Community Engagement is Harming Cities: Disrupting Racial Planning for a Planning End of Shared Well-being

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Abstract

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This thesis will contribute to planning theory and practice the idea that means-based planning theories and racial planning enable community engagement processes to have negative impacts on the city and the public's well-being by reproducing white supremacy and stunting change in the city. Therefore, ends-based planning theories should be prioritized in planning and disrupt racial planning, in order for cities and well-being to be addressed more urgently. Using the literature, I categorize the differences between means-based and ends-based planning and theorize about a planning blind spot of white supremacy and whiteness. Using Seattle's design review as a medium, I show why a means-based racial planning community engagement process like design review is unable to achieve the goals of building more housing and redistributing advantages to nonwhite people. I then end with an argument for planning to emphasize ends-based planning towards shared well-being as the future of planning.

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Introduction:

The United States currently needs to build significant amounts of new housing, transportation, and energy infrastructure (Demsas, 2021; Freddie Mac, 2021; IPCC, 2022; Levy, 2021). The supply of such infrastructure is currently insufficient to meet the demand in cities. This insufficient supply of infrastructure affects affordability, inequality, sustainability, crime, and well-being. The United States urgently needs to build a large amount of new infrastructure to meet current and future demand. However, the United States, with all its wealth, resources, and innovation, struggles to develop the infrastructure it needs. In comparison to other countries, infrastructure development in the United States is both slow and cost-inefficient; it spends much more money for less total infrastructure than other countries. One important reason for this inadequate infrastructure is the current community engagement system in the United States, which delays infrastructure provision through processes like design review, environmental review, historic preservation, community boards, and public meetings. Highlighting the harm done to cities and their inhabitants because of such delay, this thesis will interrogate why planning is so invested in current community engagement processes by analyzing what planning philosophies strongly influence the planning field.

Means-based planning refers to a category of planning philosophies more focused on process than on outcomes. I argue the combination of planning being too invested with means-based planning and planning's insufficient theorization and interrogation of whiteness and white supremacy, enables community engagement to delay development, racial equity, and well-being. The lack or slowness of development in the sectors of housing, transportation, and energy, makes it more costly to afford living in desired cities of choice by lowering affordability, makes it more likely for current car-centric transportation patterns to continue exacerbating climate change, and allows for inequalities to continue or grow, all of which are bad for current and future well-being. Development, housing, transportation, urban form, and the built environment are prominent concerns in the planning field. Similarly, race, segregation, and racial inequality are widely acknowledged and are also prominent concerns in the urban planning field (Goetz et al., 2020). Yet, in the context of urban planning and urban development, race is primarily framed in understanding the circumstances and behavior of people of color (Goetz et al., 2020). This framing happens despite white people being the most highly segregated racial group in the United States (Feagin, 2014). The consequence of this normative framing is that discussions and topics of race are almost exclusively equated with the conditions of people of color, and the role that advantaged white neighborhoods play in producing and perpetuating regional inequality gets downplayed or ignored.

The normative framing around race creates a blind spot for the urban planning field, one that is unable to see the ways community engagement processes such as design review, historic preservation, and environmental review act as another form of advantage for white people and whiteness. Whether conscious or not, means-based planning philosophies work in concert in reproducing and increasing white advantage by delaying or stopping the development of needed housing and infrastructure via community engagement processes. Therefore, I instead argue that planning should deemphasize design review and other forms of community input and emphasize an ends-based planning philosophy and practice in the built environment, concerned with growing and redistributing advantage and well-being amongst nonwhite people through the appropriate forms of development. I agree with Baca (2022) that growth and redistribution are critical to a better, more equitable society. So, in short, I argue for disrupting racial planning for a planning end toward shared well-being.

My method in this thesis is to review the literature on planning theories, whiteness, and white advantage, with a special interest in discussing growth, appropriate development, and delays that planners and cities are having. Defining means-based planning as being mainly concerned with process and ends-based planning as being mainly concerned with outcomes. I will categorize the two planning philosophies by grouping planning theories into one of the two categories. I will then introduce Goetz et al.'s (2018) whiteness framework and Williams' (2020) identification of racial and reparative planning, as this will help the reader begin to identify why understanding race from a whiteness framing is needed to understand race fully. Additionally, these concepts will identify the connections between means-based community engagement and the funneling of advantages to white people and funneling of disadvantages to nonwhite people. This will be followed by an argument against means-based planning and for ends-based planning focused on breaking cycles of disproportionate white advantage in the built environment and redistributing shared advantage amongst nonwhite people. Then the thesis will walk through four case examples of Seattle's design review. The cases act as practical examples of how means-based processes and systems of funneled advantages to dominant groups such as white supremacy work in concert to allow delay through current community engagement in the United States. Lastly, I present ideas about how a planning field and practice emphasizing ends-based planning philosophies would practice future community engagement in the reshaped relationship between community engagement and development. I will also present ideas about a framework for how planners would go about practicing a planning end toward shared well-being.

Literature Review:

Planning Theories Influencing Practice - Means-based Planning

One of the key debates that has been happening in planning theory is whether means-based or ends-based planning be prioritized in the field (Fainstein & DeFilippis, 2016, p. 5). Means-based planning is defined as planning processes that are more concerned with setting up an open and fair process and less focused on what comes out of that process. Ends-based planning is defined as planning processes that are more concerned with achieving a goal or outcome and less concerned about whatever process must be set up to achieve the outcome. Put another way, these two theoretical categories of planning are sometimes described as process versus outcomes (Fainstein & DeFilippis, 2016, p. 5). Therefore, this debate around whether planning should prioritize being more means-based or ends-based is key to understanding community engagement processes in current planning practice and why the planning profession is struggling to meet the standards it aspires to.

I agree with several of the authors arguing against communicative, consensus, and rational planning ideas that means-based theories have the strongest influence on planning practice today (Sandercock, 1998; Flyvbjerg, 1998; Hillier, 2003; Purcell, 2008). One of the strong planning theories influencing current practice is pragmatism. Pragmatic philosophies in planning reject rational planning's aspiration for universal truths and instead embrace the idea of many truths that are not fixed. Pragmatism also argues that these truths can be subjective and come through experience, therefore at the very least placing these truths on par if not greater than rational truths. The pragmatic theory asks for planning to create processes for community trust-building, democratic engagement, processes that promote social learning, and enhancing citizenry knowledge. The planner is a neutral entity under this theory. Planners act as social therapists or emotional engineers who referee discussions or provide technical information and answer questions that help support the citizenry's learning or decision-making process. Forester (1999 & 2012) writes about planners or city staff who moderated engagement between groups of people on a topic. The city staff made sure the ground rules set by the participating groups were followed and stepped in to redirect or end conversations that were deemed unhelpful to the process of engaging with each another. Lastly, the purpose of planning in pragmatism is a construction of solidarity (Hoch, 1996[1988]), an agreed-upon truth, and getting to an agreed-upon decision. The ideal version of pragmatic planning is probably best seen in practice in the form of focus groups, neighborhood plans, or resiliency and disaster preparedness plans. Therefore, the “yes/no” referendum category that many community engagement processes fall into seek both a super majority of yes and a yes from the “right” constituents. These constituents are generally the more powerful within the participating group, as evident from the research from Einstein et al. (2019) on the influence of white, higher income, incumbent residents. Also, even in the ideal version of pragmatic planning, it may be that the time put into the agreed action does not match the worth or impact of the agreed action.

Similarly, communicative planning acts as another strong influence on current planning practices. In communicative planning, planners are once again neutral entities and act as facilitators. The purpose of planning is to follow the proper process to reach a consensus, to achieve a win-win decision that can come about through communicative action and the logic of the best argument. In Habermas' formation (Healey, 2003[1996]), the ideal communicative process has participants of the public democratically communicate toward a consensus resolution. Participants leave their personal interests at the door and engage deeply, earnestly, and honestly with others for the decision they believe is best for the common good. This leads to an environment where what is for the common good fails to have consistent measurables and instead is what participants agree on since the goal of the process is agreement. For Habermas, because these parameters are met, the decision should come down to whoever has the better argument. A critique of Habermasian communicative planning is that adhering to his principles would make justified moral judgment an impossibility, for example, from the whiteness framework discussed in further detail later. Part of the strength of whiteness is the invisibility and durability of it. Therefore, a communicative agreement among participants that white supremacy isn't real or that exclusionary zoning that perpetuates white advantage is for the common good could never be challenged to be morally wrong and therefore fought against. However, it is also important to note that communicative planning finds it very important for all relevant stakeholders to be present in the communicative process. Consensus is a goal of both communicative and pragmatism.

Another planning theory that falls into the means-based tradition is rational planning. The purpose of planning in rational planning is to promote reason and science (Faludi, 1973). The belief in rational planning is that planners using science and rationality to address issues of the city is what's best for the public good. For Faludi (1973), politics are separate from the job planners do. Instead, planners practice and promote the scientific method in order to best address the problem set by the policymakers. Similar to pragmatism and communicative planning, rational planning treats the planners as an objective neutral entity that finds the rational and efficient path to solving policy directives. The planner does not participate in the visioning or formulation of political decisions about the built environment.

What stands out to me from these theoretical influences is the removal and sidelining of the planner in dealings connected to the built environment. Instead, a process is set up that creates space for all relevant community members to make decisions impacting the city and not under set goals but instead under a decision that is agreeable to the participants. Design review, for example, has little planner involvement and requires a five-person board to agree while impacting the look, timeline, and scale of development in the city. The pragmatic influence allows for all interests or truths to be valid and essentially equal when it comes to decision-making. This is how a housing development can be threatened or delayed due to one board member refusing to allow a daycare to be part of a project. Holding up a project due to a daycare, which to many people would seem unreasonable, gets legitimized in the process and allowed to happen. Questions that arise from such a setup include: although planners generally are seen as symbols or employees of the state, are they also not members of the public that through their education may voice a more expansive interest? Also, does it not seem extreme that the people who learn and study the city more than the general public be regulated to roles they are not trained to do and left out of the decision-making process altogether?

Another thing that stands out from these theoretical influences is that everyone in the public, no matter the topic, has valid interests but also that there is uneven power of voice in the process. None of the theories deals well with the difference in power among those who participate. Because means-based planning theories have the goal that a decision is made through consensus or agreement, it can regularly mean that those with less power compromise more than those with more power in order to get to a decision. Said another way, no decision is made unless it is approved or accepted by those with the most power. In the literature, Habermas' communicative action is calling people to a higher level of themselves and is assuming through practice, and through ground rules, that people can act and civically engage with others. Innes (2004) in writing about consensus-building admits that “consensus building is not, in any case, the place for redistributing power.” A concern about communicative planning is that it could have the ability to be redistributive, but redistribution would have to be agreed upon as good for the common good. In practice, it seems environments play a large role in one’s ability to practice this higher level of oneself. Habermas is calling through willpower and practice to engage at this level, and that seems unrealistic with how people engage in the world.

Pragmatism is more concerned with solidarity and getting to yes than redistributing power or advantages (Allmendinger, 2002; Harrison, 2002). This shows up in arguments made by Lindbolm (2003[1959]), who argues that good policy is a policy that passes, and we should really be more focused on how to get to an agreement. All of this relates to a dilemma I find in processes such as design review. Healey (2003[1996]) writes, “it will always be the case that those not present will outnumber those present…” Therefore, it is important to make sure that if review boards are set up, they are as diverse as they can possibly be (I will explain later is not the case in Seattle). However, more importantly, having people speak on behalf of renters or people moving into the city is necessary for a process such as design review. If the current system is not set up to allow that, and we have squeezed all we can out of incentives or targeted outreach, why not have planners be the representative instead of on the sidelines?

Planning Theories Influencing Practice - Ends-based Planning

In contrast to means-based planning theories, ends-based planning is more concerned with seeing a goal or outcome come to fruition than it is with setting up the most open process. Although, means-based planning is the major influence on planning education and practice, ends-based planning does have a robust history in planning theory and practice. Ultimately, I argue for ends-based planning to become more influential in planning practice and community engagement processes. Therefore, an exploration of the types of ends-based planning already present in the literature will help advance my argument.

Advocacy planning bases itself on the understanding that appropriate planning action cannot be prescribed from a position of value neutrality, but instead sees that prescriptions for urban space are based on desired objectives and therefore are political. Davidoff, an advocacy planner, wrote, “appropriate policy in a democracy is determined through political debate. The right course of action is always a matter of choice, never of fact (Davidoff, 1965, p. 331).” This is to say that advocacy planning views the role of the planner as an advocate that is open and more upfront about their politics in support of plans, the government, or other group interests. The purpose of planning under advocacy planning is to participate in and use practices of democracy like advocacy to achieve policies that meet desired goals and values. Under advocacy planning, there is an understanding of plural public interests. Early in Davidoff’s writing, pluralism was strongly connected to advocacy planning, in which planners advocated on behalf of the many public interests they happened to be aligned with. However, overall, the base value of advocacy planning is advocacy for the poor and policies that will improve the lives of the poor (Davidoff, 1965), in addition to a base value in using and supporting democratic processes. The role of power is seen as a core principle of advocacy planning. Therefore, conflict among different interests, conflict between a narrow policy agenda and a broad policy agenda, and conflict to have power are understood as something to participate in and navigate in advocacy planning.

Equity planning, another type of ends-based planning approach, has a base value of bringing equity to the public through policies and the shaping of the built environment. Equity can be defined as fairness that generally requires sharing resources, advantages, and practices that meet the standards of justice from past inequities and equal opportunity for the present and future. Equity planning, for an equity planning theorist like Krumholz, is generally described under the lens of economic equity or a reduction in the gap between the rich and the poor. Krumholz, in reference to the work he did for the city of Cleveland as the planning director in the 1970s, pushed forward the idea that equity requires that locally responsible government institutions give priority to the goal of promoting a wider range of choices for residents who have few choices (Krumholz, 1999). Equity planning views the purpose of planning as creating equity as an end goal. It views the planner's role as using their technical and analytical training to achieve the goal of equity. The state's role in equity planning is central, as the state enacts the policies needed to allocate benefits and choices to the larger public. The role of power is also acknowledged and considered critical in equity planning. Therefore, planners maximizing their role or influence within the state, using their knowledge, technical training, and political skills to achieve a pro-poor and pro-equity goal, is what makes equity planning.

