

Planning Chicago's Public Housing
A Case Study Evaluation of the Plan for Transformation

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THESIS

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Anna Bachman, champion of affordable housing and dear friend.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
CHA	Chicago Housing Authority
HOPE VI	Homeownership Opportunities for People Everywhere
HUD	United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
LAC	local advisory council
MPC	Metropolitan Planning Council
MTW	Moving to Work agreement
OCRA	Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions and Appropriations Act
PFT	Plan for Transformation
PHA	public housing authority
QHWRA	Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act

SUMMARY

An evaluation of the planning process for the plan for transformation was conducted through a case study constructed from primary source materials, journalistic material and published literature. In order to evaluate the results of the study, a theoretical framework was established to determine a best practices approach for planning epistemology and planning theory. The case presents the planning process as it was faced with challenges from the introduction of neoliberal housing policies, competing interests and the extent to which the CHA followed a planning process that benefitted its residents. The results examine the power relations between HUD and the CHA and the CHA and residents to determine whether the relationship could be characterized as an exchange of power or force and the implications for this theoretical analysis in future planning projects.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. **Background**

The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) was founded on values of egalitarian housing opportunity, racial equity and desegregation (Hunt, 2009). Testimony from the early residents of Chicago public housing were filled with praise for the quality of the housing and that it supported positive social structures in the neighborhoods (Hunt, 2009). For the CHA, its early public housing developments in the 1930's were successful at providing housing to low-income residents with the intent to move into the middle-class (Hunt, 2009). However, as successful as the CHA began, tracing the history of the CHA shows several historical turns that provide context for the topic of this research paper.

In 1966, the Chicago Housing Authority was the defendant in one of the most significant public housing decisions of the decade. On behalf of resident Dorothy Gatreaux and more than forty thousand African-American families who were applicants of CHA public housing, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed suit against the CHA for systematic and illegal segregation (Gatreaux, 1974; Rubinowitz, 2000). After several rounds of litigation, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of Gatreaux, in finding that the CHA violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964 on the grounds of racial discrimination. The implication of this decision meant that a public housing authority, regulated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), was guilty of intentionally building public housing in areas with high concentration of poor minorities with the intent of class and race segregation (Rubinowitz, 2000). As a result, Judge Richard B. Austin ordered the CHA to comply with the Gatreaux program where

lawsuit plaintiffs were given rent certificates to relocate within Chicago and in the surrounding suburbs. After *Gatreaux v. Chicago Housing Authority* and the implementation of the Gatreaux program, the CHA officially came under widespread public scrutiny (Hunt, 2006).

While this paper is not a study of the Gatreaux program, this is but one example of the disastrous history of the CHA and how the failure of leadership exacerbated existing problems which carried into the future. Before and during the lawsuit, the CHA was providing a necessary public service by providing low-cost housing; however, the intent of promoting the public good was castaway while members within the CHA tried to advance their political careers. This, in conjunction with aldermen, always on the verge of reelection, prevented public housing from developing within their wards (Hunt, 2009). In the end, political posturing won at the expense of CHA residents. After the turbulent 1970s, CHA management was unable to rebound from its recent failure. As management struggled to regain control of the organization, residents were subjected to dangerous living conditions. In Chicago's public housing, the abuse came from two sources: at the hands of other residents through gunfire, gang violence in public spaces, drug dealing, violence against women, and abuse at the hands of the CHA through broken elevators in high-rise buildings, garbage chutes filled up to the top floors, loss of heat, infested apartments, dark hallways, leaky roofs, and broken plumbing (Hunt, 2009). Such conditions were not limited to a few high-rises—they were the norm for most Chicago public housing.

Early CHA struggles mirrored the dramatic changes in public housing across the nation. In response to conflicts surrounding the divide of race and class and public

regulation versus private market discipline, HUD acknowledged this and sought to change the landscape of public housing (Wyly & Hammel, 2000). In 1998, legislation was passed to provide federal support for public housing revitalization. Under this program, Chicago's public housing would become a laboratory to examine public housing change in a city defined by a legacy of sharply divided neighborhoods and entrepreneurial elites (Wyly & Hammel, 2000).

B. Statement of the Problem

In 2000, under the watch of Mayor Richard M. Daley, the plan for transformation was made an official proposal for public housing redevelopment. This planning document aimed to address slum-like conditions that residents endured by rehabilitating or redeveloping the entire stock of public housing in Chicago (Chicago Housing Authority, 2000). Considered to be the most ambitious and large scale redevelopment of public housing in the United States, the plan proposed to bulldoze the housing stock that did not pass the condition test mandated from Congress and to build anew in the footprint of the original buildings. Unlike prior public housing plans, the plan for transformation would include a variety of mixed-use and mixed-income buildings. Under the authority of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the plan was funded through a five-year budget under the Moving to Work (MTW) agreement. Prior to the plan for transformation, the CHA owned and managed 38,000 public housing units. An important detail to the plan was that it would not be a one-to-one ratio of demolished units to rebuilt or rehabilitated units. In fact, the plan could not account for 13,000 units, essentially displacing 6,000 households by sending them into the private housing market with Section 8 rental vouchers (Chicago Housing Authority,

2000). Since its presentation in 2000, the plan has since been updated through several versions and in 2012 was renamed to the Plan for Transformation: Plan Forward. For the purposes of this paper, the original plan for transformation, as it was developed and presented in 2000, will be the focal point for analysis. At the time of conducting this research, the Plan for Transformation: Plan Forward is scheduled to be completed in 2015.

In the case of the CHA, the plan was a way to reacquaint itself with the new world of public-private partnerships and to receive capital for redevelopment from the financial market and private developers. For planners, the introduction of private market forces and the need to satisfy both investors and stakeholders challenges traditional planning activities. It asks planners to reconsider for whom the plan is constructed.

The act of planning, as defined by Patsy Healey (2006) is “a practice that is not merely concerned with managing existing relations but with imagining and opening up future potentialities for improving the conditions of daily life existence and enrichment for humans in their coexistence with each other and the rest of the animate and inanimate world.” (p. 10)

In the planning profession, the need to effectively address problems demand that practitioners develop and execute robust decision making. Without such a process, problems increasing in complexity, spanning across time and space, culminate into the clash of colocation of activities (Healey, 2009) and challenge the ability to achieve any goal. When plans involve financial bodies it challenges the traditional goal of planning that it should focus on the needs of the stakeholders. By allowing private capital influence into public housing development, this complicates the process of planning by introducing the need for profit and shifts focus away from non-financial stakeholders. To plan the transformation of public housing, simple problem solving skills are not sufficient

to address problems at the scale of an entire city and across several governing bodies. This calls for a new analysis of planning that can balance financial influence with the needs of stakeholders.

C. **Purpose of the Study**

The plan for transformation was developed under the auspices of market capitalism and a dream that Chicago could dramatically change public housing. Lured by the promise of privatization and efficiency, the CHA transformed itself from former slumlord into the largest housing developer in Chicago. This research paper presents a case study of the Chicago Housing Authority plan for transformation and analyzes the planning process as an activity influenced by power, ideology and neoliberal market practices. After reviewing the literature on both the plan and the organization that administers the plan, I argue that historically, the Chicago Housing Authority followed the “branch” method of the rational comprehensive model of planning (Lindblom, 1959). However, little is known about the about the CHA’s approach after drastic organizational changes across the past three decades. The review of the literature reveals that theoretical analysis of the planning process has not yet been published. This could be explained by the relative unimportance of a plan still in progress or that theoretical analysis is not highly valued but I argue that such a theoretical analysis offers the field a more conscious and necessary understanding of the key assumptions that shape the reality of public housing in Chicago (Dalton, 1986). In this case, the planning process, which had a critical impact in determining the availability of housing for 30,000 Chicago households who may otherwise face worse living conditions or homelessness, requires attention and deep analysis.

D. **Significance of the Study**

In December, I had an encounter with a formerly homeless woman. She was bundled up in everything she owned and looked to be my age. Initially, she approached me asking for any change I might have but—I am not sure why—decided that I looked like a person with whom she could share intimate details of her life in extreme poverty. Most of the conversation consisted of her describing the struggle of providing for herself and a small child while she waits for space in public housing. I nodded and added polite phrases where I could. I considered walking away but I let her tell me her story because I was transfixed by the strangeness of the situation and of my own curiosity about a life about which I had only read in class assignments. I mention this story because this encounter happened while on my way home from planning school. In the classroom, her story is merely an abstraction of poverty or the result of a neoliberal policy decision but the reality of her situation represents the wicked problems (Rittel & Webber, 1973) that planners address.

My research works under the assumption that during the planning process, planners attempt to address difficult, abstract issues with concrete action but consideration for the human impact of planning becomes an afterthought after several rounds of negotiation, politicking, power plays and pressure to meet financial constraints. Financial constraints come in two forms: first, in the form of funding or rules governing funding and second, pressure to adapt to neoliberal market practices. My encounter served as a reminder to myself that city and government organization are given the power to shape the reality of housing and that their success or failure at

planning is important to examine, as their implications affect the development of future generations.

II. RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Public housing in Chicago is a critical issue for current and future planners to address. In order to understand how this can be improved upon in the future, the literature review begins at the question of knowledge and the assumptions upon which planners rely to guide their conception of a good plan. For this paper, the epistemology of planning will be the starting point to frame the question of good planning. The second theme addressed is the literature surrounding the modern applications of planning theory and finally, the third theme focuses on the literature surrounding the plan for transformation and the Chicago Housing Authority. The examination of these three themes, through the plan for transformation, form a layer cake where philosophical underpinnings frame the modern planning process can be revealed.

