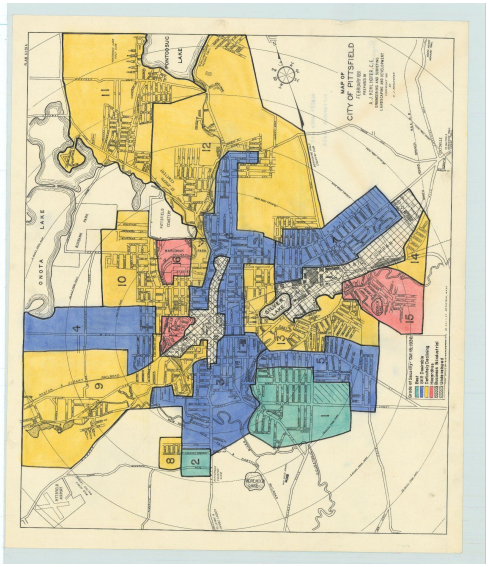

Redlining in Pittsfield, Massachusetts: A Case Study

"Redlining is the practice of arbitrarily denying or limiting financial services to specific neighborhoods, generally because its residents are people of color or are poor." (Habitat for Humanity)

A Report Commissioned by The Greylock Federal Credit Union with the support of Berkshire Bank, the Berkshire Branch of the NAACP, and the MCLA Foundation.

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Abstract

This report was commissioned by Greylock Federal Credit Union with the support of Berkshire Bank to research several questions: Was there redlining in Berkshire County, Massachusetts? If there was, what are the ongoing effects on the Black population? And what can be done to alleviate its effects? The research team focused on Pittsfield as a case study of the questions because three census tracts in the city hold 34.8% of the total population of Blacks in the county. Using the markers of segregation set forth in Richard Rothestein's *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America,* we argue that the presence of redlining is undeniable as evidenced by the lack of Black homeownership and the historic concentration of Black residents in the Westside of Pittsfield. A neighborhood that has historically had poorer housing and environmental conditions in addition to lower life expectancies when compared to other Pittsfield and Berkshire County neighborhoods. Additionally, the planning of roads and the demolition of the property have created further segregation and paved the way for the destruction of the community through gentrification. Using this case study of the Westside of Pittsfield from 1900-1968, we place the current issues in historical context to better explain how the conditions arose in order that the problems may be addressed with an intersectional understanding of the systems that created them. The report ends with a series of recommendations about how financial institutions and the municipality can address the ongoing effects of redlining and segregation.[1]

[1] Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*

Black Homeownership in Pittsfield

Rev. Samuel Harrison is one of Pittsfield's most significant historical figures. He was one of the few Black chaplains in the US Army during the Civil War, serving the famous all Black Massachusetts 54th regiment. Locally, he was an influential leader and thinker who was the minister of the first Black church in Berkshire County, the Second Congregational Church in Pittsfield. He was also a champion of civil rights, fighting for equal pay for African Americans in the military. He was also an early Black homeowner in the city.[2]

For the purposes of the report, Rev. Harrison's story is notable not because of his extraordinary accomplishments, but for his fairly ordinary tale of homeownership. In 1850, when he came to Pittsfield, he found housing near Onota Lake and eventually moved to Third Street, only three blocks from his church on First Street. He stayed there seven years until he could raise the money to buy a lot and build a house. Harrison relates the story in his autobiography:

> In the fall of 1858, we moved into a house which we could call our own. I suppose I was in debt about one hundred and fifty dollars, to three persons, fifty dollars each. I laid the matter before a friend. He thought the money could be secured from the Berkshire County Savings Bank by placing a mortgage on the property, which I did.
>
> But afterwards I found I had made a financial blunder. It was three hundred dollars instead of one hundred and fifty. I had to pay seven percent interest, and I gave my note for one hundred and fifty dollars to the builder. I aimed to discharge the mortgage which the Savings Bank held. I paid not far from one hundred dollars of interest. I was housed comfortably in my own shanty after years of anxiety and toil, and, I may say, of prayer.[3]

His house was inherited by his children, then grandchildren, and finally great-grandchildren until it was purchased by the city of Pittsfield in 2004 to create a museum in Harrison's honor. Harrison's story plays out the American dream of financial security and generational wealth through property ownership.

Harrison, however, was unusual for his time. Most Blacks rented in very cramped quarters. When Harrison died in 1900, a large portion of his congregants still lived in poor circumstances. In a sermon, he wrote about one of his parishioners, the formerly enslaved woman Pendar and her family, which consisted of three generations of women who lived in a hovel at the edge of town with no work and little food to eat.[4]

Indeed, Harrison's is one of the few stories that we can tell of generational wealth in Pittsfield for a Black family. The Westside of Pittsfield, which was known as the Black part of town even as far back as Harrison's time, is still characterized by poverty, poor housing conditions, and lack of opportunity.

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[2] Autobiography of Rev. Samuel Harrison
[3] Ibid.
[4] Harrison, "Pittsfield Twenty Five Years Ago, A Sermon".

First, a look at the poverty indicators. For this, we turn to "Morningside and Westside in Pittsfield, Ma: A Historical Perspective," an effort to track neighborhood changes through the time period of 1990 through 2020 based on census data and housing analyses from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC).[5] According to the report, the percentage of families living below the poverty line in the Westside has quadrupled from below 10% to above 40% between 2000 and 2019, and the unemployment rate in 2019 was triple that of the rest of the City. According to the mapping done by the Opportunity Atlas, a collaboration between the U.S. Census Bureau, Harvard University, and Brown University, the Westside Neighborhood has one of the lowest median incomes in the city. At the age of 35, Black children who were raised in the neighborhood are expected to have a median income of only $20,000.[6]

This disparity is reflected in the housing conditions. Nearly 70% of the houses in the Westside in 2019 were built before 1939. Unsurprisingly, the vacancy rate is 21.5% which can be categorized as "hyper-vacancy.[7]". The research within this report supports the conclusion that this pernicious dynamic is an outcome of historical land-use decisions and the legacy of housing discrimination.

Part of the problem is the lack of opportunity. In 2015, according to the BRPC conducted "City of Pittsfield-Westside Neighborhood Land Use and Zoning Analysis," only about 10% of the acreage in the Westside was zoned commercially. A comparison between the 1952 zoning map compiled by the Planning Board and the most recent version of the zoning map shows a significant contraction of "commercial" zoning for this area and throughout the Westside. In 1955, in the area bordered by John Street to the west, Dewey Street to the east, Linden Street to the north, and Columbus Avenue to the south, there were twenty-four parcels that had businesses operating on them. Today there are only three. Additionally, business corridors along West Street and Columbus Avenue that once were home to multi-use, mixed-income buildings–and, crucially, Black-owned businesses–were replaced through urban renewal. The lack of "neighborhood business" zoning designation severely limits the ability of all Westside residents to establish small businesses.

Furthermore, a review of existing health studies conducted by the Grey to Green initiative of BRPC found that average lifespans in the Westside Neighborhood were 9.5 years shorter than those in more affluent sections of the city, such as the SouthEast neighborhood. Notably, this goes against the countervailing common sense that identifies neighborhoods associated with PCB pollution as the worst off, health-wise. The decade-sized gap in lifespan is not entirely explained by the nationwide trend linking income and lifespan. It can, however, be explained by segregation[8].

While it may strike some as shocking to use the word "segregation" in reference to a county and a state that had no overt Jim Crow laws, it's best to remember that housing discrimination was written into federal law, as this report details. Also, a look at census data from 2020 reveals a

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[5] Dominguez, Clarissa. Orluk, Nate. *Morningside and Westside in Pittsfield, Ma: A Historical Perspective.* 19 Dec. 2021.

[6]Brown University, et al. "The Opportunity Atlas." *The Opportunity Atlas*, Opportunity Insights, 1 Jan. 2020, opportunityatlas.org.

[7] Richard Florida, "The Disturbing Rise of Housing Vacancy in US Cities," Bloomberg CityLab, Bloomberg, July 27, 2018

[8] See appendix J "Redlining Impacts on Social Determinants of Health"

portrait of segregation within Pittsfield and compared to Berkshire County. 52.2% of all people who identified as African American, alone or in combination, live in three census tracts in Pittsfield. For the entirety of Berkshire County, 34.8% of all people who identified as African American, alone or in combination, live in those same three census tracts in Pittsfield.[9]

In Richard Rothstein's T*he Color of Law, A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America,* he argues that to assess the presence and effects of segregation, it is best to look beyond official policies (like redlining) and consider things such as lower life expectancy, poor housing conditions, and low income–all conditions we see historically and currently on the Westside.[10]

As hinted above, the lack of overt Jim Crow laws on the books in Massachusetts has allowed Berkshire County to overlook the other ways in which it embedded institutional and structural racial discrimination into its systems and communities, allowing racist practices to persist without examination—without any question or thought at all–creating a false distance between Berkshire County and the racism present throughout the country. We can describe this unwillingness to confront stark truths as oppression by omission. Designing policy from behind this veil hides the solutions so desperately needed. This report will shine a light on how these practices were put into place, how they were perpetuated, and how they continue to play out with an eye toward using this knowledge to finally take real steps to address the ongoing effects.

Defining "Redlining"

The National Housing Act of 1934 established the Federal Housing Administration whose express purpose was to increase access to homeownership by providing alternative mortgage products to the existing standard of fifty-percent down payments. The Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC), founded in 1933, had, as its initial purpose, mortgage relief for homeowners who were on shaky footing as a result of Great Depression-era economics, though it is now infamous for its practice of assigning loan risk grades to neighborhoods. These federal organizations established 87 and 88 years ago, respectively, were not the beginning of racial segregation or economic disenfranchisement. They were, however, at the beginning of an economic paradigm that has since established homeownership as the fullest economic expression of "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness" in the American consciousness.

The term "redlining" arises from the aforementioned HOLC loan risk assessment practices. The HOLC created color-coded maps that divided neighborhoods into four categories so that lending institutions could issue mortgages based on the level of the neighborhood's "loan worthiness."[11] Neighborhoods that were deemed a credit risk would not receive Federal Housing Authority (FHA) loan insurance and were marked in red–hence the term "redlining." As a result, banks, seeking the assurance of FHA insurance, would not issue construction loans to developers, nor

[9] For some perspective; if those who identified as White, alone or in combination, live in those three census tracts at similar percentages, the population living in those three census tracts would almost double and quadrupled, respectively.
[10] See appendix B for Rothstein's full list of questions and markers. See appendix J"Redlining Impacts on Social Determinants of Health".
[11] Rothstein, 64-5

mortgages to co-ops and homeowner's associations, unless they abided by the FHA's strict standards.[12] The loan worthiness of a neighborhood was based to no small degree on the racial make-up of it, and Black neighborhoods were labeled red[13].

On the surface, it would appear easy to answer the question "was there redlining in Pittsfield?" Yes, the HOLC did grade Pittsfield's neighborhoods for "risk", the HOLC had a Pittsfield office from 1936-1939, and two redlined areas are correlated with Black residential settlement patterns captured by the 1930 federal census.

Redlining was only one of many racist and discriminatory policies that came about through New Deal housing initiatives which were tantamount to a "state-sponsored system of segregation," according to Rothstein whose book details how the government's housing assistance efforts were "primarily designed to provide housing to white, middle-class, and lower-middle-class families."[14] African-Americans and other people of color were left out of new suburban communities — many of which had "racially restrictive covenant" clauses in deeds that prevented the sale of the property to non-white people. These covenants applied to developers and subsequent homeowners and were touted as a guarantee of property value.

There were also economically restrictive covenants, which like racially restrictive covenants, were language contained in deeds. These however would specify the cost of construction or appraised value of final construction. Rothstein relays how economically restrictive covenants were employed after the Supreme Court deemed racially restrictive covenants unenforceable by states[15]. Often the costs and appraised values were set at a level that Black families would not be able to afford and thereby still result in racially homogenous neighborhoods even without explicitly racist verbiage.

Prior to receiving the HOLC securities maps, we were able to find racially restrictive covenants in deeds from Becket and Williamstown, and economically restrictive deeds in Pittsfield, which we will detail later in the report.

Redlining and racial covenants existed for a short period of time, (the covenants were declared unenforceable in 1948 and they were outlawed in 1968) but their effects are ongoing. The combination of overt exclusion of Blacks from owning property in new white suburbs and the inability to secure mortgages in Black neighborhoods created the incredible wealth gap we see nationally because property ownership has become a key to garnering and maintaining wealth in the United States. As of 2017, the average Black citizen earned about 60% of the income of the average white citizen, but Black wealth was 5% of the total of white wealth.[16] In 1863, Black communities owned less than 1% of the total wealth in the United States. Today that number is only slightly higher.

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[12] Rothstein, 11-12

[13] Fishback, P., Shertzer, A., LaVoice, J., & Walsh, R. (2020). THE HOLC MAPS: HOW RACE AND POVERTY INFLUENCED REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS' EVALUATION OF LENDING RISK IN THE 1930S. *NBER Working Paper Series.* www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w28146/w28146.pdf

[14] Rothstein interview *Fresh Air*

[15] United States Supreme Court. *Shelley v. Kramer.* 334 U.S. 1. 3 May 1948 https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/334/1/

[16] Ibid.

Also, while the above definition of redlining is generally agreed upon, there are scholars who question the impact that the HOLC maps had during the period they were in use. Scholars note that lending based on perceived neighborhood risk had been well established *before* the creation of the maps, and that, unless private lenders were directly consulted by HOLC offices, private lenders did not have access to the maps.[17] The residential security maps created by the HOLC might then only represent a formalizing or institutionalizing of the existing lender, realtor, and insurer practices. These scholars do not debate the empirical observations in the neighborhoods assigned lower risks seen today, that "Black households were almost entirely concentrated in the highest risk zones on these maps," nor do they assert that the pre-residential security map practices were not based on the anti-Black discrimination specific to the United States of America.[18] This is to say that discrimination already existed, a fact that is clear in historical stories of Black Pittsfield residents' struggles to find housing and loans detailed later in this report.

The discrimination also continues today according to a report published in 2018 by the National Community Reinvestment Coalition that investigated contemporary economic indicators for neighborhoods known to be graded by the HOLC. Although this report focuses heavily on the HOLC maps, what was found is persistent economic depression in neighborhoods graded as hazardous that today are "minority" neighborhoods. Even more recently, in 2019, a HUD investigation into Facebook and other social media platforms found that they were allowing landlords to use users' data on race, religion, and zip code to select who would see housing ads, and, more notably, who would not. After a settlement, Facebook changed its policies, but the exchange speaks to the ongoing discriminatory practices built into housing and the importance of financial institutions understanding the complete picture of how the systems continue to function–through everything from ongoing loan approval practices through to marketing.

