

## **A Case Study of Modern Milwaukee Neighborhoods: Characterizing the Landscape Through Redevelopment, Race, and Citizen Participation**

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### ***Abstract***

Milwaukee has seen another period of revitalization in recent years. Though it remains segregated, each neighborhood is seeing an implemented redevelopment plan unique to their neighborhood. The developmental landscape and citizen participation within the landscape is generally not studied. This qualitative archival case study looks to catalyze the conversation through a racial lens. This study will analyze different design principles, participation methods, the implemented participation methods, while considering the racialized and historical aspects of redevelopment in the city of Milwaukee.

## ***Introduction***

This project is a case study of Milwaukee's modern neighborhoods through its redevelopment and revitalization process. I intend to target specific developments in these neighborhoods. The purpose of this study is to highlight the patterns within the landscape of Milwaukee's development scene. I would also like to consider how it can be characterized through analyzing redevelopment and the redevelopment initiatives in different neighborhoods and amongst different social groups. While many academic writers focus on revitalization funding and neighborhood strategic planning through critical lens, as well as the redevelopment process in Milwaukee, there is a distinct lack in literature considering the developments themselves. This includes what they were built from and what it says about the environment, particularly in a segregated city like Milwaukee. I look to provide a brief example of developmental differences within the city. I hope that this project begins a conversation about the physical manifestation of the revitalization process and how it reflects the demographic makeup of the neighborhoods in the city. Gaps that exist in the literature and discourse around development and participation are the failed projects, which go unreported. Successful projects report attainable success measures to maintain funding, which does not leave room for critique. While this study does not delve into all failed projects and initiatives, I hope to catalyze conversations surrounding race, citizen participation and what the developmental landscape means for different citizens. I attempt to explore Milwaukee's landscape through asking questions such as "What patterns emerge by looking at Milwaukee's development initiatives?" and "How does citizen participation play a role in the redevelopment process?" Through these questions, I hope to address the initiatives within the city and to consider the citizen participation in these neighborhoods. This study is important

as it looks at redevelopment and redevelopment initiatives through a racialized lens and one of citizen participation.

### *Literature Review*

The overarching interpretive framework employed in the study is related to Critical Race Theory (CRT) but is more correctly a set of theories related to the hierarchical racialized societal structure existing in the United States today. This study will work with these critical theories of race in the context of community development to demonstrate the developmental difference in the communities of those who have different ethnicities. The critical theories of race assert that “a system of white supremacy creates a racial hierarchy through which power, privilege, and material resources are unequally distributed” (Blanks, 2018). These theories go beyond explaining the inner workings of the societal hierarchy, but also provide avenues for ways to change these structures. These structures are also historically predicated on the unequal distribution of resources and power (Omi & Winant, 1994), which indicates a lack of decision-making power in non-White communities. Anti-Black policy, which will be explored in the historical context of this paper, is a physical manifestation of the racialized hierarchy. Joe Feagin focuses on the plight of Black Americans from slavery until the modern era. Feagin asserts that this naturally provides an activist dimension to the work in CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006).

Milwaukee has a history of activism and the mobilization of grassroots organizations in response to inequitable redevelopment processes. Milwaukee is one of the most segregated cities in the United States, so this racialized developmental narrative is important to this study. The inequitable power distribution embedded within our institutions and community development, as

explained by the critical theories of race, also suggests that there is a lack of citizen participation within planning initiatives. As such, an added lens implemented in this study is the Citizen Participation Continuum developed by Silverman, which shows the spectrum of citizen participation amongst citizens in community developmental efforts. This perspective provides a spectrum of citizen engagement and citizen participation regarding community development and develops conversation on the role that community development corporations (CDCs) play in this continuum regarding citizen participation, which falls in the middle of initiatives of the likes of grassroots participation or community-based organizations and Government Based Organizations and private corporations, which produce instrumental participation amongst citizens according to the model (Silverman, 2005). These two ends of the spectrum look to either instrumentally delegate tasks to citizens to complete projects, while grassroots tend to emerge as responses to safety concerns and influence the agenda of community-based organizations through grassroots activism.

