

EQUITY & THE PUBLIC MEETING: ARE PUBLIC MEETINGS ENGAGING THE
COMMUNITY?

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Abstract

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The Yesler Terrace Neighborhood was the oldest public housing site in Seattle. Because of its proximity to the urban core and the need for more density the area is set to be demolished and redeveloped in phases. Two blocks are ready for redevelopment and is undergoing the early stages of permitting. An Early Design Review public meeting was held for both developments. Almost no one from the Yesler Terrace Community attended, even though it is an opportunity for existing residents to have a say in what could be their future neighborhood. Public participation has been an integral piece in the planning process and profession, since the 1960s. Yet public meetings are still the most common form of community engagement. This thesis examines the history behind participation and new tools for designing effective engagement.

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“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.” -Jane Jacobs, *The Life and Death of Great American Cities*

Introduction

Jane Jacobs has been a champion for public participation since her seminal book *The Life and Death of Great American Cities*. Planning professionals are taught her work through numerous lenses. Because of her success I feel it is important to remember that while she was a journalist she was first and foremost a citizen of her community. She began her work by fighting to keep her neighborhood and the community it cultivated intact. While what she experienced in her neighborhood such as eyes on the streets turned into planning professionals’ theories for good planning practice. She was simply participating in the process and in doing so significantly improved it. Jacobs had such an impact as a community participant yet the effectiveness of community participation is still a highly debated topic. Especially as large urban areas are receiving an influx of residents tasking planners with creating strategies to increase density and essentially change entire neighborhoods. An example of this can be seen in the Yesler Terrace Public Housing Project it is slated for redevelopment to become a mixed income choice neighborhood. Because these types of changes are a reality it is causing a clash between local government and citizens. This clash is making community engagement imperative for planning professionals to be effective in their communication with communities. The following paper studies how the planning profession’s history keeps public hearings the most common mode of

participation even though it has shown not to be an effective tool. I will explore ways effectiveness is tested in the local government and citizen realm. Then make a case for the utilization of an equity analysis prior to creating any community outreach event for any given planning initiative especially when using an old approach or public hearing.

Methodology

Why are public meetings/ hearings the most common mode of community engagement in the planning profession?

To answer this question I will first examine how public participation became an integral step in the planning process. Then highlight how public participation became a mandatory feature of federal regulations predominately dealing with housing and slum clearance. I will then use an observation of a City of Seattle Early Design Review Board meeting concerning two properties in the Yesler Terrace Public Housing Project. The housing project is undergoing a master planned redevelopment to become a model mixed income neighborhood or choice neighborhood. The Early Design Review meeting is an opportunity for the existing residents to have a voice in the design of new units in their neighborhood. The Yesler Terrace redevelopment has also been a highly contentious issue within the city prior to start of its redevelopment in 2013. I will use the City of Seattle's Equity Analysis to test if the Early Design Review Board Meeting passes the analysis regimen a pilot program or initiative must complete before it can be adopted as a full-fledged city program. The public meeting method of participation has been the norm since the mid nineteen hundreds. The practice has been grandfathered into our system without the same rigor new programs experience. This study is aiming to take a step back and understand the bigger picture of how planning professionals

arrived to where we are now with participation and what are ways to leverage innovative metrics of effectiveness.

Literature Review

This literature review is broken down into three sections, development of planning theory in terms of participation, the history of federally mandated public participation, and the evaluation methods of participation, more specifically, public hearings. These three sections will give an understanding of the paradigm shift the planning profession experienced in the 1960's. The second section will show how public participation became routinized in the public sector through several federal housing bills. The last section discusses various methods of measurement to judge effectiveness in public participation that have already been used. The articles selected inform how citizen participation influences the ultimate decision makers, government officials and planners.

Major Shifts in Planning Theory

There is a clash between communicative oriented planning professionals and technocratic oriented planners on the level of community involvement needed for the planning process to be efficient today. Yet all planning project do require some form of community outreach in its process, it is whether this portion is pursued with purpose or purposely swept under the rug. This bifurcation in planning theory and practice has been a problem since the 1960's which marks the shift from technocratic, top down model of town planning to one where communities wanted to have a seat at the decision making table.¹ Currently, a plan can't simply be adopted without community support or at least attempts to obtain the community's

¹ Fainstein, Susan. "New Directions in Planning Theory." *Urban Affairs Review* 35, no. 4 (2000): 451-78. Accessed June 8, 2015. <http://www.gsd.harvard.edu/images/content/5/4/540408.pdf>.

opinion. The problem arises when it comes to the implementation of community engagement, gathering enough citizen participation, and receiving productive feedback. These variables create barriers between the community and planning professionals.² This disconnect can sometimes manifest in the built environment by a clear miscommunication between the user and the implementer. Such as underutilized public space but heavily used blighted parks.

The Development of Planning

There have been three major developments in the point of view since town-planning's conception. The design planner turned analyst and rational decision maker; technical expert turned manager and communicator and, lastly a move from modernist to postmodernist thought about town-planning.³

First, prior to the 1960's town-planning was very conceptual and an exercise in macro-architecture and the physical design of an area. At this time the profession was solely concerned with the physical environment as its own entity. In the 1960's the purely physical view of towns developed into seen the town as, "systems of interrelated activities in a constant state of flux."⁴ The aesthetic value of the physical space was looked at through the lens of social life and the economic activities. The town was now a place instead of a just a built space. Town-planning was then no longer seen as a simple blueprint it was a living thing that always needed to be a work in progress because it was inherently human.⁵

² Ibid

³ Taylor, Nigel. "Anglo-American Town Planning Theory since 1945: Three Significant Developments but No Paradigm Shifts." *Planning Perspectives* 14, no. 4 (1999): 327-45. doi:10.1080/026654399364166 Nigel Taylor pages 327-345.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

The second big shift in planning was a change to having a value system rather than only a technical and specialized skill profession. Planners who came in to the profession prior to the 1960's believe, town-planning requires substantial knowledge of planning techniques. Those entering the profession during the shift felt town-planning decisions were "value-laden and political." This meant planners had no superiority other than specific skills in judging, communicating, and decision making on a big picture scale.⁶ Because planners possessed these skills their main job was to act as a manager of the community's values of urban space and translate these values into the built environment.

The latest move in planning thought was shifting from normative thought and modernity to the post-modern world. Modernists believed in mastery, thus the theory a master plan could be created for one area and be seen all the way through without revision. Post-modernist thinkers realized there was no way there was "one type of environment" or one correct master plan could exist because the built environment was relative to the users, people.⁷ This shift is where we stand more so today in the profession with a focus on people oriented environments.

The Built Environment for People

In 1958 the shift from purely physical environment planning to planning physical environments for people was beginning with Jane Jacobs at the forefront. She was an outspoken community member in New York City and her article featured in Fortune explained why Downtown is for People.

Jacobs deconstructs the intricacies of how a street works equating it to a "nervous system; it communicates the flavor, the feel, the sights. It is the major point of transaction and

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

communication.”⁸ In this article she is calling planners to look at alleys as an opportunity space to be animated and to design downtowns through a pedestrian lens. Calling for this lens supports Jacobs’ example of urban customer service. The customer (people of the city) is always right because in this scenario the planner’s job is to serve the needs of people who live in and use the city. Jacob states, “Downtown has had the capability of providing something for everybody only because it has been created by everybody.”⁹ This is featured at the beginning of the paper because it exemplifies the shift in thought for planners to create with the community. Jacobs exemplifies this ideal by being an outspoken citizen herself but without also being a professional planner yet ultimately contributing to the theories that are in use today. Making a strong case for the potential that could be harnessed in other citizens through engaging and relevant activities.

To better facilitate a criteria for planning with the citizen, Kevin Lynch created the Dimensions of Performance. The five basic dimensions outline the built environment’s need to fit all citizens. First, vitality, the place must protect the survival of the species. Second, sense, planning to match the environment’s capabilities and the people’s social constructs. The third dimension is fit, spaces and channels fitting to the patterns of people. Fourth is access, an ability to reach others and daily activities with ease. Finally, control, spaces are created with an ability to be modified and revitalized throughout time to continually fit the needs of the people.¹⁰ The criterion shows spaces need to be created with the users in mind. Without the users there is no need for physical structures, the existence of the built environment is founded

⁸ Jacobs, Jane. "Downtown Is for People (Fortune Classic, 1958)." *Fortune*. September 18, 2011. Accessed June 8, 2015.

⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁰ Lynch, Kevin. "Dimensions of Performance." In *Good City Form*, 111-120. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984.

by those who need to exist in it. Lynch emphasizes the need for plans created with the capacity for citizens to be involved in molding spaces to fit the needs of the community.