Also included in the ends-based category of planning is the Marxist theory on planning. Marxists are anti-capitalists who view the world in categories of two classes of people. The Bourgeoisie are the capitalists who generate passive wealth without working and own the means of production. The proletariat are the working-class people of society that are large collective majority and work to generate the wealth that the bourgeoisie gather. Marxist planning theory views the current purpose of planning as reproducing and upholding capitalism. Folelsong (2003[1986]) argues that because capitalism both engenders and constrains demands for state intervention in the built environment, American urban planning was created to balance these tensions in a manner conducive to the continuation of capitalism. Similarly, Harvey (1978) argues that urban planning is one of many instruments of state power that is expected to stabilize capitalism, create conditions of balanced growth, and contain civil strife. Planning for the end of the capitalist city would push for the collection and use of class power on behalf of the proletariat. The role of the state in an anti-capitalist city is as a tool for convening power for the proletariat. The role of planners would be to act as technicians in support of proletariat power.

Feminist theory in planning can also be categorized as a type of ends-based planning. Dolores Hayden's "What Would a Non-sexist City Look Like?," examines a gendered city that disadvantages women and advantages men (Hayden, 1980). Hayden argues that the mass movement to the suburbs isolated women from their family and friends leaving them alone all day during the week when their husbands and kids were at work or school. The continued unequal burden of domestic work and child-rearing that fell on women was made harder by the isolation and loss of their "village". Sandercock and Forsyth (1992) note that in 1992 planning theory had yet to understand the economic status of women, the location and movement of women through the built environment, and the connections between capitalist production, patriarchy, public life, and domestic life of women. Therefore, planning for the gender-equal city requires planning practice and theory to incorporate gender and emancipatory planning so that planning can have more epistemological flexibility and produce gender equality (Snyder, 1995). The role of the feminist planner is to implement plans, policies, and spatial changes to the built environment that enhance or work towards gender equality.

Also, part of the tradition of ends-based planning are the theories related to sustainability and justice. Climate change and sustainability are issues that have moved up the priority list in the planning field. Yet the IPCC (2022) report argues that not enough action has been taken to mitigate or adapt to climate change. The concept of just sustainabilities is an ends-based planning approach concerned with not only the environmental aspects of sustainability but also the social needs, welfare, and economic opportunity integrated into sustainability. What is needed is to “ensure a better quality of life for all, now and into the future, in a just and equitable manner, whilst living within the limits of supporting ecosystems. (Agyeman et al., 2003, p. 5).”

Lastly, the planning theory of the just city can be included in the category of ends-based planning theories. The aim of the Just City planning approach is to understand justice as encompassing equity, democracy, and diversity and to argue that justice should influence all public decision-making about the built environment (Fainstein, 2010). Fainstein argues that by making justice a principal consideration of urban policy the consequence will be an incremental and consequential change of the city towards justice. In this tradition, the planner’s role is to execute plans that promote justice and all it encompasses.

There are a few similarities among these ends-based theories. One is that planners engage with the political process and promote plans toward their desired interest or set of values. This is the opposite of what happens in means-based planning theories. Instead of being neutral entities that mediate meetings and processes, planners get to use their expertise towards goals shaping the built environment. Under ends-based approaches, where planners are looked to and expected to use their expertise, engaging more with the built environment does not necessarily equal engaging with the built environment well. When thinking about how to engage with the built environment well, one can draw from the insights of feminist theory where one has epistemological flexibility. Epistemological flexibility – or the awareness and understanding of different knowledges and experiences of the world, such as understanding gender, class, race, and sustainability – is a skill ends-based planners will need to engage with the built environment well (Sandercock, 1992; Snyder, 1995). Therefore, for planning expertise to be valued, planners must be educated on how to engage with the built environment well and understand that as new information becomes available, new ways of engaging may be necessary. The profession continues to bring value in its expertise by being amenable to those possible shifts and engaging with the built environment well.

The second similarity I notice between the types of ends-based planning is the expectation of planners to use their relative power and association with the state towards ends in the built environment. Whether it be towards redistributive and pro-poor policies, anti-capitalist policies, gender equality policies, climate change policies, or justice policies there is a relationship with using power to achieve those outcomes. Davidoff, later in his writing, argues that planners should be doing redistributive work. Davidoff, at a conference in which he references the work of Krumholz states, “if a planner is not working directly for the objective of eradicating poverty and racial and sexual discrimination, then she or he is counter-productive” (Davidoff, 1978, p. 69). In contrast to pragmatism and communicative planning, the crafting and use of power is a key tool for reaching goals of equity and redistribution. At least in theory, the redistribution of resources, goods, and spatial arrangements also leads to the redistribution of power, social status, and influence to class, gender, and racial groups that have been without it in the city. In essence, for a ends-based approach, using tools such as the state and power allow planners to achieve goals, at scale and promptly.

The last similarity between ends-based planning approaches is the resolution of definitions for whatever end is being pursued. There can be great discussion, theorizing, and debate among the planning field and planning-adjacent fields on how to define an end. Even among some planning theories such as feminist theory and just sustainabilities there is a built-in understanding of different iterations of the definition. However, there is always a strong core that is followed throughout in defining the goal of the end. The price of such a strong definition is that there is little room for the community to come up with what social justice, or any end, means for them once a definition is set (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2017). Planners use their knowledge and privilege to accomplish social justice by any means possible.

Understanding White Supremacy & Whiteness in Planning:

Another thing all the theories above have in common is a lack of serious acknowledgment, understanding, or theorizing on the impact race and racism has in American planning. This gap in planning theory, especially among the ends-based planning theories, is surprising given that some of the authors mentioned above are writing and publishing during and shortly after the civil rights era between the 1950s and 1970s. However, a small and emerging group of people are contributing to planning theory and the planning field by focusing on the impacts race and racism are having on the planning of urban spaces and cities. Edward Goetz, Rashad Williams, Justin Steil, and Willow Lung-Amum are researchers and academics who are having this conversation in planning theory. Not only is this group of people framing this theoretical discussion around race, racism, and racial inequality, they are more specifically focused on framing those discussions from a starting point of white supremacy and whiteness, as this has been the missing discussion yet to be vigorously had in the planning field. They argue that continuing to focus only on the disadvantages to people of color born from planning decisions and processes and not on the advantages to white people born from planning decisions and processes is detrimental to racial equity.

In following this discussion particular discussion, if there is any desire for the profession to meet the standards of a profession that is racially equitable and a profession that makes cities racially and socially just, then there is a need in planning theory and planning practice to understand and confront whiteness and white supremacy that influences a lot of the practices in planning. Even for a field that does spend a lot of time, language, and study in understanding and trying to address racial disparities in the built environment, what is missing from the field is an understanding and framing of racial disparities starting from whiteness and white supremacy.

This missing awareness and paradigm can be seen based on a search of digitized articles in the database of the *Journal of the American Planning Association (JAPA)* and the *Journal of Planning Education and Research (JPER)* done by (Goetz et al., 2020). The search revealed only four articles in *JAPA* mentioning the phrases “White supremacy,” “White domination,” or “racial domination” and only one article in *JPER* carrying these terms.

The sheer lack of theorizing of any phrases related to whiteness and white supremacy is evidence of a blind spot in the urban planning field. Therefore, defining key concepts like white supremacy and whiteness are important to the argument I am presenting in my thesis. Starting with the concept of white supremacy, I agree with a group of researchers who argue that the concept has become muddied over time and therefore has lost analytical precision (Bonds & Inwood, 2016; Omi & Winant, 2014; Pulido, 2015). White supremacy, when invoked, generally is in reference to the actions and beliefs of white racist extremists advocating for hate, violence, and an ideology that places the white race as superior to all other races and therefore deserving of dominance over all other nonwhite people (Omi & Winant, 2014). This framing of white supremacy individualizes the concept, allowing it to be a caricature that obscures the more systemic and enduring dynamics and allows for conception of white supremacy as being outside the social and political mainstream. In the case of this thesis, this conceptualization of white supremacy will be referred to as white extremism.

In this thesis white supremacy will be defined as an extensive, elastic, and evolving sociopolitical system that continually benefits white people in society and the built environment, makes sure it does not benefit non-white people, and reproduces whiteness as the highest status (Williams, 2020). In other words, white supremacy is a malleable evolving system of racial exploitation that has become so ubiquitous and adaptable that many people think only of white extremism and not of the sociopolitical system itself. Thus, white supremacy entraps whites and nonwhites in relations of exploitation, which intersects with analogous or sibling systems of exploitation like patriarchy and capitalism.

Whiteness can be defined as the culture, language, practices, behaviors, policies, desires, and norms that are the expression of status bestowed on white people under white supremacy (Lipsitz, 2006). It is a way of describing the power, status, and advantages gained by the larger overall sociopolitical system of white supremacy.

Goetz, Williams, and Damiano, in their writing about the whiteness framework, make the case that there are four themes to whiteness that urban planners should be concerned with. They are whiteness as exclusion, the value of whiteness, the invisibility of whiteness, and the durability of whiteness (Goetz et al., 2020). An example of one of these themes can be seen in Lipsitz's writing about the investment in whiteness. The investment in whiteness comes in part from the theme of whiteness as exclusion, which can be recognized in the exclusion of non-white people from things like “their” white schools and white neighborhoods (Lipsitz, 2006). Actions that produce exclusivity generate what Lipsitz notes is a major part of whiteness, which is hoarding resources for whites only. In the example of white schools and white neighborhoods, because of the ways quality housing and quality schools are tied together in the United States, property wealth in the form of housing begets better education, finances greater investments in human capital, and allows for intergenerational transfer of wealth that solidifies related advantage (Howell, 2019). This hoarding is set up through systems of white supremacy that continually give advantages and allow for more hoarding of white advantage. Therefore, Goetz et al.’s “Whiteness Framework for Urban Planning,” which is based on whiteness as exclusion, the value of whiteness, the invisibility of whiteness, and the durability of whiteness, provides a useful framework for understanding and confronting white supremacy in planning. It is important to mention that opposing whiteness is not the same as opposing white people. This distinction is important to understand in a field that is overwhelmingly white. Theorizing about whiteness is not theorizing about the destruction of people who look like you, though that is what white supremacy wants white people to think. Whiteness gets its meanings and value from various forms of nonwhiteness (Pulido, 2017, p. 527). Understanding whiteness is about understanding the expression of status and advantage bestowed on white people due to white supremacy.

Whiteness Framework:

To understand whiteness, one must accept that a key part of whiteness is exclusion. Historically and presently in the United States exclusion has been the central principle of whiteness (Harris, 1993). This can be seen in historical policy such as the New Deal, which guaranteed economic rights and pensions to white workers and excluded sectors like farmworkers and domestic workers, which were dominated by Black and nonwhite workers. In conjunction, the building of the middle class through the subsidization of homeownership and single-family homes excluded Black and nonwhite people. Presently, an analysis of social surveys conducted since 2010 indicates that exclusion and protection of advantage is still the activating principle of white identity politics (Jardina, 2019). A more fundamental argument from Fraser (2016) states that whiteness functions as a line of demarcation separating those deemed ripe for dispossession, stigma, and social disrespect from those entitled to the protection of liberal democratic norms.

Next in the framework is understanding the value of whiteness. Drawing from Fraser's argument above, whiteness is created to facilitate racial domination and therefore provides a set of advantages that bring value to anyone who is able to claim membership (Harris, 1993). As the definition of white supremacy states, the value of whiteness is a system that funnels advantage to white people. Another way of articulating this is what Lipsitz (2006) refers to as the hoarding of advantages, including property. The racial wealth gap is one measure of the value of whiteness (Oliver and Shapiro, 1989). The subsidization of white homeownership was already mentioned, but even presently white people are approved for mortgage loans at rates far greater than nonwhite people regardless of income or other factors (Ross & Yinger, 2002). White families have gained the advantage of entering the middle class, financing retirements, transferring assets, or helping to buy homes for their children, while discrimination in home lending and the predatory lending and foreclosures of the 2008 financial crisis have funneled disadvantage to nonwhite people by continuing to increase the racial wealth gap (Shapiro, 2017).

Lipsitz (2006) argues that in American society, "whiteness is everywhere" but simultaneously "very hard to see" (p. 1). This paradox is central to understanding white supremacy as a durable system of domination and subordination that is both encompassing and veiled (Goetz et al., 2020). Whiteness is invisible, and that helps explain the blind spot in an overwhelmingly white profession. This invisibility has social and psychological origins. As Max Weber writes, "the fortunate man is seldom satisfied with the fact of being fortunate. Beyond this, he needs to know that he has a right to his good fortune. He wants to be convinced that he 'deserves' it, and above all, that he deserves it in comparison with others… Good fortune thus wants to be "legitimate" fortune (Weber, 1946, p. 271)." There is debate in the literature on the level of invisibility of whiteness. For example, Mills (1997) argues that whites do not see their advantage the way fish do not see water. Edsall and Edsall (1991) argue that white people are generally conscious of the advantages they have. However, there is an unwillingness to name or analyze white advantage. White people typically disavow their racial advantage when asked, yet consistently behave in ways that defend their advantage. This can be seen in individual behavior, such as the "Karen" phenomenon in which white women calling the police when called out for antisocial or exclusionary behavior of nonwhite people in public spaces. Examples in planning include hesitation in riding transit due to fear of transit being "unsafe," which is in part because it is known that those who rely on transit the most in cities are nonwhite people and poor people. Therefore, transit is stigmatized as the "other" that does not fit into whiteness. This stigmatization gets to my last point about the invisibility of whiteness, which is that the consequence of the invisibility of whiteness is that the very concept of race is associated primarily with people of color while the status of white people remains largely unexamined (Brown et al., 2003; Hayward, 2013; Schein, 2006). It creates a standard and normality of the superiority of white middle-class space, a contemporary era that decouples racist consciousness from the perpetuation of racial hierarchy and understands white space as neutral space that "naturalizes" exclusion and privilege (Howell, 2018; Bonilla-Silva, 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Inwood & Martin, 2008; Peake & Ray, 2001; Young, 2002).