A. **Planning Epistemology**

Epistemology is defined as “the theory of knowledge, concerned with how we know what we do, what justifies us in believing what we do, and what standard of evidence we should use in seeking truths about the world and human experience” (Audi, 1998). Emerging from the 1960’s, two views of city planning were prominent: planning focused on the space as an object and planning focused on the process (Taylor, 1998). These views are different because planning the space as an object orients the planner to consider planning towards a goal. Focus over planning as a process does not necessitate any aspiration outside of following what is considered to be a ‘good’ process (Taylor, 1998).

For the purpose of this paper, the research will focus on the more dominant theory in the United States—the rational planning model. In the 1950's the rational planning model dominated because it offered sound reasoning by which decisions for large scale planning projects could be justified (Hoch, 2011). In the literature base, two works that describe the mechanics of planning have informed decades of planners on the general formulation of the planning process: Banfield's "Ends and Means in Planning" (1959) and Lindblom's "The Science of Muddling Through" (1959). These works are the focus because of their prominence in the literature and their explanatory power in planning epistemology.

First, what is rational planning? Banfield (1959) writes that rational planning is "the process by which he selects a course of action (a set of means) for the attainment of his ends". Lindblom agrees with Banfield's definition, but expands it to include a less formalized method of planning through the "root and branch" approach to planning. The "root" method, having been established in the literature of decision-making and planning, is known for its sense of rationality (Lindblom, 1959). Lindblom explains that human's fascination with rational decision making, emphasized through math formulae, statistics and systems analysis, calls for an epistemology influenced by logic and quantification of value. The "branch" method is described as one in which the decision-maker ignores ranking values or spending a great amount of time on assigning the utility of each value. Instead, this process is quick to reestablish a new plan of action depending on the opportunity to achieve one value in particular. Readers may be interested to find that it is not the highly-rational, quantifiable process that Lindblom calls as the more useful of the two methods. Essentially, he scrutinizes the limits of human

intellectual capabilities as they apply to the “root” method. The epistemological value of his argument brings to light a new understanding of the planning process. Rather than placing more emphasis on a method of planning focused on abstract assignments of value, he argues that political problems are only addressed through increments, and thus, a wise planner should acknowledge that achieving planning goals only occurs in increments.

Banfield (1959) offers a similar perspective on the logical structure of planning but differs in that his focus is over rationality and what constitutes a rational choice in planning. However, “good” planning is achieved if the means are likely to be attained and rationality is the best vessel in which the means will be achieved. It is important to note that while Lindblom (1959) and Banfield (1959) both are interested in the epistemology of planning, Banfield describes the “root” method while Lindblom focused on the success of the “branch” method. In fact, the definition of a rational decision from Banfield can be summed as “one in which alternatives and consequences are considered as fully as the decision-maker, given the time and other resources available to him, can afford to consider them” (1959). As an example of rational plan making, he studied the Chicago Housing Authority, which at the time was noted to be one of the best administered housing agencies in the nation. However, it was found that the Chicago Housing Authority did not follow anything that resembled a rational planning process and its decision-making body was not in consensus on what goals should be pursued. Furthermore, it was found that certain influences that should not be considered in any rational process were highly politicized and used as leverage in the CHA planning process.

Banfield concludes that the field would benefit if a series of case studies on organizations were conducted in order to better understand the intersection of rationality and plan making. Despite the prevalence of the rational comprehensive model, several scholars write that the model has been discredited (Hoch, 2011) and it is most criticized for its lack of describing the goals of planning or the substance of plans (Taylor, 1998). Therefore, it should be viewed with skepticism because it cannot inform planners of a good planning goal, but is singularly concerned that a goal is achieved by means of a rational process. The literature surrounding rational planning only points towards deeper questions about the dissonance between developing an airtight planning process and the external factors that may pressure and influence change in the planning process.

B. **Modern Planning Theory**

The second theme identified in the literature review are modern extensions of planning epistemology. Specifically, this body of literature acknowledges that planning—no matter how rational—will be challenged by external forces. Produced decades after the scholarly focus on rational planning, this literature was developed in response to the weakness of rational planning. This body of literature drew upon Banfield and Lindblom for their framing of planning epistemology but take the analysis further to describe goals of good planning. To begin, this literature assumes that there exists a disconnect between planning theory and the practice of planning and that this gap should be examined.

John Friedmann (2008) acknowledges that practicing planners work under the assumption that theory is irrelevant and more practical experience is valuable. As a theorist he argues that practicing planners should concern themselves with planning

epistemology. He refutes the belief that theory does not matter in three parts; first, by arguing that planning theory informs planners of humanist beliefs that guide their work; second, it helps them adapt to future challenges in terms of scale and complexity; last, it allows planners to borrow concepts from other fields to be used in planning. By inviting in theories from other fields, this strengthens otherwise weak planning practices. Most important, his argument frames the epistemological importance of planning as it assumes a human-centered framework for future development. Modern planning theorists such as Friedmann are unabashed in their arguments that the decision-making process required by planning is not a purely scientific activity and excluded from persuasion or external factors (2003). Furthermore, planning should be less objective—planners should assume values that will benefit the greater good (Friedmann, 2003). In essence, the model of planning used in most forms of rational-decision making is outdated and a new epistemology between planning and actions must become more mainstream.

Friedmann acknowledges that in addition to a robust decision-making process, there are other values and practices that planners should consider. One such value that Friedmann acknowledges is pragmatic planning. Pragmatic planning is more concerned with the application of context and practical effects of language, history and culture more so than following the strict methodology of rational planning (Hoch, 2002). Verma (1996) questions the possibility that rational plan making and pragmatism can be integrated. For the purpose of this paper, the ongoing question of pragmatic planning (Hoch, 2011; Healey, 2009) falls outside the scope of this study but should be mentioned as an alternative theory that works to address the shortcomings of the

rational model. The literature surrounding the scientific process in planning (Lindblom, 1959) is extended into the modern age with “Scientific Reasoning and Methods in Urban Planning” (Kim, 2013). Both Kim and Friedmann note that in the Information Age, planning theory can contribute to better methods of planning when more information is available to aid the decision-making process but that it should not be the guiding force for plan making. Following a scientific process is beneficial but Kim stresses that frequent reevaluation of the method and the philosophical underpinnings guiding the plan is necessary (2013). Regardless of what philosophical assumptions guide planners, they must act in “real time” against the pressures of deadlines and public expectations (Friedmann, 2008). The literature base for planning epistemology concludes that good plans, at their core, focus on a sustainable future for humans and that the rigor of its guiding theory will be tested as the reality of the planning situation unfolds and the plans are challenged. Good plans are made when, in the face of power, they keep their integrity and never lose focus of achieving goals that benefit stakeholders.

D. Public Housing Transformation

The final theme is literature surrounding public housing transformation. HOPE VI, or Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere, was a HUD program that designated \$5 billion dollars for public housing authorities to bid upon with few restrictions on how the money should be spent (Cisneros & Engdahl, 2009). The HOPE VI program is the starting point for analyzing public housing transformation because this shaped the modern landscape for all public housing authorities but specifically, was the catalyst for the plan for transformation in Chicago. Effective since 1993 but passed through

legislation and made into law in 1998, the original policy mandated that a one-to-one ratio would be enforced for the number of demolished units to rebuilt units (Cisneros & Engdahl, 2009). Due to political contention and disagreements about urban design and the debate between public housing high-rises in exchange for mid-rise and town-home style buildings, Congress later revoked the one-for-one replacement mandate in 1995. At its heart, the HOPE VI program had humble beginnings as a way for the legislature to utilize common goals as a starting point for public housing reform. As the program grew in popularity and influence, the scope of the project included providing increased social support to residents, it aspired to address issues surrounding social integration, and in a show of modernism, it mandated using principles of New Urbanism for housing design. Most important, it increased economic development opportunities for private businesses surrounding the new developments. What began as public housing support transformed, at least conceptually, into a full scale restructuring of national public housing (Cisneros & Engdahl, 2009).

On the policy level, HOPE VI was the federal answer to recognizing negative attitudes towards 'big government' and the looming crisis of public housing (Wyly & Hammel, 2000). In essence, HOPE VI became a handshake between public housing revitalization and private market activity (Wyly & Hammel, 2000).

Since 1992, each reiteration of the HOPE VI program shows its evolution through its changing priorities (Wyly & Hammel, 2000):

“eliminating the limit of number of units for demolition or revitalization (September 1994), suspending the one-to-one ratio of rebuilt to demolished units (July 1995), expanding program eligibility to all PHAs with troubled housing (April 1996), and strong encouragement to establish self-sufficiency programs, strict occupancy and eviction rules, and mixed-income sites (July 1996).” (p. 53)

Documenting the evolution of HOPE VI shows that the culmination of changes indicate an increased reliance on public market fixtures and the introduction of gentrification to address funding public housing revitalization. Wyly and Hammel (2000) analyze the connection between gentrification and HOPE VI program with the introduction of mixed-income housing. Specific to Chicago, they conducted a study evaluating property values and amount of investment from HOPE VI in which they found that “gentrification conditions the reinvention of assisted housing policy” (Wyly & Hammel, 2000).