Future Theories for Participation

Susan Fainstein writes about how after the development of the planning profession there has been a greater focus on communication with citizens. Community engagement has a strong rhetoric in a neighbor or city plan yet many cannot agree on the best tactics for implementing community outreach. Another problem that arises is some planners have put an enormous amount of effort into a community meeting or feedback session yet the community showed little to no interest. These clashing ideas and outcomes have been curbing efforts for community outreach. Fainstein maintains there still is optimism in the new urbanism movement for stronger community engagement. But, “sustaining this optimism depends on translating it into practice.”¹¹ Leading to why there is a focus on finding ways to measure effectiveness in planning participation practices.

The, “globalization of planning and design projects, growing density and social variations within communities, and emergence of new technologies to communicate with the world,”¹² is making it easier to connect with people. These technologies are tools available to community leaders and professionals to engage citizen in their space or neighborhood because it is ever more accessible. Because of the increased accessibility he planning profession movement towards citizen ownership needs to be built around cultural sensitivity. “The days of viola

¹¹Fainstein, Susan. "New Directions in Planning Theory." *Urban Affairs Review* 35, no. 4 (2000): 451-78. Accessed June 8, 2015. <http://www.gsd.harvard.edu/images/content/5/4/540408.pdf>.

¹² Faga, Barbara. "The Future of Public Participation." In *The Urban and Regional Planning Reader*, edited by Eugenie Birch. Routledge, 2008.

design and centralized control are behind us ... to accomplish anything; our (planners) work now requires skillful navigation of the political and social rapids.”¹³Our society is increasingly moving towards having many diverse backgrounds. We can no longer design for the majority because there will be no majority unlike the dichotomy of our beginnings.

Planning theories shifted professionals to become more citizen input centric. The advancement of communication technology should be an avenue for planning practitioners to find inventive ways to reach the community and obtain vital information. People are constantly posting opinions and input on the internet every day. As that is growing so too is the breadth of knowledge on how to harness these new communication tools to hopefully engage people in creating and understanding their environment rather than an opportunity to simply hear about a planner’s vision. While the internet will not fix our communication problems with the community it does beg the question with all the advances why is the profession still using public hearing as the main form of engagement.

Federally Mandated Public Participation

The Housing Act of 1954 most known for terms such as urban renewal, slum clearance, and is the first act to name public participation as a requirement for receiving federal dollars. The housing act was primarily meant to fund urban areas’ creation of adequate housing for low income and minority populations, who were the primary residents of slums. Suburbanization forced the federally government to find ways to keep cities going by redeveloping areas that were blighted. The Housing and Home Finance agency distributed pamphlets which were in

¹³ Ibid

essence a “How to guide for urban renewal funding.”¹⁴The guide outlined seven essential strategies for submitting an application for federal dollars. These strategies were Adequate Codes & Ordinances, A Comprehensive Plan for Community Development, Neighborhood Analyses, Effective Administrative Organization, Financial Capacity, Adequate Housing for Displaced Families, and lastly Full- Fledged Citizen Participation. While the HHF listed participation last the instructions for what full- fledged citizen participation were on mark stating participation must be a part of the program at the beginning of planning and include representation from the following communities business, professional, labor, welfare, educational, and minority groups from not only slum or blighted area slated for redevelopment but the city at large which the pamphlet referred to as the ‘community.’¹⁵

Ten years after the Housing Act required representation of the ‘community’ a new bill was passed, the Equal opportunity act (EOA) of 1964. As a part of the War on Poverty it again focused on slum clearance to improve the quality of life by not only supplying housing but creating job opportunities. Section 2 of the EOA created urban and rural community action programs. These programs were to be executed by a public or nonprofit agency or a combination of the two but could not be conducted by a political party. These programs were meant to work toward the elimination of poverty by developing employment opportunities and improved living environments. The programs being implemented were required to be “developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum feasible participation of the

¹⁴ McGraw, B. T. "The Housing Act of 1954 and Implications for Minorities." *Phylon* 16, no. 2 (1955): 171-82. Accessed June 8, 2015. http://www.jstor.org/stable/272718?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

¹⁵ *Ibid*

residents in the areas and members of the groups served.”¹⁶ The language in the equal opportunity act of 1964 was the catalyst to create over a thousand Community Action Agencies around the country. Non-profits and public agencies were created to begin carrying out the work of improving urban areas.¹⁷ The creation of the community action agencies shows that without the participation there was no way of reaching the goals outlined in the EOA. While the language in the EOA was inclusive in nature this was still a tumultuous time in America for race relations. The blighted areas being targeted for improvement needed to build capacity within their community to create community action groups. If the community action groups were able to organize and create engagement programming within the slums than it would be a community led redevelopment. The newly created community action agencies were receiving funding directly from federal government superseding state and local governments. The community action agencies were in a difficult position because they were expected to produce results yet did not have experience in management, leadership or trust in their communities.¹⁸ The first part of their funding was most likely spent on establishing their organization as a trustworthy source to be connected to the government. The struggle for results coupled on top of officials not happy about direct funding to poor minority led organizations brought a level of higher scrutiny to the program eventually leading to its demise.¹⁹

Once the Demonstration Cities and Model Cities act of 1966 was implemented through the “The Great Society,” the requirement for participation moved from the maximum feasible participation to widespread citizen participation that was to be executed by local government

¹⁶ Berman, Evan M. "Dealing with Cynical Citizens." *Public Administration Review* 57, no. 2 (1997): 105.

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ McGraw, B. T. "The Housing Act of 1954 and Implications for Minorities." *Phylon* 16, no. 2 (1955): 171-82. Accessed June 8, 2015. http://www.jstor.org/stable/272718?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

¹⁹ Ibid

rather than non-profits or community groups. The change in language intentionally gave control back to state and local governments by removing the direct federal funding to the citizens in Community Action Agencies.²⁰ Those who were already participating had differing experiences between continuing as a partnership with the government and having to step back to assume an advisory role. The Model Cities program presented many opportunities for professionals such as planners and social researchers to conduct studies on the urban ills occurring in these blighted areas. The impoverished residents experienced continuous experimentation to create policy measures for improving employment and livability yet had not seen significant change in their communities. They once again faced numerous surveys, focus groups, and presentations. This type of human research naturally led to distrust between the communities being studied and their local government, ultimately causing the declination of citizens' willingness to participate.²¹

Participation was further weakened through the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 language change from widespread citizen participation to an "adequate opportunity for community participation." An opportunity for citizens²² was all that was required to obtain a community development block grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. This is where we sit today with federally mandated participation, needing only to present an opportunity for citizens to comment, propelling public meetings to be the most common method of participation.

²⁰ Irvin, Renee, and John Stansbury. "Citizen Participation in Decision Making: Is It Worth the Effort?" *Public Administration Review* 64, no. 1 (2004): 55-65.

²¹ McGraw, B. T. "The Housing Act of 1954 and Implications for Minorities." *Phylon* 16, no. 2 (1955): 171-82. Accessed June 8, 2015. http://www.jstor.org/stable/272718?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

²² Irvin, Renee, and John Stansbury. "Citizen Participation in Decision Making: Is It Worth the Effort?" *Public Administration Review* 64, no. 1 (2004): 55-65.

While these four bills are not the only government acts which mention public participation as one of the aspects needed to be met, they are some of the most imperative in the history of public participation as part of the planning profession. Each bill was a major marker in showing the government's awareness for the amount of skilled workers needed to run a city effectively. The urban renewal housing acts solidified the need for comprehensive plans and other documents that are directly related to the planning profession yet they were just as important to what they referred to as the urban poor or slum residents. The blight that is referred to throughout all of these bills was located in communities who should have a vote in the approach to the redevelopment of their community. While the 1954 and 1964 bills attempted to include the citizens effected by urban renewal it instead brought about the 'routinization' of participation.²³ As the government began to increasingly become the keepers of public participation the practice was institutionalized as another box to check to receive federal funding. The 'routinization' of participation stunted the very act they were attempting to cultivate within communities, the willingness to aid in improving the quality of life in their neighborhood. Participation then morphed from community led to a necessary step in for professionals in the planning process.²⁴ Making an "opportunity for citizens to participate" a requirement led some professionals and officials to refer to participation as the "Achilles heel of planning."²⁵

²³Howaes, Christopher, Michael Lipsky, and Dale Rogers Marshall. "Participation in Urban Politics: Rise and Routinization." In *Big-City Politics, Governance, and Fiscal Constraints*, edited by George Peterson, 153-193. Wasington, D.C.: Urban Institute Press, 1994.