CDCs tend to fall in the middle of the spectrum along with nonprofits. Government-based engagement is based on the perspective of the government officials who are elected as representatives and should, therefore, represent the population. In terms of community development, this looks like citizens solely relying on officials to make the decisions, as they are trained to do so and don't have field expertise. (Glaser, Yeager, & Parker, 2006). CDC's value democratic processes and work more intimately with community members, although their reach is not far due to staffing, funding, and general resources. "When the CDC movement was initiated in the sixties, community development efforts consisted primarily of local residents pressing for changes to improve their neighborhoods" (Frisch & Servon, 2006). These movements emerged to

protest the conditions of urban renewal, redlining, and displacement (Vidal, 1992). These coalitions evolved from grassroots organizations in the ensuing decades in different cities, into organizations with relationships with government, churches, and philanthropic organizations. According to a diagram by Frisch & Servon, CDC's now serve roles as intermediaries of sorts between neighborhood residents, religious institutions, or small businesses and city government & CDBG, banks, foundations, and private corporations and developers. As it evolved, the CDC began to implement comprehensive plans in the early 1990s, which called again for more citizen participation to secure funding. This, however, was not without criticism. Activists who critique the role of CDCs also assert that they are "just a branch of city government, or a front for various corporate funding schemes." (White, 1993). Others would argue that collaborative revitalization strategies increase citizen responsibility, but not control, resulting in a pushed local or state agenda (Elwood, 2002) while disinvestment in Black and Brown communities continues.

Disinvestment in Black communities in the form of exclusionary policies like redlining and urban renewal are broad examples of this general disinvestment. This is of course in the context of deindustrialization and urban decline with American cities, which has also influenced poverty, safety, and community violence (Bentancur & Smith 2016). While CDCs are effectively seen as conduits of solving urban social dilemmas in regard to poverty, other political theoretical approaches, like neoliberalism, would suggest a shift towards economic solutions that focus on building relationships between public and private sectors. New Urbanism became a savior for Milwaukee's downtown area, which came from the 1999 and 2010 updated plans. There is also a desire to increasingly draw the Creative Class to the city's urban center (Saboori, 2013). This approach also employs citizen-based participation via the Charrette process, a design-based

planning workshop, which is a product of the Congress for the New Urbanism. (Rollison, 1996, p. 81).

With a lack of sociopolitical context, however, a power dynamic between planners and residents is created (Bond & Thompson-Fawcett, 2007). Another perspective is the Urban Regime Theory. These neoliberal theories see cities as competitive growth machines, which must have a primary focus on the private sector as a means of redevelopment and economic revitalization. This perspective would have little to no citizen participation as it focuses on competition and private corporations stimulating the economy or developmental politics, which are employed by city administrators. This perspective would also seek to revitalize economies through strategies meant to improve local circumstances of employment and development, to boost competition and growth—not to practice ‘redistributive politics’ (Harding 1999). It also argues that the city is made up of struggles between groups, which benefit some and disadvantage others, primarily through seeking methods of production. This directly clashes with critical theories of race, which suggest there exists not only social and racialized hierarchies in developmental differences but historical dimensions of race which play a role in development (Winant, 2000).

Milwaukee’s redevelopment patterns have had different legacies for Black, Brown, and White citizens. For example, the Black community in Milwaukee has suffered from racist policies, like Plessy V. Ferguson, which promoted segregation and the underfunding of communities throughout the United States. The archival and historical construction perspective was used in the following articles to illuminate the reality of the post-civil war reconstruction era, the Jim Crow era, and the existing redlining policies which pushed Black families out of neighborhoods and into underfunded clusters of slums, which were destined to be destroyed (Ware, 2021). The realities of

