradiction, between the goals of housing production and social welfare are clearly revealed in the cases of UPACA and WVC. This tension, it should be added, also characterized the experiment in maximum feasible participation in the War on Poverty (Marris and Rein, 1967; Rose, 1972).

In the end, neither community groups nor bureaucrats had the capacity to resolve the contradictions and inefficiencies which were inherent in the structure and funding of programs of housing reform. There was no community of interests built into either the design or the administration, of urban redevelopment programs. In this case, as in others, the final effect was to blame the loser for the failure of a program which had never been designed in a way that could succeed.

Footnotes

1. The research for the UPACA case began in 1971 using methods of participant observation, in-depth interviews with over fifty of the major actors, and a variety of documentary sources including minutes of meetings, correspondence, and agency reports. The research ended in 1976, and was made possible through the cooperation of the directors of UPACA's housing and community action programs. Funding for the research included a grant from the Center for Studies of Metropolitan Problems of NIMH (No. 1 RO 3 MH 22621).

The research for the West Village case began in 1973 and continued through 1976. The principal methods of research were in-depth interviews of community activists, professional consultants, and agency officials as well as the use of administrative records and newspaper reports.

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