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Irvin, Renee, and John Stansbury. "Citizen Participation in Decision Making: Is It Worth the Effort?" *Public Administration Review* 64, no. 1 (2004): 55-65.

Effective Public Participation

As discussed in the theory portion, planning professionals at times clash about the ‘best’ approach to city planning. Some planners are more technical, forecasting demographics while others are more of advocates for social issues preferring the Jacobian principals of trusting the community’s sense of place, much like her customer’s always right philosophy. Neither is more adequate than the other but they are dependent. Technical skills are easier to quantify effectiveness through metrics and are validated as facts. Something as fluid and dependent on human interaction and circumstance as participation is of course not as easily quantified and validated in the professional world. Social workers and public administrators face a similar problem of measurement and use qualitative data techniques. Surveying or quantifying how many people were reached through participation works to create quantitative data but does not answer if the participation was actually effective. Leading us to the debate if the measurements of participation methods effective.

The most widely noted measurement of effectiveness in citizen participation is Arnstein’s Ladder of Participation. The Ladder of Participation scales how much power a citizen or community group has in the ultimate decision of a policy or city initiative. Arnstein’s refers to these as degrees of power and places them into 3 sections citizen power, tokenism, and nonparticipation.²⁶ Each section coincides with an eight rung scale of power, like steps in a ladder. The highest rung of power is citizen control, the lowest, manipulation. *See Ladder in Figure 1.* Public hearings or meetings range from tokenism to blatant nonparticipation. The range is dependent upon the themes or goals of the public meeting. The section of non-

²⁶ Arnstein, Sherry R. "A Ladder Of Citizen Participation." *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35, no. 4 (1969): 216-24. Accessed June 8, 2015. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01944366908977225>.

participation can be explained by attending a public hearing held to present a plan and the meeting is attempting to convince the public of a decision that behind closed doors has already been made. Allowing for comment yet no follow up feedback is representative of tokenism.²⁷ Informing and Therapy would fit if a meeting was to be purely educational or if the public was against an initiative and professionals were attempting to show citizen's where their logic is wrong. The bottom rung of the ladder is manipulation using meetings for the appearance of involvement. Yet none of the material generated is actually taken into account in the final product.²⁸ This ladder approach is oriented more toward the effectiveness of community interest rather than what a municipality will normally look to collect. Municipalities more often than not have to be about the bottom line for the good of the majority and budgeting purposes. The ladder of participation also questions rational planner's policy decisions based on numbers and scientific background rather than requests from the community. Arnstein makes a point to note effective engagement lands between citizen control and partnership the eighth and seventh rung respectively.²⁹ During the time Arnstein was writing about the ladder of participation there were some factions of citizens who called for control over school districts but recognized that in our democratic society no one group should be in total control. The eighth rung is advocating for decision making groups, where the majority is comprised of citizens from the neighborhood such as low income and/or minority groups whom she refers to as the 'have-nots'.³⁰ To reach this type of decision making body community partnership building is key. While the ladder is a useful tool to understand the kind of ownership the community

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Ibid

should have in decision making, as a tool of effectiveness it can only judge power roles of participation not necessarily the effectiveness of the outcomes.

Where Arnstein has left a gap in her theory of participation others saw as an opportunity to explore effectiveness through the lens of elected officials and city employees, they after all are the implementers. Not all are planning related which is to be expected considering that even though planners tend to have the outright requirement of participation because of the Housing and Urban Development acts participation is still increasingly owned by all public sector administrators. One study in particular focused on citizen participation in local government budget decisions. While not entirely a planning issue it is a highly technical one which the lay citizen may find difficult to understand. Furthermore, budgeting tends to bring out more of the personal interest when debating what to fund or cut. In four cities in North Carolina three main stakeholder groups who are actively involved in implementing participation were interviewed. The groups partaking in the study were elected city council members, city managers and budget staff, and active citizens.³¹ Each member was interviewed over the telephone totaling forty interviews. The interviewers discussed themes such as “Elected Officials support and actively seek input from citizens on budget priorities,” “Public hearings are effective mechanisms to elicit citizen participation,” and “Citizen input must be followed by feedback from staff or local leadership.”³² A full list of responses and themes for each can be seen in Figures 2 to 4. Each group was asked similar questions but the focus for the purpose of this study is the difference in perspective on public hearings and outreach to citizens in the budgeting process. Eighty-six

³¹ Berner, Maureen, Justin Amos, and Ricardo S. Morse. "What Constitutes Effective Citizen Participation In Local Government? Views From City Stakeholders." *Public Administration Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (2011): 128-63. Accessed June 8, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41804544>.

³² Ibid

percent of elected officials interviewed felt public hearings were effective mechanisms to elicit citizen participation. The same percentage supported the statement “Elected officials support and actively seek input from citizens on budget priorities.” The city staff interviewed had slightly less positive numbers: fifty four percent of those interviewed agreed “Public hearings are effective mechanisms to elicit citizen participation.” Seventy seven percent agreed “Elected officials support and actively seek input from citizens on budget priorities.” The active citizens group had a different response rate on the matter forty six percent felt “Public hearings are not effective methods of eliciting citizen participation.” Sixty four percent felt, “Elected officials do not support and seek out input from citizens on budget priorities.”³³ The study covered most of the main stakeholders one would find at a public hearing. The study fell short by not including non-active citizens and not having uniform questions for the interview creating difficulty when wanting to clearly compare sentiments on all the issues across groups. With that being said this study illuminates where there is disconnect between how local government and citizen stakeholders feel about the type of participation being elicited, public hearings. The active community perception supports the previous case made about how the more government controls the process the more routine the practice becomes. One could believe this is one reason for the difference in sentiment. Yet what is still prevalent is a clear need for local government to understand that public hearings are not an effective form of engagement with the community.

Both strategies show different approaches to judging effectiveness but the same perception of a ‘versus’ mentality, the community lens versus the local official. Neither measurement can aid

³³ Ibid

in an ultimate solution to creating more effective tools for how professionals treat participation and how citizens feel as participants.

Seattle Case Study: Early Design Review Board Meeting for Yesler Terrace

Meeting Context

Yesler Terrace was the product of a slum clearance grant that was given to the newly created Seattle Housing Authority for a public housing project. The project was completed in 1940 and has remained public housing until the recent redevelopment of the land. The Yesler Terrace housing project will be completely leveled to make way for denser buildings and the beginning of a new model mixed income neighborhood. There were many disputes over the widespread displacement of low income families. To remedy this a one to one replacement promise was made that all the individuals currently living in Yesler Terrace would have the first opportunity to live in the new low income units that will be built. The redevelopment project is being conducted in phases so not all of the public homes are demolished at this time. The developer who won the bid for two of the Yesler Terrace parcels from the housing authority is beginning the early stages of permitting and design review. The sites in question are block 2-E and 3. 2-E is of the most interest to the current residents of the Yesler Terrace neighborhood because it will be next door to the extremely low-income units they will be building to the west. In between the 2-E parcel and the extremely low income building will be a pedestrian green way which will allow residents and visitors to use a stair climb to traverse the incline from Yesler to Fit. This

will be a public space both buildings will share. *See Figure 5 for context map.* The thought behind mixed income development is to have as little barriers between subsidized units and market rate units. Except not all low income units in the neighborhood will be mixed within each building hence the extremely low income development to the west of parcel 2-E. It is important that when buildings are separate but share a public amenity such as the hill climb the orientation of the building is not facing away from the low income building because it deters the cultivation of a community. While 2-E shares the hill climb to the east of the building lies parcel 3 which will host a rectangular pocket park at the north end of the lot. In addition to the public spaces each building will have a court yard for the residence it is unknown at the moment whether or not the court yard will be open for daylight hours and act as an auxiliary public space. The design of the two buildings were made to look as if they were logs stacked to pay homage to what the architect says is the history and culture of Yesler Way as skid road for timber. Both buildings are being built under the zoned height limit but there were some departures they asked for such as less parking spots and a lower percentage of retail due to the protection of an older tree.