Returning once again to the question "did redlining happen in Pittsfield?" the answer is most likely yes, and also it doesn't matter if Pittsfield was officially redlined by the HOLC because housing discrimination was built into the policies of the Federal Housing Authority, and the effects are evident and ongoing in Pittsfield.

Methodology

No historical event exists in a vacuum, so when examining history, it is not only important to look at individual places or events but also at the societies and circumstances which created them. To ignore the larger context of history ignores the motives and ideologies that created systems that continue to persist and impact our communities today.

This is especially true of something that could appear straightforward on the surface–the yes/no questions of "was there redlining?" or "was there state-sanctioned segregation?" *The Color of Law* takes a multifaceted approach to determining the presence of both, asking a series of questions on a wide range of topics, including the politics around public housing; the economic, racial, and industrial zoning laws; the presence of racially restrictive covenants and other

[17] Hillier 397
[18] Fishback, et al, 27-8

involvements and restrictions from federal organizations; highway and road planning; slum clearing and urban renewal; the presence or absence of amenities in neighborhoods; and segregation in schools and jobs.[19] In addition to these policy-based investigations, he also asks questions about the stories told in that time in place. What were local papers reporting? What did politicians say and do? Did people distribute leaflets? Organize? Fear monger?

Following Rothstein's lead, we've drawn from a wide range of sources. Our research includes census records, HOLC records, oral histories, real estate records, archival city records and reports, and secondary accounts, most especially about the Westside of Pittsfield. We give special attention to the oral history interview with Florence B. Edmonds conducted by her daughter in 1980 for the Schlesinger Library of Radcliffe College.

We also drew upon the 1946 Planning Board Housing Study and the 1970 Technical Planning Associates Housing Study commissioned by the city of Pittsfield, and the 1961-62 Master Plan developed for the city of Pittsfield. Using these reports, we show the racialized difference in the quality of and need for, housing. We compare the analysis of housing conditions on the Westside from these reports with Black residential settlement patterns. We also investigate the racially exclusionary quality of residential construction from the period of 1945-1955. The broader context, provided by newspaper articles, helps to connect those reports to the housing experiences of Black families in Pittsfield. We theorize that public perception of the Westside as a whole, and the Deering-Mill-Satinet (DMS) neighborhood, in particular, was the result of segregation limiting Black families to areas in a neighborhood with substandard housing concentrations[20].

As part of our research, the community organization Westside Legends Inc. circulated an online oral history interview devoted to honoring the history of residents from the focus neighborhood. Two responses were generated that represented periods of time that briefly overlapped with our time horizon of 1900-1968. One additional oral history interview, in particular, provided testimony and insight into the migratory connection between Reidsville, North Carolina, and Pittsfield, Massachusetts. This interview also highlighted the role the Wendell Sheraton Hotel played as a driver of employment for Black families. This was corroborated by a longitudinal analysis of employment conducted for two Black families studied, as well as in the cataloging of the place of residence for Black families in Pittsfield post-1940. These latter analyses utilized city directories.[21]

The charts included in this report often utilize census data, land records/deeds, and mortgages. The decadal federal censuses from 1900 to 1940 provided the addresses and tenancy status of all Black Pittsfield citizens reported. For those homeowners during that time period, deed records and mortgage records were used to corroborate addresses and catalog mortgage loan terms. 1920, 1930, and 1940 Pittsfield Collector's Books for Real Estate were used to investigate tax rates for Black homeowners, as well as catalog property ownership of additional plots not used as the

[19] For the full list of Rothstein's questions, see appendices
[20] Akin to the dynamic described by Adolph Reed in *The Jug and Its Contents,* p. 179-197.
[21] City directories occasionally contain conflicting information with more reliable sources, such as the 1940 federal census, and city tax records. Some major categories of employment, however, are revealed: laborer, housekeeping, various employment through the Wendell Sheraton Hotel.

primary residence and therefore not contained in the federal censuses. These records produced maps of location and tenancy status for Black heads of household for 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, and 1940. For those Black families who reported to the 1940 federal census, city directories from 1940 through 1968 were used to produce maps for 1950 and 1960 of the location of Black renters. The 1950 and 1960 maps do not represent all of the Black renters in Pittsfield for that time period; however they do correlate with *Berkshire Eagle* reporting, editorials, and letters to the editor from the 1950s and 1960s that claim racialized segregated settlement patterns in Pittsfield, and also show the endurance of tenancy in the Westside for Black Families.

Additionally, during the summer of 2021, two Williams College students working with us as interns on the project compiled a timeline of matters related to zoning, housing, and construction from B*erkshire Eagle, Berkshire Evening Eagle*, and the *Berkshire County Eagle* newspaper archives for Pittsfield. This timeline spans the years from the inception of the planning board circa 1929 to a reflection on urban renewal's impact on the architectural landscape of a portion of Pittsfield in 1984. The timeline is not comprehensive, but the interns were directed to investigate zoning decisions, environmental factors, housing, and construction related to the themes of urban renewal that Rothstein identified in his book. Our document is not a holistic inquiry into the development of the entirety of Pittsfield nor the Pittsfield Metropolitan Statistical Area–although both are relevant. It is a study of whether land-use decisions, mortgage lending practices, realtor practices, and public prejudice had the effect of segregating and economically and politically disenfranchising Pittsfield's Black citizens.

We feel it is also important to note the sources we could not gain access to or locate, as this too contributes to oppression by omission, and may establish a historical basis for the contemporary assumption of the irrelevance of data disaggregated by race. Whether due to a perceived lack of value, human error, or technological limitations, when attempting to research historical and contemporary conditions disaggregated by race, there is a paucity of primary sources and data. This serves to obfuscate and, in extreme instances, render invisible historical conditions that pertain to Black county residents.

For example, records pertaining to World War II Black veterans' use of the G.I. Bill were either never kept or discarded by the Veteran's Office of Pittsfield; the materials relating to the G.I. Bill that we found were nationally distributed memorandums on home appraisal standards and floorplans of a handful of insured homes. Many potentially useful records that were likely to have been archived at City Hall were destroyed by water damage prior to being digitized. These records would have shed light on many things, including the predilections of the Planning Board.[22] Rothstein points out the importance of seeing what local politicians were saying, so it is particularly frustrating to have no records of communications to the city council, and, for example, ordinance 79 of 1959 detailed the procedures of the Planning board at a crucial moment preceding public housing development in the city.

[22] As Rothstein details in explaining the difference between de facto and de jure racism, the prevailing legal counterargument to judicial relief for African Americans impacted by segregation often relates to intent of potential defendants. Intent may be understood as the combination of what one's personal beliefs, understandings and opinions are with the actions one takes. Communications between the city boards responsible for land use decisions, and particular ordinances may have been more revealing of intent than newspaper articles.

There's a large gap in records held by the Pittsfield Housing Authority. The gap spans 1945 to 1966, a time period when the board considered the preliminary feasibility studies of the Jubilee Hill Urban Renewal Project and Columbus Urban Renewal Project, among many other residential developments. Included in this gap are minutes of board meetings that *may* shed further light on resignations immediately prior to the 1954 Housing Act. Furthermore, at least one housing study we located referenced population survey ins of Black people and families in Pittsfield, but those population surveys could not be located in the records of City Hall, the Local History Department of the Berkshire Athenaeum, the records of the Pittsfield Housing Authority, or in reviews of previous local and regional research regarding the Black population in Berkshire County. The only potential reference is a republishing of a map in the *Berkshire Eagle.* Additionally, in 1966 a panel study was held by the Central City Council of the Urban Land Institute. The City of Pittsfield, the Association of Business and Commerce, and the Pittsfield Housing Authority were all sponsors. All urban renewal plans were reviewed, along with the Central Business District plan, and, as will be discussed later, transportation plans.

Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, for the time period we studied, 1900-1968, precious few remain who can tell their stories from even the vantage point of adolescence. Of those who have completed personal interviews, or are known to the researchers but have chosen not to be interviewed, the eldest was born in the late 1930s and early 1940s. As we have documented herein, the dynamics of redlining that manifested locally were occurring before the conscious memories of most of our living elders and knowledge keepers.

It is worth noting that, in addition to having research gaps for our report, the missing records present larger problems for enacting change based on this report and others like it. The local challenges are detailed above. They also exist nationwide. For example, a fire in 1921 resulted in the loss of the 1890 census records; if the United States federal government were to enact a Reparations Policy for the genocide, enslavement, and domestic terrorism enacted on Africans and African Americans, many Black families may not be able to prove entitlement to remunerations, as some of our ancestries are interrupted by the 1890s census. For example, one researcher's great-great-grandfather was born in Virginia in 1881/2 (as was ascertained by marriage licenses and 20th-century censuses), missing the 1880 federal census and the 1890 federal census. By 1900, this ancestor was on their way to Springfield, Massachusetts. Nothing else of this branch of said researcher's ancestors can be definitively connected to the one known. Aside from rightful claims to inclusion in Reparations, understanding our family histories is empowering.[23]

Our research showed a connection through time between space, race, homeownership status, and access to political power. These connected factors acted as a means of reinforcing lower caste status on Black Pittsfield residents and were reinforced by employment discrimination and urban renewal. The passage of various Civil Rights and anti-poverty legislation at the state and federal level seems to have spurred brief flourishing of community organizing[24] and led to the

[23] For a brief introduction to the importance of knowing one's family history, see the preface to Kendra Taira Field's *Growing Up with the Country; Family, Race and Nation After the Civil War.*

[24] It should be noted here, that an absence of evident community organizing prior to the 1950s may itself be a result of race-based prejudice, and Black community leaders of the time attempting to ensure their community's safety. "Pittsfield Has So Far Avoided a Negro Problem." *The Springfield Republican,* 30 April 1944.

development of organizations and structures to provide amenities, job access, and housing to residents of the Westside, specifically Black Westsiders and low-income families. However, in the Great Society Era, community-led initiatives were hampered by federal changes in anti-poverty funding strategies, and by local opposition to low-income housing development that would have limited the concentration of low-income families in the Westside.

History of Black Population in Berkshire County

It is important to understand that there has been a Black population in Berkshire county since its founding. According to anecdotal sources, Blacks were present from the beginning of white incursion and colonization. Certainly, they were present as early as 1752 when whites settled the town because "many of the early [white] citizens of Pittsfield held slaves." The earliest recorded Black presence in Pittsfield dates to 1761 during the same year the town was incorporated. We also know that many people escaped to Massachusetts from surrounding areas after it abolished slavery in the 1780s.[25]

In Pittsfield's early days, Blacks supported the establishment of the town's agricultural and skilled labor base. There were forty-five Black residents in Pittsfield in the 1790 census. One of the first residents was the enslaved woman Pendar who gained her freedom and made a livelihood in the town until her early nineties. At this time, a few Blacks established themselves in the town as independent small farmers, although most tilled the soil of others.

There was a notable migration of free Black people to the area between 1800 and 1850. Pittsfield, in the 1840 census, had 202 Black residents, the largest number of any town in Berkshire County, which had 1,259 total. Coincidentally, the county and the greater rural New England landscape and economy were undergoing a vast transition. Merino sheep imported to the U.S. created a newly profitable industry--woolen mills. Spurring residential development in Pittsfield, notably in what would later be referred to as the Westside.

As mentioned earlier, the immolation of the 1890s federal census obscures important details that have broader implications, but we do know that at the beginning of the twentieth century, many Blacks left Pittsfield for manufacturing jobs in the West. This mirrors the Great Migration that began in the early 1900s when, throughout the United States, Blacks moved to cities pursuing industrial jobs as agrarian work became less financially feasible. Many of those who remained in Pittsfield were employed in service jobs, such as hotels. But as The Great Migration continued, Pittsfield became a thriving small metropolis, and the Black population grew once more, especially with an in-migration from a number of southern states. This migration also coincides with the expansion of Black families living in the DMS neighborhood, and the concentration of Black Pittsfielders living in wards 5 and 6 (circa 1920-1940).

Southern Blacks moved north en mass, fleeing the wanton aftermath of Reconstruction and Jim

[25] Massachusetts abolished slavery gradually thorugh a series of court cases that began in 1781 and lasted until about 1790.

Crow laws, as well as the economic destitution of the post-WWI South. W.E.B. Du Bois details this inter-south, post-Reconstruction migration of Black people in his sociological treaty *The Souls of Black Folk*. He observed that many Black families in rural areas of Georgia's Black belt were suffering from the post-Reconstruction practice of absentee tenant farming (sharecropping), which incentivized many to move to nearby town and city centers. But there, segregation and employment discrimination ruled the day. Du Bois hypothesized that a functioning rural economy for Black families would be preferable to city life, and the likely outcome of a successful Reconstruction period.[26] Lacking that many Black families chose, and were encouraged by Black pastors, to migrate north.

To highlight this migration, we can examine the relationship between Pittsfield and Reidsville, North Carolina. Between 1920 and 1935, many Black families relocated to Pittsfield from Reidsville. During this same period of time, Greensboro, North Carolina–which was only 30 miles from Reidsville–saw its population swell from about 20,000 people to over 53,000 people. Greensboro's population growth was driven by the expansion of the textile mill industry. In short, in order to escape conditions in the South, Black people moved their lives nearly 700 miles north in search of that place where the self-evident truths expressed in the Constitution of the United States, of equality and liberty, may have been more accessible to them. That place was not Greensboro, only 30 miles away. It is crucial to understand, these families were refugees, who transplanted a community in hope of a better life, in many ways. Might Du Bois' history help more fully explain why Pittsfield was settled upon and not Greensboro? What does it mean to only know one's ancestors as refugees?