The last theme of the framework is the durability of whiteness and refers to how even in a "post-racial" "race-neutral" society, nonwhite people, especially Black people in the United States are under continued subjugation and far from racial equity. "The so-called post-racial era presents the paradox of formal equality for people of color and the simultaneous worsening of racial inequality in housing, criminal justice, wealth, and other realms" (Goetz et al., 2020). This is to say that part of the durability of whiteness is to make sure, from a policy perspective, not to radically disturb the expectations, tastes, and aesthetics of whites in order to preserve the interest and privileges accorded by whiteness. Whiteness requires an understanding of how systems and institutions carry within them elements of racial subordination and continue to work in ways that reproduce racial hierarchy and inequality (Goetz et al., 2020). It also requires an understanding of the paradox in which a large portion of white people reconcile abstract beliefs in racial equality with support for systems and structures that reproduce racial hierarchy, or in which white people repudiate explicit racism while simultaneously defending racist institutions and practices that perpetuate white supremacy (Bonilla-Silva, 2012; Foster, 2013). This expression of durability can be seen in the continuing support for single-family zoning, or the exclusionary politics related to community input for NIMBYism. Single-family zoning is now well known by the planning profession and those regularly dealing with politics as a racist policy that used race-neutral language to get around a Supreme Court ruling that prevented the use of race as an explicit barrier to where people live (Rothstein, 2017). The impacts of such a policy are still apparent today and still reproducing racial inequalities. Yet heavy support from much of the public for keeping single-family zoning and weak political will to remove single-family zoning from cities keeps it in place rather than moving towards rectifying nonwhite disadvantage. Simply, white advantage wins out.

It is important to point out that exclusion, value, invisibility, and durability are not only the pillars of whiteness, but also, they explain why whiteness is the dominant normative culture in the United States. Whiteness has been normalized and that normalized culture has been given value as the standard. Exclusion creates an environment where those white people born after the initial exclusion experience single-family neighborhoods of mostly white neighbors, car-centered transportation, schools that are mostly white, good-paying jobs, social representation, and media representation. Value is generated from exclusion, and value is also validated through exclusion. It is normalized to think that white people are where they are through their work and not through luck, therefore normalizing whiteness as the highest value and hard work as the explanation for prosperity. Invisibility creates a society where single-family only neighborhoods, driving in a personal car for every trip, and regularly ending up in high-paying jobs with all-white co-workers is the American norm. The blind spot to all this from mainly white people keeps the standard durable. Planners who are knowledgeable about the whiteness framework can better identify the times when resistance to a policy, development, or change in the built environment is the result of that policy simply not being in line with whiteness. Also, because whiteness is so entangled with the dominant American culture, planners should be ready for when nonwhite people present similar resistance to the current state of the built environment.

Racial Planning

Racial planning helps further understand planning's relationship with white supremacy. Williams gives a name to something that has always been present but has rarely been discussed in such a way due to the lack of a term. Racial planning can be described as a type of planning that has been happening due to periods of de jure and de facto white supremacy. Williams (2020) argues that racial planning is "the most historically dominant planning tradition, has remained unacknowledged and untheorized, leaving its effects to be communicated as a series of nearly discrete and anomalous planning events." Racial planning describes the public production of racialized space that funnels advantages to white people and restricts the funneling of advantages to nonwhite people. The understanding of how cities are spatially segregated by race through the many state and non-state actions – such as the creation of reservations, Chinese Exclusion, Japanese Internment camps, slum clearing, urban renewal, the New Deal and G.I. Bill for whites, exclusionary zoning, racial covenants, red-lining, highway construction, lynchings by white towns, segregated schools, and bombings in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Alabama – give historical examples of racialized space. Racialized space can be described under two phases of white supremacy. De jure white supremacy is where racial exploitation happens under state-sanctioned, underwritten, and enforced transfer of wealth and opportunities from nonwhite to white populations (Mills, 2003). Through the overt policies of racism such as racial covenants and red-lining that explicitly excluded Black and other nonwhite people from neighborhoods, or the racially exclusive federal subsidization of homes for white Americans but not nonwhite Americans. De facto white supremacy involves nonwhites inheriting a position of disadvantage and divestment that handicaps them and entraps whites and nonwhites in a relationship of exploitation, as analogous systems of capitalism and patriarchy do with regard to class and gender (Mills, 2003; Mills, 2017). Williams explains there are three modes of racial planning: planning by state action, planning by state inaction, and planning by private action, none of which are mutually exclusive.

It is important to make the connection that if white supremacy is a sociopolitical system that funnels advantage to white people and away from nonwhite people, then racial planning is the form of planning that reproduces white supremacy by funneling white advantage. It is the type of planning Williams argues has been most prominent in American planning thus far. Williams (2020) focuses on planning action and planning inaction that help us think about community engagement. He argues that:

> where planning action is concerned, racial exploitation can be found in the so-called "rational" planning decisions that protect white neighborhoods in favor of taking the politically "least resistant" path, putatively class-based exclusionary zoning that, with a

> very thin veil, specifically targets African Americans (Rothstein, 2017), and environmental policies that treat nonwhite communities as “waste bins” (Pulido, 2017).

He argues further that (Williams, 2020):

> where planning inaction is concerned, it is found in communicative planning approaches that trade in an explicit focus on racial justice as a desired end for a communicatively determined, relativistic end instead (Fainstein, 2010; Flyvbjerg and Richardson, 2002), urban economies wherein politically unprotected nonwhites are particularly subject to expropriation by predatory lenders and private equity firms (D. Fields, 2017; Newman, 2009), fetishized white areas of concentrated affluence that hoard advantages and opportunities resultant from the history and ongoing logics of white domination (Goetz, Damiano, and Williams, 2019), and integrationist strategies that either take for granted the cultural backwardness of blacks or place undue burdens upon them while doing nothing to fundamentally address the racial wealth gap (Goetz, 2018; Shelby, 2016).

Both of these quotes get at the main crux of racial planning and the power whiteness has in planning practice. For example, when we think about the history of design review in the Seattle context, we can see that design review was born in 1994 at the same time Seattle’s first comprehensive plan went into effect, which means it’s also when the urban village strategy was implemented in Seattle (Seattle, 1994). The main goal of Seattle’s 1994 comprehensive plan was “Maintain and enhance Seattle’s character. Seattle’s character includes large single-family areas of detached houses both inside and outside of villages, many thriving multifamily areas, neighborhood commercial areas, industrial areas….” The urban village strategy followed the patterns many other cities took across the US, which was a compromise. Viewing Seattle’s initial comprehensive plan under a racial planning lens may seem not to directly connect to community engagement processes. However, it shows how a politics and plan is reproducing white supremacy through the durability of whiteness and making sure not to radically disturb white advantage. Embedded in the durability of whiteness are the race schemas white Americans have that show up in what appears to be race-neutral language or policy but in practice still relate to race (Watson, 2006). Affordable housing is an example of race-neutral language that engages white people's racial schemas and elicits a racialized response (Goetz, 2008). Similarly, “character” is a race-neutral term used to engage white people's racial schemas for the protection of whiteness and elicits and projects a racialized response. Additionally, the enactment of Seattle’s design review in 1994 took the projected growth coming to the city and, instead of sharing the burden of development citywide, instead chose to concentrate development in a small percentage of the city, which preserved the mostly single-family-zoned city, born from the intent to exclude nonwhite people from white spaces, that has funneled increases in home prices and, therefore, wealth to mainly white homeowners and funneled displacement mostly to nonwhite residents of the city (Seattle, 2015; Census, 2020).

In addition, design review that is born out of this plan may have been set up as a process that is equal and allow residents of focused developed areas to have equal opportunity to shape how that development gets introduced into the neighborhood. However, again it is a process and tool that allows white aesthetics and interests to prevail in the face of some level of advantage being lost with apartment development happening in proximity to single-family homes. Again, as an example, if single-family homes are what the government has subsidized specifically for the benefit of white people, and municipalities spent from the 1920s to the 1980s expanding single-family zones and downzoning other residential zones (Rothstein, 2017), then single-family homes, in essence, become a symbol of whiteness and status, and single-family neighborhoods become a normative standard, a desire, and an advantage to uphold. Anything other than that is stigmatized as the “other” or nonwhite. Design review allows for residents to have a significant influence on stopping, delaying, and/or shrinking an apartment development and most of the residents that participate in design review are white people who perpetuate white supremacy in the process of participating in design review (Einstein, 2019; Trumm, 2021; Demsas, 2022).

Additionally, in practice and with almost 30 years of observation, the white upzoned neighborhoods were not intensified to the same degree as nonwhite neighborhoods and white upzoned neighborhoods were able to use their resources to delay projects more successfully than the nonwhite neighborhoods were able to (Seattle, 2015; Einstein, 2019). All of which has funneled advantages generally to white home and property owners as the large jump in property values continue, and funneled disadvantages to the generally nonwhite population as can be seen in displacement demographics (PSRC, 2022; Winters, 2022). Under racial planning, one can see community engagement processes like design review as advantaging white people in the city and disadvantaging nonwhite people.

Williams' argument about inaction in planning is also relevant to the critical analysis of community engagement processes. As it says, planning inaction can be seen through communicative planning approaches that do not explicitly focus on racial justice and do nothing concretely to reduce the racial wealth gap or spatial segregation in the city. There are similarities and connections between what Williams' argument and what Davidoff and Krumholz wanted out of planning. Davidoff, who believed planners should be advocating for the poor and least advantaged, states that “if the work is not specific in its redistributive aims, then it is at best inefficient. If the work is not aimed at redistribution, then a presumption stands that it is amoral” (Davidoff, 1978). Davidoff would agree with Williams in this assertion about inaction in planning. One could see Davidoff arguing that a planner should advocate against community engagement processes that fail to redistribute advantage to the nonwhite disadvantaged.

Williams argues that planners must actively interrupt racial planning and re-direct advantages to nonwhite people and the built environment in which nonwhite people live. Krumholz, who believed in equity planning and reaching the goal of equity in the city, has similarities with the ends-based planning Williams is arguing for. This call for actively disrupting racial planning very much requires planners to use their professional expertise and the relative power that comes from that expertise, to politically advocate for changes in the built environment that disrupt racial planning. This championing of issues will probably put the planner in positions in which they must publicly disagree with elected officials and/or certain parts of the public. If housing scarcity in a city produces housing unaffordability, homelessness, displacement, lack of choice, and segregation that disproportionately disadvantages nonwhite people, then any process or policy that causes a delay in the construction of housing that would address and alleviate these disadvantages reproduces racial planning and therefore white supremacy by getting in the way of disrupting the funneling of advantage to white people and funneling of disadvantage to nonwhite people. In summary, regarding concepts like racial and social equity, an equity planner would view policies or processes that inhibit racial and social equity as needing to be removed or reformed and would work to convince state officials to do so.

Heidenheimer, Heclo, and Adams (1990, 3–5) remind us that “government inaction, or nondecision, becomes a policy when it is pursued over time in a fairly consistent way against pressures to the contrary.” Seen through a racial planning lens, without an affirmative goal of racial justice, non-adoption of racial justice becomes official policy through inaction. In critically analyzing planning practice and community engagement with the lens of state/planning inaction, if racial justice, diversifying the field, and hearing from publics normally not present in community engagement processes are goals, the continued inaction on racial justice could be a major factor in why people do not participate. The profession has seemingly given a lot of thought and resources over the last decade to find ways to hear from more underrepresented voices, which could be understood as trying to better the process. However, material conditions have not only failed to get better over time but on the aggregate have gotten worse over time (Goetz et al., 2020). Consider things like good-quality, affordable, housing for nonwhite people and the connection of the amount of wealth that nonwhite people have missed out on due to struggles around housing (Shapiro, 2017). Or consider the calls for better access to safe comfortable schools, access to jobs, and concerns around living in a food dessert. When there is no action for nonwhite people but there is action for white people, how can the community engagement process expect significant participation from nonwhites and others that have not gained in such a process? What trust should nonwhite groups have when the process does not deliver the ends in a timely manner, if, at all? It may feel almost insulting to ask for more of their time when planners or the government have not provided even the basics for them. Trust is important in building public engagement, and the best way to build that trust in public engagement is to actually produce material planning advantages for nonwhite underrepresented communities. So far that has been hard because it requires going against white supremacy and disrupting the hoarding of advantages and instead equitably sharing advantages between nonwhites and whites.

In confronting whiteness, Williams argues that disrupting racial justice and installing reparative planning should be planning's core mission. Williams’ reparative planning falls into a category of ends-based planning theories that are concerned with outcomes and material and measurable changes towards accomplishing a goal through aspects of the built environment. Reparative planning combines the more colloquial understanding of reparations for nonwhite, particularly Black African American people in the US with planning and the built environment. Reparative planning is not just about the material and economic demands of the reparations movement but also the moral reconciliation or apology that is needed from the state and white society to African Americans. His idea is not solely focused on the built environment but seeks to repair the affective, epistemic, and moral schema that allows widespread white advantage to go unchecked. A core mission of racial justice and reparative planning follows in the history of other ends-based theories such as advocacy planning and its goal for the redistributive function of planning. Along with equity planning and its goal of achieving equity and reducing inequality in society.

Steil's antisurbodination planning (2018, 6-7), which reparative planning builds on, argues that planning has failed to take a clear stand to address racial disparities or to "systematically recognize the role of planning in the white supremacist construction of US urban and suburban space." Steil also writes that planners must shift from an anticlassification perspective, by which he means a perspective that condemns all decisions made with discriminatory intent, to an antisurbodination perspective that "acknowledges the need for conscious policies aimed at preventing the exacerbation of, if not eradicating, durable inequalities" (Steil, 2018). This is to say planners must move away from a practice focused on race neutrality and toward a practice that is committed to dismantling white supremacy. Race neutrality or race-neutral language is another favorite trope of whiteness that allows one to feel as if they are not racist while upholding the reproduction of whiteness and white supremacy.