Meeting Observation

On May 13th, an Early Design Review Public Meeting was held for two developments in the Yesler Terrace neighborhood. The meeting was located at the Seattle University Alumni & Admissions building located along 12th avenue but more than a mile from the site in question. The meeting began at 6:30pm and was slated to run until 9:30pm, longer than normal because the board would be reviewing the two sites together. Early Design Review Board meetings do not cover zoning issues or land uses. The process is purely used to comment and participate in

the design of the structure or structures that will reside within the boundary of the Yesler Terrace Master Planned Community. The total number of attendees was thirty but of those thirty only three attendees were residents of the Yesler Terrace neighborhood. The public comment section of the meeting which was allotted forty minutes. During this time one of the three community members commented to first bring attention to the fact that the meeting location was neither located in the Yesler Terrace neighborhood nor served well by transit. I assume she had some form of ability impairment because she was carrying a cane. Her first comment was not about the project at all but true nonetheless. There is not a direct transit service line from Yesler Terrace to Seattle University the nearest bus stops connect the area to downtown or Madison Park. In terms of the projects, she had no major qualms with the design but wanted the architects to be mindful of the ground floor retail being inviting. She also appreciated that the planned pedestrian pathway continue to be open to both buildings considering it is being shared with an extremely low –income housing development to the west of the 2E development. The second commenter noted he was happy the design did not completely shade the two buildings north of Fir Street which he had vested interest in as he was looking to develop them. The third comment came from a commissioner of the First Hill Improvement District who was attending design meetings to be involved with aspects of the Yesler Terrace redevelopment consider its proximity to First Hill. The last comment was read aloud from an email response sent into the assigned planner prior to the meeting. The virtual comment praised the development and was fully in favor of the entire project. After the public comment period and a short break the attendees were informed the board would then deliberate the design proposal but during the deliberation process everyone else in the room

would have to remain silent. The board attempted to discuss each project separately but ended up mainly referring to them as one project. This time was to note concerns and decide if they would grant the architecture firm departures that were requested in terms of parking and retail space. This portion was fifty minutes the design was largely approved of by the board. Although there were some reservations over the departure which would convert a portion of the ground floor retail space into live/work units and reduce the originally required retail percentage. The firm requested a departure to protect an old grown tree that could not be moved and should not be torn down. The idea for live/work units would turn their alternative to retail space because at present design with the tree intact the space available would not meet the retail depth requirement. The board voted instead to give them a departure from the depth requirement rather than lower the percentage of ground floor retail. While originally noted during the deliberation period only the board was allowed to speak and allowed for the architects to clarify if a question arose. The meeting was concluded with a rapid run through of the city design guidelines and the extensive Yesler Terrace guidelines. During this time the board will mark which ones they feel the architects should pay close attention to in the next round of design development. At this point it was a little after 9:00pm all those who were community members had left and all that was left were those who had vested interests in the project such as the architecture firm's staff and the staff from the developer of the parcels. Needless to say everyone in the room seemed tired which led to the board speeding through the design guidelines. It was ruled the project should continue with the design and permitting process.

Effectiveness of the Early Design Review Board Public Hearing

As previously laid out in the literature review there have been many tests of effectiveness of public participation and even more specifically public hearings or meetings. Yet public meetings are still a dominant fixture in the public participation world and are still used heavily by City of Seattle as their form of public outreach. According to the criteria set by the ladder of participation the public meeting for the early design review is on the rung of non-participation. The meeting featured about three participants from within the community none of the five board members live within the Yesler Terrace neighborhood. While the meeting did include a forty minute time block for public comment in the actual decision portion of the EDR all attendees besides the board had to remain silent. The silent deliberation effectively turns the present attendees from participants in the process to an audience. It is because of this presentation format that the EDR meeting can also fall within the degree of tokenism because there is opportunity for comment but no discussion between community and official or community and presenter. The EDR meeting is a prime opportunity to operate at the seventh or even eighth rung of the ladder because the EDR is meant to help guide the rest of the design or change the course of the design. In the Arnstein ladder of participation measurement the meeting format was “weak” and ultimately ineffective.

Moving beyond quantifying effectiveness there is a preemptive measure which the City of Seattle has put into effect through the Office of Civil Rights, The Race and Social Justice Initiative. In March of 2014 they released a comprehensive report about how the citizens of Seattle felt about racial inequities, ways in which the city is bridging the gap, and how the city has interacted with citizens. The section of focus for this study is the citizen reaction to “Are

you aware of the City of Seattle Outreach,” “Have you participated in an outreach even?” and “Do you feel your participation is valued?”³⁴ The biggest difference in response was between White and African American participants. Of those who said they had participated in an outreach event White responders and African American responders were just as likely to say yes meaning neither is drastically participating more than the other. When asked if the respondent felt their participation was highly valued those who are African American were the lowest percentage to say yes their participation was valued, at six percent.³⁵ In light of these results those who participate but do not feel their participation is valued renders the public hearing or outreach event ineffective from the citizen point of view. While we can quantify participants with a sign in sheet we cannot call the method effective even if it is reaching a great number people. Simply reaching does not equate to participation but as a metric it supports the routinization theory of participation through government control. The City of Seattle Equity Analysis, is a step the City is taking towards leading with racial equity. The Equity Analysis is meant to be used as a tool for project development early in the projects creation. The early timing of the equity analysis produces a greater effect on creating an equitable program, policy, or budget decision. The practice of public meetings has been a feature throughout the history of the planning profession and of general citizen participation but has yet to undergo an equity analysis.

³⁴ City of Seattle, City of Seattle Racial Equity Community Survey: A Project of the Race and Social Justice Initiative, (Seattle, WA, 2014), 16, <http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/2013-Community-Survey-RSJI.pdf> .

³⁵ Ibid

Equity Analysis

The format of the following equity analysis was created for the City of Seattle departments to utilize when creating new programs, initiatives, and budget analyses. I will respond to the questions using information directly from the Department of Urban Planning and Development where available to best capture their ideas of equity. Questions 3 through 6 ask specific questions on improvement I will answer these through my observation of the May 13th Early Design Review meeting for the parcels located in Yesler Terrace. I will not answer question 6 because it is focused on generating a report for upper management which is unnecessary for this study. At the end of the analysis there will be a written debrief. A blank Equity Analysis worksheet is included as Figure 6.

Step One: Set Outcomes

1a. What does your department define as the most important racially equitable community outcomes related to the issue? (Response should be completed by department leadership in consultation with RSJI Executive Sponsor, Change Team Leads and Change Team. Resources on p.4)

In the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Seattle 2035 comprehensive plan the Department of Planning and Development includes a section for an equity analysis of the plan. The goal they include is the following: “Equitable growth will be achieved when Seattle is a city with people of diverse cultures, races and incomes and all people are thriving and able to achieve their full potential regardless of race or means. Seattle’s neighborhoods will be diverse

and will include the community anchors, supports, goods, services, and amenities people need to lead healthy lives and flourish.”³⁶

The Early Design Meeting did not have community stakeholders other than those who were already on the board and live in the general area of Central Seattle but none from the Yesler Terrace community. The most equitable community outcome would be to have participation in the design review from actual residents.

1b. Which racial equity opportunity area(s) will the issue primarily impact?

The Early Design Meeting is an opportunity for existing residents to leave their mark on Yesler Terrace.

Opportunity areas for this program are Education, Community Development, Jobs, and Housing.

1c. Are there impacts on:

Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement and Immigrant and Refugee Access to Services

Please describe: Yesler Terrace residents already have shown they feel disenfranchised as a community because they are being displaced. Many residents have made the claim that when they are finally given the opportunity to return to the area the community they had cultivated will not exist anymore. Being a part of the design process of the new building that will make up the neighborhood could be a drive for continuing on the community feel. Many of the residents still residing in the Yesler Terrace Community are Somali immigrants. If the meeting organizer sent advertisements they would have to be multilingual. The presentation was not set up to be

³⁶ City of Seattle, The Seattle 2035 Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Seattle2035 Equity Analysis, (Seattle, WA, 2015), 4, http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p2273983.pdf.

delivered in another language nor were there translated documents assuming the outcome of nonparticipation.

Step Two Involve Stakeholders. Analyze data.

2a. Are there impacts on geographical areas? Yes.

Central and East District

2b. What are the racial demographics of those living in the area or impacted by the issue? (See Stakeholder and Data Resources)

Fifty four percent of the Census Tract area for Yesler Terrace is made up of people of color. See map in Figure 7. In 2008 thirty percent of residents were eligible non-U.S. Citizens. Of the thirty percent there is what the Seattle Housing Authority labels a “notable increase” in Somali and Vietnamese households located in Yesler Terrace. African Americans/ Africans and Asian Americans/ Asians comprise about 80% of the neighborhood.³⁷

There was not a representation of these demographic numbers at the Early Design Review meeting.

2c. How have you involved community members and stakeholders?

Three community members spoke at the community hearing.

2d. What does data and your conversations with stakeholders tell you about existing racial inequities that influence people’s lives and should be taken into consideration?