Though Black migrants escaped Jim Crow laws, they encountered new forms of discrimination in the north. There were systems in place to assimilate the white immigrants who were also moving into the Westside (and to Pittsfield generally). Whites worked in the factories, moved up in social class, and moved out of the Westside. Blacks did not find the same social mobility or welcome. This is not to say that anti-European immigrant sentiments did not make white immigrants' lives difficult, nor to compare the relative suffering of these two broad and non-homogenous groups of people. It is to say that while European immigrants' cultures, and skin tones, may have *momentarily* prevented them from purchasing homes and building equity through homeownership, these families have not been barred entry to the "middle class" America created by New Deal legislation.[27] Furthermore, chattel slavery and Jim Crow are not mere dints in the founding ethos of our nation. They are clean breaks in the human covenant our national motto "All men are created equal" is founded on. From this perspective, the local implementation of the New Deal and later urban renewal legislation which created and reinforced the structural and systematic disparities observed in the Westside today, are a continuation of the peculiar institution over which our country fought a civil war.[28]

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[26] DuBois, 116

[27] Here we should recall the United State's history of policies that either explicitly or implicitly excluded and exploited African Americans from federally created wealth accumulation strategies; An Act to appropriate the sales of public lands, and to grant preemption rights Pub. L. 27-16. (1841) https://uslaw.link/citation/stat/5/453; An Act to Secure Actual Homesteaders on the Public Domain, Pub. L. 37-73. (1862) https://govtrackus.s3.amazonaws.com/legislink/pdf/stat/12/STATUTE-12-Pg388.pdf; An Act to secure the public welfare by establishing a system of old age benefits, Pub. L. 74-271 (1935)https://uslaw.link/citation/us-law/public/74/271

[28]See recommended readings "History of anti-Black exclusionary federal policies"

How A City Became Segregated

> "If proof of a civil rights violation depends on an open statement by an official of an intent to discriminate, the Fourteenth Amendment offers little solace to those seeking its protection."[29]

Historically and contemporarily, the rates of Black homeownership are low when compared to whites. Of particular interest to this report is the fact that Black families were excluded from accessing federally insured mortgages, which is in stark contrast to the treatment non-Black immigrants faced.

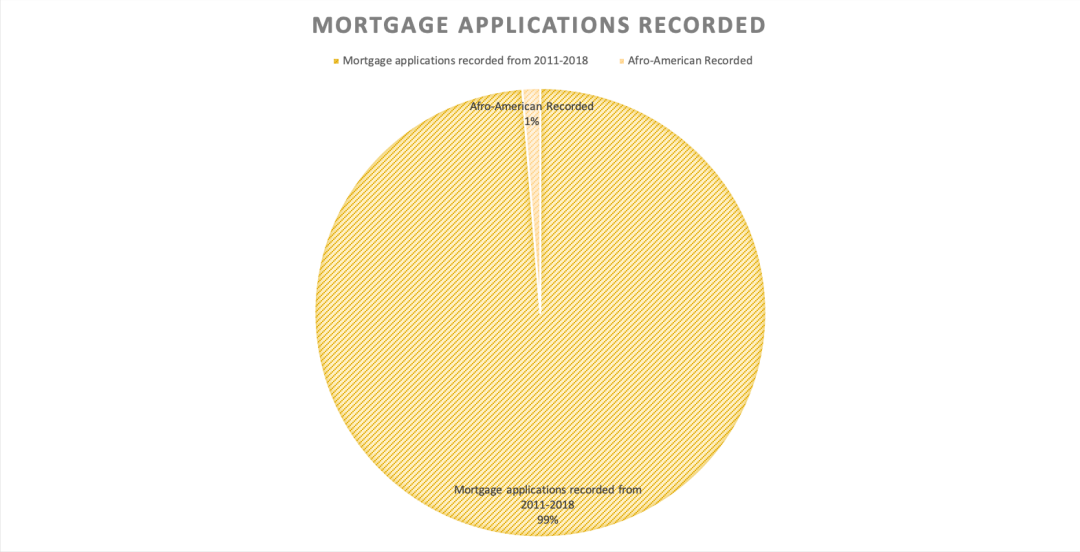

Figure 1

Table 17.—OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS, TYPE OF STRUCTURE, AND PLUMBING FACILITIES, FOR STANDARD METROPOLITAN AREAS AND CONSTITUENT PARTS, URBANIZED AREAS, AND URBAN PLACES OF 10,000 OR MORE: 1950—Con.

[Percent not shown where less than 0.1]

Subject	Standard metropolitan areas--Con.											
	Fall River			Lawrence	Lowell	New Bedford	Pittsfield	Springfield-Holyoke				Worcester
	The area	Bristol County (part)	Newport County, R. I. (part)	Essex County (part)	Middlesex County (part)	Bristol County (part)	Berkshire County (part)	The area	Hampden County (part)	Hampshire County (part)	Hartford County, Conn. (part)	Worcester County (part)
All dwelling units	42,082	40,267	1,815	37,955	38,489	43,241	19,627	116,294	99,292	12,689	4,313	76,586
Urban-farm dwelling units	98	98	...	60	97	39	83	619	474	137	8	136
OCCUPANCY, TENURE, AND RACE												
Occupied dwelling units	39,714	38,169	1,545	36,959	36,178	41,127	18,997	113,531	97,121	12,290	4,120	74,442
Owner occupied	13,768	12,698	1,070	14,524	17,761	16,859	10,080	53,829	44,621	6,913	2,295	34,300
Percent of all occupied	34.7	33.3	69.3	39.3	49.1	41.0	53.1	47.4	45.9	56.2	55.7	46.1
White	13,744	12,677	1,067	14,503	17,743	16,580	10,016	53,368	44,176	6,906	2,286	34,194
Negro	15	12	3	21	16	269	63	450	436	5	9	101
Other races	9	9	...	...	2	10	1	11	9	2	...	5
Renter occupied	25,946	25,471	475	22,435	18,417	24,268	8,917	59,702	52,500	5,377	1,825	40,142
White	25,854	25,421	473	22,352	18,379	23,664	8,788	58,502	51,309	5,374	1,819	39,798
Negro	31	30	1	67	32	586	126	1,176	1,168	2	6	305
Other races	21	20	1	16	6	18	3	24	23	1	...	39
Nonresident dwelling units	64	64	...	6	25	31	22	96	31	11	54	36
Vacant dwelling units	2,304	2,034	270	990	2,286	2,083	608	2,667	2,140	388	139	2,108
Nonseasonal not dilapidated, for rent or sale	493	475	18	289	257	376	179	1,069	930	102	37	576
Percent of all dwelling units	1.2	1.2	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.8
For rent	356	352	4	205	167	315	114	580	534	34	12	384
For sale only	137	123	14	84	90	61	65	489	396	68	25	192
Nonseasonal not dilapidated, not for rent or sale	484	423	61	330	431	454	162	838	694	99	45	480
Nonseasonal dilapidated	76	72	4	72	74	98	48	138	120	10	8	107
Seasonal	1,251	1,064	187	299	1,524	1,155	219	622	396	177	49	945

[29] United States Court of Appeals 10th Circuit. *Dailey v. City of Lawton, no. 291-69.* 425 F.2d 1037, 1970. https://www.leagle.com/decision/19701462425f2d103711215

Figure 2

1900 Census figures for Pittsfield indicate there were 277 Blacks in the city. Research in land records for Black homeownership indicates that only 10 Black families owned their own home at this time. The primary concentration occurred in the Jubilee Hill area on the Westside of Pittsfield near the west branch of the Housatonic River. This stretch of the Housatonic was a mill river where European factory workers lived initially. When European immigrants moved up, it became affordable housing for African Americans.

By the next census in 1910, Black homeownership had increased only by three households. The 1920 census shows only an increase by one. But by 1930 there was a slight increase by eight households, up to twenty-two Black homeowners total. 1940 saw a slight dip by three down to nineteen total households. After the war, there was another increase of seven to twenty-eight households. 1960 saw another increase from twenty-eight to thirty-seven.

Prior to the FHA regulations, one major barrier to homeownership was access to loans. In many cases the Black homeowner, as we saw in Harrison's story, took loans or notes from private individuals. These individuals in many cases were the previous owner who sold them the property. We found numerous instances where Black homeowners assumed a bank loan from the previous owner, agreeing to pay that loan off on top of their current loans. In some cases, Black homeowners did take notes from other Black individuals, but land records indicate a degree of allyship as there are several instances of Jewish and Italian property owners whose families had been settled on the Westside renting and selling to non-whites.[30]

When Black homeowners purchased their homes, many received loans from several major Banks in the City including Pittsfield Co-op Bank, City Savings Bank, Union Co-operative Bank, Berkshire County Savings Bank, Federal Loan Co. of Pittsfield, and the G.E. Employees' Home Building Trust. In some cases, they secured loans from several different institutions.
There is a depiction of this complicated manner of securing a mortgage in an interview with Florence Edmonds, the granddaughter of Rev. Harrison. While the story she tells is about a mortgage on a church, it demonstrates the importance of community and allyship. According to Mrs. Edmonds:

> We started building the church in '69…but the interesting fact over that, to help us with the mortgage the white Congregational church and our church formed a committee, which we called the Support committee, and every year in February, we'd have what we call a Brotherhood Banquet, and that has helped out. We used to have barbecues in the summer, and of recent years it was through this fellowship, this Support Committee this fellowship dinner that we have helped pay the mortgage.[31]

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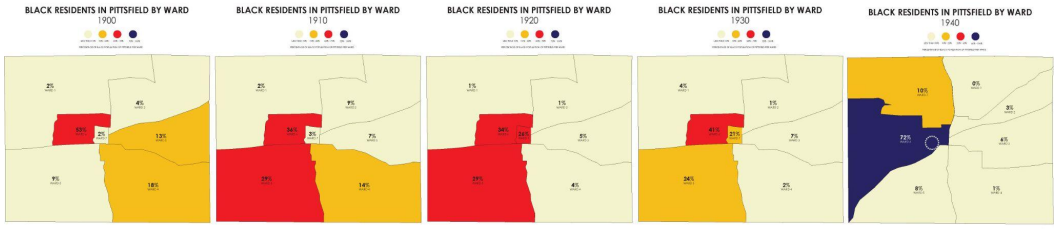
[30] Powell, Dennis. Personal Interview. Sept. 2020. This is another interesting dynamic ripe for further research.
[31] Edmonds, Florence. "Black Woman Oral History Project," interview by Ruth Edmonds Hill on January 5, 1980, in Pittsfield, MA (Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on The History of Women in America, Radcliffe College) page 7

Eventually, Edmonds says, “The First Church decided to give us two hundred dollars every month and our church pledged three hundred dollars every month and that’s the way these last two or three years of our mortgage was paid.”

Another major barrier to homeownership was an opportunity. These limited opportunities could have contributed to the clustering of non-white families in the Westside. They simply did not have the opportunity to move elsewhere. As the chart below indicates, the majority of Black-owned homes were in Wards 5 and 6 (figure 10)[32].



Between 1900 and 1930, the percentage of Black Homeowners in Pittsfield gradually became concentrated on the West Side of the city. In 1940, ward boundaries were redrawn, encapsulating a supermajority of the city’s Black population into a single ward: Ward 6.

Figure 3

Discussion of this lack of opportunity occurred in public forums throughout the 1950s and ’60s. Phillip Ahern, a leading member of the planning board in the 50s, stated in 1956 *Berkshire Eagle* article, that “there is only a small degree of mobility within the city for these citizens and that those Negroes which reside in other neighborhoods are the exception and not the rule.”[33]

The enforcement of this lack of mobility was refuted by both the Berkshire County Real Estate Board and the president of the Union Federal Savings and Loan Association, but surveys of the location of Black homeowners say otherwise. In 1962, Peter G. Arlos, chairman of the Pittsfield Democratic City Committee, spoke at a Berkshire County Chapter of the NAACP general membership meeting, noting:

> The real estate agents and the banks are willing to help a Negro if he wants to buy in a restricted area– along Linden Street, Francis Avenue, Columbus Avenue, South John Street. In this restricted area created by Pittsfield banks and real estate men, live 90 percent of Pittsfield’s Negros (who own their own homes). The other 10

[32] See Appendix D

[33] Ahern drew upon the 1946 housing study conducted by the city and commissioned by the following banks; City Savings Bank, Berkshire County Savings Bank, Pittsfield Co-Operative Bank, Union Federal Savings and Loan Association.

> percent who don't live there built their homes or bought homes years ago in areas that were then undeveloped.[34]

Several *Berkshire Eagle* letters to the editor in August of 1966 indicate the reporter Edward Farrell covered the "Negro housing problem" through the lens of "closed neighborhoods" and " lost realty sales."[35] Inducing white residents of Pittsfield, one living in the Williams Street section, to acknowledge in letters to the editor a truth which Black families seemed to have already known,[36] that "laws governing the selling of property to Negroes are written in invisible ink."[37] This prompted Alice McNiff of Stockbridge to write that her study of "every Berkshire county Negro family south of Pittsfield documents all his findings"[38].

Furthermore, according to the findings of the 1968 Race Study conducted by the Human Relations Committee:

> There is only one Negro family living in the Williams Street section… The best and newest schools are outside the Negro community… Negroes can't get credit as easily as white people… Integration to the white man means to bring the Negro into our group, it does not mean let's go over to where the Negroes are."[39]

This combination of local stories, surveys, and journalism all came to the same conclusion: it was difficult for Black families to buy property, and where they could purchase was geographically constrained.

It was also difficult for Black families to hold on to property even after they'd purchased it. For this, we turn to the story of Rose Robinson. In July of 1927, Rose and her husband Harry purchased the deed for a lot on Atwood Avenue from Harold J. Bridgman's--a prodigious early 20th century Pittsfield developer–thus securing that hallowed Afro-American dream of liberty through land ownership, once offered by Sherman's Special Field Order Number 15.[40] But in 1933, her husband died, and in 1941, Rose sold her home to another Black family, the Barnabas family. Most of her immediate kin network had chosen to move away from Pittsfield. By the

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[34] "Arlos Charge Answered: 'Conspiracy' Against Negroes In Purchasing Homes Denied." *The Berkshire Eagle,* 2 May 1962, p. 13.
[35] Reid, Napoleon. "Housing For Negroes." Letter to the Editor. *The Berkshire Eagle,* 15 Aug. 1966, p. 18
[36] See: "Walker Not Gunn Answered Question on Negro Housing." *The Berkshire Eagle.* 7 Jun. 1956, p. 14.
[37] Calebaugh, Ward. "Negro Housing Articles." Letter to the Editor. *The Berkshire Eagle,* 19 Aug. 1966, p. 18
[38] Mcniff, Alice. "Negro Housing Articles." Letter to the Editor. *The Berkshire Eagle,* 19 Aug. 1966, p. 18
[39] Weil, Richard. "Council Study Asks Change in White, Negro Attitudes." *The Berkshire Eagle.* 25 Jul. 1968, p 1. continued p. 13.
[40] Issued 16 January 1865 by Union General William Tecumseh Sherman, after a meeting with Black clergymen in Savannah Georgia. When asked how best these men saw for newly freedwomen and men to care for themselves, they answered: "The way we can best take care of ourselves is to have land, and turn it and till it by our own labor–that is, by the labor of the women and children and old men; and we can soon maintain ourselves and have something to spare." Section I of Special Field Order Number 15 provided that "[t]he islands from Charleston, south, the abandoned rice fields along the rivers for thirty miles back from the sea, and the country bordering the St. Johns river, Florida, are reserved and set apart for the settlement of the negroes now made free by the acts of war and the proclamation of the President of the United States."

time of the sale of her home, only one of her five children, also living in the DMS neighborhood, was still in Pittsfield (a son, Harry Robinson Jr. was enlisted during World War II). Functionally, Rose Robinson had little social capital, despite being a long-time member of the Second Congregational Church, to draw upon to keep her home.