Key to disruptive racial planning approaches such as reparative planning is the need to educate white people and planners on white supremacy and whiteness. In future classrooms, the confronting of white ignorance of both whiteness and white supremacy is important if the larger society is ever going to work against the reproduction of systems and hierarchies that continue white advantages. Therefore, increasing the number of classes on critical whiteness, opportunity hoarding, exclusionary white communities, and racial animus should be a goal (Williams, 2020 & Lung-Amam, 2021).

The Dark Side of Community Engagement:

Urban planning theories influence urban planning practice. Understanding the major influences on the planning field helps identify a major problem American cities are trying to deal with. I agree with other writers that American cities are struggling to build key infrastructure and enact changes to the built environment at the scale and speed needed to meet demand (Blumgart, 2021; Demsas, 2022; Grabar, 2021a). The problem is, in the US, planners who attempt to address these problems or crises have a hard time moving forward and completing even basic projects, let alone transformational projects. That difficulty is not because these projects are bad projects and do not address the problems, but because many community engagement processes are prone to delay tactics that lead to significant cost increases and the watering down of projects, making them less effective (Demsas, 2022; Einstein et al., 2020; Levy, 2021). The dark side of community engagement (Blumgart, 2021), which could also be described as the power of delay, refers to how a lot of power is granted to a relatively small number of nonrepresentative citizenry who delay or kill projects regularly. Delay increases costs and uncertainty during the development process. Such increases in cost and uncertainty lead to a reduction in the scope, scale, and the number of projects that can be paid for and developed. In essence, participatory community engagement processes are causing delay for new development and change in the city. The community engagement processes I am referring to include regulatory tools and practices well-organized citizens use to delay projects such as design review, environmental review, historic preservation, public comment, and community boards.

Blumgart (2021) writes about how the current community engagement review process puts too much power in the hands of a few privileged citizens, which leads to long delays and the killing of projects. There are several ways in which community engagement causes delay in practice. Research from Einstein et al. (2019) not only gives an example of how public meetings are used to cause delays for housing and land-use decisions, but also provides insight to the demographics of people who mostly participate in community engagement. Einstein et al. (2019) looked into whether community participation related to the development of housing and zoning were biased towards an unrepresentative part of the "community," therefore reducing housing affordability. By coding thousands of instances of citizens speaking at planning and zoning meetings and by matching individuals by voter registration information, the authors find that the people participating are generally white older, male, longtime residents, voters in local elections, and homeowners. Einstein et al., (2019) in their research also found that these individuals overwhelmingly are not in support of more housing, which is generally counter to the position of the overall population.

Einstein et al. (2020), in their book Neighborhood Defenders, outlines a theory about how land-use regulations and nonrepresentative political participation diminish the supply of housing. Writes about an example of an old church in Massachusetts where a group of motivated neighborhood defenders organized to raise a variety of concerns and used multiple regulatory tools to slow down, alter, and stop the development of a dense housing project. The project took 11 years to complete and include 60% fewer housing units than originally planned. Einstein et al. (2021) in other work also looked at whether the demographics of those who participated in planning related community meetings changed or became more representative with the higher usage of online forums (e.g. Zoom) due to Covid-19. The authors find that participants in online forums are quite similar to those in in-person forums and similarly unrepresentative of residents in their broader communities. They are also equally as opposed to the construction of new housing as they are in person. These results suggest powerful limitations to public meeting reform, especially in the absence of mobilization aimed at enhancing political interest and efficacy. In essence, the construction of new housing can be delayed or stopped by consistent opposition found in public meetings, and this opposition does not subside even when meetings in theory should be more accessible by moving online.

Another way construction of new housing is delayed is due to some of the processes related to design review and the micro-managing of aesthetics. Grabar (2021) writes about the tension between aesthetics and affordability that has been prevalent in the US for the last few decades. Design reviews and codes that focus on the design of buildings have driven up costs due to delays and building inefficiencies for the look of the building. Many architects argue these extra costs and codes come without producing the great design of buildings they had hoped to have. Grabar discusses how design review, which is a community engagement process where volunteer private citizens oversee and make decision on the design and look of a development, puts community members in a position of power to judge aesthetics, which are both subjective and are used to keep certain people out of said communities.

The power of delay is not only affecting new housing construction. It is also delaying, weakening, and killing capital infrastructure projects such as transit rail projects. Demsas (2021) looks at the multiple reasons why it costs much more to build things in the United States than it does in other countries. Rail projects, highway expansion, and housing all cost more than they do in other countries. The author, through interviews with researchers on the topic and through review of the literature, points to the power of citizen lawsuits often used in state environmental review processes to delay as a major contributor. The State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA), also known as environmental review, creates processes and laws that allow for litigation. Additionally, an unwillingness to maximize productivity by using a 24-hour schedule instead of staying within a relatively small window of fixed working hours is cited by Demsas as another reason for the delay in transit projects. Also, making sure agencies are fully staffed and are practicing infrastructure projects regularly were other major contributors to cost overruns. Overruns on costs make it difficult to finish projects and difficult to garner support for building needed expansions that provide better service.

In summary, the representatives of communities partaking in these tactics are more likely to be white, older, and homeowners which is not representative of the medium to large cities in which this issue is most acute. Current community engagement processes do not take into account the context of broader issues and are not representative, while also causing delays, increases in project costs, and lack of ability to meet the supply American cities need.

What is Community Engagement Delaying?

Community engagement is delaying housing, transit, bike lanes, and renewable energy. One example of the impact delay has on the United States' ability to develop and meet demand can be seen when looking at transportation infrastructure development in the United States. The United States is the sixth-most expensive country in which to build rapid rail transit infrastructure like the New York City Subway, the Washington D.C. Metro, or the Seattle Link Light rail (Demsas, 2021), where the average cost is about $880 million per mile (550 per kilometer). The five countries with higher costs than the United States are building projects that are more than 80% tunneled, whereas in the United States tunneling is used only about 37% of the time. Rail transit projects in the United States cost much more than other projects abroad. The Second Avenue Subway in New York cost $2.6 billion per mile, the Central Subway in San Francisco cost $920 million per mile, and the Purple Line in Los Angeles cost $800 million per mile. In contrast, Copenhagen built a project for $323 million per mile, Paris did a project for $160 million per mile, and Madrid finished their project for $320 million per mile (Eno, 2021).

The high cost for transportation infrastructure does not affect only rail transit. Even infrastructure we should be divesting in due to climate change, such as roads and highways, is increasingly costly to build in the United States. Research has found that states spent almost three times as much to build a mile of highway in the 1980s as they did in the early 1960s (Brooks & Liscow, 2021). Other research showed that cost to construct one mile of interstate highway increased five-fold between 1990 and 2008 (Mehrotra, 2021). This illustrates a trend of rising costs for important infrastructure that dates back sixty years. As Alon Levy writes, “This is not about our wealth: there is no correlation between a country’s GDP per capita and its subway construction costs. Nor is it about geological factors: the biggest factor behind a project’s cost is what country it is in, and costs are fairly consistent even across different geologies ... This is purely institutional” (Levy, 2021). In other words, delay in planning and development processes in the United States is the main driver for the difference in the cost and speed of constructing key infrastructure. Time is money, money is power, power is delaying transportation projects, and a major contributor to that delay of transportation projects and therefore the cost of transportation projects is community engagement.

Planning’s Investment in Means-Based Community Engagement

The American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct is the code of ethics for the highest professional certification for planners in the United States. The first section, covering the principles AICP planners aspire to, includes principles such as: having special concern for long-range consequences of present actions, seeking social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons (recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration), increase opportunities and advance careers of underrepresented groups in the profession, and systemically and critically analyzing ethical issues in the practice of planning (APA & AICP, 2016). It is noted that this first section of the AICP code of ethics is aspirational. These are things the planning field hopes will come from its planners and planning processes, but they are not set objectives that professionals are required to uphold or have strategies for in all planning decisions.

As the previously discussed research from Einstein (2019) showed, there has been significant research on the makeup of the people who participate in the current community engagement process. White, wealthy men are overrepresented in the community engagement processes, meaning the current community engagement is generally not representative in the large and medium size cities in which the lack of supply of key infrastructure is most prominent. The lack of representation has led to a lot of research on how to better reach a more representative population. However, such thinking and research reveals that the field is trapped in framing the question as one of how to make the process better or fairer. This very much is an admission that the field is falling in line with the means-based way of thinking, as there is a belief that a better process will result in the outcomes the field is looking for. There has been little discussion and reflection recently in the profession about whether current community engagement processes are effective or detrimental. Little consideration is given to whether these current practices are aiding in city goals -- such as building enough housing to house growing population, redesigning streets to reduce pedestrian injury or death by drivers in cars -- or whether they are slowing down these initiatives. This framing of questions would require the planning field to reverse its investment in the idea that there is a universally equal process that will lead to desired ends.

"The devaluing of planning theory by practitioners leaves too much of the decision-making in day-to-day planning practice to be based intuition and instinct" (Fainstein & DeFilippis, 2016, p. 3). The lack of acknowledgment and consciousness of planning theory does not negate the strong influence means-based planning has on normative planning practices in the planning field. Means-based planning processes are more concerned with setting up an open and fair process and less focused on what comes out of that process. Just like the example above presents, theorizing on whether a process can be made better to achieve equitable representation with the assumption equitable representation leads to equitable ends instead of theorizing whether said process is or is not helping to achieve the goal of equitable ends shows how means-based planning is the major dominant planning philosophy guiding the planning field.

General themes found in the mix of planning theories that make up means-based planning include the neutrality and/or removal of the planner in planning processes, everyone in the public having valid interests no matter the topic, and not dealing well with power differences among participants. Processes like design review, historic preservation, and public meetings are examples of public engagement processes where the process is designed for the public or volunteer citizens to make a case, come to agreement, and make decisions. The lack of direct political involvement from the planner reduces professional authority on matters of the built environment. The neutrality of the planner also allows for the interests expressed by those in the community that participate to be validated no matter the topic. If during the community engagement process exclusion, degrowth, or a desire for a static city are the interests expressed then these interests become valid even if they are immoral or unattainable. The removal of the professional provides no equivalent counter or challenge to such desired interests. There can be no discussion of whether these should be valid interests or whether they should be ignored. Lastly, means-based planning processes do not deal with power differences, as they hope all parties are equal and all politics are settled before participating in community engagement processes. The research that white, male, wealthier, homeowners are the most likely to participate in such processes illustrates an environment where decisions are made by gaining the approval and permission of the most privileged groups in our society and hoping that such groups both gracefully share power with others and have interests that align with planning values.

Planners in practice observe these themes regularly. This is why educating the community and trying to find ways to convince and cajole the public into having the same interests and values as the planning field has become a significant part of the planner's job. The lack of professional authority for planners, the elevation of community power and approval, and the belief that process will eventually lead to good is what can be found in the community engagement processes influenced by means-based planning. The reason the framing in the planning field is how to improve the community engagement process is because, philosophically, means-based planning is the dominant influence taught and practiced by students and practitioners alike. The lack of knowledge or rigorous theorizing of planning theories therefore aids in the investment of such a planning approach as little serious inquiry in the broader profession has considered whether such community engagement processes are appropriate for the field of planning.

It is not just means-based planning influences that are channeling investment into current community engagement processes such as design review, environmental review, historic preservation, public meetings, and community boards. These community engagement processes are also falling in line with racial planning as they reproduce and funnel advantage to white people and other advantaged groups. Deference to whiteness is clear in the setup and expectation of community engagement under means-based planning and therefore does not disrupt racial planning but instead reproduces white supremacy. All four pillars of the whiteness framework can be seen in current community engagement processes. For example, as Einstein et al. (2019; 2020; 2021) point out in their work, white homeowners are overwhelmingly against new housing and specifically against new housing in their neighborhoods. This finding again shows "whiteness as exclusion" as an outcome and validated value in a majority of community engagement processes that is accepted by the means-based planning process. From the planning side, as a predominantly white professional field, the acceptance of such a community engagement may also stem from the invisibility and durability of whiteness. This calls us to return to the statement of the normalization of white interests as valid, especially when white community concerns are expressed in race-neutral language. The planning field is predominantly white, the single-family neighborhood was subsidized and normalized as the standard, and whites are the most segregated demographic group (Feagin, 2014). Statistically, the general white planner grew up in, is accustomed to, and may live in the type of neighborhood expressing concern, angst, or resistance to the construction of new multi-family housing, transit lanes, or bike lanes in their neighborhood. It is hard to resist white supremacy; it is even harder when resisting means disrupting values, interests, and aesthetics a white planner may also view as having equal validity to the disadvantages nonwhite people have due to their lived experience. As a field, when we do not accept the fact that means-based community engagement does not improve nonwhite advantages and when we do not more forcefully push for deemphasizing such processes in search for something better, we are perpetuating white advantage and nonwhite disadvantage.

Means-based planning and whiteness work in tandem to create and allow for a community engagement process that harms cities by continuing racial planning and reproducing white supremacy. The urban planning field is currently having the wrong discussion around community engagement. Theorizing on how to make community engagement more accessible and equitable in order to achieve racial equity or fairer cities has produced the same results for the last fifty years. It does not work. Instead, a goal of disrupting racial planning and achieving a more equitable city should be set and then planning should theorize and strategize on what policies and processes achieve those goals. Community engagement will not go away, but the relationship community engagement has to development and change will be restructured. Means-based planning must be deemphasized, while ends-based planning must be prioritized.

Ends-based Planning Towards Disrupting Racial Planning:

Overall, means-based planning is not helping to make cities better, but instead is helping cities stay static in their built environments and urban forms. Neither the supply of key infrastructure nor the redistribution of advantages to nonwhite people are meeting the demand present in American cities. If the United States could meet the demand by developing in the same pattern it has over the last eighty years, then it would have already done so. Key infrastructure and advantages are connected to one another. The inability of means-based planning to significantly increase material conditions of core needs throughout the last several decades is why it is time to deemphasize means-based processes. In order to make needed changes in American cities and in order to disrupt white supremacy and racial planning, ends-based planning should be emphasized more and become the dominant normative planning paradigm that influences planning education and practice.