The data shows large populations of communities of color. If there was true Yesler Terrace community representation at the Early Design Review meeting then the racial make-up of participants would be drastically more diverse. Another racial inequity is the lack of multi-

³⁷ City of Seattle, Yesler Terrace Definitions and Guiding Principles: Working Toward a Community Vision, (Seattle, WA, 2007), 20, http://www.seattlehousing.org/redevelopment/pdf/YT_Guiding_Principles_English.pdf.

lingual translated documents for Somali or Vietnamese immigrants who would have a difficult time if they were not proficient in English.

2e. What are root causes or factors creating these racial inequities?

One cause could be a lack of resources in the city department to fund translation for immigrant citizens. There was little understanding of the community participation methods and how to engage effectively in design guidelines for a neighborhood.

Step Three Determine Benefit and/or Burden

Step 3. How will the policy, initiative, program, or budget issue increase or decrease racial equity? What are potential unintended consequences? What benefits may result? Are the impacts aligned with your department's community outcomes that were defined in Step1?

The Early Design Review meeting does not improve racial equity because the hearing did not have adequate representation of existing residents of Yesler Terrace or the materials that would have been required for community participation. There should be a greater push to involve the residents in the building design to foster a cohesive neighborhood identity.

Unintended consequences could be increasing the feeling African Americans in Seattle have that their participation is not valid. The design concepts are unappealing to the existing community when they are given the opportunity to return. Not having the neighborhood retain some of the existing community does not align with the Department of Planning and Development's equity statement.

Step Four Advance Opportunity or Minimize Harm

4. How will you address the impacts (including unintended consequences) on racial equity?

What strategies address immediate impacts? What strategies address root cause of inequity

listed in Q6? How will you partner with stakeholders for long term positive change? If Impacts are not aligned with desired community outcomes, how will you re-align your work?

Program strategies? Hold the Early Design Review meeting in Yesler Terrace, possibly at the Yesler Terrace community center so the event is easily accessible for all residents. Advertise that there will be in language translation considering two immigrant communities hold a strong presence in Yesler Terrace.

Policy Strategies? Implement a policy which requires representation of the racial makeup of the neighborhood as a step toward receiving approval from the board. Institute a policy where each board member must have a conversation with a community stakeholder of the area. Create a rotating board depending on the micro areas of a neighborhood instead the large urban village delineation.

Partnership Strategies? Find ways to partner with local community groups who could review the plan together and then send in feedback via email if they are unable to attend the meeting or are limited English proficiency. Create a partnership line between the architecture firm and community group within Yesler Terrace for them to collaborate on design of structures and public spaces especially the pocket park located on parcel 3.

Step Five Evaluate. Raise Racial Awareness. Be Accountable.

5a. How will you evaluate and be accountable? How will you evaluate and report impacts on racial equity over time? What is your goal and timeline for eliminating racial inequity? How will you retain stakeholder participation and ensure internal and public accountability? How will you raise awareness about racial inequity related to this issue?

A board member or planner should make a note or create awareness around the lack of community representation at the meeting. The planner in charge of the project should write in the summary of the permit document that while the board approved the design there was not support from the community. By having this note as a part of the meeting minutes or in the final permit report could put pressure to stop counting silence as support.

5b. What is unresolved? What resources/partnerships do you still need to make changes?

Create partnerships with the community to educate them on how they can help create and influence the look of their neighborhood.

Step Six Report Back

Share analysis and report responses from Q5a-b with Department Leadership and Change Team

Leads and members involved in Step 1.

N/A for the purpose of the study.

Reflections from the Equity Analysis

If I were to only observe the EDR meeting without the equity analysis the only experience to note would have been not being allowed to speak at an event labeled as public participation. I would have noted it felt as though many people had shown up until realizing only about three people of the community did show. The rest were all invested prior to the meeting. What the equity analysis brought out was the larger understanding of why the public meeting was so ineffective.

The first step in the equity analysis is grounding you in a stance on equity and if a department stance is not available it gives you the space to create one. In step 2 it sets the conductor of the analysis up to think like a planner. To find data about the racial makeup of the area and what it

means for equity, the program you are attempting to implement, and most importantly what does it mean for the neighborhood. Demographic numbers alone cannot lead equity but having step one push someone to think critically about how they would approach and reach equity goals begins to weave a story with the numbers such as understanding the large portion of non-citizens residing within Yesler Terrace. This demographic data number informs us, there may be a call for translation services either at the public meeting or prior to the meeting would require the architect to create a translated print copy of the presentation. Another major impact the analysis can have on effective engagement is its emphasis on interacting with stakeholders, not only development stakeholders but citizens from the community. Seeking out community leaders and engaging them in the project details can begin to build relationships that would aid in creating interest in urban issues that do not always get attention such as the EDR. It is with these relationships that planning professionals can ascend the ladder of participation with citizens and gain an understanding of one another. While it would be more beneficial for a planner to implement this type of analysis before performing any kind of outreach program or event questions 3-6 do a good job of reflection that could lead to answers as to why previous events had not succeeded.

Limitations

There are a few limitations to the equity analysis because it is designed to be an internal document that is used at the inception of a project not after an observation of an event which already occurred. Because the analysis was designed this way some of the questions are difficult to move through such as meeting with stakeholders. Being an observer of the situation I made a point of not interacting with meeting attendees even though most were from

stakeholder groups who own the property and are developing the two parcels. Yesler Terrace is also not listed as a neighborhood or urban village because prior to the master planned redevelopment it was considered the southernmost corner of First Hill. In the analysis I marked it as central because that was the closest fit. The map provided with the analysis worksheet labels the area as part of Downtown but does not list as an option either. The biggest limitation is buy in and ownership for city staff. With the question “What are root causes or factors creating racial inequities?” First, race is a difficult subject to discuss openly because the subject does carry very strong emotions. Second, even if the planning professional does follow the instructions and creates enough time to meet with and hear from all of the stakeholders in a given area it would still be a difficult task to understand the “root” cause of a racial inequity. The practice of understanding cannot be done through merely a worksheet. Lastly, many of the sections state they should be in conjunction with a senior staff member or team leader which in theory is an excellent practice but most assignments are delegated and there is no real way to control who is actually doing the work behind the questionnaire that is created to push the user who should be a decision maker to be mindful of the questions of equity while deciding on impacts of a program. Yet if it is being delegated to a mid-level employee that employee is getting a very well-rounded education in racial equity but are ultimately not the deciding factor. This brings us back to the ladder of participation and why it is important to understand who actually has the power. While the analysis has its limitations it does shed light on the very real limitations and set backs of public meetings, which do not involve citizens from the actual community in which the redevelopment is occurring. Furthermore while general questions about race will not fix the problem of effective participation it does lend insight to planners as

to why communities of color are difficult to reach. Another reason could stem back to the history of oppression with communities of color who have institutional memory of experiencing public meeting for manipulation.

Findings and Conclusion

It is difficult to quantify feelings into numbers and to use those numbers to define the perfect method of interaction between communities and professionals. Creating those type of statistics does not bring us closer to the reason community engagement is so integral in the planning process, because it is about understand a communities sense of place. To understand how residents interact with their built environment will take more creative methods than surveys and meetings. The equity analysis is a good starting point to generate culturally sensitive and appropriate methods.

Further Research

As a profession we have been embracing new innovations for engaging citizens by using technology to aid in our ability to convey the more technical aspects of planning. Social media is increasingly helping to globalize our world not only culturally but even generationally. It is a form of communication used by most citizens in the United States as well as immigrants. Seattle especially has a large population of immigrant and refugees who according to the Race and Social Justice Initiative survey are unaware of opportunities for citizen participation but do gather at community centers or faith based places and participate in their communities as well as use Facebook to stay connected abroad. The next wave of effectiveness would be to leverage these new forms of communication to generate interest around urban issues and increase participation. While this study stressed the lack of citizen involvement and input into