She returned to 32 Deering Street, a neighborhood described in a *Berkshire Eagle* article (exploring the conditions of "negro" housing) as "unsanitary", "a menace to life", a "slum."[41] But it was a neighborhood where she would be welcomed and not have to endure prejudiced neighbors. In short, the choice for Rose was to be exposed to certain environmental harms (pollution, poor quality housing, etc), yet shielded from others (prejudice and intolerance).

If stable homeownership is in part a function of a strong social support network, and a strong social support network is the foundation of thriving neighborhoods, then homeownership can be understood to develop a quality of social capital which communities can draw from in addition to financial capital. The discrimination that conscripted Black homeowners to limited geographic and economic options in Pittsfield and incentivized younger generations to move to areas with more opportunities acted as a cap *and* tax on this social capital. Both limiting the opportunity for Black families to purchase homes, and destabilizing kin and extended kin networks needed for families to increase their economic outlook.[42]

Housing Shortages

The story of housing discrimination nationally and locally is deeply entwined with the story of the housing shortages that precipitated the New Deal policies. In this way, Pittsfield was part of a larger pattern. And to understand the housing shortage, we must look back into the development of Pittsfield, most specifically the Westside.

Though the definition has changed over time, the Westside is, roughly, understood to be bounded to the east by U.S. Route 7, to the north by the Pittsfield Cemetery, to the south by the former Boston and Albany Railroad, and to the west by Onota Street. The placement in the cut between the river, the railroad, and a highway aligns with Rothstein's identification that Black and immigrant neighborhoods were often bounded by rivers, railroads, and industry. The DMS neighborhood is not geographically considered the Westside today, but many folks who say they are Westsiders have lived in this neighborhood. For the purposes of this report, we will honor that lived experience.[43]

[41] "Deering Street Residents Appeal to City for Help." *The Berkshire Evening Eagle*, 8 July 1940, p. 4.
[42] For a contemporary exploration of the social dynamics of neighborhoods and homeownership see Appendix I." Neighborhoods Stability and Homeownership".
[43]The area described for the Westside proper roughly correlates with the contemporary census tract 9006

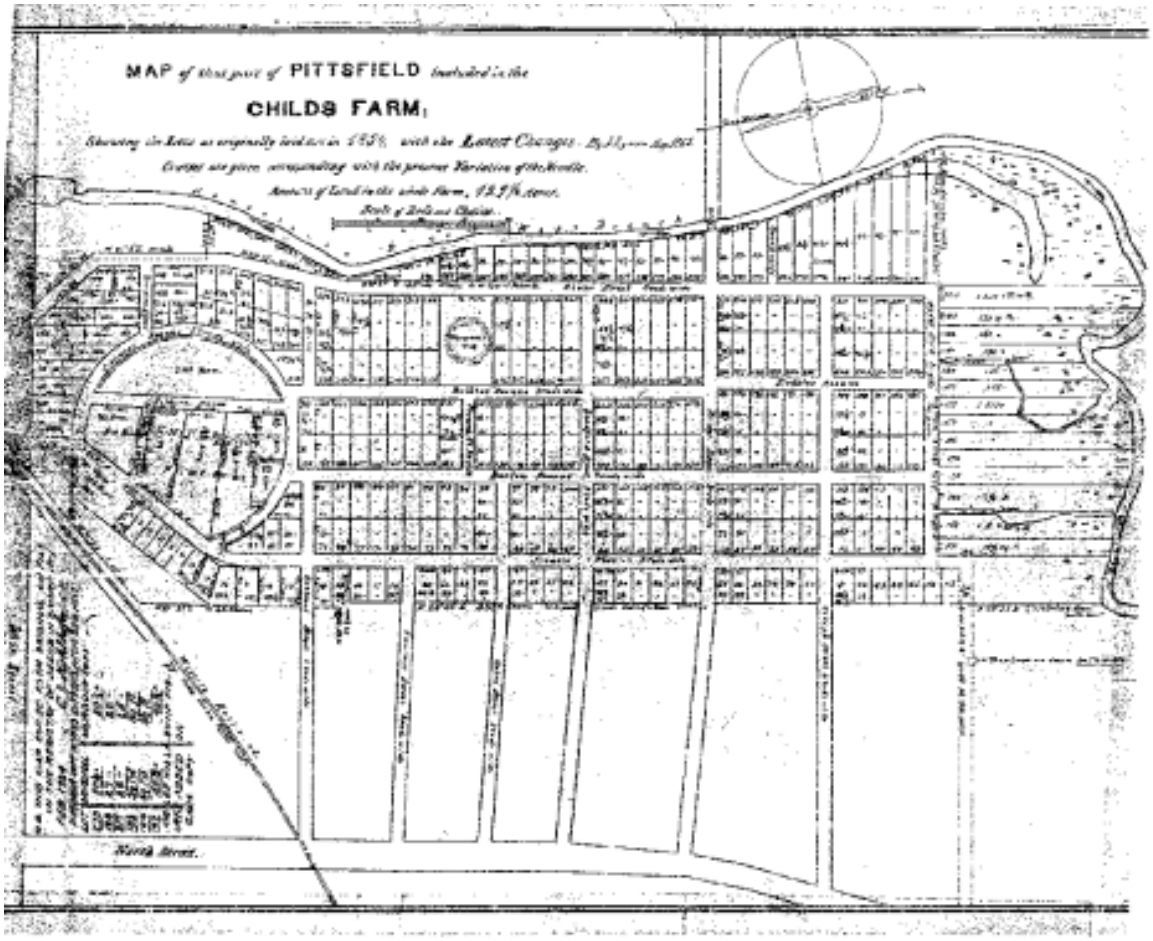

Figure 4

What we currently understand to be the Westside was formed by the parceling out of Child's Farm in Pittsfield, an area that came to be known as Jubilee Hill. The 129 acre+ farm was the area west of downtown and northwest of the railroad–shown in black in figure 2. This area was originally laid out in 1854 and revised in 1864 when numerous uniform lots were laid out to accommodate a large number of dwellings.
The DMS neighborhood was built on land owned by Gilbert and Charles West. The West family still owns large tracts of land on upper West Street in Pittsfield. This highlights how property and land ownership can be and *has* been passed to subsequent generations through centuries. Consider, the West family first purchased land in the Westside prior to the end of Reconstruction and held onto that land through two world wars and at least the onset of the mid-20th century period of the Civil Rights Movement. An investigation by the fire department into the cause of a small electrical fire indicates the grandson of Gilbert West, also named Gilbert West, owned at least one building on Mill Street (alt. Court) into the 1950s.[44]

Shortly after the layout of the Westside, owners such as James Francis, Stephen V.R. Daniels, and Oliver W. Robbins proceeded to sell lots on Jubilee Hill. Historical maps from 1876 indicate

[44] This historical fact raises an interesting avenue for further study--who was compensated during the eminent domain period of urban renewal?

that this area and other parts of Pittsfield were still rural and houses were sparse (see figure 5).

Figure 5

Both the Westside and the DMS neighborhoods were (among the) landing pads for immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe during the mid to late 19th and early 20th century. And the exclusive areas for African American Jim Crow refugees, and families relocating from elsewhere in the county and neighboring region in the early 20th century. For European Immigrants, these neighborhoods were in close proximity to mills, and, therefore, employment[45].

By the 1890s, the city was divided into six wards with a population of 17,281. The outlying areas of Pittsfield were still isolated and rural with farms and large plots of land. The 1904 Farnham atlas (figure 6) shows that the city gained another ward, as the population expanded beyond 21,000.

[45] A conclusive study of early 20th century employment demographics in "mills" is lacking; however numerous anecdotes strongly suggest mill operators did not hire African Americans.

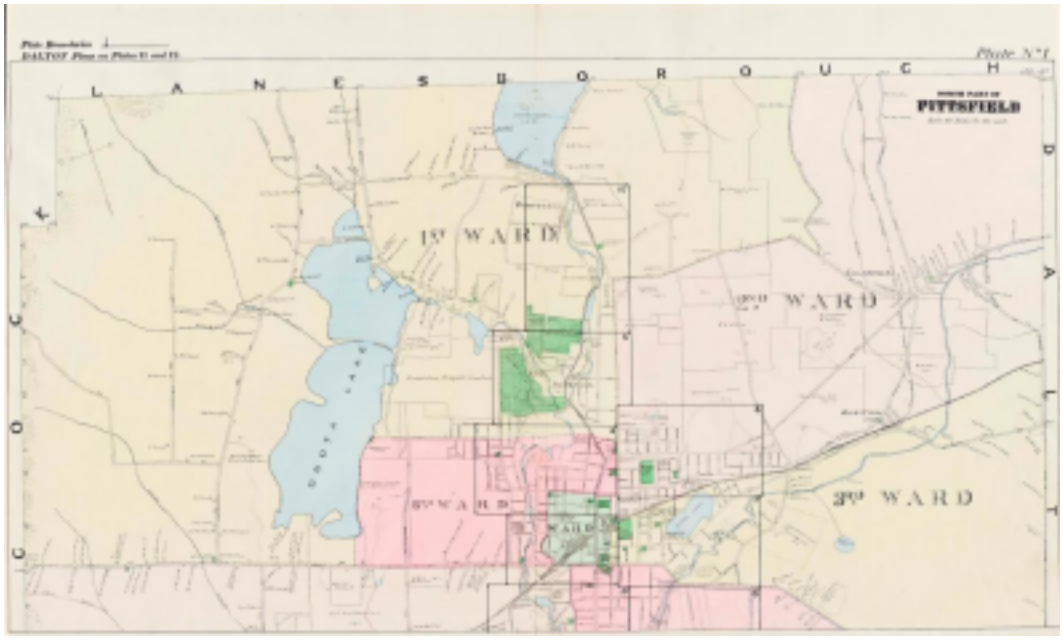

Figure 6

By 1900, and in the following years, some noticeable growth occurred in the areas west of Jubilee Hill and in the northern and eastern sections of the city. A 1915 development map of the city shows the areas of Pittsfield that grew from the period of 1876-1915 (figure 6).[46] The areas in red include downtown Pittsfield (North St. area) where many commercial buildings and businesses were located. Noticeable is the growth of commercial, mixed-use buildings along Columbus Avenue and West Street.

[46] *Residential and Business Districts of Pittsfield in 1915, Red Showing Development Since 1876.* Boltwood 1915.

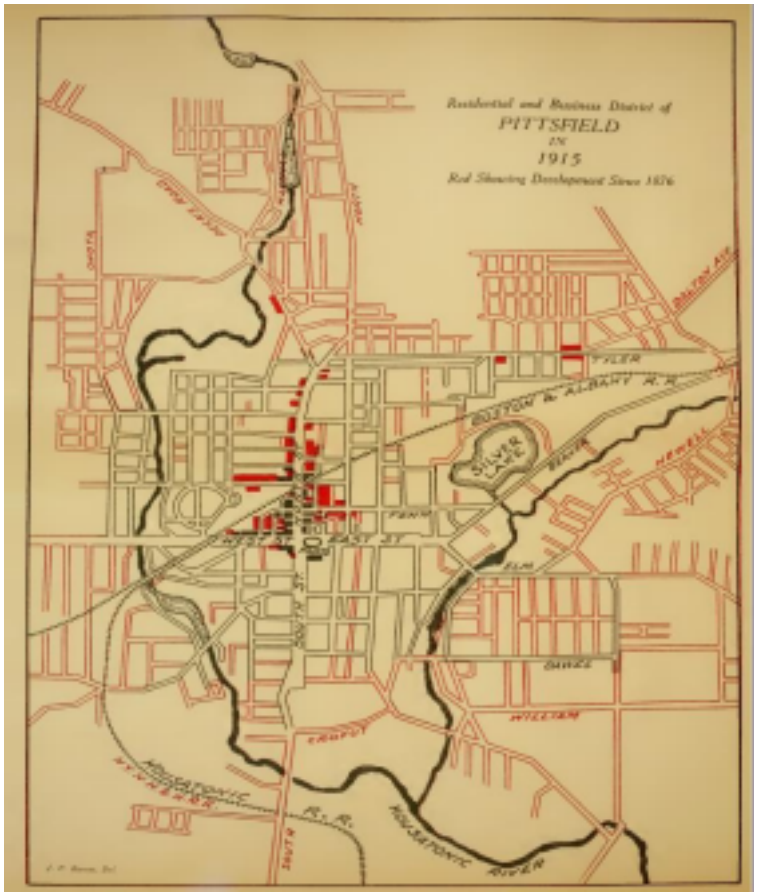

Figure 6

The map also shows many new developments with streets in areas to the west, east, north, and south on the edges of the city. New developments were created to encourage housing growth outside of the downtown area. As will be discussed later, these areas were restrictively zoned.

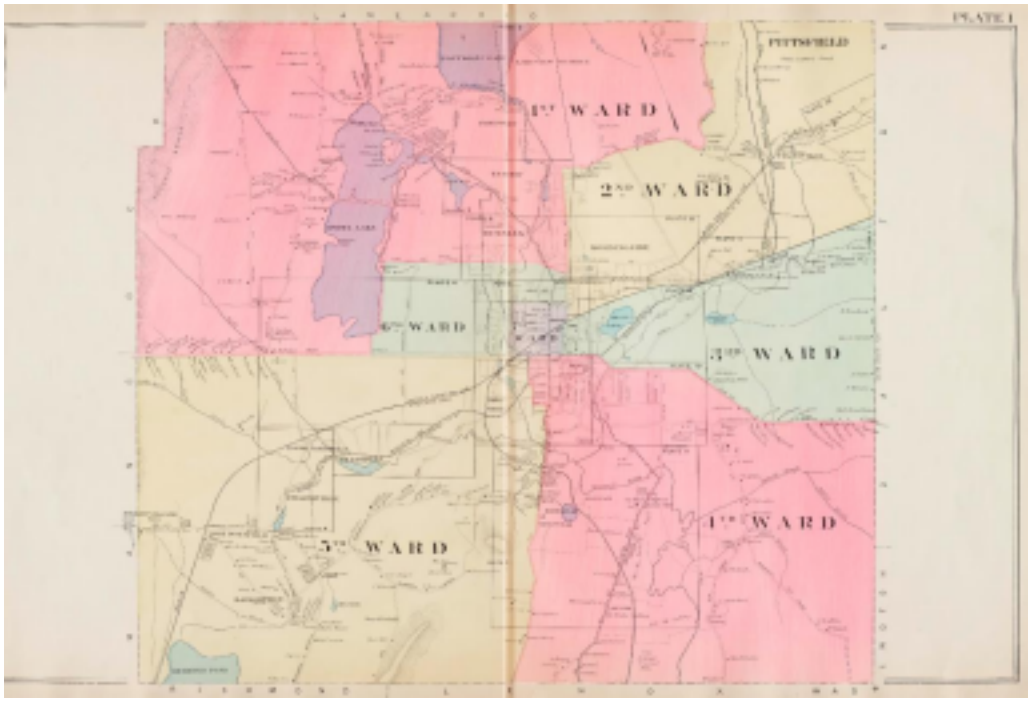

Figure 7

Pittsfield's total population figures indicate that growth more than doubled from 1890 to 1930, with a small slowing in 1940.[47] During the growth period of the early 20th century, General Electric (formerly known as Stanley Electric Manufacturing Plant) was the largest industry and biggest employer in the city.