A review of academic journals and published books reveals the literature base surrounding the CHA and the plan for transformation as a process is thinner than expected. Whether this is due to the fact that there is little to be studied about a plan projected to finish in 2015 or because the field chooses to study public housing projects elsewhere, the literature review reveals that there is more to learn about public housing in Chicago. *Blueprint for Disaster* (Hunt, 2009) recounts the history of the Chicago Housing Authority from its onset after the Great Depression to the plan for transformation’s progress in 2009. The housing authority has a history of mismanagement and corruption but noted by Banfield (1959) that around the time of his work, the CHA had been one of the most successful public housing organizations in the United States. Tracing the history of the CHA is important to tell the story of how a once successful agency turned into a failure. In the literature base, there are several works focused on the litigation of the Gatreaux case in the 1960s (Rubinowitz, 2000) where a class-action law suit was filed against the CHA, claiming it violated the Fair Housing Act of 1968. Losing the Gatreaux law suit was a slippery slope for the CHA. As it set the stage for the CHA, faced with high overhead costs and volatile living conditions for

residents in high-rises, to lose its ability to effectively manage its housing units (Bennett, Smith & Wright 2006). Rightfully so, the CHA came under the scrutiny of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and in 1995, was forced to relinquish its control of property management.

After 10 years of implementation, the report “Chicago Housing Authority’s Plan for Transformation: What Does the Research Show So Far” (Vale & Graves, 2010) provides a comprehensive overview of academic research, research conducted by independent institutes and some journalistic coverage of the plan. It is important to note that while this report is a valuable resource, much of the content focuses on topics outside the scope of this paper. For example, the majority of this report summarizes the quantitative and qualitative studies conducted on the effects of relocation on the families who lived in CHA housing (Vale & Graves, 2010; as cited in Venkatesh & Celimni 2004; Sullivan 2002). Their review of literature about the plan itself begins by explaining that most reports have contradictory findings. The report identifies that the conflicting results stem from the lack of consensus amongst researchers on key terms such as “neighborhood quality” and “self-sufficiency” (Vale & Graves, 2010).

The City of Chicago wanted to use the plan as a tool to reinvent public housing and reestablish control of the Chicago Housing Authority. However, HUD guidelines required that the planning process work under four external factors. First, housing authorities were required to submit annual and five-year housing plans; second, the city would assume control of the CHA on June 1, 1999; third, HUD mandated that the CHA develop mutually agreed upon benchmarks and performance metrics; last, 18,000 units of CHA housing would be demolished (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006). The four

conditions will later become a focal point for this paper as they relate to political and fiscal stipulations on the planning process.

In conclusion, the review of literature reveals that the literature base is particularly strong in its depth of researchers willing to ask difficult questions about sociological effects of the plan but there is significant room to conduct more theoretical analysis. In reference to the first theme in the literature—planning epistemology—planning theorists spent considerable time explaining how we make plans to address issues but there is a notable disconnect between planning theory and the practice of planning. Scholars are willing to produce theory about the practice of making plans and planners are skilled at making and analyzing plans, but in order to learn from the Plan for Transformation, the two approaches must be combined into a single study. As evidenced through the literature review, this analysis will be valuable for any planner wanting to examine public housing policy in Chicago and the practice of planning. As urged by Hoch (2011), this type of study attempts to bridge the gap between the theory and practice of planning. A more in-depth analysis of planning theory can inform planners and future policy decisions of the value of challenging planning assumptions that could be carried into the future.

E. **Conceptual Framework**

Planners are experts and advisors, yet they must be aware that their advice has political implications. One way that this is recognized is through the feasibility analysis that planners conduct to determine which organizations or individuals might oppose or support some aspects of the plan. This practical analysis is merely a check on how likely certain goals will be attained but this speaks to the fact that planners tread lightly

in the face of political opposition and authority. In an attempt to bridge the gap between planning and the use of power resources, I begin this analysis with the work of Foucault. His theory and analysis of power is of special significance to planning because he challenges the assumption that good plans will prevail because they are reasonable and well intentioned. To specify, this examination of power will not focus on the disciplinary aspect of disembodied power that Foucault describes through his example of the panopticon in *Discipline and Punish* (1977). Rather, he specifies that the body of power in question for the individual is the ability to enforce change or to promote behavior that otherwise they would not have done (1977). Furthermore, Foucault makes the distinction between discursive and juridical-discursive power to differentiate between power assumed from the rule of law and power exerted as a means of control.

In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault (1978) wrote:

The analysis [of power] should not attempt to consider power from its internal point of view and...should refrain from posing the labyrinthine and unanswerable question: "Who then has power and what has he in mind? What is the aim of someone who possesses power? Instead, it is a case of studying power at the point where its intention, if it has one, is completely invested in its real and effective practices. (p. 97)

Working under the assumption that power is relational in nature, Foucault warns readers that the examination of power relations is merely a starting point to uncover the intent of the power. The significance of including Foucault as a starting point of the examination of power is to remind readers that planning is not an activity excluded from coercive power relations.

To give some context, an avenue through which planning is coopted through power is through the seduction of neoliberal economic policy and the rhetoric of

economic independence (Giroux, 2006). In an attempt to appeal to common sense or to the pragmatic nature of planners, the rhetoric of neoliberalism allows the financial elite to mask structures of inequality and power relations by constructing a reality of self-reliance. In essence, this practice pushes the burden of social problems onto the economically marginalized poor which disproportionately affects minorities of color, women and young people (Giroux, 2006). Market fundamentalism works to trivialize democracy through its focus of the accumulation of capital and the power paired with capital. As evidenced through the power of the financially elite who have enough capital to lobby for their needs, those without power resources are ignored and blamed for their lack of entrepreneurial success. Without acknowledging the potential for neoliberalism to be used as a power resource in pedagogical spaces and its implication for planning the use of public goods, the public sphere will continue to suffer autocracy (Giroux, 2006).

Planning theorists have developed the theory of communicative planning to address the need for a theory that concerns itself with democratic planning practices. Based upon the work of Jurgen Habermas, communicative theory plays a critical role in shaping the framework for the analysis of power in planning. Planning in its essence is an activity that is not insularly focused on the pedagogical value of a new development plan. Instead, it must take into account theoretical validity, balance this with concrete goals that will benefit the community and facilitate the negotiation of terms between competing interests (Forester, 1999). Because the planner is pulled in several simultaneous directions, a robust theory of planning acknowledges that the activity must be practical, empirically fitting and ethical (Forester, 1999). The communicative theory

of planning explains that merely to do an action is inadequate to fully communicate every intention upon which it was based. By failing to fully communicate the action, we lose the ability to “challenge, criticize, announce, expose, threaten, predict, promise, encourage, explain, insulate, forgive, present, recommend and warn” (Forester, 1999). Most important, the act of planning should be ‘meaningful’ in that it must make sense to others. Whether this invites in the appeal of market fundamentalism in a culture focused on capital accumulation, this is to be determined by the individual planner. In this sense, the overt action or inaction on the part of the planner has communicative implications.

On the relevance of the communicative theory and the power of planning, Forester writes, “Planners and analysts often do recognize their power as closely tied to ‘the politics of information’. They have information—or access to it—that others need, and they have some influence in the politics of the planning and the policy process as a result” (1999). By having the technical training and expertise, the planner has the power to shape the reality of the situation and thus, the actions taken in the planning activity. Habermas acknowledges that power, ideology and organization challenge the ability of the planner to perform communicative action. The ideal speech situation is absent of coercion but the ability of the planner to both recognize and challenge distorted communication becomes the basis for democratic and ethical planning.

At the heart of communicative theory, Healey identifies that “multiple conflicts over changes to local environments are critical preoccupations of local social and political life” and planners who must manage these conflicting interests are simultaneously blamed and praised as guardians of the public good and heralds of the future (2006). How then is a planner to challenge distorted communication under

pressure of social expectations? Healey identifies one distortion as the influx of neoliberal policy activism through the increasing number of economists involved in policy analysis, and in particular, developing metrics to measure policy efficiency. The preoccupation with 'efficiency' as the favored indicator of policy effectiveness is seen as a reassertion of instrumental rationality that intensifies her identification of neoliberal influence.

Reflecting upon the epistemology of planning, Healey indicates that communicative planning assumes that social processes are constructed by participants (2006). Thus, all forms of knowledge are socially constructed and this is imparted upon others through equally legitimate means of communication such as storytelling, rational analysis and expressive statements. She assumes that our focus on efficiency replaces effective communication of ideas with utility-maximizing models and 'cold' rationalism. In regards to the theory of Habermas, it is clear that Healey agrees with his theory that the epistemology for an individual is based on social interactions. In terms of public policy, ideas are debated and language, the medium for which discourse becomes interactive, fosters collective reasoning and mutual learning. The power dynamics of social life that dominates what others are encouraged to value are "invisible and deeply ingrained in our social practices and modes of thought" (Healey, 2006). These structures act as frames for action. Politics, governed by structures of power and in place to determine the allocation of a good, are the deliberative effort to control the mechanisms for managing collective affairs. This is a persuasive activity where discourse is used as a tool to guide the action of a governmental agency. In this sense, policies have the ability to become thinly veiled power plays.