segregation were pervasive and long lasting. Ware argues that the government played a crucial role in ensuring residential segregation, in conjunction with banks, who provided high interest loans to Black families, and homeowners associations. This was all followed by Negro Removal, which Niles Niemuth explains in his thesis regarding Urban Renewal and the Black community (Niemuth, 2014). Ware continues to mention how these legacies of segregation perpetuated by the government have had long lasting legacies on the health, wealth, education, and overall quality of life for many Black people and those in low-income impoverished, inner-city neighborhoods. Niemuth characterizes the destruction of Black neighborhoods through the construction of highways, civic centers, government buildings, and other developments. As Black families were continuously relocating to Midwestern cities due to the Great Migration, Milwaukee's Black population began to be removed from different areas. After the US Housing Act of 1949 signed by President Truman, to clear slums, many Black families were displaced from their neighborhoods after being classified as areas beyond rehabilitation. "Between the years of 1952 and 1973, the City of Milwaukee conducted seven urban renewal projects, mainly clearance, and completed a highway system" (Blanks, 2018). Kilbourntown-3 was a neighborhood located on the Northside of Milwaukee, housing much of Milwaukee's Black population. Milwaukee's Community Renewal Plan (CRP) was responsible for this as well as the conservation projects which took place in the then primarily White Midtown neighborhood. Vliet street was K-3's primary business district with groceries stores, shopping, bars, churches & mosques, and other small businesses, but the area was destroyed due to hierarchical racial framing from Joseph Tamney, a chair of Marquette's Sociology Department in the 1960's. "Tamney identified K-3 as a community that lacked strong, structured social relations and where many people felt alienated."

(Blanks, 2018). This framing allowed for discourse of a lack of social cohesion in Black neighborhoods to affect neighborhood and city plans.

Despite the emergence of discriminatory development processes, Niemuth focuses on the resilience, empowerment, and the usage of Urban Renewal by Black families in relation to the Civil Rights Movement. As Urban Renewal hollowed out and destroyed Black communities, collaborating organizations like the Midtown Neighborhood Association and The Urban League were able to shift the focus to CDBG to emphasize local control where they saw a lack of decision-making power. Highway 43 was constructed from 1962 – 1968 through the heart of Bronzeville, the center of Black life and entertainment in Milwaukee (Blanks, 2018). The Zeidler Administration developed the plans as 8,000 Bronzeville homes were eliminated according to the Near Eastside Area Plan from the City of Milwaukee. This only proliferated segregation and the concentration of poverty (Niemuth, 2014) as well as a lack of safety and violence within the community. Grassroots organizing and resistance measures were an important aspect of decision-making power in Black communities, especially regarding housing.

The destruction of K-3 and the lack of implementation until 1967 led to the Open Housing Marches. With 200 days of marching in sight led by Father Groppi and the NAACP Youth Council along with legal methods employed by Vel R. Phillips, tensions continued to rise due to a lack of political clout, segregation, and oppression. on July 30, 1967 after reports of police brutality. The 1967 riots saw the destruction of property, looting, and an eventual curfew. Eventually after demonstrations and the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Fair Housing Laws were passed in Milwaukee (Rozga, 2007). The evolution from old Urban Renewal policy which looked to redevelop blighted inner cities, clear slums, and allow for new housing construction, was slated

to transform into citizen-led activism and participation as city officials were increasingly forced to pay more attention to the concerns of residents (Bonds & Farmer-Hinton, 2008).

In past decades, examinations of the ways in which we use federal and city funding through the Neighborhood Strategic Planning (NSP) processes have ignited the discussion on exactly how funding empowers communities (Bonds & Farmer-Hinton, 2008). From 1997 to 2008 the city of Milwaukee introduced the NSP to allow community members to participate in the allocation of funding more deeply from the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) program. The biggest difference between the Urban Renewal slum clearance policy and the community empowerment perspective was simply the language from some perspectives. Some studies found that the funds designed to be distributed to low-income people were diverted to city agencies to pay for city services and staff, which leveraged less power than the previous system. (Bonds & Farmer-Hinton, 2008). Another related initiative was the Minneapolis revitalization program (Filner, 2006). Minneapolis in the 1980s spending average was \$4 billion in redevelopment of the downtown and \$52.9 million spent in neighborhoods. Even with the existence of CDBG, the funding went to suburbs rather than blighted neighborhoods. The limitations of participatory empowerment through Filner's perspective are the hierarchy of homeowners over renters, who tend to be excluded in the decision-making processes. Blanks also mentions the limitations of CDBG and the framing of deficiencies in the Black community by city administrative leadership.