[47] Myers, Preliminary land use plan of Pittsfield n.d.

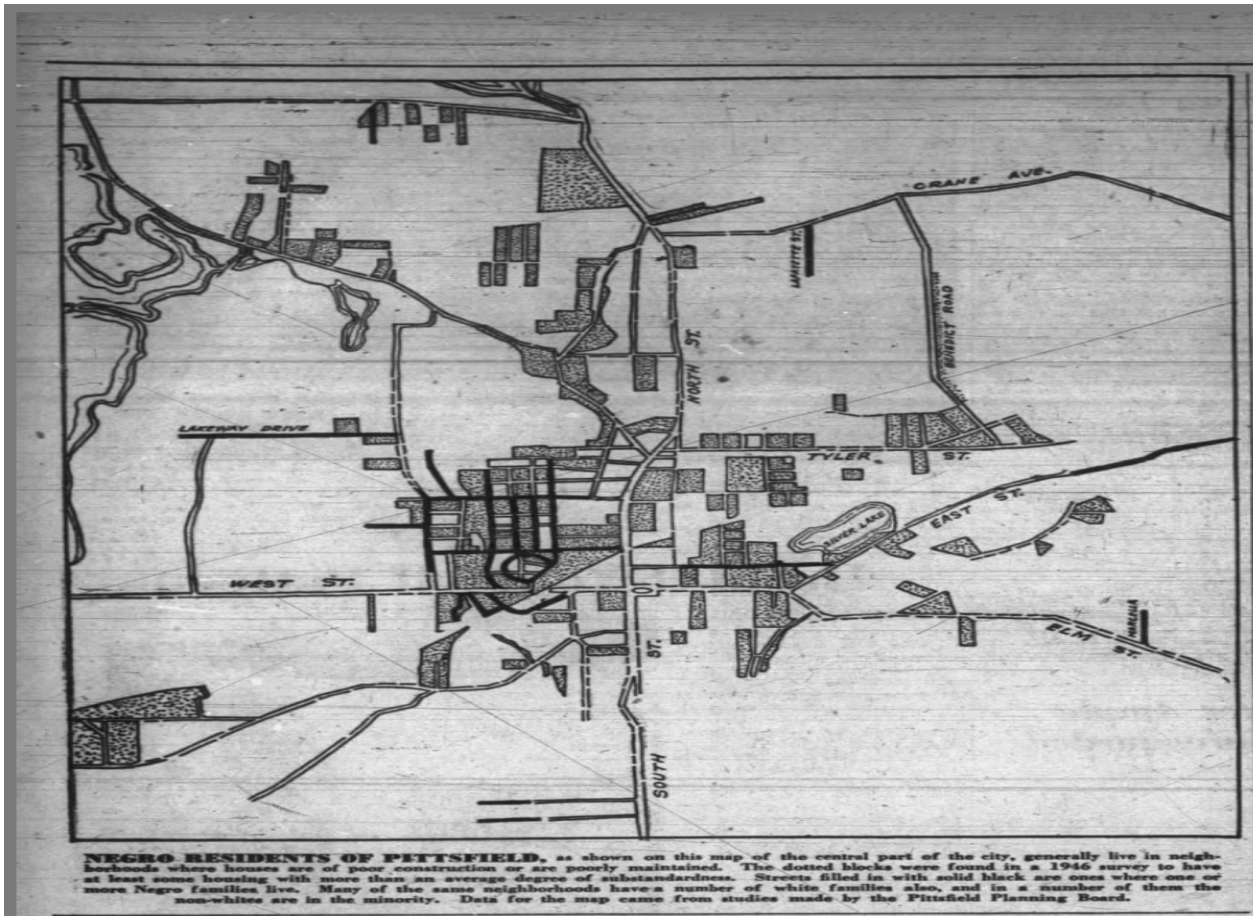

Figure 8

By 1940 the Black population in Pittsfield had nearly doubled since the turn of the 20th century. In 1930, 82 of the 123 Black families living in Pittsfield lived in Wards 5 and 6, the wards surrounding and containing Jubilee Hill. We also see a high concentration of Black families living immediately southwest of Jubilee Hill in the DMS neighborhood. Figure 8 shows a map that may be a result of the 1946 Housing Survey, streets filled in with black indicate where Black families resided.

Despite the new construction from 1876 to 1915 (figure 6) Pittsfield along with the rest of the nation faced a housing shortage[48]. Figure 6, a 1955 development map,[49] and *The History of Pittsfield* all illustrate that most if not all of the 2,600 new single-family homes constructed between 1945 and 1955 were "toward the northeast, off Dalton Avenue, and toward the southeast, along with Williams and neighboring streets."[50] And these areas of Pittsfield were in neighborhoods where Blacks were not welcome.

[48] The section on Affordable Housing will provide additional detail on the strategies Pittsfield used to fill the housing gap.
[49] See the map for the 1955 map of development in Pittsfield contained in appendix F
[50] Willison, p. 236

The exclusion of Blacks from the new developments was at times explicitly stated in racially restrictive covenants. The Mountain Grove on Shaw Lake subdivision in Beckett had a covenant that read: "no part of the land hereby conveyed, or the improvements thereon, shall ever be sold, leased, traded, rented or donated to anyone other than of the Caucasian race."[51]

There's evidence that city leaders supported these practices. In 1934, Fred E. Kroker, the developer of Mountain Grove, faced a challenge from the Springfield Real Estate Board.[52] In defending his company's practices, Kroker told the *Berkshire Eagle,* "We restrict the property to certain types of people. We work similar to a country club, looking up persons to see what they do and what color they are."[53] The executive vice president of the Pittsfield Chamber of Commerce weighed in on the Springfield board challenge, saying that after investigating the allegations, the complaints had ceased and that Mr. Kroker (who was a member of the Pittsfield Chamber of Commerce) had provided a suitable explanation. So it would appear that the Pittsfield Chamber of Commerce was entirely comfortable with vigorously racist and segregationist real estate practices.

Another story of the Mountain Grove development gives a picture of how local racial covenants created the wealth gap[54]. In September of 1934, a white Westside resident who lived on Jubilee Terrace purchased lot 201 in the Mountain Grove subdivision. It appears that the lot and subsequent cottage was only used for vacationing and not as their new primary residence.[55] A white Westside family could use the equity from the housing in a neighborhood we have demonstrated as being the most welcoming of any in Pittsfield to Black families, to purchase land, develop on that land, and then sell and profit from their investment. Their Black neighbors were legally constrained from engaging in the same wealth-building behavior.

Racially restrictive covenants were not the only path to segregation. Through restricting the type of home, and the cost of construction of a home, a development could be segregated economically, which for the period of time in question would most likely lead to a racially homogenous development. Rothstein calls these "economically restrictive covenants." A Pittsfield example can be found in the lots laid out for the Pittsfield Industrial Development Company by A.J. Kohlhofer south of Dalton Rd, east of Benedict Rd in 1924 (figure 9). These lots were subject to covenants allowing only single and double houses, the former to be built at an expense no less than $5,000, the latter no less than $7,500. The lots laid out

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[51] Bk. 467, p. 48

[52] The Springfield Real Estate Board planned to file suit with the relevant state authorities under NRA rule 5, article 7 alleging that Kroeker was sweetening the sale of property with offers of additional free lots.

[53] "Barbe Defends Member Of Chamber Attacked By Springfield Realty Men." *The Berkshire Eagle,* 23 Jun. 1934.

[54] For the greater part this case study has focused primarily on land use regulations within the city of Pittsfield, and not the broader Pittsfield Metropolitan Statistical Area. Another approach would be to investigating the confluence of land use, segregation, housing discrimination, and racial wealth gaps in the Pittsfield Metropolitan Statistical Area.

[55] It is not possible to divine whether this Westside resident was motivated by racial prejudice to seek out land where Black families were legally restricted from living. However the subdivision developer had broadcast through the newspaper their intentions of developing an all-white summer cottage subdivision, two months prior to their purchase of a lot.

for the adjacent section of this neighborhood (figure 10), coincide with the 1945 to 1955 home building expansion in Pittsfield. A deed for those lots in Block F lays out these economically restrictive covenants, excluding any homes that were not single-family home, and set the floor for the cost of construction at $5,000. The average appraised value in 2022, for property tax purposes, of homes in the "Block F" in figure 8 is $178,550. Although not every deed was checked for every lot shown in figures 8 and 9, given they were being offered through a sole development company, it is likely economically restrictive covenants were present throughout.

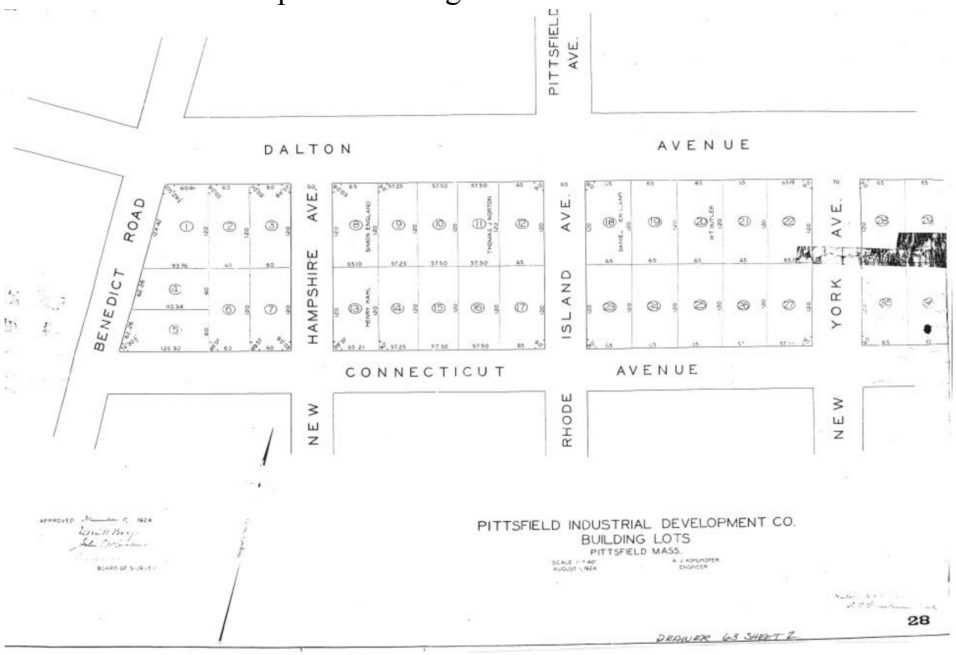

Figure 9

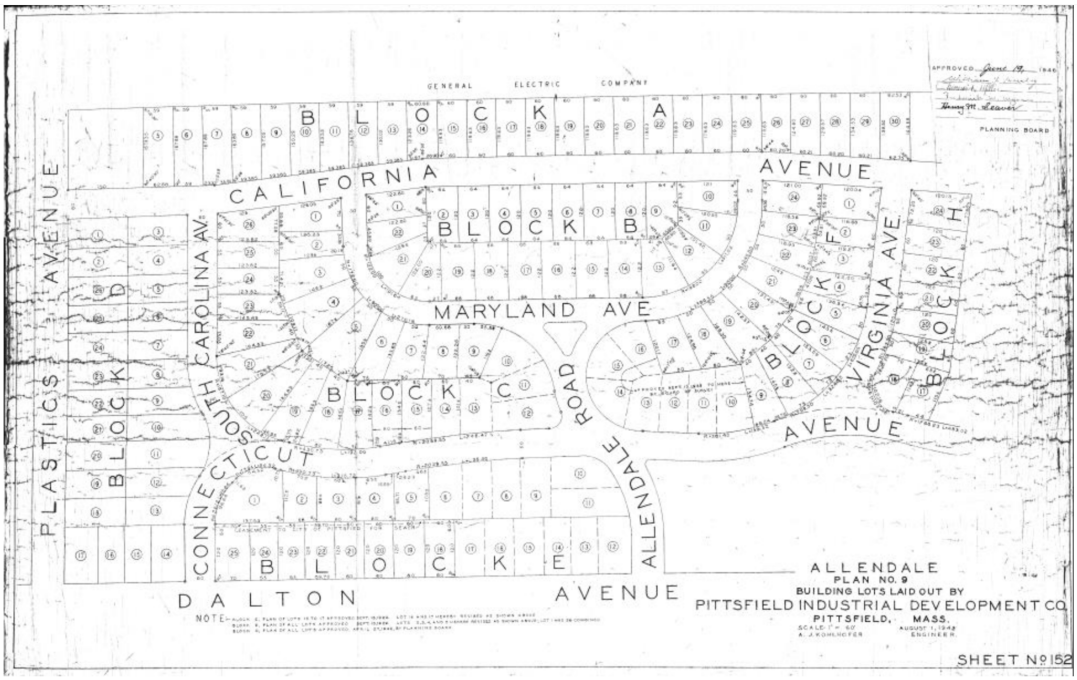

Figure 10

Certainly, citizens have been aware of segregation in Pittsfield for a long time. A newspaper debate in 1963 about the segregation of elementary schools shows the further harm caused by the mix of segregation and lack of new housing. When *Eagle* reporter Edward J. Farrell dismissed the concerns around segregated elementary schools due to the mixing of populations at the junior high level, it revealed that the newer elementary schools, serving the more recently developed neighborhoods, lacked African American students:

> Although the majority of the nonwhite population creates de facto segregation at the elementary grade level in the Pittsfield Public Schools, the problem is not considered serious. Most of the students attend Briggs School with Tucker and Redfield also harboring a goodly number.[56]

This fact–along with stories like the experience of a Black G.E. engineer who could not find anyone to rent to him because he was Black in 1957[57]–add nuance to Farrell's claim later in the article, revealing that yes the new developments in question in Pittsfield had an introductory all-white period:

> There have been cases where non-whites have been denied housing in Pittsfield, but the 1960 housing tract indicates there were far more non-whites who were successful in penetrating all-white areas than those who were denied this right.[58]

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[56] Farrell, Edward. "De Facto Segregation Doomed by Housing Law." The Berkshire Eagle, 6 Jul. 1963, p. 6.
[57] See appendix I "The Ongoing history of Housing Discrimination in Pittsfield, Ma" for the full story.
[58]Farrell, Edward. "De Facto Segregation Doomed by Housing Law." The Berkshire Eagle, 6 Jul. 1963, p. 6.