In criticism of the communicative theory of planning, the literature revisits Foucault and his analysis of power. The examination of power begins at acknowledging that power manifests itself in all areas of discourse (Flyvbjerg, 2004). Planning is an act completed through political maneuvers and discourse—a point which nearly all of the reviewed planning theorists acknowledge. However, few theorists, with the exception of Patsy Healey and John Forester and other communicative planners, so willingly acknowledge the infiltration of power in planning. However, in *Planning and Foucault*, Bent Flyvbjerg questions the communicative theory of planning for its inherent contradiction to the theory it posits and its failure to account for the preconditions for power relations amongst actors. He calls the act of acknowledging the lack of power relations analysis “the litmus test of a good planning theory”. Flyvbjerg uses the theory of Foucault as a counter-example to explain the contradictory nature of planning theories based on Habermas and ‘communicative rationality’. To those who may be concerned that Foucault’s theory is singularly focused on the coercion of power, Flyvbjerg argues that Foucault is an important but underutilized theorist for planning because he calls for the analysis of power and rationality that can be used to empower a democratic society.

Despite the coercive nature of power, Foucault discusses how power has the ability to be used for producing results against competing interests. He explains that the weakness of Habermas’ argument and those who rely on this theory is that by assuming that power structures in the status quo are conducive for effective planning, misunderstand the nature of power and coercion. For example, Foucault challenges us to imagine the structure of power in a society if we ‘cut off the head of the king’, which

asks us to challenge dominant power structures. Habermas does not argue for the radical reimagining of power structures and instead pushes planners towards communicative rationality (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

The communicative theory of Habermas requires an idealists 'leap of faith' reminiscent of Kierkegaard in order to create a space where individuals can experience freedom of communication.¹ For this type of discourse to occur, Habermas assumes that 'consensus-seeking and freedom from domination' are present forces to establish a common normativity in human conversation (Flyvbjerg, 2006; as cited in Foucault, 1978). In contrast to normative ideal statements, Machiavelli, Nietzsche, Derrida and Foucault all frame human nature and dialect to be influenced and subjugated by dominant power structures. Without being more critical of the preconditions for discourse, the ethic at which Habermas arrives is that the communicative theory is a product of power, rather than excluded from power. In fact, Foucault directly addressed Habermas: "The problem is not of trying to dissolve [relations of power] in the utopia of a perfectly transparent communication, but to give...the rules of law, the techniques of management, and also the ethics...which would allow these games of power to be played with a minimum of domination" (Flyvbjerg, 1998).

In the debate between Foucault and Habermas, Habermas' work is coopted by Foucault's argument that power is always present in discourse. Flyvbjerg's critical analysis of the Aalborg, Denmark city plan directly addresses Foucault's criticism of Habermas by acknowledging that the planning situation reinforces "the rules of law, the

¹ See Flyvbjerg (2004) for a more in depth discussion of Habermas and his conception of the 'leap of faith'. In this context, the Kierkegaardian leap of faith is a commitment to truth-seeking with no guarantee of success.

techniques of management, and also the ethics which would allow these games of power to be played with a minimum of domination” (Flyvbjerg, 1998; as cited in Foucault, 1978).

To further the examination of power in planning, Flyvbjerg’s *Rationality and Power* (1998) describes the planning process for the Aalborg Project, a plan introducing autobus public transit and access for automobiles to a historic Danish city. The level of detail for this analysis of the plan includes interviews with city officials, the media and original documents from different iterations of the plan. *Rationality and Power* frames the project in terms of power relations and critical theory. By recreating the planning process in a narrative format, Flyvbjerg focuses on the complicated nature of plans and the political will behind planning decisions. The power dynamics distinguish the relationships between planners, city officials and the opposition to the plan described in terms of “the will to power” from Nietzsche and presents the planning results as a product of power.²

Flyvbjerg explores the active power relations between decision making and planning and that even rationality, or rather, the rationalization of an activity is not independent of power relations. Moreover, the intrusion of market dominance in the rationalization of plans point towards Flyvbjerg’s most assured point: whomever controls the budget controls the plan. Following this line of reasoning, this work traces the support of the city council and alderman and analyzes the plan as a product of relational power. A specific instance of relational power is a previously supported 25 to 1 decision

² In this context, Flyvbjerg (1998) describes the will to power as the psychological desire to bring others under one’s power.

that was reneged upon and abandoned in the face of opposition. This work establishes a framework for evaluating the plan for transformation through the lens of critical theory and analyzing power relations.

In *The Politics of Urban Planning*, William C. Johnson (1989) further describes the power relations between parties involved in a planning activity. Through a power map, the roles of each player can be defined and used to gauge expectations about actions taken during the planning process. Unlike a game theory model where expectations are based upon logical assumptions about a player's rational behavior under certain circumstances, the power map already assumes the coercive nature of power and its ability to influence the decision making of others based on irrational reasoning. He describes influence in the planning process that occurs out of the fear of losing a value and institutionalized influence over another actor. He frames power as such that it is a combination of "resources, skills, knowledge, and contacts" that are used to accomplish one's purpose against opposition (1989).

Johnson uses three case studies to highlight three different power structures within planning: elitism, pluralism and 'street-fighting pluralism'. Although power structures are useful as systematic explanations of behavior and goal achievement in the planning process, he stresses the importance of coalition building and the necessity of public-private partnerships. Power is diffuse, and coalitions form, reform, reveal and conceal themselves in several instances in a complex planning process. Thus, to examine power, it is important to note "who initiated the project, whose initial terms prevailed, and who gained the most from it in financial or political goods" (Johnson, 1989).

The specific examination of power in planning and the plan for transformation traces the history of federal government 'devolution' from Nixon to subsequent presidential administrations and the neoliberal influence—or demand for increased efficiency—that had a marked influence on federal policies towards housing programs (Smith, 2000). Specifically, governmental devolution includes relinquished control of federal policy implementation to individual localities while providing less program funding. The economic rationality behind devolution is attractive due to its promise of increased efficiency in public policy. The key to understanding devolution is that it has been a policy framework for the past few decades regardless of the political affiliation of the administration. Essentially, the same policy is repackaged in different ways through party rhetoric and the allure of reducing the image of government bureaucracy. For example, every presidential administration from Nixon to Clinton used similar logic to devolve federal control over housing. Whether it was called the revival of federalism from the Nixon administration or '*new new federalism*' under the Clinton administration, it was enacted assuming that reducing federal involvement in program implementation while simultaneously increasing the local government's responsibility for implementation is more beneficial than increased federal control. Smith poses the question of whether devolution is beneficial considering that it ignores systemic problems such as racial discrimination and housing market conditions that cannot be changed at the local level (2000).

Considering the history of racial segregation and discrimination against Section 8 voucher holders in the Chicago housing market, tenants are forced to navigate a tight rental market only to find that the available Section 8 rental units were substandard and

the promise of freedom to choose a unit anywhere in Chicago was false. Smith raises the question as to whether local control exists or if it is only the illusion of control presented to localities. In addition, the reality of market conditions for those who reside in public housing are masked behind the rhetoric of neoliberal economic policies that promote “choice”. Substandard housing conditions for public housing residents and the denial of freedom of mobility in Chicago was invisible to policy makers who assumed the markets to be equitable to all actors.

In summary, the conceptual framework developed establishes what will be used in Chapter 5 as a lens to analyze the planning process. The framework begins with a discussion of power and communicative planning theory. The communicative theory acknowledges that power and ideology affect the ability of planners to practice communicative planning. Habermas argues that acknowledging such influences is the first step to overcoming distorted communication and establishing the basis for democratic planning. Foucault agrees that power is a precondition to discourse but contends that without challenging the precondition of power in discourse, communication is a product of power. Understanding that planning involves distorted communication, power and the influence of neoliberalism, the forces shaping public housing in Chicago should be evaluated to understand the plan as a product of power. By observing the planning process for the Plan for Transformation, planners gain new insight into the forces that shape the outcome of plans and whether the planning process was focused on meeting goals that would benefit stakeholders. The structure of analysis begins by examining relational power at the federal level through HUD and the

HOPE VI program and the CHA. The analysis continues from broad institutional power to the relationship between the CHA and residents.

III. METHODS

A. Research Design

Compared to other social science research, planning differs because there exists a unique divide between planning theory and the practice of planning. Dandekar (2005) argues that research that follows a qualitative methodology is more easily applied to address that junction. A case study approach offers researchers more utility in analyzing a plan because it emphasizes analysis from primary source material. Utilizing primary source material opens researches to more than one explanation for the resulting plan. Baxter (2008) defines a qualitative case study as an approach to research which explores a specific phenomenon within its context by using a mix of data sources. Specifically, this approach evaluates the case through a variety of lenses, possibly granting the researcher more understanding than by using one data source alone (Baxter, 2008). Case studies are more appropriate for complex social issues where there is more than one interpretation for the phenomenon and the research questions focus on “how” or “why” the phenomenon occurred. I argue that the complexity of the planning for the plan for transformation warrants the use of the case study method.

The philosophy guiding the assumptions of the case study method stress that truth is relative and dependent on a subject’s perspective (Baxter, 2008). Using a case study to evaluate the plan for transformation allows for the researcher to better understand actor’s actions and to consider alternative views of reality for each complex interaction. By focusing on the plurality of different views and the context in which they appeared, we can better understand the guiding forces in the planning process.

The plan for transformation will be the unit of analysis for this paper, and specifically, the planning process will be the case. The definition of a case is “a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context” (Baxter, 2008; as cited in Miles & Huberman, 1994). In order to limit the scope of research for this paper, the case will be bounded by the time frame of the planning process and activity of planning. By placing this boundary it limits the scope of research to the planning process from 1996 until December 2001. While the plan for transformation was approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on February 6, 2000 (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006), plans for the redevelopment of certain existing housing units were accepted until 2001. Since planning activities continued past the plans approval, December 2001 is considered the first phase of the plan for transformation and determined to be the endpoint for analysis. Moreover, by placing this time limit on the case study, the study will exclude the ‘Plan for Transformation: Plan Forward’, as introduced in 2012 which warrants a whole separate analysis.