'African Americans are differentiated and further penalized in the CDBG community organizing program in a variety of ways: limited engagement with Black citizens in decision making, funding of primarily white-led organizations, limited competition in

grant-making, implementation of criminological ideology and strategies, and achievement of transactional outcomes.’ (Blanks, 2018)

While there seems to be criticism of government agencies, and questions of CDCs relationship to citizen participation in development, there seems to be little to no outside critical analysis to organizations like Habitat for Humanity and other nonprofits (Kenny & Bonds, 2015).

Other projects and initiatives such as HOPE VI were designed to renovate and replace public housing for mixed-income housing, which was criticized as resembling urban renewal and causing gentrification. The Choice Neighborhood Initiative was built from this and was designed to revitalize and sustain communities, granting high-quality access to low-income residents, while using locally driven strategies. Many of these strategies were collaborative in some ways, but informative in others, with residents desiring a transfer of power to plan their communities (Harling 2020). The reviewed literature should provide a context for the rest of the study, which looks to characterize the developmental landscape after revealing federal historical policy as well as local policy, which have led to the conditions of segregation and poverty which heavily affect Milwaukee today.

### ***Methodology***

The methodology of this study is a qualitative case study. A case study is “an in-depth, multifaceted investigation, using qualitative research methods, of a single social phenomenon” (Orum, Feagin, and Sjoberg, 2006). The purpose of this study is to characterize Milwaukee’s developmental landscape through key areas, and to analyze the citizen participation methods employed in the target areas. This study also focuses on the unique relationships that residents

have with redevelopment based on their spatial concentration. Archival data will be the most effective in describing Milwaukee's landscape as well as providing historical context. This should limit, but not eliminate, potential bias. Since the research for this study prioritizes archival data, the peer-reviewed articles for the lit review have a heavy focus on historical data, race theories, and the citizen participation aspect in redevelopment and revitalization. Much of the literature was also theoretical in nature; Each source builds on one another in a discourse analysis process. Only a few had physical examples of citizen participation, however, the archival methodology attempts to fill in the gap. Rather than focusing on a small section of the city, such as the downtown area, this study looks to provide a holistic outlook on different sections of the city.

The Unit of analysis for this case study falls into the society level category since the focus is on different developments in four different neighborhoods in Milwaukee. These data subjects were selected through viewing the area plans from the City of Milwaukee Department of City Development. I also looked at the catalytic projects in the area to develop the scene of the general revitalization plan. I further explored different neighborhood plans in key areas. Along with these area plans, I will view the involvement of the neighborhood associations in the areas as well as key stakeholders involved in revitalization projects, which include nonprofits, schools, banks, as well as other organizations. Furthermore, regarding commercial avenues, Business Improvement District (BID) and websites producing content on the development scene, showcasing Milwaukee's commercial development. For other neighborhoods with a large residential focus, specific CDCs and connected initiatives will be referenced. These neighborhoods are the Near Northside (NNS), Near Southside (NSS), Near Westside (NWS), and the Eastside (ES). The study will also highlight different specific developments or development initiatives. Through my

research questions, the landscape of Milwaukee's participation initiatives in relationship to community empowerment will be thoroughly explored. The relationships I seek to explore are the existence of unique differences within Milwaukee's developmental landscape to certain neighborhoods and their demographics, key events, and key stakeholders.