Here we see how the combination of redlining and racially restrictive covenants (whether explicitly or implicitly stated) lured white families out of the city center and Westside to new subdivisions while preventing Black families from buying property in the only places they could live (the Westside), resulting in both segregation and the wealth gaps that persist today. Also, we see that home ownership was–and is–not just about financial wealth, but also about assuring the rights of Black Pittsfield residents[59], and equitable access to public goods[60].

Affordable Housing

One of Rothstein's markers to determine the presence and effect of housing discrimination is the availability and the process by which affordable housing is located. Housing shortages often have a higher impact on communities of color.

As detailed in the previous section, Pittsfield has had a housing shortage since at least 1933 as found by the study conducted by the Investor Syndicate of Minnesota. Multiple studies, most notably in 1946 and 1970, have pointed out the great need for affordable housing in Pittsfield. Yet, little public housing has been built in Pittsfield since the 1960s, and a negligible amount since 2014. Meanwhile, the local private market has consistently been unable to provide the necessary supply of housing.

Even during the 1945-1955 period which saw 2,600 new homes built, Pittsfield struggled to supply the necessary quantity of housing. In the 1950 census of housing, the city had a vacancy rate below a single percentage point, indicating that even during this relative boom time of new construction, demand was still being unmet. The quality of housing suffered, too. By 1940, most of the housing stock in the Westside had been in constant use for seventy years. Pittsfield's non-white residents had homeownership rates twenty percentage points lower than white residents, and statewide it was found that renters were twice as likely to occupy substandard housing.

In one of his "Constructively Speaking" columns for the *Berkshire Eagle* in 1956, Phillip Ahern, who served in various capacities for the city of Pittsfield and the Pittsfield Taxpayers Association between the late 40s and early 70s, also said of the 1946 housing study commissioned by the city: "We have both blighted housing and segregation in this city… For the most part, our poorest housing provides domiciles for our minorities, and few of our minority families reside in areas which have not been established as blighted areas."[61]

Meanwhile, urban renewal projects (which will be covered in another section) have been largely concerned with commercial development, further complicating the housing shortage by relocating families without providing new housing for them. On top of this, there's a history of town leaders being resistant to zoning for more density (with affordability) in the downtown district, thus preventing the construction of multi-family homes, which would alleviate the problem.

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[59] Building code enforcement and lack thereof; restricting the ability to enter private contracts.
[60] Access to quality public education, access to open space and recreational facilities.
[61] Ahern, Phillip. "Minorities and Bad Housing." Editorial. *The Berkshire Eagle,* 24 Nov. 1956, p. 6. See Figure 8.

But the most troubling pattern we see is the resistance by city residents and leaders to address the problem. In fact, we find most major housing movements have served to reinforce segregation, in favor of "conserving" open space and implicitly protecting single-family home values.

In 1945, the Federal Public Housing Authority halted all new contracts for government-financed war housing under the Lanham Act, which had provided the first new construction of affordable public housing in the city. In response to the halt, and the long-term problems of inadequate housing supply and poor conditions of the current housing in the city, the Public Works Department, working in collaboration with the Pittsfield Taxpayers Association, published a report in 1947[62] of unaccepted streets. This report was a guide for the City Council to help them consult with land developers and contractors for future development and growth of the city. The primary areas identified lacked adequate sewer, water, and other utilities, indicating they were in the undeveloped periphery of the city.

A 1946 city survey of housing detailed pockets of slum conditions across the city. 18% of the 13,000 dwellings were substandard, and 1,600 more houses were needed[63], with the highest concentration of substandard units in the ward 6/Westside by far--and a distinct deficit that heretofore the private market could not bridge. Yet, despite the information in these reports, the City Council unanimously voted against any subsidized housing in 1948.

Between 1940 and 1973 only two low-income, and non-elderly, public housing projects commenced. Both were met with considerable resistance from community and business leaders, real estate agents, and home builders associations. One was the Wilson Park Housing project off of Wahconah and Wilson Streets (figure 11), which served as veteran housing when built, and today is operated by the Pittsfield Housing Authority as low-income housing. The other development was off of Benedict Road on the westerly side and south of Crane Ave (figure 12).

[62] Phillip C. Ahern was the executive secretary at the time.

[63] This dissimilarity between this figure, when compared to the 2,500 homes constructed in the 9 years following its publishing, likely is an artifact of population growth. 1,600 homes *may* have served the needs of the 1946 population, but not the 1955 population.

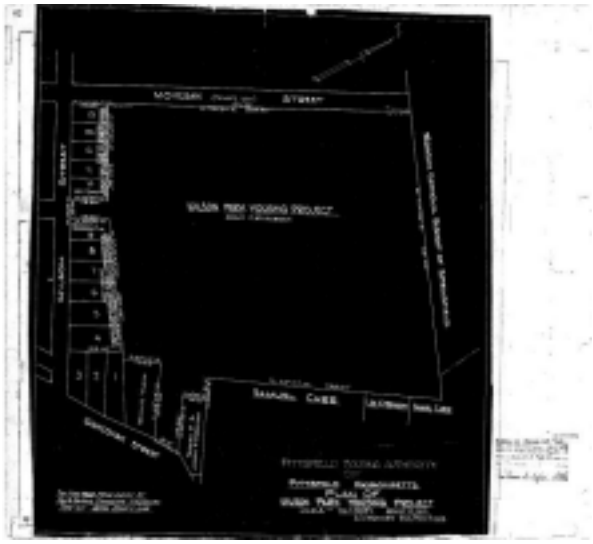

Figure 11

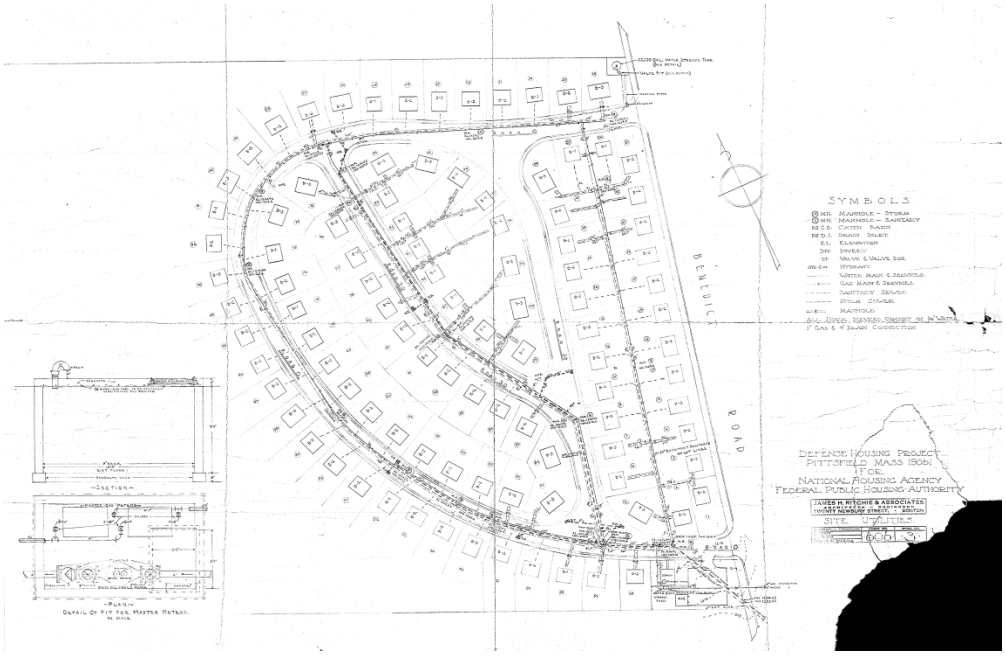

Figure 12

The Benedict Avenue twenty-three acre parcel was taken via eminent domain by the U.S. government to provide ninety-nine units of low rent housing for veterans and GE workers. In 1955, the Public Housing Administration transferred the property to the Pittsfield Housing Authority. The development was poorly planned, which lent a veneer of credibility to the notion that public housing units were poorly constructed. Nevertheless, 134 families were waiting to fill them. Studies conducted by the state Commission Against Discrimination (CAD) in 1958 and 1959 reveal that there were only two non-white families at Victory Hill. In 1960 there were none. When the veterans no longer had a need for this housing, many of the new residents were on some form of public assistance. Eventually, elderly people moved into these units because of the low rent. Over the following fifteen years, the houses fell into disrepair and the area became a

"shanty" community.

The Victory Hill houses were condemned due to outdated heating systems that could have been renovated,[64] though they were structurally sound enough to be moved elsewhere and reused. The decision to raze the entire development likely reflects the status "government housing"[65] had in the minds of many Pittsfield citizens, and not the quality of the construction of these homes. As well as alternative proposed uses for that parcel. Within a year of the PHA accepting a bid to demolish the Victory Hill war housing project, seventy-two of the ninety-nine houses were sold. Walter Wilson, director of Berkshire Farm Agency, would purchase 28: "I bought the buildings because an architect said they were soundly constructed."[66] Two were purchased and relocated in Pittsfield to be used as year-round housing. This rankled the sensibilities of many in Pittsfield and led to an agreement between the construction company responsible for removing the homes and the PHA forbidding sale of the structures for use as primary residences in Pittsfield. The whole situation is a testament to the quality of the structures, and also to the stigmatization of public housing in Pittsfield. By June 1965, Victory Hill was unoccupied.

By 1970, the urgency of housing shortages and conditions once again led to a study, this one with many pointed passages that remain relevant today. Given the timeframe, they can also be understood as implicating the urban renewal process in Pittsfield. For example, it clearly lays out the mathematics of affordable housing:

> These people have been forced to live in deteriorating and dilapidated housing where rents between $90 and $100 per month are available. It is not economically feasible to build new housing and charge less than $130 per month rent for a one bedroom apartment. According to estimated family incomes for 1969, at least 30% of the population cannot afford to pay this amount, and many of the families in this category need apartments larger than one bedroom. Hence there is a sizeable need for subsidized multi-family units which will provide a decent living environment for those of low, moderate or fixed incomes.[67]

The 1970 report also includes this still relevant assessment of the lack of housing density:

> There is an acute shortage of multi-family housing. In the past, Pittsfield's zoning map did not designate areas for the construction of multi-family housing. As a result, there now exists an acute shortage of such housing, though the demand for it exists. The zoning ordinance now provides for a maximum of 15,600 units in areas zoned RG and RM, without the necessity of removing existing structures. The designation of large areas of land for possible multi-family development has the advantage of keeping the price of such land down by providing the choice of many areas to the developer. If all the existing vacant land were built to its

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[64] "Hinsdale Man Appeals Denial By Selectmen." *The Berkshire Eagle,* 23 Dec. 1965, p. 8.
[65] "Contractors Form New Association." *The Berkshire Eagle,* 14 Apr. 1942, p. 4.
[66] Farrell, Edward. "Many New Uses Found For Old Victory Hill Houses: Most Buyers Keep Units Intact." *The Berkshire Eagle,* 19 Aug 1967, p. 5.
[67] Technical Planning Associations. *Housing Survey: Pittsfield, Massachusetts.* 1970.

> zoning capacity, 51.5% of the new dwelling units would be provided in multi-family housing."[68]

Of particular relevance to this paper is what the 1970 report has to say about the importance of messaging–shining a light on the local acceptance of a national phenomenon, that public housing and multi-family zoning is in a zero-sum contest with single-family property values. It notes that local government (Pittsfield) has failed to recognize subsidized housing as a necessity. It has also failed to address the harmful narratives that "public programs and subsidies are strictly devoted to providing housing for the very poor." The report states (mirroring what Rothstein has to say, and aptly describing Pittsfield's contemporary pattern of public investment) that, "Actually, recent government involvement and assistance has largely aided middle and upper-income households through federal income tax deductions, capital gains, and advanced depreciation allowances."[69]

So how did we get to the conditions cited in the 1970 report which continue to persist today? It appears that no city body authorized with oversight of zoning and planning existed prior to the establishment of the planning board in May 1929.[70] Starting then, city residents began petitioning the Planning Board for all manner of property re-classifications. What survives of this historical record today shows that residents who owned property and operated businesses were able to shape development in the city by asking for new zoning classifications of their property (many residents were asking for "downzoning" from Residential A/B/C or D to Business A/B or C. A development pattern keeping in line with historical city development patterns). In exclusively zoned neighborhoods these petitions set early precedents for future zoning ordinance challenges, leaving impressions for future settlement patterns.

None of the residents in these historical records were Black, as far as can be ascertained. This makes a certain common sense; the combined lack of property and business ownership by Black citizens gave little reason to appeal for zoning variances. This means too that Black residents had little means of influencing what Pittsfield could look like. Thus we see the national pattern of exclusive access to political power based on homeownership status playing out in Pittsfield. It may also be said that property owners exercising this power to guide land-use decisions led, in part, to limit the supply of housing, and also factored into later city debates regarding where to place public housing during urban renewal.

Single-family homeowners, specifically, have proven themselves familiar and comfortable opposing particular reclassifications and land uses that they saw as deleterious to their home values, neighborhoods, and quality of life.[71] In 1947 the *Berkshire Eagle* reported that Hull Street residents seeking to convert their two-family homes into multi-family units were consistently thwarted by single-family homeowners. In response, they sought, under the recommendation of

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[68] ibid.
[69] ibid.
[70] Insight into racialized zoning is, therefore, obscured.
[71] This argument–that property value is negatively affected by the presence of people of color–echoes the justification for redlining and racially restrictive covenants. It is demonstrably false. "In fact, when African-Americans tried to buy homes in all-white neighborhoods or in mostly white neighborhoods, property values rose because African-Americans were more willing to pay more for properties than whites were, simply because their housing supply was so restricted and they had so many fewer choices" (Rothstein, *Fresh Air).*

the zoning board of appeals, a rezoning of the entire street.[72] In another example, residents of Gamwell Avenue successfully blocked the construction of five apartment buildings. Perhaps the most dramatic example of a neighborhood organizing to defeat an increase in the supply of housing was in 1971 when the “Southeast Homeowners Association” sued the city of Pittsfield for illegal spot zoning, preserving what would become Kirvin Park as open space. Instead of the proposed 100 Pittsfield Housing Authority rental units and a satellite hospital for Berkshire Medical Center.