Ends-based planning overall is what the planning field should emphasize. However, following Williams (2020), an ends-based planning towards disrupting racial planning should be a top goal of the planning field. Using housing scarcity in high demand American cities as another example of the racial planning and harm produced under current planning philosophies, I will explain how an ends-based planning approach would differ in its intensity and strategies to achieve the outcome of disrupting racial planning.

The United States is currently in a roughly 3.8 million home shortage across the nation (Freddie Mac, 2021). This lack of supply of homes in the cities and regions where people want to live and work means homes are scarce in these cities. As I have said, scarcity in the housing market drives up the cost of housing that is available making housing and the city less unaffordable to live in. Incumbent homeowners benefit from the increase in home values and are protected from year-to-year rising housing costs due to locked in payment rate from long-term mortgages. Renters on the other hand, due to short term tenures of year-to-year leases, are put into a position where the cost of housing can increase each year, making livability harder. This cycle of increasing rents can cause people to become homeless or essentially force them to move to a place more affordable, usually further out from the city. Historical racist policy and racial planning produces an environment where it is primarily white homeowners receiving the benefit of increased values and secure housing tenure. While nonwhite people are disproportionately dealt the disadvantages of increasing rents, homelessness due to the inability to pay for housing, and displacement from neighborhoods. Dealing with housing affordability, choice, displacement, and homelessness all comes back to producing enough housing for everyone to live in and have ample choices of where to live. Meeting housing demand is a mixture of the housing needed to meet the demand and the additional housing to maintain a vacancy rate of 13% (Freddie Mac, 2021). The scope and scale of achieving affordability in housing is not just about making sure there is enough housing for each person or household. Research from Colburn and Aldern (2022) show there is a correlation between cities with low vacancy rates or vacancy rates of six percent of lower and high costs of housing and high rates of homelessness. Conversely, cities with vacancy rates in the low double digits, between ten and twelve percent, are correlated with higher affordability in the housing market and less homelessness. This indicates the scope and scale required to address the affordability of housing.

More specifically as the lack of supply leads to a lack of affordability for the housing that is presently there, and lack of affordability puts a strain on people's ability to secure stable housing, it also negatively impacts equity and well-being. There is no state, county, or city in the country where a full-time minimum-wage worker can afford a two-bedroom rental (Paddison, 2020). In only 7% (218 out of 3,000+ counties) of all US counties can a full-time minimum-wage worker afford a one-bedroom rental. The same trend is happening for home ownership. The US now has almost 500 cities where the cost of a home averages one million dollars or more (Winters, 2022).

Many of the biggest most desirable cities and metropolitan areas, such as New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco Bay area, Seattle, and Washington, D.C., are where lack of housing and affordability are strongest. For example, the Seattle region (also known as the Puget Sound) currently has a population of 4.3 million people and 2.3 million jobs and is expected to grow to 5.8 million people and 3.4 million jobs by 2050. The region is already short on housing stock to meet the needs of the current population. The Puget Sound Regional Council estimates the region will need 810,000 new housing units to accommodate the region's 2050 population. In

Seattle, the largest city of the region, as of February 2022 the median home price is $829,000 and as of 2020 the median rent is $1,702 per month (Census, 2020; PSRC, 2022; Realtor, 2022). Bellevue, a city just east of Seattle, has a whopping median home price of $1.25 million.

Yet, despite the current state of housing in many of the large and medium-sized cities in America, policies and processes that block and delay the construction of new housing are continually winning out and staying in place. Research in San Francisco, which may be the most unaffordable city in the United States, found that the production of new housing units reduced displacement pressures generally and that new subsidized housing had double the impact on reducing displacement pressures than market-rate housing did (Zuk & Chapple, 2016). Providing even more support to anti-displacement measures, Enterprise Community Partners reports that subsidized housing is the most effective anti-displacement strategy (Brundage, 2018).

An ends-based planner is more concerned with achieving a goal or outcome and less concerned about whatever process must be set up to achieve the outcome. In the case that an ends-based planner's goal is to disrupt racial planning and break the funneling of white advantage, that planner would understand all the context above and would have a strongly defined goal that describes housing supply shortage as reproducing white advantage and reproducing nonwhite disadvantage. Therefore, this planner would define the desired goal as building more housing, both market-rate and subsidized, in order to redistribute advantage to nonwhite people in American cities. As another major theme of ends-based planning is that the planner is actively engaged in political decisions about the built environment and uses their professional authority and relative power to achieve such goals. The ends-based planner would not tolerate any policy or process, especially those enacted or created by the planning profession, that is ineffective at achieving the goal of more housing. The ends-based planner would be even more distraught about policies or processes that delay or block more housing of all types, as this actively goes against the goal of more housing while continuing the cycle of white supremacy and racial planning. The ends-based planner would use any strategy available to remove such barriers and continue towards their goal.

In wrapping up this argument, it should be clear that it is not just housing the United States is lacking in right now. The United States is also failing to build sufficient mass transit and renewable energy even in its most progressive locations (Demsas, 2022; Motavalli, 2021). Much of the major infrastructure in the United States is dangerously overstretched and lagging behind many of its economic competitors and peer countries (McBride & Siripurapu, 2021). The United States' population has just about doubled since the 1960s, when most of the country's major infrastructure was developed. The 2021 report card from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) gave the nation's infrastructure an average score of C-. The 2021 score is up from a D+ in 2017 and ranks as the highest grade in twenty years, but all of that suggests the poor quality of infrastructure that has been present for decades in the United States.

Additionally, the transportation sector is responsible for 29% of total U.S. greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and 35% of US carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions (EPA, 2019), most of which comes from the land use and infrastructure decisions made in the United States that prioritize the car and sprawl. As the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022 report reiterates, cities in particular must reverse and reduce land use decisions that create sprawl, reduce and replace car infrastructure such as highways, roads, and wide streets, and reduce the use and number of cars. Instead, the IPCC says, cities must invest in land use decisions that increase density, walkability, and livability, increase transit and transit service, and increase biking and walking infrastructure that enables fast and safe transportation (IPCC, 2022). The IPCC also writes of the importance of increasing electrification and the increase of renewable energy sources powering cities, as both will help with the mitigation and adaptation of the effects of climate change. Renewable energy is another form of infrastructure the United States is lacking in, as in 2021 such energy sources accounted for 12.2% of total United States energy consumption and about 20.1% of electricity generation (EIA, 2021).

Similar to housing, the lack of supply of new transit infrastructure, bike and pedestrian infrastructure, and renewable energy infrastructure effects affordability, equity, and well-being in cities. The lack of these key infrastructures also continues racial planning and funneling advantages to white people while funneling disadvantages to nonwhite people. Because urban infrastructure forces many people to rely on cars as their main mode of transportation, people are spending between $5,000 and $10,000 per year on a single car versus using cheaper modes of transportation to get around (Roberts, 2021; Wingate 2021). This automobility has obvious effects on affordability but it also exacerbates GHG emissions impacting the security and safety of people all over the planet due to climate change. Noting that the people most at risk to climate change are the Black and Brown or nonwhite people of the world. White supremacy not only puts the global nonwhite population’s health and security at risk, it also funnels advantage to white people domestically, since nonwhite people generally are more impacted by the money and time lost to owning a car.

The issues urban planners face today can be described as an era of crises. Housing supply shortages, housing affordability, sprawl, inequality, racism, and climate change are all crises that cities all over the world, including the United States, are dealing with (Campbell, 2012; Lipsitz, 2006; Osborne, 2015; Reece, 2018; Thomas, 2008; Uitermark & Nicholls, 2017; Watson, 2006). To meet these crises head on and address them appropriately, planning cannot continue to rely on and be invested in the means-based processes that are currently dominant. I agree with Campanella's (2011) argument that currently the planning profession is a limited or trivial profession. There is a lack of vision from planners and there is a lack of courage from the field. That lack of disciplinary identity means the profession tries to do too many jobs or jobs planners are not trained for. The lack of professional authority creates an environment where it is hard for planners to implement proven practices and plans unless they are given the approval of certain key stakeholders, which forces planners to spend a lot of time convincing people. The lack of visionary capacity stems from the previous two aspects infecting the field. So much time is spent on the permitting, educating, cajoling, and the administrative features of the job that little time is left for actual planning and strategizing to accomplish a vision. Very often the status quo is reproduced because planners have very little bandwidth to think anew and plan. Additionally, Legacy (2017) warns that seeking consensus is problematic, as it seeks to remove the political in planning and stops citizens from confronting, wrestling, or challenging the ways urban form should be constituted. So, as McGhee (2021) and Wilkerson (2020) argue in their respective books, white supremacy harms nonwhite people, but it also harms us all. Cities, the nation, and the world are hurt by white supremacy. That is why I argue that planning should deemphasize design review and other forms of community input and emphasize an ends-based planning philosophy and practice in the built environment that actively disrupts racial planning and white supremacy.

Case Examples – Seattle Design Review:

What is Design Review?

Design review is a regulatory process in which building proposals for new residential or commercial buildings are approved by an advisory board. Approval of the building proposal can either be the responsibility of city staff or a group of volunteer citizens. In North American cities, the particular steps, policies, and administration of design review vary. For example, Seattle offers three types of design review: full, administrative, and streamlined. Administrative and streamlined design review are handled by city staff, do not have public comment, and combined cover about one-third of all qualifying building proposals. Full design review is handled by a volunteer citizen board, includes public comment, and covers two-thirds of the qualifying building proposals in the city. It is also important to note that single family homes are exempt from any design review process. Given that this thesis is focused on the dynamics of planning, community power, and the substantial issues with the current community engagement processes, I will focus here on Seattle's full design review process. Although, there are a few examples of North American cities with different design review structures – in Portland, Oregon a greater share of projects avoids full design review, and in Vancouver, British Columbia design review is handled by professional city staff – most cities that have a design review process follow a pattern similar to Seattle's full design review.

In 1994, Seattle implemented its design review program in collaboration with the start of Seattle's Urban Village Strategy of focusing new population and job growth in a small number of neighborhoods throughout the city. The point of enacting design review was to give citizens living in these locations a voice and a way of engaging with the aesthetic, design, social, and cultural appearance and functions of the multitude of new building development coming into those neighborhoods. Seattle's design review splits the city into seven districts, each of which has its own review board. Boards are appointed by city officials and board members are intended to represent five interests: design professionals, real estate or development professionals, community group representatives, local residents' representatives, and local business representatives. Developers present their proposals to the review board at public meetings during two phases of the design review. First, developers go through what is called "early design guidance" and second through what is called "design recommendation." In either phase, the board can mandate additional meetings and deliverables if it is not satisfied with the proposed design.

The purported benefits of design review include the ability to improve site design and to improve buildings aesthetically so that they fit into a "neighborhood character." It also allows developers the ability to be granted departures or special exceptions from certain zoning or building regulations, which can allow the building to better serve the community. Lastly, it creates a satisfying community engagement process that includes citizens early in the development process and has led to a reduction in wasteful legal appeals to development projects. The negatives of design review include a delay in building development, which adds substantial costs to a project. In 2017, it was estimated by the city of Seattle that each month of delay adds $270,000 in expenses (Bertolet, 2017). A smooth design review process adds six months of delay to any given project in Seattle, which can then either lead to a higher-rent project, a project with fewer units, or cause the project to fold altogether (Bertolet, 2017). Developer Maria Barrientos estimates in 2021 that design review cost developers between $600,000 and $800,000 while adding between eight to twelve months of delay (Trumm, 2021). Connected to the negative of delay is the negative that design review instills uncertainty over the development timeline, leading to less financing and investment from banks and investors and reducing the overall addition of new homes and buildings. A last negative ascribed to design review is the influence and organizing of citizens uncomfortable with Seattle's growth obstructing any new developments they can by flooding the board with negative reactions and complaints. This creates a lot of pressure on the volunteer citizen board to make demands beyond the purview of design review, find odd reasons to delay projects, or simply find any reason to be against the project all together.

Given that general understanding of design review and its pros and cons, the next section will share a few examples of the dark side of design review in Seattle and how the process delayed housing projects in a city and region severely in need of housing. Following the examples, there will be an analysis that will identify the key actors in the process, who has the most power, and what deep values are being projected by the citizens who participate. Then I will assess which planning theories and assumptions are informing the current community engagement process of design review. I end by suggesting a collection of planning theories and assumptions I argue would produce a more appropriate planning process that can better address large-scale planning issues.

Design Review Cases

Seattle is currently in a period of significant increases in its transit infrastructure, as the expansion of a light rail system throughout the Puget Sound region is taking place. Accompany that expansion in transit and light rail stations is an emphasis on transit-oriented development (TOD), which refers to the process of developing dense walkable neighborhoods surrounding transit. An example of a design review process in Seattle is the TOD project at the Capitol Hill light rail station at 118 Broadway East (SDCI, 2017). A housing project was proposed that underwent 10 years of public engagement due to its connection to the light rail station. It proposed 400 residential units, 168 of which were affordable housing, below-market units, plus a daycare, all spread through four buildings. The delay during the design review process happened during the design recommendation meeting (the second required meeting). Some of the issues that came up included the review board wanting to pick the color scheme. Examples of comments were: “I would go with a different color” and “I do think that color is used a lot to spruce up affordable housing” (Bertolet, 2017). A lone board member refused to support the project if there was going to be a ground-floor daycare facing a commercial street, saying, “I still think it’s a terrible idea to put ground-floor childcare on Broadway… frankly, I can’t support the project with this” (Bertolet, 2017). There was also a call from the board to make the building fronts less monolithic and add modulation to the buildings, which generally refers to horizontal modulation in which buildings have more ins and outs on the exterior walls. The board also did not like the two street-level residential units and suggested they be turned into retail spaces. A last comment from a board member said, “this is a really good building. I think we were expecting it to be a great building” (Bertolet, 2017). In the end, the design review board mandated a second recommendation meeting which added at least another two-months delay to an already nine-month process up until that point. The project was built in four phases because of the four buildings. The original application for a land-use permit for the project was placed in March of 2017 and the project was completed in June of 2021.