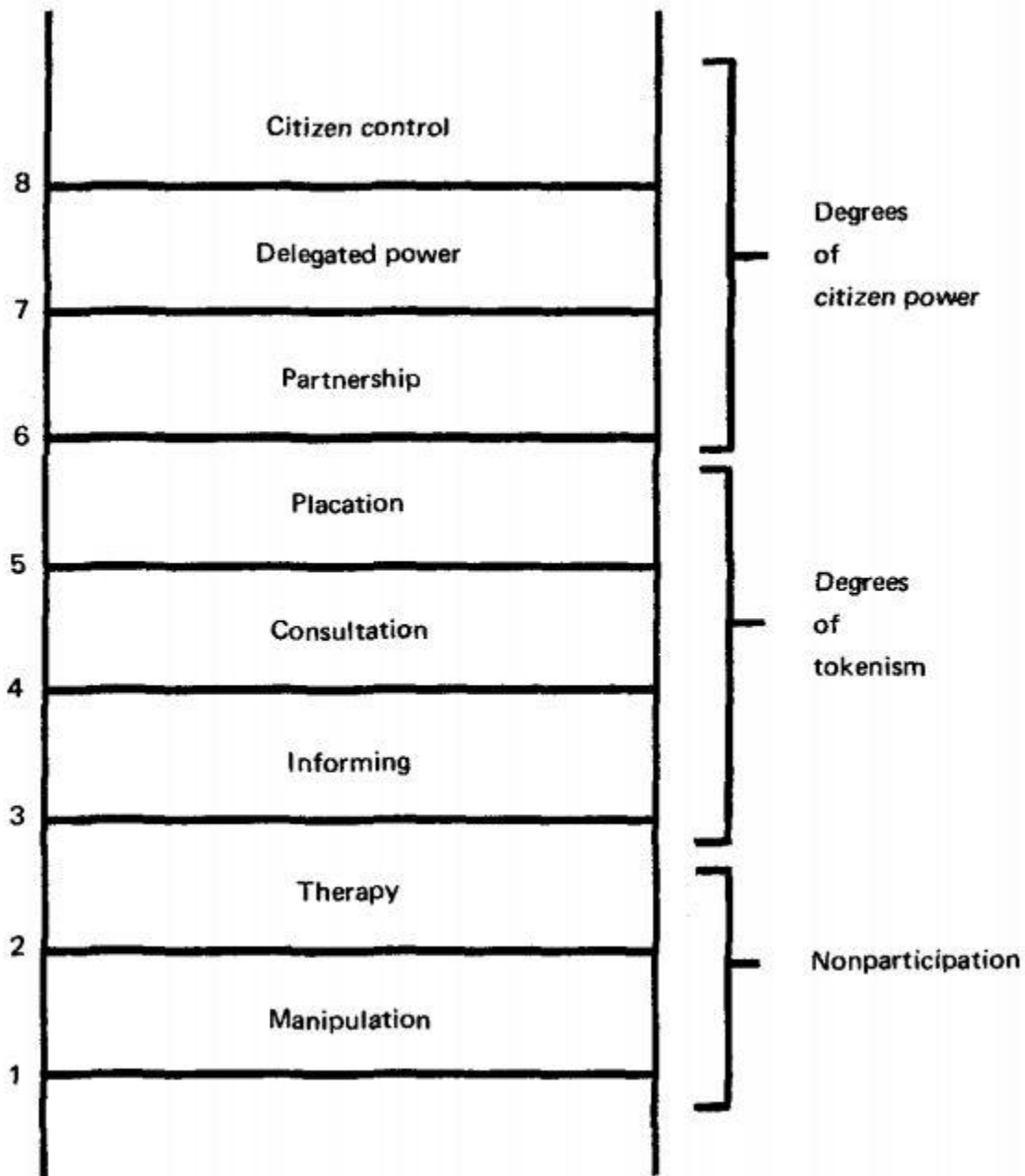
neighborhood and city plans there are some cases where the community's voice was present. An interesting test would be to take the community driven visions from past plans and map which visions came to fruition. Lastly, we could use the equity analysis to improve professional urban planning program curriculum to either include community engagement or reorient it towards more equitable approaches.

Lessons Learned

In twenty first century planning we continue to utilize methods of participation that have been proven to be ineffective from a professional and citizen standpoint. Comprehensive plans, design reviews, neighborhood redevelopments, etc implementing public meetings as a part of their engagement plan are missing out on an opportunity to create ownership and capacity within a community. After examining how other scholars have attempted to quantify the effectiveness of participation from citizen power to city staff and officials feelings towards engagement and utilization in decision making, the equity analysis could be an answer to both sides of the spectrum. Leading with racial equity can aid in breaking the routinization of participation by ensuring professionals think critically on how to encourage community voices to be present and valued in planning practices. One way the analysis ensures planners are seen through this community focused lens is by requesting on open dialogue with community stakeholders forming key partnerships prior to an engagement activity or program. A step even further would be utilizing the partnerships prior to designing the engagement method or program. This would mean treating each project with fresh eyes around engagement instead of focusing on duplication. As we moving towards a society that is more racially diverse we can no longer look at participation without looking at community culture.

There seems to be no wholly right answer to effective participation except to continue to adapt and not cling to one systematic method. While Seattle's equity analysis does have its flaws the timing of beginning with equity is correct. As we innovate how we communicate and work with the community, equity can be the jumping off point to create lasting partnerships between professionals and citizens, to create more innovative engagement.

Figure 1: Ladder of Participation³⁸



³⁸ Arnstein, Sherry R. "A Ladder Of Citizen Participation." *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35, no. 4 (1969): 216-24. Accessed June 8, 2015. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01944366908977225>.

Figure 2: Elected Official's Results³⁹

Common Themes from Elected Officials

| Elected Officials Responses and Themes from Interviews | Number of Responses | Percent of Total |
|---|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Elected Officials support and actively seek input from citizens on budget priorities | 12 | 86% |
| Public Hearings are effective mechanisms to elicit citizen participation | 12 | 86% |
| Communication and cooperation are keys to an effective citizen participation process | 11 | 79% |
| Citizen input must be followed by feedback from staff or local leadership | 10 | 71% |
| Elected officials are voted to be public stewards; they are the informed citizens with budget training | 9 | 64% |
| Citizens tend to be self interested and promote "pet projects"; they do not have a community wide mindset | 9 | 64% |
| Citizens should serve as community advocates | 9 | 64% |
| Citizens do not understand the technical nature of the budget process | 8 | 57% |
| Citizen surveys are effective mechanisms for citizen input | 7 | 50% |
| Citizens are apathetic; they generally do not care about the budget process | 7 | 50% |
| Total Group Membership | 14 | |

³⁹ Berner, Maureen, Justin Amos, and Ricardo S. Morse. "What Constitutes Effective Citizen Participation In Local Government? Views From City Stakeholders." *Public Administration Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (2011): 128-63. Accessed June 8, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41804544>.

Figure 3: City Staff Results⁴⁰

Common Themes from Staff

| Staff Responses and Themes from Interviews | Number of Responses | Percent of Total |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Citizens do not understand the technical nature of the budget | 12 | 92% |
| Elected Officials support and seek input from citizens on budget priorities | 10 | 77% |
| Communication and Cooperation are keys to effective citizen participation | 10 | 77% |
| Citizens should serve as community advocates | 9 | 69% |
| Citizen input must be followed by feedback from staff or elected officials | 9 | 69% |
| Citizens are apathetic or generally do not care about the budget process | 8 | 62% |
| Citizen tend to be self interested and promote "pet projects"; they do not have a community wide mindset | 8 | 62% |
| Public Hearings are effective mechanisms to elicit citizen participation | 7 | 54% |
| Concerns regarding the late timing of input in the budget process | 7 | 54% |
| Elected Officials are voted to be public stewards; they are citizens with special budget training | 6 | 46% |

⁴⁰ Berner, Maureen, Justin Amos, and Ricardo S. Morse. "What Constitutes Effective Citizen Participation In Local Government? Views From City Stakeholders." *Public Administration Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (2011): 128-63. Accessed June 8, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41804544>.