The "Southeast Homeowners Association" (SHA) was an evolution of the "Pittsfield Taxpayers Association"[73]. The SHA mobilized in the 1960s to prevent low-income housing from infiltrating that general area of Pittsfield[74]. All three groups effectively advocated for exclusionary zoning policies, S.T.O.P. as their name implies submitted a petition with almost 2,000 signatures seeking to limit the amount of affordable housing throughout Pittsfield to less than the state recommended percentage.

These examples show that single-family homeowners and realtors did not leave the development of the city to one-off opposition to particular projects. They organized, raised money, hired legal counsel, drafted petitions attempting to limit through ordinance the amount of affordable housing in the city, and when the time called for it, they sued. Attempts by city officials to quell the unfounded concerns of non-Westside homeowners and assure them that public housing would not decrease home values failed because public sentiment was too strongly solidified to overcome. A passage from the 1970 reports sums this up rather well:

> Public awareness of the value and importance of organizing and planning for subsidized housing is necessary if local and private groups are to become involved in the program. A lack of realistic subsidies to those who need them amounts to a subtle form of housing discrimination. Local government officials must lend their support to the elimination of this situation.

Unfortunately, elected municipal officials in Pittsfield have not always lent their support to end this narrative. A contentious exchange occurred in 1952 after a federal program under Title III of the 1949 Housing Act allocated 200 units of housing to the city of Pittsfield.[75] In response, Mayor Capeless put forward a proposal asking the city council to authorize the Pittsfield

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[72] Here it should be noted that Frederick Myers, staunch opponent of any public housing projects, executive director of the Pittsfield Taxpayers Association, and Planning Board member, put forth a plan to increase the supply of housing through the private market that focused exclusively on dividing existing single family homes into multifamily units. His plan was unveiled at a city council meeting one night after the Zoning Board of Appeals heard Hull Street residents petition for a rezoning of their entire street. No permits under The “Myers Plan” would be issued over the following 3 months. The “Myers Plan” only amounted to denying housing to those most in need.

[73] The “Pittsfield Taxpayers Association” (PTA) was founded between April and May of 1932. It merged in 1959 with the Pittsfield Industrial Development Corporation and the Pittsfield Chamber of Commerce. This formed the Association of Business and Commerce, which was heavily involved in the 1961/2 Central Business District report (CBD). The CBD report served as Pittsfield's comprehensive development plan that was required to qualify for federal funding under the 1949, 1954 and 1961 Federal Housing Act. Both Frederick Myers and Phillip Ahern served in leadership roles for the PTA and sat on the city Planning Board.

[74] Ward 1 in Figure 7. Present day Ward 4.

[75] As mentioned in the methodologies section, the loss of City Council records from this time period obfuscates insight into the board meetings of the PHA and communications with the mayoral administration and city council.

Housing Authority (PHA) to enter into an agreement with the Federal Public Housing Administration. This was required to authorize the PHA to receive temporary loans from the federal Public Housing Administration. These loans would cover the initial cost of the issuance of bonds to private investors. Financing the immediate construction of fifty public low-rent housing units.

However, the council again rejected a proposal for public housing. The Mayor's proposal received five affirmative votes of the nine councilors present the first night of voting, yet was ruled defeated as it did not receive a majority vote from the eleven-member body. One month later, when the Mayor's proposal received a hearing in front of the fully assembled city council, his proposal was defeated, in a 6 opposed, 5 in favor vote.

Councilman Robert N. Hart was particularly vehement in his objection, describing public housing as "pure and unadulterated socialism in its complete form." Of course, Councilman Hart was not voicing these claims in a vacuum. Rather, he was repeating the objections to Title III-low-rent public housing provisions he had heard from the U.S. House Banking Committee Chair Walcott and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, as well as the prior claims that all public housing was "socialistic" by Edward B. Karam, president of the board, of the Berkshire Real Estate Board.[76] Two developers in the audience also supported Councilman Hart's objections–one demanding his developments more quickly be connected to public utilities and the other condemning large families to their chosen fates.

The Berkshire Eagle reported that Councilman Harrington, a proponent of the Mayor's proposals, responded to these objections by stating, "After hearing Mr. Hart's arguments…I realize that they ill conceal his Ward 4 attitude towards less fortunate people."[77] Harrington's observation bears out over the cycle of public housing battles in the city. Over and over, white citizens of affluent areas of the city stop any attempt to address the housing shortages and conditions in resource-starved areas thus perpetuating, and exacerbating, those conditions, laying the groundwork for "slum clearance" and urban renewal projects to be synonymous with "Black".

Ironically, the public utilities serving these single-family-homeowners relied on the more densely populated areas to raise the tax revenue required for the maintenance of streets, sewers, and water lines. The lack of population density that comes with single-family homes often does not generate enough taxes per a given unit of area (especially compared to more densely developed neighborhoods) to pay for public infrastructure.

The effect is that the older neighborhoods and the "slum" areas of Pittsfield, the more densely developed areas and the neighborhoods Black Pittsfield residents were allowed to live in, were subsidizing public utilities for the restrictively zoned single-family only neighborhoods[78]. This development scheme was recognized as requiring a significant increase in taxes to finance the

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[76] Linscott, Roger B. "Every Saturday: Presidential Primaries Are All Greek to the Average Voter." Editorial. *The Berkshire Eagle,* 8 Mar 1952, p. 12.

[77] "Council Sidetracks Rental Housing Plan." *The Berkshire County Eagle,* 23 Jul 1952, p. 1, cont. p. 2. It should be noted that here Ward 4 refers to the same area of Pittsfield that both the Southeast Homeowners Association, and S.T.O.P. represented.

[78] see appendix F for 1952 zoning map.

public infrastructure these new developments required.[79] Homeowners in those neighborhoods (northeast of Dalton Avenue, south along with Williams and adjacent streets, and north along the stretch of West Housatonic Street across from the present-day 705 Building) meanwhile responded to proposals to develop affordable housing in or near their neighborhoods with vehement opposition. Today those areas, specifically northeast of Dalton Avenue and southeast along Williams Street, which in 1952 were zoned R-1-A/B/C and R-2[80] are also our least diverse, highest median income, highest "opportunity" scoring neighborhoods. This may be what the 1970s Housing Study was referring to when it chastised public opinion and city planning for mistakenly assuming low-income people were receiving the majority of public welfare. Rothstein and contemporary scholars refer to single-family zoning as "exclusionary zoning."

Another form of resisting public housing projects was to propose they be built on the outskirts of the city. In the aforementioned *Eagle* column, "Constructively Speaking" by the aforementioned Phillip Ahern (the executive secretary to the planning board) advocated for the relocation of PHA projects to the outskirts of the city on less desirable and therefore less expensive land while also reclassifying unaccepted streets to "guide" the development of the city[81]. Ahern wanted to formalize that as a policy for Pittsfield and had proximity to the board which would vote on such a recommendation.

Such a strategy of locating public housing projects in less dense, single-family zoned areas of the city was pursued, and in every instance, post-1950, both public and private projects were defeated with a sole exception.[82] The Pittsfield Housing Authority sought to build low-income and large units near Osceola Park in West Pittsfield north of Route 20 in 1969. . North along Crane Avenue, in 1965 a private developer with a plan for a fifty unit "garden apartment" proposal known as Unkamet Farms[83] was swiftly defeated in a decision "anticipated because of an adverse report handed down from the Planning Board."[84] In 1962, off upper West Street in Pittsfield, a private developer sought to invest 1.2 million dollars and build at least 100, and up to 200, affordable rental units just off Fort Hill Avenue. The developer specifically noted that the development would not add any more school-aged children. The project never materialized.[85]

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[79] Willison, George F. *History of Pittsfield, Massachusetts:1916-1955*. 1957. City of Pittsfield.

[80] R-1-A "restricted single family, 1 acre minimum lot size; R-1-B restricted single family 15,000 square feet minimum lot; R-1-C restricted single family 6,000 square feet minimum lot size; R-2 restricted single family 10,000 square feet minimum lot size

[81] The joint Planning Board and Public Works Department project cataloging unaccepted streets was unable to be located. However it is likely the streets that Ahern had in mind would substantially overlap with where public housing could be located. Meaning this strategy of methodically accepting streets would increase the value of abutting land, and increase the cost of development. Rendering those areas unsuitable for public housing too. This point would turn out to be moot, as all proposed public housing projects except one were defeated.

[82] Furthermore, spot zoning would have been required for each of these proposals, as can been seen in the case of Kirvin Park, providing a strong legal basis for overturning said spot zoning.

[83] While the exact location of this proposed development is uncertain, it was in close proximity to the Berkshire Hills Country Club, and less than a half mile north of the former war worker housing project known as Victory Hill.

[84] "Swift Action on Zoning Update"

[85] This is another cruel irony of this period of public housing opposition. Today these neighborhoods enjoy the health benefits associated with increased "green" space, while Westside residents endure "grey" spaces. Leaving the Westside more susceptible to the urban heat island effect being exacerbated by climate change.

In 1968 Rev. Joseph Kerr suggested the PHA pursue a housing project in Springside Park. This scattered-site development was supported by the Berkshire County Chapter of the NAACP, and was seen as a response to the prevailing strategy of isolated and income segregated ghettos. Residents living near Springside Park in Pittsfield hired a lawyer, and the Springside Park proposal was dropped. As mentioned previously in "Southeast Pittsfield" the PHA attempted to locate 100 units on vacant lands south of outer Williams Street, which led to a lawsuit against the city, a controversial opinion issued by the city solicitor days before a verdict was due in Superior Court, and the preservation of single-family zoning and open space in an outlying area of the city. In 1972 PHA brought forth a proposal for units to be built in the recently acquired Brattlebrook Park, abutting neighbors opposed on the grounds traffic would disrupt their neighborhoods.

Prior to the Columbus Urban Renewal Area Projects, the only post-war public housing built in the city was a 100 unit elderly housing development. This development was constructed on the border between a commercially zoned and single-family residentially zoned plot of land, as a dead-end to Elberon Avenue just north of the intersection between Plastics Avenue and Dalton Avenue. This particular location had proven unprofitable for private developers given its challenging topography.

These failed attempts to locate substantial housing projects outside of the Westside,[86] played a distinct role in shaping the neighborhood. As Black Westsiders sought economic opportunities outside of the city and county, low-income families were concentrated in private and public subsidized housing in and around the Westside. This settlement pattern helped cultivate ideologies connecting morality and culture with poverty (often justified by "crime") further cordoning off the Westside from public and private capital. Establishing a new chapter in the cycle of private-sector disinvestment.

It should also be noted that the opposition to public housing that arose in those neighborhoods described by Willison was racially homogenous immediately following their construction (1945-1955), and up through 1968 at the least (see footnote 33). Residential development in Pittsfield in response to the post-World War II housing crisis reflected nationwide strategies identified as segregationist. Land use was restricted by single-family and lot size requirements, often with the tacit understanding, this would render housing beyond the economic means of non-whites. Then, after the housing development policies that had served the requirements of middle and upper-class whites had been successful, a development that would have met the needs of low-income families, and Black families were opposed and defeated by those living in segregated, single-family neighborhoods. Homeownership created a political ideology in mid-20th century Pittsfield that conceived of equality as zero-sum and mobilized white homeowners to desperately, and successfully, protect their property values by any *political* (and thankfully non-violent) means necessary.

[86] Of the currently existing public and private low-income developments (20 or more units), 9 are circumscribed within a 14 block radius in the Westside neighborhood. Four–Dower Square, Oak Hill Apartments, Brattlebrook Village, and the Wilson Projects–are located throughout the remainder of Pittsfield.

Living Conditions, Environmental Conditions

A combination of factors has led to the blighted conditions seen in the Westside. As mentioned in earlier sections, the housing stock is quite old. Many of the homes on Jubilee Hill were built in the late 19th century. The difficulty of purchasing a home, combined with the precariousness of keeping it, meant that when the families who owned these older homes died or moved in the early 1900s, the properties were sold to realtors and businesses rather than other families. This, coupled with demand for housing, meant single-family dwellings were divided into double dwelling residences and multi-family apartments to accommodate the influx of workers since the rural areas of the city were still not developed. In 1918, the U.S. Housing Corp. was established to provide funding to build housing for war workers, but in most sections of the city, especially on the Westside, including Jubilee Hill, renters occupied older homes.

The City of Pittsfield historically at this time did not have much regulation regarding housing standards, building codes, sanitation, sewer, electricity, and other basic services. In the late 1920s discussions were held by city leaders to propose zoning ordinances to deal with the changes and growth in the city.

When the Great Depression hit, the City Council recognized that there was poor housing. It was projected that these factors would lead to increased health problems and substandard living conditions for its low-income residents. Various Federal programs through the FHA made available funding to cities to encourage the stimulation of home repairs through local banks during the 1930s. Also at this time, landlords in the city complained to the City Council that they were unable to collect rent incomes from welfare recipients. And these city-wide issues were compounded and less often addressed in the Westside.

Environmental factors of the Westside have made living there more dangerous for its residents. This is reflected in contemporary life span disparities between the Westside and more affluent Southeast section of Pittsfield. There have been a couple of notable fires in the neighborhood. In 1932, a Tidewater Oil Company tank filled with naphtha and kerosene suddenly exploded, damaging two homes on Deering Street beyond salvage. Only with difficulty did firefighters prevent the total destruction of another. But sometimes it was simply that the houses were unsafe because of outdated electric and heating systems. The two apartments inhabited by Mrs. Williamson on Deering Street and Mill Court both caught fire a total of four times over the course of fifteen years–mostly due to faulty wiring and old, combination cooking and heating stoves. A 1953 fire started by faulty wiring was owned by the grandson of Gilbert West.[87] But many of the environmental hazards are part of the landscape–namely the railroad and the river.

There are several documented stories about the river. The Western Branch of the Housatonic was developed like any other New England waterway in the 19th century. Dams, mills and their tenements, and dumps proliferated along the river. The conditions along the stretch of river running between Mill Street and Deering Street had drawn the ire of city residents and officials as early as 1923. *The Berkshire Eagle* proclaimed that from the West Street bridge looking south, the river was “of a condition distinctly discreditable to Pittsfield.”