The second example of design review in Seattle is the Passive House apartment complex in the Capitol Hill neighborhood at 1300 East Pike (SDCI, 2017). Passive House is a deep green or ultra-green building energy standard that provides one of the most sustainable, comfortable, and energy-efficient buildings currently able to be constructed. Solis apartments, the name of the project, is a 6-story 45-unit housing project that has become the city's largest apartment building built to the Passive Home standard. During design review, there were objections from the review board over the use of fiber cement siding as the façade material. The board mandated a third meeting primarily over this objection and instructed the development team to explore the use of brick in order to attempt a "more historical feel," as a board member stated (Bertolet, 2017). Two months later the third mandated meeting happened and the original proposal with fiber cement siding was passed, causing a delay of two months for no change to the project and adding extra costs. It took 19 months for the developer to receive the final construction permit after first applying for design review. The project was completed in the summer of 2020.

Another example of design review in Seattle is the process for the Phinney Flats at 6726 Greenwood Ave N. Phinney Ridge is one of Seattle's more affluent neighborhoods. The project is a 4-story 57-unit apartment building (SDCI, 2017). The design review process for this project was rough from the start. The review meetings had significant numbers of upset residents who expressed concern over the project. Much of the residents' comments were focused on issues outside the purview of design review but were still heavily influential on the design review board, which mandated two extra meetings during the process. "The proposed storefront design made no real analytic reference to extant examples and failed in themselves to convey any particular sense of place," is a statement from the review board on their rationale for mandating further design review meetings (Bertolet, 2017). This project was approved 16 months after its initial application for design review. In addition, even with all the public participation and extra meetings mandated for this project, residents of the neighborhood still pursued a legal appeal to the project through the state environmental policy act (SEPA), which added more delay to the project. The Phinney Flats development process started in 2016 and was completed in 2020.

The last case is a twenty-three story two-hundred-unit student housing tower in the U-District neighborhood, two blocks away from the University of Washington at 4131 Brooklyn Ave NE (SDCI, 2022). The project is currently in the design review process and has already been delayed twice by the review board for an extra 4 months. The review board is made up of one landscape design firm that competes with the landscape firm that is part of the project, and three other board members are architects that work as direct rivals to the architect on the project. Therefore, this project seems to potentially be an example of a professional filibuster, meaning the professionals on the board are purposely stalling or delaying due to presiding over a project led by their professional competitors during volunteer periods of time. All of these board members, especially being part of the built-environment professions, should know the city is in a housing crisis and that time is critical. The project started in the spring of 2019 and is still waiting for approval as we approach summer 2022.

Where Does the Power Lie?

As one examines the four examples above, the actors in the design process include the developer or development group, the five-person design review board, the citizenry that participated in the public meetings, and the planners and policymakers. The developers initiate the process by bringing forth a project that is designed to fit within the land use and zoning regulations of the plot and take into consideration the perceived design or aesthetic interests of the neighbors who care. During design review, developers can get backing for potential departures from the code or a special allowance from regulatory rules in the zoning code from the design review board if they agree the departure aids in a design interest of the board or community. Overall, developers are generally designing a project within the confines placed on them by code and hoping their design appeals to the review board. Very little if any power is held by developers in a design process such as this.

The five-person design review board has the final say on whether a project is approved for construction. They can mandate future meetings for projects, which means they can delay projects, adding months to the development of the project. As seen in the Capitol Hill TOD example with the removal of the childcare service, the review board can force changes in the amenities or programming proposed by the development plan. As seen in both of the Capitol Hill examples, they can also influence the color and materials of a building project. This is all to say that the design review board holds immense power in this process over the approval, aesthetics, and timeline of a project.

All design review meetings are open to the public for public comment and therefore there are citizens that also participate in design review. Design review was created to give the community a voice, so this means citizens have a strong influence over the design review process. Review board members are not elected but come from the same area as the participating public and feel great pressure to represent the will of the greater community when strong opinions are expressed. As the pressures of the inadequate supply of housing in Seattle has prompted the building of multifamily buildings to replace single-family buildings, community residents have begun to organize and assert their power by regularly using the public comment forum during design review to delay, shrink, or kill housing projects from coming to their neighborhoods. Hypothetically, this influence could be used to stretch or enhance the amenities, features, or units, though to find examples of such projects is rare.

The planners and policymakers are the last and somewhat hidden actor in the design review process. They create the regulations that developers design within. Policymakers also created and enacted the design review process in the first place, developing a process in which volunteer citizen reviewers are not elected as representatives by the community but rather chosen by council members or other political appointees. The process excuses single-family homes from review, allows public voice in the design of buildings that those participating will most likely not live in. It is a process in which the city has almost no participation on individual proposals. One could say policymakers have power in that design review was created and set up by them in 1994 and therefore could be changed or adjusted in the future. However, the process is set up so that planners do not have a lot of influence on the individual development projects as they work through the design review process.

Legitimized Values and Delaying Housing

In analyzing and reflecting on the case examples of design review one should not only think about where power resides in the process but what values get legitimized as valid during the process and whether these legitimized values line up with planners' or the city's values. First, I will argue that because design review in the US is so poorly defined and is generally decided by private citizens that happen to have a strong interest in, and therefore a strong opinion about, design. Design review, as an overall process, tends to legitimize the feeling that every building needs to be a building I would want to live in, I would want to walk past to admire, or a building so nondescript I can easily ignore it when I walk past. This value can be seen in the comments from the TOD project, in which a review member wanted a “great building” instead of a “good building.”

Similarly, design review legitimizes the idea that change must be litigated, and that current residents act as gatekeepers to the new or young people of the city. A quote from Jacob Anbinder describes this value realized in design review stating, “It’s a movement from a kind of politics that presumes change is an inevitable and necessary part of urban life… to a model of urban politics that presumes change is harmful and unnecessary, and any change must be litigated, or else the city will cease to exist in the state it was in before” (Grabar, 2021). One can see this value expressed by residents of Phinney Ridge who not only showed up loudly to protest at design review meetings but also followed through with actual litigation to try to stop the development of the apartments.

Dr. Anika Singh Lemar is quoted by Grabar: “It’s hard to say something has to look pretty, so to get to any type of specificity you have to say it looks like stuff around it, which is a boring way to address aesthetics” (Grabar, 2021). Style, look, and aesthetics are all subjective. Yet design review and design guidelines legitimize the aesthetic taste of the review board and neighbors, in contrast to the aesthetic desire of an architectural designer who specifically studied design. This legitimation can be seen in the examples from the TOD project around the desired color for the building and in the material choice of the passive house project in Capitol Hill. One reviewer wanted brick because it makes the building feel historic and historic is the aesthetic the reviewer wants to see. The research shows that white homeowners are overrepresented in public meetings and other community engagement, including design review. A racial planning lens reminds us of the history of state-sponsored advantage in the subsidization of single-family houses to white families for decades after World War II and state-sponsored disadvantage in the barring of single-family homes to nonwhite families. It is fair to describe an aspect of “good” design and aesthetics to many of those participating in the design review process as an aesthetic of whiteness. It is an aesthetic that continues the advantages and cultural relevance of whiteness and things connected to whiteness. A stated reason for design review is to give residents a say in how new development looks and feels. When they use this say to minimize and shrink the feel, look, and impact of new multifamily buildings, it allows the housing typology of a single-family home to still feel culturally superior and important. It is a holding to nostalgia in time of change.

Ultimately, as the research and discussion from the above sections discussed, when a city is having affordability, displacement, and homelessness issues building housing to allow the supply to meet or exceed the demand is the best thing a city can do to minimize those issues. The longer a city fails to address housing affordability, the further racial planning is continued in that city and therefore the further white supremacy is being reproduced. Therefore, any policy or process, such as design review, that blocks or delays housing is detrimental to the goal of disrupting racial planning and therefore is funneling disadvantage to nonwhite people. Seattle is one of the cities struggling through a housing crisis. A City of Seattle report found that between 2005 and 2019, Seattle would have needed to produce an additional nine thousand housing units to maintain its baseline ratio of jobs to housing units (City of Seattle, Emsi, & Berk, 2020). Design review is a means-based community engagement process, as seen in these case examples, which delayed and limited the total number of units built that year. Three of the cases were going through design review in the same year of 2017. These three projects add up to about five hundred units of housing. Imagine the total number of units restricted and not built every year due to a means-based process like design review. The main problem with these design-review cases is the units of housing they delay being built. The delay was due to a means-based process that gives validation and deference to the concerns of the majority-white design review boards, instead of to the supply of housing needed in the city.

Looking at the Capitol Hill TOD project, probably the biggest reason for the delay was that a single reviewer refused to approve the project if it had a daycare near a busy street. That street is one of the more multi-modal streets in Seattle. As an arterial road with a good amount of traffic, the street includes relatively wide sidewalks, a dual-direction concrete protected bike lane, a streetcar, and is a key location for transit via bus and light rail. From a planner's perspective, this is a great location to have childcare services, as it can be reached by just about every transportation mode possible in the city. However, the value that gets legitimized in design review is that children are not welcome in key parts of the city. Having a value that is unwelcoming to children also has a gendered impact, as much of the childcare and transportation of children falls on women (Hayden, 1980). A daycare right by the light rail, next to a protected bike lane, near a bunch of other transit, and below housing with possible families with kids works towards city and planning goals such as livability and social justice. Yet the value and goal that won out was no daycare at that location in order for the project to avoid further delay.

Looking at the passive house project in Capitol Hill, what is important to emphasize is the nineteen months it took to get the construction permit for such a building. Passive House Certification is one of the highest levels of sustainable building. During a time when we are facing a climate crisis and cities are trying to be more sustainable in all sectors, this deep green, highly sustainable housing project, instead of being fast-tracked, was slowed down to nineteen months before being permitted. Passive House buildings are excellent at keeping their interiors between 72-78 degrees Fahrenheit, which reduces energy consumption and therefore sustainability but also acts as protection against extreme heatwaves like the one Seattle experienced during the summer of 2021. Yet the value that is legitimized and prioritized in this project is that a certain historic look is more valid than climate-resilient housing. Again, the board’s values are not matching with the values of the city or planners.

Looking at the last two case examples, the Phinney Flats project in the Phinney Ridge neighborhood is a clear example of valuing exclusion and building type. In Seattle most people are aware of the continuing rise in the cost of housing, that people are moving to the city, and the rise in homelessness in the region. Yet the public loudly fought against new housing in the form of a 4-story multifamily apartment. Most of the community input was outside of the purview of what design review oversees, which indicates there was no fundamental issue with the design of the building. The public just did not want that type of housing in their neighborhood, and the design review process gave voice to such desire and aided in delaying housing. The U-District residential tower showcases another pitfall of a participatory design review process, which is the risk of professional filibuster where professional competitors are responsible for evaluating project designs. In Seattle's case, this is not just a small risk but most likely a regular occurrence as thirty-three of the forty-two design review board members are architects, even though only sixteen positions of the design review board are supposed to be filled by architects. This means that, many times, competitors are viewing the design of their competition. Such conflicts delaying project is unacceptable during a housing crisis, but it is legitimized due to design review.

To conclude the examination of the case examples, one can see the means-based influences present in the process. There is both a pragmatic and communicative influence in creating an environment for the public to find agreement with little help from planners. There is a lack of addressing power differences and conflict. Prospective residents are dispersed and unknowable, and this advantages current residents' preferences in design. Moreover, architectural and design competitors have power over their competition during reviews of design. We can also see the communicative influence of consensus in that review board decisions can be held up by one or two board members not agreeing to approve the project. One persistent critique of communicative planning is that in practice people do not leave their personal baggage at the door and think in terms of the common good. I think this problem is evident throughout all four examples.

Therefore, it seems evident that the values that get promoted through the design review process do not match the stated goals of planners and cities. The design review process is not helping to address crises urgently and instead is delaying and killing development and change in the city. In addition to design review not helping to achieve strategic goals, Seattle's design review is a poor community engagement process. Although my argument is to deemphasize means-based processes, I find it important to lay out how poor of a process design review currently is as extra context for why planning should not be so invested in it. First, design review is nonrepresentative. Thirty-three of forty-two review board members are architects, and five of the eight review boards are all white, with only one review board having Black members (Trumm, 2021). Additionally, it does not seem that the Seattle design review program is interested in becoming more equitable. A public records request revealed in the summer of 2021 fifteen pro-housing advocates applied for fifteen openings on design review boards, but none of the fifteen pro-housing advocates were selected (Trumm, 2021). This was followed by eighteen applications for fourteen available review board spots, five of which were from pro-housing urbanists. All five were rejected, and instead the city extended the application period to fill the remaining 4 spots (Trumm, 2021).

The second reason why design review is a poor community engagement process is because it produces extra cost and delay. Recent research has shown that Seattle design review adds $47,000 per unit in costs to new residential development in Seattle for market-rate units (Trumm, 2021). Also, analysis from ECONorthwest shows that it now takes about eighteen months to complete design review in Seattle and 26 months if you add the securing of the construction permit (ECONorthwest, 2021). Moreover, this delay does not seem to produce better-designed buildings, which is one of the stated goals. Evidence of this fact is that the University of Washington (UW) campus is exempt from the design review process, but many of the AIA architectural design awards won by the City of Seattle are for buildings on the UW campus (Pushing The Needle, 2021).

Discussion:

Ends-based Influenced Community Engagement

In pushing forward an ends-based planning philosophy whose goal is shared well-being, a change in the relationship community engagement has to urban planning, development, and change will follow. Initially, when starting my thesis, I thought a heavier focus would be focused on answering what is a different way of doing community engagement so that the slowness and delay can be eliminated or mitigated. However, the thesis has focused on the theories influencing the current process. In the discussion section I will briefly theorize some ways community engagement would change under an ends-based planning philosophy. The first question a planner might have is if they are to accept this readjustment of community engagement, how should we do community engagement to avoid the problems above while still taking into account the public? To me, when thinking about the reshaping of the relationship community engagement has to development and change, it is about lessening the number of opportunities the public has to micromanage individual projects and about lessening the validity of conflicting interests the public pushes for. This change will in many ways lessen the power and influence of well-organized and well-resourced community groups. It will also shift more power and influence to planners, public agencies, and representatives. Therefore, part of the answer to how to do "new" community engagement requires accepting an idea or way of thinking that believes voting is community engagement (Baca, 2022).