Figure 4: Active Citizen Results⁴¹

Common Themes from Citizens

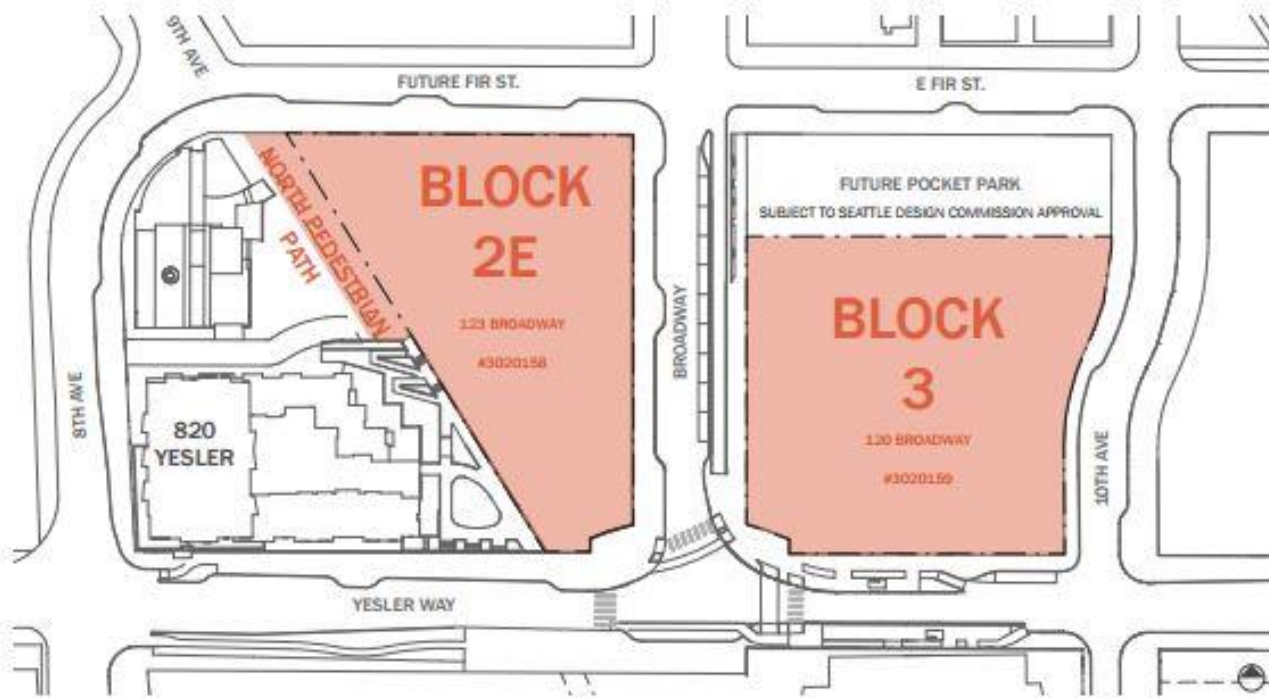
| Citizen Responses and Themes from Interviews | Number of Responses | Percent of Total |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Citizen input must be followed by feedback from staff or elected officials | 10 | 77% |
| Communication and cooperation are keys to effective citizen participation | 10 | 77% |
| Elected Officials do not support and seek out input from citizens on budget priorities | 9 | 69% |
| Citizens should serve as community advocates | 9 | 69% |
| Concerns about the late timing of most current methods used to elicit citizen participation | 8 | 62% |
| Citizens can help prioritize projects from the ground-up/grass roots organizations | 7 | 54% |
| Support for a Citizen Budget Summary | 7 | 54% |
| Citizen involvement should be a 365 day process, not just during budget season | 7 | 54% |
| Public Hearings are not effective methods of eliciting citizen participation | 6 | 46% |
| Elected Officials are voted to be public stewards; they are citizens with budgetary training | 6 | 46% |

⁴¹ Berner, Maureen, Justin Amos, and Ricardo S. Morse. "What Constitutes Effective Citizen Participation In Local Government? Views From City Stakeholders." *Public Administration Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (2011): 128-63. Accessed June 8, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41804544>.

Figure 5: Yesler Terrace Early Design Review Context⁴²

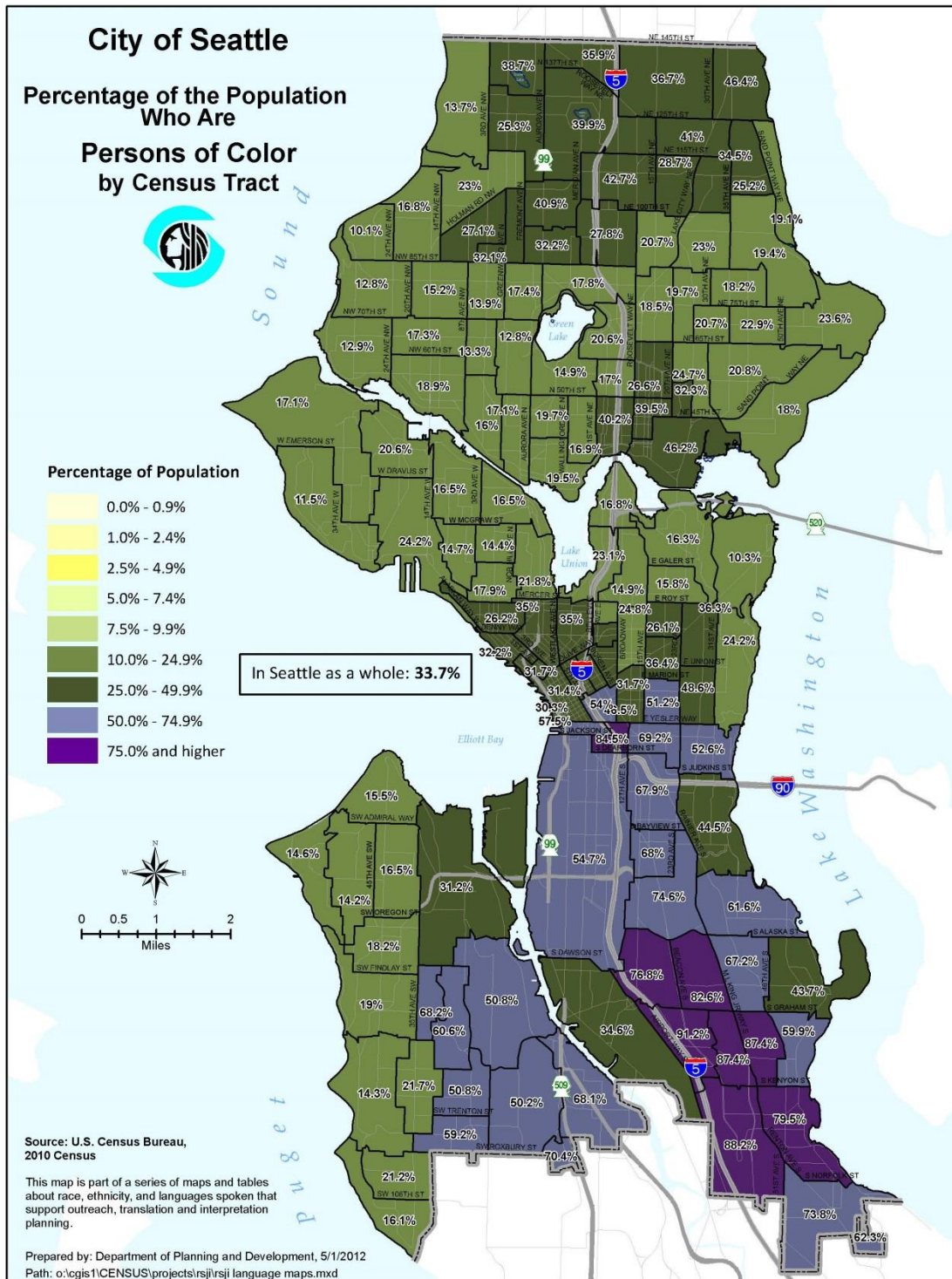
PROJECT SCOPE

The Design Review scope for the project includes Block 2 East, the northern portion of the 9th Avenue Pedestrian Path (which will connect to the southern portion currently under construction by SHA), and Block 3, excluding the pocket park. The Block 3 pocket park is subject to Seattle Design Commission approval.



⁴² Runberg Architecture Group, May 13th, 2015, "Early Design Guidance: East Design Review Board." Accessed: June 8, 2015, <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/AppDocs/GroupMeetings/DRProposal3020159AgendaID5339.pdf>

Figure 6: Percentage of People of Color in Yesler Terrace⁴³



⁴³ City of Seattle, Department of Planning and Development, May 1, 2012, "Maps on Race and Ethnicity: Persons of Color." Accessed: June 8, 2015, http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/dpdd016871.pdf

Figure 7: Equity Analysis Tool Kit⁴⁴

Racial Equity Toolkit
to Assess Policies, Initiatives, Programs, and Budget Issues

RACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

The vision of the Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative is to eliminate racial inequity in the community. To do this requires ending **individual racism**, **institutional racism** and **structural racism**. The Racial Equity Toolkit lays out a process and a set of questions to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, initiatives, programs, and budget issues to address the impacts on racial equity.

When Do I Use This Toolkit?

Early. Apply the toolkit early for alignment with departmental racial equity goals and desired outcomes.

How Do I Use This Toolkit?

With Inclusion. The analysis should be completed by people with different racial perspectives.