To analyze the developmental landscape in Milwaukee, I will be considering the initiatives in each neighborhood, while providing examples of specific developments or plans which have come from the initiative. This will involve breaking down the individual characteristics of each neighborhood. I will then be examining the patterns that arise from the data sources, while considering the demographic nature and history of the areas. This qualitative analysis will incorporate the framework of critical race theory and the theory of citizen participation in planning. As a case study of Milwaukee's development, the strength will be the holistic approach in considering the neighborhoods and emerging developments from the neighborhoods. The data used is also generally from objective sources, so researcher bias will not be as prevalent in this study as others. Concerning the limitations of the study, while there will be detailed qualitative data, the lack of quantitative data will not provide enough information to critically analyze any of the CDCs or even initiatives. Furthermore, limitations may lie also in the loose structure, which may make finding development patterns more difficult.

### *Characterizing the Developmental Landscape*

An interesting development is the NWS's North 27th street corridor. The need for development was found in the 2017 Near Westside market analysis by the City of Milwaukee Department of City Development, which was adopted from the 2004 NWS Area Plan, SOHI

District Master Plan, Avenues West Action Plan, NWS Design Charrette, and Near West Side Partners (NWSP) Strategic Plan. The revitalization initiative is also listed as a catalytic project, which looks to transform the area into commercial space. The NWSP is a community development organization with stakeholders such as Marquette University, Advocate Aurora Health amongst others. This organization has taken on a large portion of the revitalization efforts in the NWS. Milwaukee's NWS Final project report in 2017 also indicated that the Marquette area had a predominantly White, student-filled, population, while other areas served Black populations.

The Near South Side of Milwaukee used to have a primary Polish population; however, the population has shifted with immigrants and with the area having an early Spanish speaking presence in the 1920s. With neighborhood change came different economic situations. The Milwaukee Christian Center (MCC) serves as an agency for the City of Milwaukee Department of Neighborhood Services' Neighborhood Improvement Project, which improves housing conditions of eligible homeowners, and develops affordable housing, while simultaneously giving 'at-risk' young adults in the neighborhoods opportunity to learn construction skills while earning their GED through their YouthBuild program. The NIP guidelines state that it must reside within one of the NSP areas also known as the CDBG areas. In 2016, the MCC-NIP 'dropped' a house onto a vacant lot, which is another aspect of the revitalization aside from the home repairs. Along with this is the Building Neighborhood Capacity Program, which looks to build relationships and skills in Clarke Square, Muskego Way, and Historic Mitchell St. in the NSS predominantly Latino population, who make up nearly 70% of the residents.

The NNS of Milwaukee has a predominantly Black population, who make up 60% of the residents. On the NNS of Milwaukee, Sherman Phoenix, an entrepreneurship hub sits across from

the Milwaukee Police Department District 7 on W Fond Du Lac Ave. A local developer and entrepreneur created the hub, which houses a couple dozen businesses which thrived until the impact of COVID-19. With taglines like rising from the ashes, the development was born out of rioting and destruction of a BMO bank branch as well as other businesses. The 2016 Milwaukee Riots were the result of the fatal shooting of 23-year-old Syville Smith by Milwaukee police. Residents indicated that the racialized poverty, economic conditions, lack of ownership, and lack of decision-making clout exacerbate the outrage from Smith's death. While Sherman Phoenix provided an avenue for economic revitalization in the neighborhood, a City of Milwaukee created program called The Milwaukee Renovation/Employment Initiative (MERI) was created in the months following the shooting to support quality housing and jobs. This initiative saw residents work on projects for income. Informational meetings about the program from the city, which only allowed developers to purchase the \$1 foreclosed properties that they would sell. While the goal of 100 renovated homes was passed and a success according to Mayor Tom Barrett, many of the residents were disappointed that the developer focused initiative will cause gentrification.

Another NNS development is from the Habitat for Humanity's (HFH) revitalization program in Midtown. The residents of the Midtown neighborhood are diverse, with a 40% Black population and a 36.7% Asian population. Midtown is a primarily residential neighborhood, which has a history of housing blue collar workers in the early 19th century and distinguished Victorian architectural styles. In the 1950s and the 1960s, Midtown shifted from a middle class to a lower-class neighborhood. Urban Renewal eventually demolished half of the neighborhood's buildings, redeveloping them into housing units, while leaving the rest. The project was originally slated from 2018 - 2020, although slowed from Covid-19, to construct, repair, or rehab a total of 100

homes. This initiative will invest more than \$10.3 million in the repairs. The goal is revitalization and stable affordable housing according to the HFH website. The framework used is based on quality of life. “The framework focuses on first understanding the concerns of the residents and then empowering these residents to lead the projects they want to see.” The other framework used is “sweat equity,” which sees the homeowners contributing 300-500 hours of construction.