Voting as community engagement relates to the planning theories of equity planning and advocacy planning (Krumholz, 1999; Davidoff, 1965). Strategies and plans for the built environment of the city are part of the political platform and calculus for representatives and politicians running for office. Planners may help shape election platforms, but mainly planners use their influence to advocate for particular policies and people and/or work with or push decision-makers towards planning decisions that benefit shared well-being. Voting as community engagement puts more emphasis on the purpose of representative democracy. Doing so shifts public power to being more indirect and allows politicians, agencies, or planners more freedom to move more quickly on changes to the built environment. This can be seen in recent examples such as in Paris, where Mayor Hidalgo has set up a significant car-free zone in Paris starting in 2024 and has built 30 miles (50 km) of protected bike lanes since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. Similarly, one can look to examples of the past and present in Bogota, Columbia, where two mayors, Antanas Mockus and Enrique Penalosa, are credited with revitalizing the public realm through public space, parks, and transportation projects during the 1990s and early 2010s (Berney, 2017). These policies were recently continued by Mayor Claudia López Hernández, who at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic built 52 miles (84 km) of protected bike lanes (Sustainable Transport Award, 2022). Rather than subject their decisions about the built environment to countless public meetings, these leaders took action and will hope voters show their approval in the next election.

The second part of this paradigm change is how the community engagement changes in the face of fewer public meetings or current community engagement processes. First, the questions posed to the public would become more constrained and focused. This may sound limiting and potentially a form of tokenism. However, currently, planners may ask about an individual project and frame the question as “what would you like to see done at site X?” This allows responses to vary, some may say housing, others parking, others a park, etc. Though this may allow people to voice their opinion, this method generally does not help clarify what should happen at the site. In constraining and focusing the community input to be something like: “we’re removing these parking spaces, what should we replace them with?" or "this street has too many injuries and fatalities, would you rather have traffic speed cameras installed or redesign the road to reduce width and slow speeds?" This shift, whereby planners set the community input to a more focused decision and take other decisions out of the community input process, is more useful and speeds things up while still hearing from the public.

Additionally, community engagement would change towards doing census-like canvassing tasks that ask very targeted questions to understand what people want and would support as voters (Baca, 2022). Such census-like canvassing tasks would include things like ethnography, direct mail, and phone and text surveys that are independent of specific projects and instead try to gauge priorities. A couple of good examples of the benefit ethnography would produce by discovering how more of the public acts versus what fewer people say in a public meeting, include ethnographic observation of the outdoor street eateries that popped up in cities across the US due to Covid-19. In Seattle in 2021, on the opening day of the University District light rail station, city officials made three blocks of a main thoroughfare car-free. Many people visited but it did not feel cramped because pedestrians and bicyclists had the whole street to themselves. The counting of people to compare to normal times and the asking or observing of joy people were having in the space would be the new community engagement planners would focus on to provide input to their plans.

Is There Fear Paralyzing Planning?

Given the preceding discussion of how ends-based community engagement might look, the reader may wonder how we can start the transition. I intend to explore this question in future work. However, something I thought a lot about while working on this thesis is whether the planning field is too scared to do anything. I tried to determine if it was ignorance and lack of theorizing that had caused this investment in means-based community engagement or if it was fear holding the planning field back. The answer may be a mixture of both, as much of current planning practice and the influences of pragmatism and communicative planning theory have shifted the profession into either a profession of neutral entities who no longer set the course of action or a profession that much prefers the bottom-up approach. Yet I wonder whether most of the positioning for planners to stay in such roles and the angst among planners for having more professional authority, comes from paralysis and fear of the past. Due to community engagement and historical studies of racial planning, many planners today understand some of the history of outright oppression, dispossession, and exploitation of racial others committed by planners through most of the 20th century. However, people and planners like Robert Moses become a scapegoat of sorts, because people blame planners like him and fail to understand the full context of white supremacy and whiteness. Yes, planners like Robert Moses used their power to inflict racist inequalities on nonwhites through de jure white supremacy, but this was during a period of racial apartheid in the United States. The public co-signed, pushed for, and asked for segregation and de jure white supremacy as well. This is a way whiteness is durable, by creating a caricature that white people can point to as bad. This caricature allows for the system of white supremacy and whiteness to go unexamined. Often it was the public or private citizens using white extremism to get their way, which can be seen: in the concept of sundown towns, in the public lynchings of Black people and the public photography for postcards, in white mobs yelling down Black kindergarteners, and in the white mobs protesting outside Black people's homes because the Black family decided to buy in a white neighborhood. Other nonwhite people had to deal with similar treatment and exclusion. There is a lack of connection made between state action and non-state action, along with a lack of connection between non-state action and state inaction, that increased racial inequalities and nonwhite disadvantages. There is an assumption often being made but rarely acknowledge from the side that use planners like Robert Moses as the crux for why planners should avoid having more power, that the state alone acted in oppression, that the state alone had all the power, and that white planners acted against the will of the majority public. Also, a focus and blame on just the specific figures who were the faces of that era fails to assume or question the possibility of a majority public that wants racism. Therefore, I theorize much of the community power, bottom-up influence in planning assumes that if the public had power during that time, the public would not have done the same things. Therefore, to make sure it never happens again we should strip all power from planners and shift it to the public. However, I argue that this is the wrong path to take. As I said, during this period white people in the general public also wanted white supremacy policy and spatial segregation.

Counter to what I believe is the more dominant belief of the planning field, I believe the role and importance of state action, or a top-down approach is crucial to goals of shared well-being. In writing about the end of modernist planning, Sandercock (1998) briefly recognizes that the state should not automatically be seen as the enemy. Communities can be repressive, exclusionary, and oppressive as well. Seen through the lens of confronting white supremacy, this repression can be seen historically in the examples such as the desegregation of schools by the state and the white public showing up in mobs to curse and spit at Black elementary students. In response, the white public moved and created new municipal boundaries with zoning that excluded nonwhites.

Jane Jacobs, who is often credited with the transition to much of the community engagement processes we have today, in the spirit of intersectional critique, was a middle-class white woman who had time to organize and advocate for change, and this allowed her to help bring about change. However, the system born from that transition did not give voice or power to groups of people that had just been hurt the most by the previous decades of urban planning. Instead, the system served white, middle- and upper-class, homeowners in cities who were starting to feel some of the pains of planning decisions. This latter group was the demographic she fell in. Her work reproduced white advantages in a white supremacy system. An example of this power shift can be seen in the period of the late sixties into the seventies through highway revolts. White communities and nonwhite communities both participated in highway revolts (Avila, 2014). However, in most cities, the two communities did not work together or build a coalition. Most highway revolts were not successful, but many that were successful did so in part by organizing to sacrifice nonwhite communities as the placement for highways instead of white communities. This was a big influence on how community engagement is shaped today, but it came at the cost of nonwhite communities and continues to be not as great a benefit to nonwhite communities as it is to white communities. Born from this period, because of an inability of whiteness to face shame and because of this sensation of fear causing paralysis, one could say the adaptiveness of white supremacy has led to the use of race-neutral language that fights all decisions made with discriminatory intent and allows for means-based processes to hold aspirations of better outcomes without doing work that dismantles white supremacy and fixes inequities.

Racial Planning is Bad for Diversity in the Field

What barriers does racial planning in combination with means-based planning place on the profession's aspiration of diversifying the field? The AICP has diversifying the field as a stated aspiration in their code of ethics. Yet the planning profession, like many other professions trying to diversify their fields, deprioritizes the very things that are attractive to underrepresented or oppressed groups (Thomas, 2008). Many people from oppressed groups want to do things to help their communities. Many want to help create change on a large scale, which often means a change to a system or paradigm. One of the more common reasons one may hear for diversity is the benefit different voices and people bring to an organization, that diversity brings new ideas, and highlights current blind spots in an organization. However, a planning practice largely influenced by means-based theories and that is generally unknowledgeable about racial planning, does not attract diversity into the profession nor does it generally foster the diversity currently in the field. Instead, it leads to the assimilation and shrinking of diversity in the profession.

Consider what is being asked when a nonwhite planner, who is already statistically less likely to go to graduate school because of the cost and time required, gains knowledge and expertise on the subject of the built environment. Because of means-based influences in planning practice that planner is trained to act as a neutral entity or a mediator to aspects, goals, and visioning of the built environment. This neutrality shrinks the influence of diverse experts in the field. Imagine a nonwhite planner having to sit through a public meeting on zoning changes and housing needed in the city and having to listen to white, privileged, wealthy, residents shout down ideas of change because of notions of neighborhood character, views, aesthetics, parking, and so on. Imagine a nonwhite planner having to participate in racial planning that continues funneling advantages to white people. A nonwhite planner knows through data and research that changes are needed and knowing that the absence of these changes has negative effects on nonwhite communities, communities that the nonwhite planner entered the field to help, bear most of the burden and harm. If this planner is unable to help these communities, planning is not an inviting environment. It will only attract those with the mental fortitude to continue a hopeless struggle or those who are willing to assimilate. It shows that planning is willing to cede much of the power it has for changing the spatial environment for shared well-being and that planning is generally not willing to cede whatever remaining power it has to planners from oppressed groups. Therefore, I think planning's desire to stick to current means-based processes and its own form of status quo continues an environment that prevents diversity in the field and stronger influences of ends-based theories on the profession.

A Planning End for Shared Well-being

Williams (2020), in a paper arguing for the disruption of racial planning, offers an answer in the concept of reparative planning. Reparative planning, for Williams, draws on the reparations movement in which state and societal apologies along with material and economic conditions for African Americans are met as an act of reconciliation. Williams does not view reparative planning as only dealing with the built environment but also as seeking to repair the affective, epistemic, and moral schema that allows widespread white advantage to go unchecked. Admittedly, a deep understanding or vision of how reparative planning would work seems to be part of Williams' future work. However, I wanted to step in and engage with the ideas of racial planning, white supremacy, and reparative planning, as I hope my thesis adds to the conversation and theorizing around the future of planning that is concerned with racial equity and ultimately the destruction of white supremacy.

To start with, I struggle with the notion that reparations, generally thought of as a large cash payment as a form of repair and rectifying, can be applied cleanly to issues of the built environment or influenced by urban planning. I also wonder whether reparative planning alone should be the answer as the main concern of the future of planning. For example, imagine a reparative planning that achieves homeownership for all Black people as both a stable form of housing but also as property to create wealth with in the long term. Jared Clemons makes a critique of wealth, which is that capital accumulation or wealth-generating is necessarily extractive because the processes by which wealth is built are exploitative (Clemons, 2022). The large jumps in home sale prices and therefore the value of homes that can be refinanced are what is used to increase material advantages. Population increases, a lack of building new housing, a lack of supply of current housing, and a growing demand for housing have created the circumstances for current homeowners to generate wealth at the expense of others. This is not a system I want to perpetuate.

Additionally, how does one deal with possible conflicts in which African Americans receiving reparations in part via urban planning and the built environment want homes and land uses that we know as planners are inefficient and destructive to the climate and the environment? As I discussed earlier, the standard has been set and has been normalized. What is seen as high social status by white Americans has penetrated into the goals of many nonwhite people. Are large homes on large plots of land and sprawled out from services an acceptable elevation of built environment reparations for African Americans? One could imagine a policy in which the overall number of such land uses does not increase but instead different winners are chosen and African Americans get to take over the properties of white people. This would be similar to land reparations that have happened in South Africa. Though temporally this may enhance racial equity in the United States and therefore be an improvement over the status quo, I am not sure such a move would be optimal or liberatory. Also, with the wealth this country has, I am sure we do not have to pick winners in society. There are enough resources and advantages to go to everyone. Admittedly this grouping of questions may very well fall into what Williams (2020) may describe as a failure to “reject the paternalistic impulses of entrenched planning traditions which would deny African Americans the right to assert, to the extent possible within planning processes, principles of self-determination and self-development (see I. M. Young 2000).” Within this quote, there is a statement of “within planning processes.” Part of what I have argued for in my thesis is a major normative change in current planning processes toward an ends-based planning. I believe that reparative planning would take the form of an ends-based approach however, a planning goal concerned with stability and well-being is more where my work is directed towards and where my work does something different than Williams’ reparative planning.

Something else that I am keeping in mind and thinking through, is a global concept of reparative practices that is not just about reparations and deconstructing whiteness in the United States, but is also about how to take care of nonwhite people around the globe. How do we take climate change, anti-Blackness, and white supremacy across the globe and deal with all of them in a new just world? Sandercock touches on this in writing about how planners respond to the complex issue of difference. She argues they must plan for heterogeneous publics, provide special power to specific social groups that have been historically excluded, secure representation for those groups in decision making, ensure participation without assimilation, develop a multicultural literacy, have flexible knowledge of epistemologies, and plan with mobilized communities and state-directed planning.

I am interested in the shared and continuing well-being of the public. I do not believe shared well-being can be achieved in the United States currently without growth and redistribution. I argue for a framework that embraces state power in an ends-based approach, that believes in an educational focus of multiple epistemologies, and one that promotes discussion and reflection in the profession as well as in broader public discourse. I am advocating an ends-based planning approach of shared well-being through planning that views its core mission as increasing growth and redistribution as the political strategy to get to shared well-being.

A Framework – For Supporting Well-being as a Goal

Fogelsong argues that American urban planning was created to balance the tensions between capitalism and state intervention and therefore is a tool for the reproduction of capitalism. Harvey argues that planning ideologies change to fit the economic realities of the time and that urban planning is a state power used to stabilize society in order to reproduce and grow capitalism. These are important criticisms of planning to be taken seriously by two theorists who critique planning through a Marxist lens. Due in part to the earlier confrontation with whiteness, I think it is more appropriate to think of this from a racial capitalism perspective. Racial capitalism refers to the argument that racism, white supremacy, or the racialization of people is a twin system of capitalism (Robinson, 1993). It argues that these twin systems were born at the same time, and they are so interwoven with each other that one cannot appropriately talk about the impacts of one without the other. Also, feminist theory and the impacts of a gendered or patriarchal system, which is probably older than both capitalism and racism, is having a large influence on a non-liberated world. I do believe that a gendered-racial-capitalist world cannot be the overarching governing system if there is to be justice, sustainability, and well-being globally.