The research for this paper was conducted as a single, descriptive case study. Yin (2012) defines a descriptive case study as one that a researcher would use to describe a phenomenon within the context in which it occurred. The framework of the case study is seen in Figure 1.

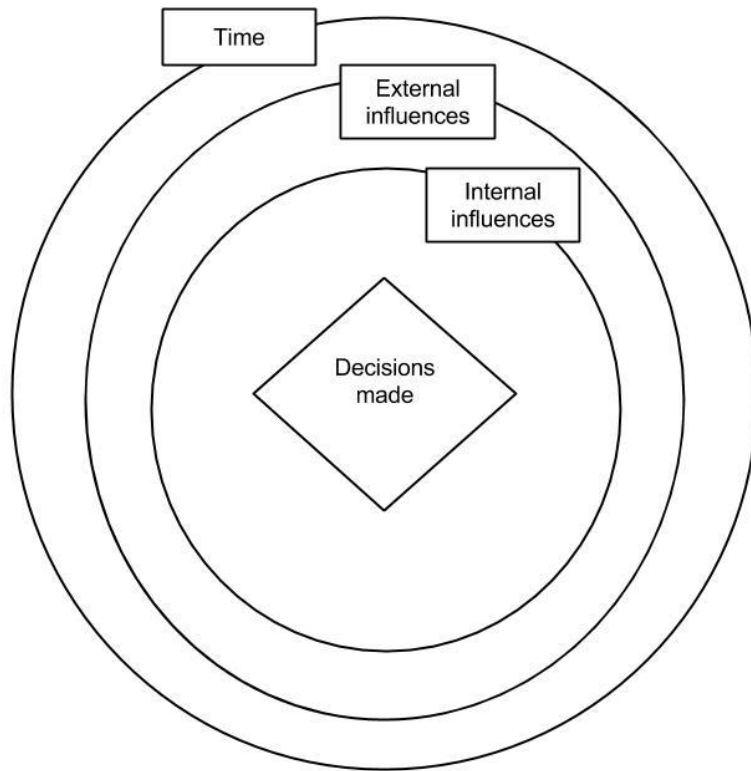


Figure 1. Research Design Framework of the Plan for Transformation Case Study.³

The diagram introduces a framework for the factors that influence the planning activity: time constraints, external and internal influences (Baxter, 2008). Through the literature review, internal and external factors have been identified as political ideological leanings, fiscal constraints and federal requirements from HUD. This framework is important to acknowledge because it serves as a guiding structure for the case study and limits research that may fall outside the boundary of the study. Moreover, it provides a structure for the final report for the study and serves as a starting point for research with the primary source data (Baxter, 2008).

³ Author, based on literature review.

In regards to data collection, the ideal research plan for this case study would include interviewing those who were involved in the planning process in order to triangulate results between primary source material and lived experiences. However, there are several obstacles to this. Namely, the planning process occurred in the late 1990s and the CHA has since reduced its staff from 2,300 employees to fewer than 1,000 (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006). Due to the confidential nature of employment records, identifying and contacting those employees may prove to be difficult. Because interviewing those who were originally involved in the planning process is unlikely, this study will not involve interviewing any human subjects. Instead, the data for the study will consist of published public documents including news coverage, testimony collected at CHA meetings, archival records, drafts of the plan, comments on the plan drafts, and the final planning product.

B. Framework

The framework for analyzing the power structure of the plan was developed from material in the review of literature. The literature specified that charting power relations in a map could be useful to visualize the structure of power in place and to give an illustration of key relationships. However, power relationships are constantly in flux, diffuse and sometimes hidden from plain sight. The representation of power relationships would be rendered through an interpretation of primary materials but without first-hand knowledge of the situations under which decisions were made the power map would lose legitimacy. Moreover, a two-dimensional map loses its ability to depict the complicated nature of coalitions who agree on some level, but disagree fundamentally. Recognizing that coalition building is a large part of power relations, that

power is diffuse, in flux and sometimes hidden from plain sight, any temporary relationship would be difficult to show in a chart due to their sometimes conflicting nature since any representation of power would be for one static moment in time for one situation. In light of this, the results are organized in a structure that begins with examining the relationship at the most broad level—institutionalized power structures—and works down towards power resources exerted between organizations and individuals.

IV. ANALYSIS

To examine where power was exercised in planning the transformation of Chicago Housing Authority housing, a review of literature surrounding the development of the plan, documents from the planning process and other primary source material are used to analyze planning decisions and to examine the relations between actors. The focus for this section is the reality of the transformation, rather than the ideal. The results of the plan are understood to be a relationship of power between the federal government and the CHA and between the CHA and the residents whose homes and lives were to be transformed.

A. **Institutional Power**

Institutional power begins at the HOPE VI program. HOPE VI served as one vessel for the juridical power that HUD exercised over the CHA to change the face of public housing and the initial funding source for the plan for transformation. The original program objectives of the HOPE VI program sought to improve living conditions for residents in public housing and to deconcentrate poverty (Goetz, 2013). Under political pressure in the 1990s, the program evolved from primarily supporting public housing rehabilitation into supporting increased demolition (Goetz, 2013). Part of this evolution was from shifting public attitudes towards 'big government' programs and the Republican congressional majority threatening to dismantle HUD. From the HUD takeover of the CHA in 1995, to the city assuming local control of the CHA in 1999, there were three distinct legislative changes that shaped the direction of HOPE VI and the plan for transformation.

In 1996, the U.S. Congress passed the Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions and Appropriations Act (OCRA) in which one section specified that public housing authorities were required to analyze their public housing stock under a viability assessment. The viability assessment was a cost test where the comparison of cost of revitalization to the cost of providing tenants with Section 8 rental vouchers was examined. If a development with 300 or more housing units failed the cost test, OCRA required that public housing agencies issue Section 8 vouchers to residents or revitalize the distressed public housing developments. This legislation set the stage for increased demolitions and increased resident use of the Section 8 rental assistance program.

Realizing that public housing was in disrepair across the nation, 1997 marked a year that attitudes towards massive federal spending on failed housing development demanded a push to end support for public housing. In 1998, Congress passed the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act proposed to “deregulate PHAs, provide more flexible use of Federal assistance to PHAs, and facilitate mixed income communities” (Office of Public and Indian Housing, 1998). Through this act, the federal government sought to give more local control to PHAs and established that mixed income communities should become a priority for public housing redevelopment. Realizing that HUD would need to adapt to changes in federal attitudes in public housing to survive, HUD secretary Henry Cisneros supported the 1998 HOPE VI program and proposed his own radical changes to the tune of neoliberalism and local control.

When evaluating the HOPE VI program, Cisneros realized that the first order of the legislation—the demolition of distressed housing—would not be enough to correct

the systemic problems that plague public housing. In order to reinvent HUD into an agency with values that align with new public attitudes, Cisneros sought to introduce public capital into public housing funding. Cisneros mentions one of the partners of McCormack Baron Salazar was an influential private-market developer who offered practical analysis for using HOPE IV to attract private sector economic development (Cisneros & Engdahl, 2009). In addition, Mindy Turbov, a former HUD employee with ties to the original program that HOPE VI was based upon, was invited to advise in the financial innovation for HOPE VI. Both would later play large roles in developing and consultation over Chicago's public housing transformation. Cisneros described the process by which HUD officials and legislators recognized that new regulations and financial incentives were necessary for local housing authorities to make changes on the scale necessary (Cisneros & Engdahl, 2009). Cisneros pushed for the restructuring of HOPE VI to accommodate private sector capital opportunities that would force public housing agencies to utilize private market financing.

Using the rhetorical power of devolution and '*new new federalism*' (Smith, 2000), HUD reduced its responsibility for program implementation and success by giving more control to local PHAs. In essence, HOPE VI established less liability on the federal government to produce successful results in public housing and "By opening the door to leveraging federal public housing funds with private capital, the program gave local housing authorities, which manage public housing, greater control of their own destinies" (Cisneros & Engdahl, 2009). Whether local public housing authorities were able to raise enough capital to finance their project, that responsibility was no longer

federal. Instead, the responsibility to raise capital was pushed onto whomever needed the project to succeed.

In a letter to the editor of the Chicago Tribune, Jane Ramsey, executive director of the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs wrote “The privatization rhetoric states that the private market will better handle the function failed by the CHA. Yet the only thing we can be certain of is that the private entities will turn a profit. The door then opens for politically connected firms to feed at the public trough with no accountability or commitment to serving the public good” (Ramsey, 1999). Her view of the planning process as one that benefits contractors and developers who are politically connected to the CHA was not solitary. Several vocal members of the community shared similar views to the level of political influences involved in implementing the plan. From this, we must ask who gained from public housing transformation. To examine this, it is important to first undercover the structure of the program to understand what juridical-discursive power, or legal limits prevent or support gain.