Step by step. The Racial Equity Analysis is made up of six steps from beginning to completion:

- Step 1. Set Outcomes.**
Leadership communicates key community outcomes for racial equity to guide analysis.
- Step 2. Involve Stakeholders + Analyze Data.**
Gather information from community and staff on how the issue benefits or burdens the community in terms of racial equity.
- Step 3. Determine Benefit and/or Burden.**
Analyze issue for impacts and alignment with racial equity outcomes.
- Step 4. Advance Opportunity or Minimize Harm.**
Develop strategies to create greater racial equity or minimize unintended consequences.
- Step 5. Evaluate. Raise Racial Awareness. Be Accountable.**
Track impacts on communities of color overtime. Continue to communicate with and involve stakeholders. Document unresolved issues.
- Step 6. Report Back.**
Share information learned from analysis and unresolved issue with Department Leadership and Change Team.

⁴⁴ City of Seattle, City of Seattle Racial and Social Justice Initiative: Racial Equity Toolkit, (Seattle, WA, 2014), 7, http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RacialEquityToolkit_FINAL_August2012.pdf .

Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment Worksheet

Title of policy, initiative, program, budget issue: _____

Description: _____

Department: _____ Contact: _____

Policy Initiative Program Budget Issue

Step 1. Set Outcomes.

1a. What does your department define as the most important racially equitable **community outcomes** related to the issue? *(Response should be completed by department leadership in consultation with RSJI Executive Sponsor, Change Team Leads and Change Team. Resources on p. 4)*

1b. Which racial equity **opportunity area(s)** will the issue primarily impact?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Justice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Jobs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environment | |

1c. Are there impacts on:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contracting Equity | <input type="checkbox"/> Immigrant and Refugee Access to Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Equity | <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement |

Please describe:

Step 2. Involve stakeholders. Analyze data.

2a. Are there impacts on geographic areas? Yes No

Check all neighborhoods that apply *(see map on p. 5)*:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All Seattle neighborhoods | <input type="checkbox"/> Lake Union | <input type="checkbox"/> East District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ballard | <input type="checkbox"/> Southwest | <input type="checkbox"/> King County (outside Seattle) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> North | <input type="checkbox"/> Southeast | <input type="checkbox"/> Outside King County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NE | <input type="checkbox"/> Delridge | Please describe: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central | <input type="checkbox"/> Greater Duwamish | |

2b. What are the racial demographics of those living in the area or impacted by the issue?

(See Stakeholder and Data Resources p. 5 and 6)

2c. How have you involved community members and **stakeholders**? *(See p. 5 for questions to ask community/staff at this point in the process to ensure their concerns and expertise are part of analysis.)*

2d. What does data and your conversations with stakeholders tell you about existing racial inequities that influence people's lives and should be taken into consideration? (See *Data Resources* on p. 6. *King County Opportunity Maps* are good resource for information based on geography, race, and income.)

2e. What are the root causes or factors creating these racial inequities?

Examples: Bias in process; Lack of access or barriers; Lack of racially inclusive engagement

Step 3. Determine Benefit and/or Burden.

Given what you have learned from data and from stakeholder involvement...

3. How will the policy, initiative, program, or budget issue increase or decrease racial equity? What are potential unintended consequences? What benefits may result? Are the impacts aligned with your department's community outcomes that were defined in Step 1.?

Step 4. Advance Opportunity or Minimize Harm.

4. How will you address the impacts (including unintended consequences) on racial equity? What strategies address immediate impacts? What strategies address root causes of inequity listed in Q.6? How will you partner with stakeholders for long-term positive change? If impacts are not aligned with desired community outcomes, how will you re-align your work?

Program Strategies? _____

Policy Strategies? _____

Partnership Strategies? _____

Step 5. Evaluate. Raise Racial Awareness. Be Accountable.

5a. How will you evaluate and be accountable? How will you evaluate and report impacts on racial equity over time? What is your goal and timeline for eliminating racial inequity? How will you retain stakeholder participation and ensure internal and public accountability? How will you raise awareness about racial inequity related to this issue?

5b. What is unresolved? What resources/partnerships do you still need to make changes?

Step 6. Report Back.

Share analysis and report responses from Q.5a. and Q.5b. with Department Leadership and Change Team Leads and members involved in Step 1.

Creating Effective Community Outcomes

Data Resources

City of Seattle Seattle's Population and Demographics at a Glance:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Research/Population_Demographics/Overview/default.asp

Website updated by the City Demographer. Includes: Housing Quarterly Permit Report • Employment data • 2010 Census data • **2006-2010 American Community Survey** • 2010 Census: Demographic highlights from the 2010 Census; Basic Population and Housing Characteristics Change from 1990, 2000, and 2010 – PDF report of counts of population by race, ethnicity and over/under 18 years of age as well as a total, occupied and vacant housing unit count; Three-page subject report – PDF report of detailed population, household and housing data • American Community Survey: **2010 5-year estimates and 2009 5-year estimates** • Census 2000 • Permit Information: Comprehensive Plan Housing Target Growth Report for Urban Centers and Villages; Citywide Residential Permit Report • Employment Information: Comprehensive Plan Employment Target Growth Report for Urban Centers and Villages; Citywide Employment 1995-2010 • The Greater Seattle Datasheet: a report by the Office of Intergovernmental Relations on many aspects of Seattle and its region.

SDOT Census 2010 Demographic Maps (by census blocks): Race, Age (under 18 and over 65) and Median Income http://inweb/sdot/rsji_maps.htm

Seattle's Population & Demographics Related Links & Resources (From DPD website:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Research/Population_Demographics/Related_Links/default.asp)

Federal

- [American FactFinder](#): The U.S. Census Bureau's main site for online access to population, housing, economic, and geographic data.
- [Census 2000 Gateway](#): The U.S. Census Bureau's gateway to Census 2000 information.

State

- [Washington Office of Financial Management](#): OFM is the official state agency that provides estimates, forecasts, and reports on the state's population, demographic characteristics, economy, and state revenues.

Regional

- [Puget Sound Regional Council](#): PSRC is the regional growth management and transportation planning agency for the central Puget Sound region in Washington State.

County

- [King County Census Viewer](#): A web-based application for viewing maps and tables of more than 100 community census data indicators for 77 defined places in King County.
- [King County Department of Development and Environmental Services](#): the growth management planning agency for King County.
- [Seattle & King County Public Health - Assessment, Policy Development, and Evaluation Unit](#): Provides health information and technical assistance, based on health assessment data
- [King County Opportunity Maps](#): A Study of the Region's Geography of Opportunity. Opportunity maps illustrate where opportunity rich communities exist, assess who has access to those neighborhoods, and help to understand what needs to be remedied in opportunity poor neighborhoods. Puget Sound Regional Council.

City

- [The Greater Seattle Datasheet](#): A Seattle fact sheet courtesy of the City of Seattle's Office of Intergovernmental Relations.

Other

- [Seattle Times Census 2000](#): articles, charts related to Census 2000 and the Seattle/Puget Sound region.

Glossary

Accountable- Responsive to the needs and concerns of those most impacted by the issues you are working on, particularly to communities of color and those historically underrepresented in the civic process.

Community outcomes- The specific result you are seeking to achieve that advances racial equity.

Contracting Equity- Efforts to achieve equitable racial outcomes in the way the City spends resources, including goods and services, consultants and contracting.

Immigrant and Refugee Access to Services- Government services and resources are easily available and understandable to all Seattle residents, including non-native English speakers. Full and active participation of immigrant and refugee communities exists in Seattle's civic, economic and cultural life.

Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement- Processes inclusive of people of diverse races, cultures, gender identities, sexual orientations and socio-economic status. Access to information, resources and civic processes so community members can effectively engage in the design and delivery of public services.

Individual racism- Pre-judgment, bias, stereotypes about an individual or group based on race. The impacts of racism on individuals including white people internalizing privilege and people of color internalizing oppression.

Institutional racism- Organizational programs, policies or procedures that work to the benefit of white people and to the detriment of people of color, usually unintentionally or inadvertently.

Opportunity areas- One of seven issue areas the City of Seattle is working on in partnership with the community to eliminate racial disparities and create racial equity. They include: Education, Health, Community Development, Criminal Justice, Jobs, Housing and the Environment.

Racial equity- When social, economic and political opportunities are not predicted based upon a person's race.

Racial inequity- When a person's race can predict their social, economic and political opportunities and outcomes.

Stakeholders- Those impacted by proposed policy, program or budget issue who have potential concerns or issue expertise. Examples might include: specific racial/ethnic groups, other institutions like Seattle Housing Authority, schools, community-based organizations, Change Teams, City employees, unions, etc.

Structural racism - The interplay of policies, practices and programs of multiple institutions which leads to adverse outcomes and conditions for communities of color compared to white communities that occurs within the context of racialized historical and cultural conditions.

Workforce Equity- Ensure the City's workforce diversity reflects the diversity of Seattle

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