So, I worry and take seriously the thought that by theorizing planning to deal with the crises of the times more appropriately, I am in essence reproducing gendered-racial-capitalism. I do think there is urgency needed to address these crises. Change is happening regionally around cities and to cities, even if their built environment stays static. I believe we are in a period where we must build a lot and have a lot of development to address our problems. I am hoping my framework can make planning a tool that creates cities, spaces, and environments that help push American society towards being more open to transformation to a world beyond gendered racial capitalism.

I argue that community engagement, currently, is a large reason why cities' built environments are static and are struggling to keep pace with the issues and changes happening to the city more broadly. When looking to answer why and how such community engagement processes continue to exist with little reflection on the effectiveness of the processes and little theorizing of something new, I argued that means-based planning theories are the strongest influence on planning practice and the reason why we have the community engagement processes we have. I believe cities and planning will continue to be slow and not live up to their potential as long as the profession prioritizes means-based planning approaches.

Therefore, I propose more broadly that planning prioritize ends-based planning theories in professional practice, as this will allow cities to be dynamic and keep up with the pace of change needed in cities. More specifically if planners are interested in addressing the many crises facing cities, allowing growth, redistributing resources and advantages, and being reparative all at an acceptable urgent pace, then I believe a framework of planning towards a goal of shared well-being is helpful. Inspired by aspects of the work of Davidoff, Faulidi, Sandercock, Williams, Snyder, Roy, Krumholz, and Flyvbjerg, my proposed planning for shared well-being framework is an ends-based framework that views the main goal of planning to be creating shared well-being. In its most idealistic version, shared well-being exists at a global scale. At its most basic level, shared well-being is framed around a city-wide and regional scale. The framework includes: 1) The goal of planning is the promotion of well-being in a multicultural human society, 2) Planners are not neutral but political people that understand growth and redistribution are the political strategies of shared well-being, 3) Planners must have epistemological flexibility that is liberatory, 4) Planners must use knowledge and power to transform environments and systems towards the goal of well-being.

First, the goal of planning is the promotion of shared well-being in a multicultural human society. Shared refers to a range of scales in the populations of people planners are concerned with. At its most basic level shared well-being is framed around a city-wide and regional scale. This is the scale that most planners are probably most comfortable with. Neighborhoods, communities, and sections of the city are where most planning practice and engagement take place. At its highest or most idealistic version shared well-being is framed around a global scale.

The drive for well-being is universal, but access to well-being is not universal due to oppressive systems that are part of the fabric of the United States. Our current society provides access to well-being for some and undermines well-being for others. I define well-being as a condition or state of being where one's physical, mental, and emotional needs are consistently and sufficiently being met. It is a condition in which a person has significant discretionary energy rather than all or most of their energy spent on surviving relatively small units of time such as day to day, week to week, or month to month. Though feelings of satisfaction and agency generally come from well-being, well-being is heavily influenced by objective measurable conditions that include some subjective feelings. Breaking it down further, resources, stability, safety, social connectedness, and mastery are the five components I would define as part of well-being. Resources can be defined as having meaningful access to relevant resources like food, housing, clothing, sleep, and more without shame, danger, or great difficulty. Stability comes from having things one can count on to be the same from day to day and knowing a small difficulty will not set off a domino-effect of crises. Safety refers to the ability to be ourselves without significant harm. Social connectedness to people and communities and spaces is when one experiences belonging to something bigger than oneself. Lastly, there is mastery that comes from being able to influence what happens to oneself, having a sense of purpose, and having the skills to navigate and negotiate one's life (Full Frame Initiative, 2009). It is important for urban planners to think about the ways the built environment impacts the achievement of these themes of well-being. Not all of the themes are under the direct control of the planning field, but many of them are. Take housing for example. It is a basic resource and something in which lack of affordability impacts one's stability and stress/health. Similarly, the placement of such housing can have ramifications on education, jobs, and social connectedness.

Lastly, the piece about a multicultural society in part is an understanding and acceptance that we currently live in a connected world due to globalism and that migration has already created global cities. It is in part connected to the highest ideal of shared well-being which is global in its context. The oppression of groups does not stop at the borders of a city or the United States. A shared well-being of the United States at the cost of shared well-being of the global south is not liberation from an exploitative advantage funneling system, but instead exportation of such a system onto the globe. It is also understanding that due to crises like climate change, there will most likely be more places that are currently habitable that turn into uninhabitable places. Therefore, as cities absorb climate migrants, cities should be open to new people and populations, making sure not to ostracize the newcomers, and adjusting to and accepting differences in a changing environment (Sandercock, 1998).

The next part of the framework is planners are not neutral but political people that understand growth and redistribution are the political strategies of shared well-being. Within this framework, planners must acknowledge and accept the political nature of planning and the shaping of the built environment and urban space. I often think about my experience in planning school, where visiting professional planners felt the need to censor themselves while answering a planning student’s question on what they would recommend because they did not think they could take a stand politically. Overall, self-censorship is not bad. However, I find experiences like these as emblematic of the retreat to neutrality I observe in the field.

Planners must understand that we are currently in an era of a lack of supply of key infrastructure sectors such as housing, transportation, and energy. However, the United States and arguably the world are wealthy enough and have enough resources to build the supply needed to meet the demand of the future. Growth and redistribution should be seen as the key political strategies for achieving shared well-being. Trying to pick winners and hoarding advantages has led to the predicament cities and societies are in now. It should be made clear that growth does not relate to GDP, nor does it relate to growth in consumption or consumerism. Growth refers to the important essential needs of everyone in the society and making sure cities have enough to allow people to have a wealth of good choices while also comfortably being able to afford to live. Housing, transportation, and energy are good examples of the sectors in which growth needs to happen so that cities and society have the supply to support everyone. While the supply grows and once the demand is met, redistribution of advantages, resources, and material goods should be adjudicated equitably and fairly, so that shared well-being can be accomplished.

Seen through the lens of racial planning, urban spatial environments and arrangements have tangible real impacts on the well-being of people and these impacts can endure for generations. This inherently makes planning's work political. This understanding brings to the forefront the politics in support of policy action or policy inaction (Steil, 2018). The scope of work for which the planner is responsible expands when we accept that the planner is a political agent. The scope of work needed from the planner will be similar to the scope of work required of a mayor or city council member (Davidoff, 1965). Concern for physical planning, social planning, and economic planning may feel large, but it is work that politicians need help with, and it is work that through planning education planners are well equipped with the skills to do. Additionally, I believe this way of seeing planning pushes the planner into the role of advocate for the common (public) interest and a champion of certain policies and spatial visions that support shared well-being.

This new approach will also change the way planners interact in community engagement processes. No longer will planners primarily be neutral entities surveying the public about what is permissible. Planners, instead, will more strictly form the context of the conversation in which the community is engaging. We will see a broader transparency of what the planner is advocating for and why, along with a clearer but in some ways narrower scope of the choices and actions to be considered by the community. Sandercock (1998), in her writing about radical planning theories, describes a piece of radial planning ideology, which requires the planner to abandon the state and embed herself within the community to best serve its interest. If shared well-being is the goal, then I generally argue against this aspect that comes from radical planning theories. The state is quite good at scaling things up and without the state it is hard to bring about any community betterment at a large scale (Friedmann, 1987 p. 407). Instead, planners must draw on their personal experience with the built environment, which is enhanced by the specific knowledge accumulated by being a planner, and their relative power that comes from the state. In having a politics of shared well-being, the planner resists when state interests do not align with public interests of well-being, but also acts with the state when the public has interests that oppose shared well-being.

Next in the framework is that planners must have epistemological flexibility that is liberatory. This idea has to do with the training and education planners receive, both in school and as they progress through their careers. Having knowledge of white supremacy, racial planning, and the investment in whiteness (Goetz et al. 2019; Williams, 2020) is important. Also important is knowledge of feminist critiques of planning and the ways urban spaces have been shaped to favor the interests of men and disadvantage women (Hayden, 1980; Roy, 2001; Sandercock, 1992; Snyder, 1995). Also important is knowledge of capitalism and a class critique of planning (Fogelsong, 2003[1986]; Harvey, 1978). This critique provides an anti-gendered-racial-capitalist set of knowledges or epistemologies that helps erase blind spots and lead towards plans that achieve the goal of shared well-being. Having flexibility in epistemologies also lends itself to planners being open to new knowledge and information. I argue it also produces a sense of humility in understanding that no one can be knowledgeable in everything. To be an expert is not to know everything, it means one knows more than the common person in a given discipline. In an interdisciplinary field like planning, to be good at being interdisciplinary one cannot read everything but must read enough to have substantial knowledge to appropriately engage in the topic and also know who to go to when more knowledge is needed.

The last part of the framework concerns planners using knowledge and power to transform environments and systems towards the goal of shared well-being. In an era where more supply is needed, growth is happening, changes to the built environment are slow, and the redistribution of advantage is possible, a dynamic city and dynamic planners are needed and at this point, they are things that must be fought for, advocated for, and organized for. Planners and the planning profession, if adopting an ends-based planning theory, have to leverage power to enact these changes. I often think about a scenario where the planning staff of a large city bands together and makes clear through commentary in the media that the staff recommended plan is being shut down for a watered-down plan approved by the mayor. Such a scenario could bring out into the public debate the question of which plan is better and establish a record for citizens to look back on when determining which plan worked or not (Davidoff, 1965). However, this would be a scenario in which planners used their relative power to advocate for a preferred plan.

The use of the special knowledge and expertise planners have is the other side of this piece of the framework. In many current processes, the public and politicians hold ideas and views that in practice do not make sense. If talking with the public one might observe that single-family zoning is popular, but so are affordable housing, climate action, and safe streets, all of which are inherently contradictory to single-family zoning. The public's stated interests are irrelevant when they do not make sense and doubly so when they harm the well-being of others. The planning profession has a lot more information, research, data, and examples of best practices from other cities, and so it is in a better position to use its knowledge toward shared well-being. Admittedly the use of such knowledge, when going against the stated desires of community members and groups, is uncomfortable for many planners. This uncomfortable position of power and influence relates to the paralysis present in the profession due to the past. Planners are afraid they might be acting paternalistically. Although, I personally do not have concerns with the idea of planners acting paternalistically to the people of the city, I think having a gendered-racial-capitalist epistemology should be part of one's planning education, in combination with a dedicated goal toward shared well-being. Under such a scenario planners should feel more confident in having to advocate for and use their knowledge and power, even in a paternalistic manner, since it is towards a goal of shared well-being.

Conclusion:

The planning field is currently too invested in community engagement processes that regularly produce delay to changes in American cities. Community engagement processes such as design review, environmental review, historic preservation, community boards, and public meetings have granted well-organized mostly white citizens the power to inhibit cities from building enough housing, transportation services, and renewable energy to address the demand cities are facing for such key infrastructure. The planning field's investment in such community engagement processes comes from an over-emphasis on means-based planning philosophies. Means-based planning influences both planning academics and practitioners into overvaluing a planning approach that is more concerned with setting up an open and fair process than it is with accomplishing planning goals and material changes. Influenced by planning theories such as pragmatism, communicative planning, and rational planning, planners are supposed to act as neutral entities that mediate and respond to the interests and values of the engaged public, even if their interests are exclusionary, unsustainable, or inequitable. This approach allows involved white community members to say no to anything that does not meet their dominant standards of what is appropriate.

However, means-based planning is not the only reason why planning is so invested in community engagement processes. Plannings deference to white interests, white aesthetics, and overall whiteness reproduces white supremacy by funneling advantages to white people and funneling disadvantages to nonwhite people. Williams (2020) calls this “racial planning,” which is a set of consistently practiced American planning policies that have produced a racialized space in American cities that benefits white residents.

Therefore, racial planning and means-based planning work in tandem to create an environment where current community engagement processes fail to provide the key infrastructure needed in American cities, while also perpetuating white supremacy and whiteness. This dynamic can be seen in processes like design review where mainly white homeowners control the type, shape, look, and time-to-completion of multi-family residential development, the kind of development nonwhite people are more likely to live in. Additionally, design review is causing long delays in housing development in major American cities across the nation during a period in which most major American cities do not have the housing stock to meet demand. The delay in housing construction caused by white interests adds costs and uncertainty to housing development, which results in fewer homes being built each year and worsening the predicament cities face. The shortage of housing in high-demand cities offers increased home values to white homeowners while causing disadvantages to nonwhite people such as decreasing affordability, increasing homelessness, and increasing displacement risk, all of which harms cities and people living in and around the region.

After about sixty years of this relationship between planning and community engagement, one can conclude that the combination of means-based planning and racial planning has been harmful. It will not allow cities to be dynamic and livable. American cities currently need to build many different things, and they need to do so quickly. Building extensive key infrastructure, and doing so densely, will allow cities to be more affordable, more sustainable, more equitable, and therefore more enjoyable. Therefore, I argue that planning should deemphasize design review and other forms of community input. It should instead emphasize an ends-based planning philosophy and practice in the built environment that disrupts racial planning and pursues a planning end of shared well-being. Shared well-being cannot currently be achieved in American cities where supply does not meet demand and white people hoard advantages. To reach shared well-being planning must act politically to appropriately grow key infrastructure and advantages so that planners can equitably redistribute advantages to nonwhite people. Planners must also view shared well-being as a liberatory goal that frees people from exploitative systems of patriarchy, racism, and capitalism. Pursuing liberation in this way requires planners to have epistemological flexibility: to understand and value different knowledges. Lastly, planners should be prepared to use their professional authority, knowledge, and relative power to actively champion policies and processes that transform environments and systems toward shared well-being.

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