B. Moving to Work Agreement

In 2000, HUD approved the CHA for the Moving to Work agreement in an unprecedented show of generosity. In an attempt to point out that this was uncharacteristic, the Chicago Tribune reported that “The financial flexibility HUD has given CHA under the plan is remarkable given that only 29 other housing authorities in the nation have obtained anything close to this kind of operating carte blanche. And those authorities—the largest of which is Seattle—were awarded that leeway because they were among the nation's top-performing housing agencies, something CHA has not been for some time, if ever” (Garza & Zajac, 2000). Historically, granting regulatory

waivers was reserved for the best performing housing agencies. In investigating this, it was found that little is required by the HUD to justify their decisions to the public. Whether HUD had changed their framework for evaluating regulatory waivers or whether there were forces outside the realm of public knowledge, this privilege given to the CHA raises questions of power and influence.

C. **Private Capital**

As part of the Moving to Work agreement, the CHA was approved to pursue bond financing to increase its redevelopment capital. In part from the \$1.4 billion dollar financing gap and in a show of modernity, the CHA was positioned to gain upwards of \$600 million dollars from issuing 15-year or 30-year bonds. Twenty-four New York bond underwriting companies were bidding to develop the bond borrowing plan. However, one of Wall Street's most aggressive financing firms, Lehman Brothers, was chosen to oversee the CHA bond project (Ruklick, 2000). In the past "behavior that led to rewards in the nation's entrepreneurial, capitalist system got punished in the public housing world" but HUD was interested in ushering in a new era of financing and capital raising (Cisneros & Engdahl, 2009). However, the CHA's history of corruption and failure raised doubts as to whether it would receive a high credit rating. After the CHA received approval to issue bonds, a spokesperson from Standard & Poor's remarked that the CHA will receive a favorable rating because Mayor Richard M. Daley was spearheading this initiative. In addition, it was noted that "it appears that Mayor Daley is running the CHA" (Ruklick, 2000). Because the CHA did receive a high credit rating, it appears that the support of the mayor lends enough political capital to a failed organization that the private financial world can overlook any past misgivings.

D. **Planning**

This section explores the planning process of the public housing transformation versus its perceived reality. The gap—if there is one—is revealed through examining what was promised and what was delivered. In Chapter 2, the theoretical ideal of planning, or communicative planning, explains that planners should be concerned with open dialogue, engaging stakeholders and fostering a democratic process and actively include these ideals in the planning process. The steps of the planning process include collecting and analyzing data, setting goals, identifying limitations, forming policies and strategies, providing alternatives, and developing a timeline for implementation (Flyvbjerg, 1998). A planning process that concerns itself with stakeholder participation and input would include additional planning efforts such as collecting public input on drafts of the plan, conducting surveys, holding public hearings for discussion, and making the plan available to read. When the planning process abandons democratic principles and does not engage residents in meaningful dialogue, this can be a form of power that furthers the interest of a few. The literature surrounding the planning process examines whether the CHA engaged residents, asked for meaningful input on the plan and ultimately whether the CHA used its power resources to meet the needs of its residents.

As noted on a resident notification document (personal communication, October 14, 1999), residents were encouraged to send their comments to the CHA Management, Analysis and Planning Department. In addition, residents were provided with a schedule of 24 public forums conducted across the next month. In November 1999, CHA and HUD officials agreed to extend the deadline for the plan in order to

evaluate public comments and reports released about the plan (Ruklick, 1999). Despite this effort at generating resident participation, reviewing primary source materials reveals conflicting details on whether the CHA efforts were genuine. Furthermore, public comment periods and resident input were mandated by HUD but public housing authorities were not required to respond to the input. Reverend Rodney Watkins of the Community Renewal Society was skeptical of the input that the CHA asked of residents. During the planning process, the plans presented to residents were already constructed and did not include the involvement of residents outside the bricks and mortar (Ruklick, 1999). This suggests that the CHA, even in an attempt to redeem its organizational reputation, still asserted its authority on personal choice.

However, during the planning process, the CHA was willing to accept advice from housing advocates. The Chicago Rehab Network, an independent affordable housing advocate, sent Terry Peterson, Chief Executive Officer of the CHA, a letter regarding the public comments on the revised October 2, 2000 version of the Plan for Transformation. On letterhead with the phrase “Community Empowerment and Development without Displacement” emblazoned across the bottom, Kevin Jackson, executive director of the Chicago Rehab Network, commended the CHA and its efforts at internal reform and taking steps towards better management (personal communication, November 14, 2000). During the public comment period for the original November 1999 plan, the Rehab Network advised the CHA on several recommendations regarding privatizing the property management, establishing a stronger relationship with the residents towards the new lease compliance efforts, and

resident empowerment. Most important, the CHA had adopted that tenants' rights section that the Rehab Network specifically proposed.

E. **Relocation**

In response to the Nixon administration initiative to decrease support for federal housing, the Section 8 rental voucher program was passed as part of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (Goetz, 2013). The intent of the Section 8 program was to decrease reliance on public housing high-rises by providing households with subsidized rent certificates to use in the local housing market (Goetz, 2013). In addition, the Section 8 voucher was a tool used to break up the concentration of poverty in areas surrounding public housing. In the 1980s, reliance on the Section 8 voucher program increased after widespread disinvestment in public housing across the nation. For public housing residents in Chicago, the CHA sought to increase the use of Section 8 vouchers to house residents during demolition and construction and as a permanent housing solution (Goetz, 2013).

The majority of news reports surrounding CHA relocation efforts suggest that the reality of resident's wishes clashed directly with the policies enacted by the CHA. In a survey conducted by the Nathalie P. Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement, the results were that "68 percent of 193 Taylor families did not rank Section 8 among their top three housing options" (Rogal, 1999). This was in direct conflict to surveys conducted by the CHA, that there was a consensus amongst Robert Taylor Homes residents that Section 8 was preferred by 85 to 95 percent of residents. When questioned on the methodology or asked to provide results, the CHA had no answer. The contradictory results raise several questions about the degree to

which the CHA valued resident's input in the planning process. Considering resident opposition to the Section 8 program and the reality of the planning process as one in which the CHA pressed ahead, this represents a disjunction between the ideal planning process and the CHA planning process.

Similar to the Section 8 program, the eviction policy established by the CHA left several residents and advocates to wonder whether the CHA was using evictions as a displacement tool (Rogal, 1998). From January 1, 1995 to August 31, 1998, under HUD leadership, the CHA evicted 1,003 families from the 13 developments that were to be redeveloped into mixed-income communities (Rogal, 1998). In addition, 355 families of mostly women and children were evicted from 10 developments that would not be redeveloped (Rogal, 1998). In accordance with the Universal Relocation Act, the CHA is obligated to provide relocation assistance—Section 8 rental vouchers—to residents evicted in good standing, but have no obligation to provide assistance to residents who do not meet the criteria to be in good standing. By constructing the image of an ideal resident as one who worked more than 30 hours a week and had no past-due rent, the CHA reserved the right to exclude its services to many residents. Rather than fight this exclusion, many residents disappeared without relocation assistance (Rogal, 1998).

An analysis of the planning process reveals that there was a concerning lack of interest from the CHA to maintain a transparent and democratic planning process. The view points from residents, as presented through the news media and other sources, reveals that they perceived the CHA as not genuinely interested in input from residents.

F. **Challenges to Power**

In November 1999, the Metropolitan Planning Council released “For Rent: Housing Options in the Chicago Region.” The study, conducted by the University of Illinois at Chicago, the Urban Institute and Applied Real Estate Analysis sought to provide a set of facts for policymakers, advocates and government officials to make informed decisions regarding the state of the Chicago region rental market. Set in three sections, the report analyzed the supply and demand of housing, qualitative data surrounding housing conditions as well as current and future market trends, followed by a discussion of future implications for the rental market. There are four significant points from this study; first, the rental market has tightened as the population has increased while the number of rental units has decreased; second, there is a gap in availability of affordable rental housing; third, models for different market scenarios point towards the increase of average rental housing prices across the Chicago region and last, historic discrimination against Section 8 rental voucher holders and racial tension disrupt settlement patterns for CHA residents after the tear down of public high-rise buildings.

The report indicated that the rental market had tightened since 1990. The tightening rental market has a few notable components: the number of rental units available has decreased while the population had increased, rent prices had increased more than inflation and the number of rent-burdened residents had also increased (Metropolitan Planning Council, 1999). Most important is the data surrounding population growth: the population in the region had grown by approximately 569,000, but the number of rental units had decreased by 52,000 units. HUD defines a “tight” rental market as one in which vacancy is less than 6 percent. The report states that the

Chicago metropolitan area had a 4.3 percent overall vacancy rate but by measuring unmet demand, the data suggest that there was a gap of approximately 130,000 units for affordable housing as of 1995 (Metropolitan Planning Council, 1999). The study includes analysis of forces that shape the lack of affordable housing in the region such as public housing discrimination or 'not in my backyard' (NIMBY) in the Chicago suburbs and steep taxation for a building with 6 or more units. These conditions were especially important in considering use for affordable housing in Chicago. Through interviews and surveys with landlords, the study reveals that current market conditions are not ideal for Section 8 voucher holders since landlords are more inclined to profit from market-rent tenants.

Finally, the study includes a discussion of the models used to simulate the effect of tearing down the Chicago Housing Authority high rise buildings and the possibility to project how average rent prices may change with the influx of Section 8 voucher holders. However, the models could not account for the inherent bias against Section 8 vouchers discovered through interviews conducted with landlords. Moreover, historical patterns of racial segregation in Chicago prevent an even distribution of residents across the Chicago region. The question that this study asks is what happens in the already tight rental market when 6,000 CHA households are forced to find other housing against Section 8 voucher bias and racial discrimination? The findings call into question the ability of Section 8 vouchers to effectively work in what is assumed to be an unbiased housing market.