The NES of Milwaukee has unique developments as well, including distinct development and development initiatives in the Harambee neighborhood and on Brady St. In Harambee, The NES area plan, adopted in 2009, looked to create the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District to revitalize the neighborhood. There was a series of community listening sessions, a design Charette through UW Milwaukee’s Community Design Solutions, which looked to eliminate blight, encourage rehabilitation, open walkways, and promote pedestrian orientation of the street. In 2018, Vel R. Phillips Avenue was opened with a reopening of America’s Black Holocaust Museum on Bronzeville Week, a city initiative to celebrate Black culture and pay homage to the historic Bronzeville neighborhood. The Harambee Greater Neighborhood Initiative has filled in gaps within revitalization in the neighborhood capacity through the LISC Sustainable Communities Initiative. The HFH, like in Midtown, has been a primary developer of homes. While many employees and leaders of the initiative saw it as a coalition which could leverage projects towards creating equity, residents in steering committees saw the initiative as promising to ‘make a change’ in the neighborhood and leave once the numbers are satisfied (Bonds, Kenny, & Wolfe, 2015). This perspective came from Harambee neighborhood residents who, as of the 2010 US Census, have nearly a 90% Black population.

Brady street is unique as well. The Brady Street Area Association was formed in 1988 and is still active today with a Facebook page, where all meetings are held virtually. The BSAA is composed of neighbors and merchants, which eventually saw BID #11 branch out of it. BIDs provide avenues for neighborhoods to help market their neighborhood and provide additional services. The Brady St. Revitalization project is a catalytic project listed on the City of Milwaukee website, which looks to see more commercial and mixed-use development. One project by Milwaukee Buck Pat Connaughton's firm Beach House LLC, proposed a two-story building with retail space and upper-level apartment space. The Lower Eastside has nearly a 70% White resident population.

### *Analysis*

The historical components to this study provided much needed context to engage with the qualitative data presented in the rest of the study from the City of Milwaukee's neighborhoods. The provided data was able to give this study a firm foundation to draw on the similarities and differences found. Again, the overarching interpretive framework of the study was CRT or the critical theories of race as well as considerations to citizen participation. This leads us to the HGNI program, the primary source of neighborhood redevelopment would be through the HFH, which would effectively develop the homes, similarly to the Midtown neighborhood. A pattern we can see here is the prevalence of citizen participation and responsibility, but not control nor partnership. One concept used by the HFH is 'sweat equity', which effectively sees the labor of those in need of homes contributing to the development process. This is not necessarily problematic, if the residents planned the policy or the program with equal control. However, the

participation ultimately pushes a local governmental agenda, which effectively sees the residents as instrumental. Frameworks of resident empowerment are visions of leadership who have decision-making power. If there is not equitable distribution in the power dynamics of planning, then the community by default is not empowered and the initiative is instrumental or performative. These power dynamics effectively assume that Black and Brown communities cannot make the best decisions for their communities.

The racial and class assumptions of hierarchy make its way into this conversation, especially when addressing the historical lens of racialized redevelopment. The lack of decision-making power and instrumental participation holds a legacy in many of Milwaukee's neighborhoods of color. This also played a role in the destruction of the Bronzeville neighborhood and Kilbourntown, a thriving commercial district, without the consulting of the residents within the community. Urban renewal in Milwaukee saw redevelopment in Milwaukee to get rid of blighted, ugly areas, but also to reinforce racial stratification and segregation. Those with decision-making power, like the Zeidler city administration, did this while actively ignoring the desires of the community to push state and local agendas, leaving many Black former residents living in enclosed and substandard housing conditions to construct Highway 43. The grassroots resistance measures of the NAACP Youth Council, Father Groppi, and the legal measures like legislation introduced by Vel R. Phillips allowed for community awareness in the quest for fair housing in 1967. There were also countermeasures from many White citizens and city leadership. A case of police brutality during the tense Marches for Fair Housing resulted in the 1967 Milwaukee Riot. The riot saw a strict response from the government along with curfew. The culmination of all these measures, along with the assassination of Dr. MLK Jr., brought about the passing of Fair Housing

Laws in Milwaukee. While the police brutality was a catalyst for the riots, the tensions existed due to substandard housing and economic conditions. Similarly, in 2016, Syville Smith was killed by the police in what turned into the 2016 Milwaukee Riots, almost 50 years later. The same conditions of police brutality, economic depression led to destruction similar to that of the past. In the destruction, a BMO Harris Bank was destroyed, but an entrepreneurial organization was born from the ashes called Sherman Phoenix, which looked to support local entrepreneurs. These were examples of a lack of transformative citizen participation, which led to more radical strategies. These strategies also saw the emergence of MERI, however, with the focus on developer-led community change, the residents saw this as merely a silencing tactic, and ultimately, this was instrumental change as well. This developer-led initiative to boost jobs also resembles neoliberal theories, which look to revitalize this area through the focus on the private sector, rather than transferring power to the community in ‘redistributive politics. Since the developers owned the property, they were given full control over the blighted residential sectors in the neighborhood and, like the HFH sweat equity, the residents would ‘work’ or be provided with jobs to build the homes.

Similarities also emerged within the economic development sphere on the NES with the Harambee neighborhood Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District and the NWS with the North 27th Street Corridor. Both were born out of plans to boost walkability amongst residents and create an economic revitalization plan. The citizen participation was also found in the forms of Design Charrettes and community surveys in these predominantly Black communities. These strategies aren’t inherently bad, however, the conflation of neoliberal design principles with disinvested communities is closer to instrumental participation than grassroots participation.

Contrastingly, Brady St. has seen a period in revitalization through their BID and neighborhood association. In fact, the Brady St meetings hold open meetings and are made up of residents and business owners who live within the area. It is one of the oldest continuously active neighborhood associations in Milwaukee. The Beach House LLC with powerful voices like Connaughton allowed for legal contention when the plan was to be blocked by the common council due to historical preservation. Three key differences can be made in this primarily White neighborhood than the other ones made. The first is the neighborhood association having clout closer to community control than the others. The second is the focus on preservation of the local neighborhood, which Black communities did not see in their neighborhoods. The third is the tension between new developers and the city officials. In the predominantly Black neighborhoods, new developers were, and are, essentially welcomed to revitalize blighted areas. These differences show clear racial and hierarchical differences in the sphere of redevelopment in the City of Milwaukee.

The purpose of this project looked to study the redevelopment narrative of Milwaukee in order to accurately analyze what the key principles of design and development in each neighborhood meant for people of different ethnicities. The goal was to loosely highlight patterns, which existed in, the different neighborhoods that were briefly analyzed. The framework of the critical theories of race provided a strong lens in how the differences in development can be physically, socially, and historically measured based on the different experiences of Milwaukee residents. When the City of Milwaukee hosted immigrants from different ethnic groups like the Polish, Germans, and other early immigrants of the 19th and 20th century, the residents had more control over their own neighborhoods. After urban sprawl caused many White residents to move

out and redevelopment and segregationist planning changed the fate of Black and Brown residents, the hierarchical difference was clear. With destruction of Black communities against their desires was a government policy, the redevelopment of Black and Brown communities without more participation of the residents further creates power dynamics and brings about new forms of segregation. While many neighborhoods are either thriving or improving, without more control or deeper forms of participation from planning by residents, the same economic conditions that led to the riots will persist and many of the initiatives of the city and local nonprofits, while well intentioned, may seem paternalistic, performative, and instrumental.

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