In response to the "For Rent" study, Carol Steele from The Coalition to Protect Public Housing stated "It is unfair of CHA to force residents to gamble their housing on

hypothetical assumptions about the future of the rental market” (Ruklick, 1999). The problem wherein lies that residents and supporters of affordable housing recognize that the study points towards the failure of the market to reasonably accommodate CHA residents. As a rebuttal, Phillip Jackson, Chief Executive Office of the CHA, argued that market forces will accommodate renters during the transition from public housing to other housing options while new units were rebuilt and existing units were rehabilitated (Strausberg, 1999). However, this ignores the fact that the predictions for the future from the report are not empirical but based on hypothetical models with different outcomes.

On November 27, 1999, the Chicago Defender published an article with a further explanation of Jackson’s comment that the MPC study proves there is enough rental housing to absorb CHA residents. “The objective for the plan for transformation is not to put people in the Section 8 market but to build 24,000 units of the best public housing in the country for all lease-compliant CHA residents” (Strausberg, 1999). Jackson assumed the reports could predict how the housing market may absorb CHA residents and that the models show different variations of market absorption. By using the rhetoric of market action to justify this interpretation of the study, the social factors that limit resident’s abilities to seek housing in the private rental market are overlooked.

In January 2000, two months after the release of the final “For Rent” study over the condition of the rental market in Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago professor David Ranney and Nathalie P. Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement director Patricia Wright wrote in an opinion piece to the Chicago Tribune that the CHA widely ignored residents wishes for the rehab and rebuilding of their

housing and in spite of this, proceeded with widespread demolition. Such sentiments were present at CHA and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development meetings throughout the city (Raney, 2000). Residents expressed their concerns with being pushed into a 'tight' rental housing market that may not be receptive to their financial position. Ranney and Wright describe the conditions under which mixed-income housing developments were a vessel for a new rationale of racial exclusion. The authors tie relational power in planning to the Plan for Transformation through the redevelopment of public housing into mixed-income housing developments. Mixed-income housing developments have the potential to become highly profitable for private developers who have the ability to turn all units into market-rate after 40 years of keeping a portion of the units as affordable. Based on a study conducted by the Nathalie P. Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement, a conservative estimate for the redevelopment of Cabrini-Green into mixed-income housing has the potential to generate \$100 million dollars of profit for a developer (1997).

G. **Resident Opposition**

The most vociferous opposition to the plan for transformation was the Coalition to Protect Public Housing. Resident leader Diedre Matthews states that their opposition to the plan for transformation is slated in historic mismanagement of CHA and their belief that it was an attempt at urban renewal (Ruklick, 2001). In addition, individual residents challenged plan implementation. In the Chicago Reader February 2000 article "Kicking and Screaming", Neal Pollack witnessed the tense situation between orders to abandon the 5266 South State Street building and the residents who chose to defy the CHA until

the very end. Barbara Moore, elected leader on behalf of residents had taken a stand to Chicago Police who regularly patrolled the building. Instead of heckling her, they made light conversation and the police wondered why they [CHA] did not rehabilitate the building so that residents would not have to suffer the disruption of moving. “That is what I’m saying,” Moore replied (Pollack, 2000). In a show of street bureaucracy, the police did not arrest or hassle any residents that day—they simply left Barbara Moore alone. Phillip Jackson, Chief Executive Officer of the CHA, paid regular visits to her building during public housing tours. Pollack wrote that the two shared an unusual camaraderie where Jackson listened to Moore’s concerns about fighting to keep her home and seemed sincere about urging her to keep fighting for her building (2000). Their once cordial relationship ended once 5266 South State Street was next to be evacuated for the winterization program. Moore refused to leave. On December 9, 2000, Jackson made an appearance on Cliff Kelley’s WVON radio program where both called Barbara Moore by name and publically challenged and humiliated her over the radio for fighting to keep her building from demolition. She and a few other residents resisted the CHA until the very end. Only without power, heat and running water would they accept the CHA replacement unit—only to find that the new unit was without heat and running water.

The evacuation policy enacted by the CHA suggests that at times, it was beyond the persuasion of reasonability or pragmatism. Although Barbara Moore’s story is only one instance of the relationship of force between the CHA and residents, it illustrates that some residents—but not all—who resisted force were subjected to public humiliation and defeat for their resistance to ‘progress’.

G. **Legal Resistance**

The most successful means of resistance came in the form of lawsuits against the CHA. In 1995, the Horner Residents Committee (HRC) from the Henry Horner Homes won an important victory through their litigation against the CHA and HUD: a consent decree that mandated that the CHA attempt to reach an agreement with the HRC or the area president and their legal counsel on all matters related to redevelopment. If no agreement could be reached this way, it would be settled through a court appointed mediator or through the court itself (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006). Because the HRC had juridical power over the CHA, the Henry Horner Homes redevelopment process was radically different from other sites in Chicago. The process was timed so that residents moved from old housing units directly to new units at the same site (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006). Through litigation, the HRC won the right to be present at all discussions surrounding redevelopment, the right to disapprove of plans and most important, their right to resist the CHA. The success of the residents at Horner Homes set the stage for future litigation against the CHA.

Since the early days of Cabrini-Green, residents were aware of the fact that development pressures from their wealthy neighbors in the Gold Coast and Lincoln Park positioned Cabrini-Green as land ripe for development (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006). In response to this, in the 1970s, Cabrini-Green residents formed a local advisory council (LAC) which represented tenants in the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) Central Advisory Council (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006). This early move to unify the residents developed a starting point for ensuring that Cabrini-Green would continue to exist despite development pressures and disinvestment by public and private interests.

Prior to the plan and the HUD take over in 1995, the Cabrini-Green LAC had been working with Vincent Lane, CHA executive director, to craft a Cabrini-Green redevelopment plan that would include \$40 million in funding towards constructing 303 new housing units, and \$10 million towards supportive services (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006). In May 1995, the plan was agreed upon by the Cabrini-Green LAC and the CHA to utilize a \$50 million HOPE VI grant to that end. To complete the plan, 660 housing units would be demolished but with the congressionally mandated one-to-one replacement, Cabrini-Green residents were assured that most of the demolished units would be replaced. However, before the plan was implemented, Vincent Lane was forced to resign as executive director of the CHA. At this time, control of the CHA was assumed by HUD and its local designate, The Habitat Company. Instead of honoring the agreement for the Cabrini-Green redevelopment plan, Joseph Shuldiner, new CHA executive director, issued a request for proposals for a new Cabrini-Green redevelopment plan. All proposed redevelopment plans, including the previously agreed upon plan, were rejected for failing to meet the requirement of the request for proposals. Anticipating this, the City of Chicago and the CHA held private meetings to prepare an alternative strategy for redevelopment. Refusing to include the Cabrini-Green LAC or residents in the discussion, the result was the Near North Redevelopment Plan which proposed to demolish 36.6 percent of total Cabrini-Green units (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006). The replacement units would be included in mixed-income development and nearly unaffordable for Cabrini-Green residents.

Feeling that their rights as tenants and citizens had been violated, the Cabrini-Green LAC sought legal redress. In *Cabrini-Green Local Advisory Council v. Chicago*

Housing Authority, the Legal Assistance Foundation argued that the CHA violated the Fair Housing Act and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006; Cabrini-Green Local Advisory Council, 1996). The lawsuit specifically argued that the Near North Redevelopment Plan would adversely affect African-American women and children given their eligibility for public housing compared to the general population. Furthermore, they argued that the CHA, in denying the Cabrini-Green LAC the right to participate in the planning process, was a violation of the resident consultation requirement from HOPE VI (Cabrini-Green Local Advisory Council, 1996). By using the legal system to stop further demolition of housing and to remedy other injustices, the Cabrini-Green LAC was successful in leveraging its lawsuit against the CHA to begin rounds of negotiation towards reducing the number of demolished buildings and increasing the number of rebuilt units.

H. **Summary**

In 1998, the CHA gained significant resources to transform public housing in Chicago. Not only did the CHA receive the largest allocation from the HOPE VI grant program, the CHA increased its local control to implement plans from the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QWHRA) (Cisneros & Engdahl, 2009). The QWHRA legislation mandated the creation of a plan to change public housing, or the Plan for Transformation. HUD approval of the Moving to Work agreement—despite public scrutiny—further increased public housing transformation funding by granting the CHA the right to pursue private market equity and other privileges to implement the Plan for Transformation (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006). However, an analysis of the planning process reveals a concerning lack of resident input on plans. The CHA, using

its power resources to implement a plan, disregarded the wishes of residents and pressed forward with plans determined by its own interests and the interests of private developers. Forcing most residents to comply with their vision of public housing transformation, the CHA faced its most significant resistance from law suits filed on behalf of the Cabrini-Green and Henry Horner housing developments (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006). Law suits are identified as the most successful method of resistance against the CHA because they established juridical power that residents could use to establish the right to be included in the planning process (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006; Cabrini-Green Local Advisory Council, 1996).

V. DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a summary of the research, relates details of the case to the theoretical framework and suggest possible directions for a future study. The research examines the planning process for the original plan in the context of the CHA and its use of power. Using the theory of communicative planning as the ideal for a planning situation but acknowledging that power relations both proceed and shape dialogue, this case study focuses on the reality of the planning situation as a product of power and force. By analyzing primary source materials, documents from the planning process, and the literature surrounding the plan, the study reflects the rhetorical situation and the subsequent planning decisions. Using the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2 to frame the interpretation of results presented in Chapter 4, the following discussion aims to illustrate the importance of applying theoretical analysis to a planning process.

A. **Implications for Research**

In my analysis of power, I determined that HUD exercised juridical power through the implementation of federal policies that necessitated the CHA to act. The result of the action was the Plan for Transformation. Enacted in response to the requirements mandated by the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QHWRA), the CHA and the City of Chicago saw this as an opportunity to regain local control of the CHA. At the end of this extension of juridical power were the residents who were to benefit from the Plan for Transformation. All of these loci of power relate to one another, and their relationships necessitate examination.

There are two overriding factors in the relationship between HUD and the CHA that demand attention. First, the exercise of juridical power flowing from the implementation of the HOPE VI and QHWRRA legislation impacted the dynamic between the two organizations. Second, HUD mandating the CHA surrender control of its public housing activities to an appointed party altered their relationship again. Chapter 4 examines HOPE VI and supporting legislation as a source of juridical power, which HUD used to influence the CHA to act. This influence stems from legislative significance and acknowledgement of the repercussions that follow breaking a law, which qualifies it as juridical in nature (Foucault, 1978). As discussed in Chapter 2, identifying who controls the purse strings (Johnson, 1989; Flyvbjerg, 1998) is a visible symbol for power resources. HUD, both controlled the initial public funding for the Plan for Transformation and granted CHA control over the use of private market funding. For this reason, public housing transformation was a product of HUD and its exercise of power over the CHA.

Additionally, one could think of the relationship between HUD and the CHA as federalist, or at least as deferential to federalism. HUD is a federal agency, vested directly with authority and legitimacy through law. HUD breathes life into the CHA through transfers of power, granting the CHA the authority to administer public housing in Chicago. The state of Illinois, nearly absent from this discussion, enables the CHA to act through state legislation. Admittedly, the CHA's authority rests to some extent on the original authorization of HUD, since the CHA's right to exist is contingent upon the legitimacy of the body that authorized it. Thus, the data in Chapter 4 makes it clear that the power relationship between HUD and CHA is only upstream-to-downstream and that their relationship appears fixed and one directional. Furthermore, specific instance

of actions between the two actors indicate that their relationship is one in which HUD mostly stands beside the CHA unless HUD initiates the conversation and is asking something of the CHA. The exception to this is where HUD is legally obligated to act. An example of this characterization of their relationship is when HUD revoked the ability of CHA to administer public housing, then this ability is later reinstated by HUD.

An important exception to this hypothesized relationship is the Moving to Work agreement because it marks an uncharacteristic action from HUD (Garza & Zajac, 2000). When HUD approved CHA's Moving to Work application, they approved 27 out of 29 proposed 'commitments, waivers and requests' from the CHA (Chicago Housing Authority, 2000). HUD's approval of this agreement gave more local control to the CHA, including increased funding opportunities under the agreement for use of capital funds for replacement reserves and the clarification of authority to leverage funds (Chicago Housing Authority, 2000). Leveraging theoretical framework from Chapter 2 and the data in Chapter 4, there are two ways in which I would interpret this event. First, HUD was utilizing its power resources to push the CHA to be more self-sufficient, which represented a benefit to HUD. In line with the shift in public housing financing towards private market capital, the Moving to Work agreement included approval for bond sales, and other special approval conditions that were not given to other public housing agencies requesting approval for Moving to Work (Garza & Zajac, 2000). In granting approval for CHA to use Moving to Work, HUD pushes more of the burden of public housing financing and success onto the CHA.

A second interpretation presents a scenario in which the CHA and Mayor Daley use the rhetoric of neoliberal housing policy and devolution as a power resource to

influence the decision of HUD to give the CHA Moving to Work authorization.

Essentially, the CHA leverages the rhetorical turn towards neoliberalism to generate increased power. This theory of their relationship fights back against juridical power with discursive power, dragging in the logic of the day to force HUD to act or lose its discursive, though not legal, legitimacy. The CHA could use the language of pushing for more private housing and the turn of public opinion towards privatization to force HUD to make a decision they did not want to in order to save face with the public. One additional possibility is that both of these situations occurred at the same time and HUD merely capitalized on the opportunity of 'rhetoric of the day' to push its burden of public housing success onto the CHA.

Since there is not a direct relationship between HUD and public housing residents, it is important to consider the way that relational power operates between the CHA and Chicago's public housing residents before considering the HUD-resident relationship. The CHA-resident relationship is complex, and not marked with nearly as much juridical power. Compared to the HUD to resident's relationship, the CHA's direct involvement with residents and their history of abusing power, this often generates tensions with residents, which complicates their exchanges of power. The addition of intermediaries between the two, including attorneys, public housing advocates, academics and non-governmental advisory bodies, all further complicate the analysis of this relationship further. However, the data in Chapter 4 elucidates a clear relationship of force between the agency and the residents, where the CHA uses its legal authority the HUD delegated it and the City of Chicago's authority to manage public housing regardless of opposition. I characterize this as a relationship of force, rather than an

exchange of power, playing upon the fact that residents were dependent on the CHA. Two events make this interpretation quite plausible: the planning process of the plan and the challenges to CHA. The residents were dependent to some degree on the service the CHA provides, which means they acknowledge their position is vulnerable should the CHA make a decision that limits their access to vital resources. Ultimately, the failure to adhere to a planning process that was transparent and one that approached residents without a pre-determined plan shows the CHA was not sincerely engaging resident participation. Without a participatory process that shares power with residents, it is clear the CHA intended to leverage its control over residents' wellbeing to exclude them from the conversation entirely. Residents were not an active part of the power dynamic, they were merely the recipients of the CHA's force; they were acted upon, not acted with.

A crucial example of the CHA failing to adhere to the ideal planning situation was their insistence in pushing the use of Section 8 rental vouchers onto residents who, when interviewed by an independent source, were against rental vouchers (Rogal, 1999). The data presented in Chapter 4 focused on three events that were coercive in nature. First, the process of relocating residents whose buildings were slated for demolition or rehab led to several instances of resident resistance. With building demolition, the data capture some instances of residents coming together to fight to save their buildings. In the case of Barbara Moore (Pollack, 2000), her resistance was unsuccessful in preventing her building from becoming demolished. As she resisted the CHA, she suffered public insults over the radio at the due in part from Phillip Jackson, then CEO of the CHA. Although this is but one instance of coercion, it is clear that at

that time, the CHA was willing to reprimand a resident failing to abide by the authority of the CHA. Instances of resistance from residents, highlighted in Chapter 4, indicate that the use of power resources was clearly disproportionate. In the case of Barbara Moore, one resident could never activate sufficient power herself to represent an existential threat to the CHA, but the CHA could exert force against Moore through its radio campaign. Moreover, the CHA used this limited exercise of juridical power to construct the image of an 'ideal' resident, then punished those that fell outside that discursive boundary, which is by definition the use of force, rather than power.

Analyzing the legal challenges to CHA reveal more instances of this relationship of force. The lawsuits presented by residents against the CHA add a new layer of complexity onto the relationship. The resident's use of juridical power to challenge the CHA was successful in leveraging some power. The result of this was that the CHA had to consult with the elected leaders of both Cabrini-Green and Horner Homes before any redevelopment plans were made. In terms of power, the CHA recognized that its use of force is limited by residents who use their resources to leverage juridical power (Bennett, Smith & Wright, 2006). At this instance, I would characterize their relationship as an exchange of power. Since the CHA is compelled to act within the guidelines established through litigation—and does—this warrants an exchange of power.

For the planning process, I argue that the awareness of relational power increases our understanding of the terms under which planning decisions were made. This helps us identify a bad planning process and how it may be challenged. Through the data, I identify that a lack of transparency and communication in the planning process is an instance of bad planning. Evaluating interactions in the planning process,

it is evident that the CHA and residents did not display a typical exchange of power. The details of their relationship show that plans were made by the use of force on the part of the CHA. Furthermore, this points to the fact that the CHA did not have the best interests of residents as a planning goal. In fact, it was only through an exercise of juridical power that residents were able to effectively resist force from the CHA and have input considered in the planning process.

The theoretical framework in Chapter 2 describes the branch method as the epistemological basis for good planning as a process by which change occurs in increments and the process guiding the change is based upon rational decision making. Communicative planning is the conceptual framework that describes how good planning is achieved. The communicative theory—based upon the planning epistemology from the branch method—describes goals towards which planners should direct the plans. Communicative theory established that good plans are achieved when the goals are focused upon improving conditions for persons and the plan does not lose integrity in the face of power. One of the named goals from communicative theory should be to increase the amount of participation within the planning process by fostering an exchange of power. However, absent from this framework is the understanding that theory guides planners but that planners are thrust into a complex network of power and they must exert power or submit to power in the planning process.

Both power and force influence action, but an actor's location in the network of power determines the extent to which they can use their own power resources to resist. The theoretical framework should include an analysis of power to ensure that the planning process does not reiterate unfair planning practices by those who hold more

power. By including this analysis within the planning framework, planners can understand where good plans and their goals lose their integrity under coercion. Through this analysis of the planning process, the branch method and communicative theory seem inadequate without understanding first the underlying exchanges of power in planning. Without this knowledge, the Plan for Transformation and the process to produce it would be interpreted as reasserting the dominance of those who hold power resources. In light of this, the future examinations of plans should include an analysis of power, to ensure that the use of productive power does not become force.

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