[87] See the introduction to the “Housing Shortages” section.

In 1933, six-year-old Dorothy Lear was "coasting in Deering Street when the sled mounted the bank of the river and slid onto the ice and thence into the open water." It was several minutes before Charles Board, a Black man would come to her rescue. Rescue never came for five-and-a-half-year-old Charles Williamson in June of 1940. On that night, the boy went outside hat in hand, "to play in the yard" according to his mother. It was 6:30 p.m., and still bright enough outside to play. When Sergeant Keegan, the officer on duty, got the call that Charles was missing, it should be no surprise that he took with him "a squad of officers to the river" because he suspected the child had fallen in. After 18 hours of searching, and the river level being lowered by the opening of a mill dam, Charles' cap was found on the bank below Deering Street, his body just downstream.

Spurred by young Charles' death, more than 200 residents of the neighborhood filed a petition (with the sponsorship of the Pittsfield Civic League) with the city council. In short, something previously unheard of happened–some of Pittsfield's Black residents rose up and spoke out directly against the conditions they were conscripted to endure. They did not levy blame; they simply asked that their dignity be seen. The petition stated, "the Berkshires are known for their beauty and freedom from slum areas, and Pittsfield, the key city, cannot afford to spoil its good reputation and thereby lose its civic pride by allowing the above-named conditions to grow and bear the costly fruits that it is sure to produce if steps are not taken to remove them at an early date."[88]

Their petition was taken up, and on July 13th the council voted to have health commissioner Dr. Willys M. Monroe, "investigate immediately" the state of the river. But, Dr. Monroe was on vacation and would not return until August 1st. Over a year later, in November of 1941, the commissioned report was yet to materialize. The stated reason for the delay, according to councilperson Walter H. Ramsay, was that the commission required DMS residents to secure waivers for potential damages from landlords and homeowners in the neighborhood. This practice stemmed from the concern that lawsuits levied against the city for work done on the East Branch of the Housatonic to protect against flooding might repeat itself on this section of the West Branch, even though this petition was put forward simply to protect children. Once again, the city's attention went toward addressing the concerns of property owners. This instance is particularly notable because the grievous loss of youth and innocence went unaddressed as well. Contemporary interviews with residents who grew up in the neighborhood indicate that not even a fence was erected to prevent similar tragedies from occurring.

Housing in the City during the 1940s was still considered poor and substandard. Pittsfield continued to lack housing regulations for health and sanitation or building codes, as detailed by Figure 13, based on a 1946 Housing study. Ward 6 has by far the highest number of houses labeled *"*unfit", and the second-fewest houses labeled "good condition". And in 1940 72.8% of all Black households were in Ward 6 (Figure 14).

[88] "Deering Street Residents Appeal to City for Help." *The Berkshire Evening Eagle*, 8 July 1940, p. 4.

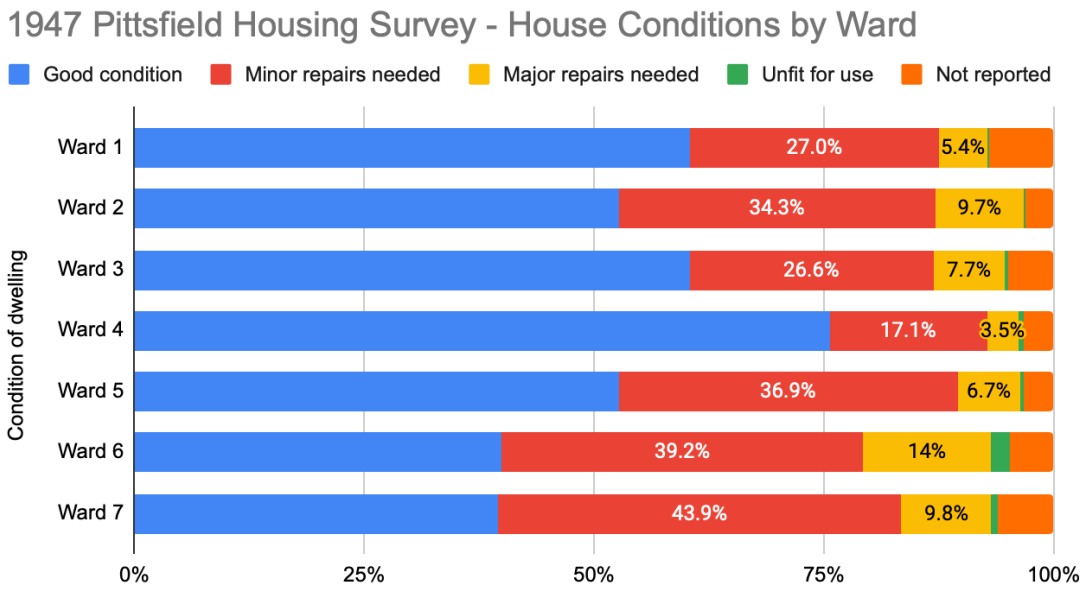

Figure 13

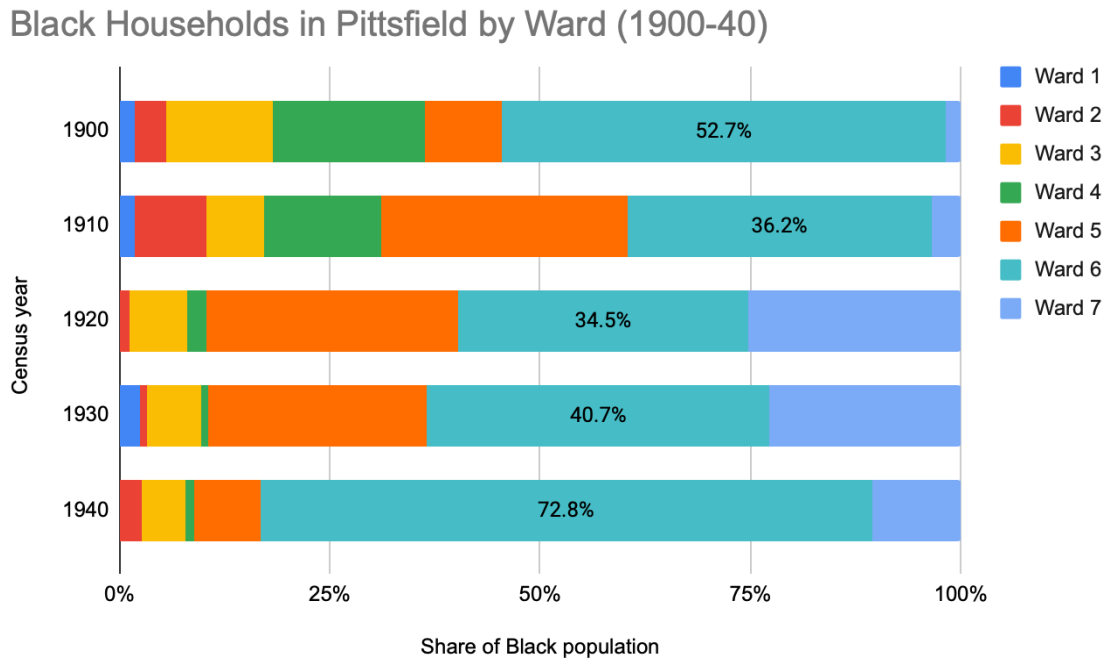

Figure 14

The 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycotts and the dedicated work of the Pittsfield Area Council of Churches shook the conscience of Pittsfield's citizens, spurring a public conversation and

examination of local segregation. By June of that year, editorials in the *Berkshire Eagle* were stating that of the 250 Black families in Pittsfield, all but 10 lived either in or adjacent to the DMS and that this should be expected:

> [As] It is topographically unattractive. It consists almost entirely of rental housing, owned by a very small number of white landlords. The tenements are among the oldest in the city. And most of them are officially classed as substandard.[89]

So it is clear that people were aware of the steps that could have been taken to alleviate the substandard housing that disproportionately affected Black citizens. However, as detailed in the section on affordable housing, they were not taken or they were defeated.

In 1969, a pastor of St. Stephen's Church in Pittsfield was tasked with studying the relationship between public services and neighborhood residents by the Urban Coalition. Part of his findings for Black residents in the "Downtown Westside" are as follows:

> Their complaint level has been significantly higher (100 percent), but their correction of situation level [is] (20 percent)... Furthermore when it is taken into account that all of the Black respondents were from the Columbus Avenue sector, and this sector reports a 41 percent correction level, it can be concluded that most white complaints from this sector are corrected while the vast majority of black complaints go unheeded.[90]

It should then come as no surprise that prior to the construction of any non-elderly unit urban renewal housing projects, Black residents from a portion of the Westside when surveyed were found to have the highest levels of alienation from city government.

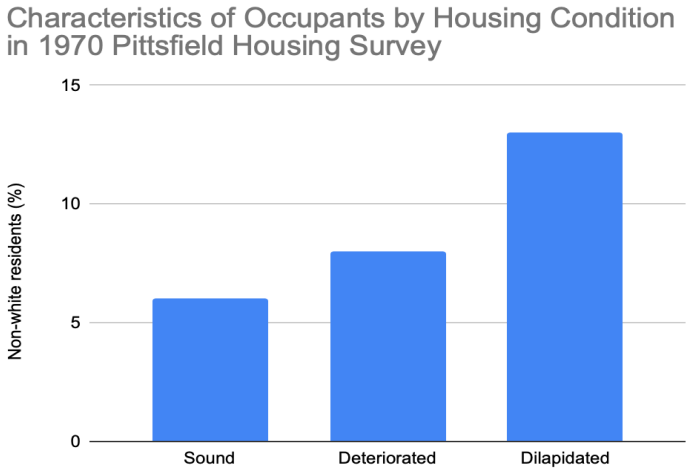

Figure 15

[89] Linscott, p.14
[90] "City's Negroes Complain More But Get Less Action" cover page

Zoning reforms to increase the density and quantity of housing were not pursued. Individual projects, both private and public, seeking to build scattered-site, high rise, ranch style, condominium-style, colonial style, multi-family housing were defeated by public opposition during the public hearings phase of development. This lack of actions, combined with economic discrimination, hindered the mobility of Black residents and enforced the tolerance of slum conditions. In short, the ghetto was created in Pittsfield by inaction and design.

Slum Clearing Projects, Urban Renewal, and Highway Construction

> "I want our young people to know that years ago our people, their forebears, had businesses on West Street and were active in the community."[91]

These days, we associate the term urban renewal with the destruction of homes and dislocation of families; with highways dividing Black neighborhoods from white ones and housing projects that concentrate low-income families. Urban renewal policies, however, were not enacted with the specific intent to further entrench segregation.

The process for slum clearance and urban renewal as we understand it today was established by the 1949 Federal Housing Act which sought to redress the disinvestment in and around city centers across the nation. That disinvestment in no small part was driven by a combination of the responses of non-Blacks to the Great Migration, the character of the residential development funded by New Deal housing policies, and the exclusion of Blacks from accessing private capital to maintain and improve housing they had access to in the neighborhoods they had access to (i.e. redlining). One way urban renewal can then be understood is as a federally funded, and locally implemented, land (re-)use policy. Municipalities could access funding to acquire and demolish property through eminent domain and then sell or lease that property to private developers.

Single-family homeowners, developers, and business associations exerted their influence to determine local land use policy. Intentionally or not, these efforts were racially exclusive. Urban renewal in Pittsfield without directly addressing the prevailing segregation, therefore, suffered from this local legacy of racial exclusion,[92] and the Westside neighborhood, in particular, was reorganized on a scale not seen in the remainder of Pittsfield. Housing was demolished to make way for commercial properties, low-income housing projects were concentrated in the neighborhood. The character of the new construction was remarkably distinct from the existing architecture. And by-ways were planned that would disconnect the neighborhood from the downtown district with the potential effect of segregating the multi-family zoned Westside from

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[91] Todd, Mary. "Afro-American Business bustled on West Street." Editorial. *The Berkshire Eagle,* 2 Oct. 1992.
[92] Urban renewal in Pittsfield was also influenced by the Urban Land Institute which was instrumental in assisting municipalities nationwide in identifying ghettos to be razed for highways. This particular land use strategy was termed "Negro Removal" by James Baldwin in a 1963 interview with Kenneth Clark.

the single-family zoned areas.

It all began with the American Housing Act, amended by the United States Congress and passed in 1949. The act contained six titles that provided funding for research on home building techniques, financing for dwellings and other farm buildings, increased funding for the Federal Housing Administration to provide mortgage insurance, funding to increase the production of public housing units, and monies for municipalities to combat blight and slums.

Title 1 of the act was the first instance in which the federal government formally recognized slums as a challenge in urban areas across the nation.[93] Federal financing was made available to authorized local agencies to draft redevelopment plans. Upon approval of those plans–by the municipality's legislative body–funding would be provided to the local agency to acquire, clear, and sell or lease land in the slum area.[94] According to the 1950 Census of Housing, nonwhites in the Commonwealth living in urban areas were five times more likely to live in housing categorized as dilapidated.[95] In Pittsfield, it was estimated that during this period of time, approximately 60% of Blacks lived in the DMS neighborhood–which had been acknowledged since the mid-1940s to be a "slum area."[96]

This was the beginning of the federal "urban renewal" program–which would come to be derisively and cogently called "Negro Removal."[97] Although this legacy is well-earned, initially the primary focus for the 1949 Housing Act was Title III which sought to significantly expand "low-rent public housing," building 800,000 new units by 1955.[98] Passed in the Truman administration, implementation of this part of the act would be substantially changed during the administration of President Eisenhower.

During Eisenhower's presidency, the focus on public housing waned; politically aligned officials in the federal legislature favored private market solutions.[99] With the passage of the 1954 Housing Act a "major emphasis [was placed] upon urban renewal–embracing the eradication and prevention of slums and urban blight."[100] During this period, the solution to a lack of housing opportunities for minorities in urban areas outside of ghettos and slums was primarily sought

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[93] Forest, Steven. "The effect of Title 1 of the 1949 Federal Housing act on New York City Cooperative and Condominium Conversion Plans." 13 Fordham Urb. L.J. 723 (1985). Available at: https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/ulj/vol13/iss3/8

[94] United States, 81st Congress. Public Law 171, Housing Act Of 1949. Govtrackus.com, 1949, US Government Printing Office, https://govtrackus.s3.amazonaws.com/legislink/pdf/stat/63/STATUTE-63-Pg413.pdf; Scheuer, James H., et al. "Disposition of Urban Renewal Land--A Fundamental Problem in the Rebuilding of Our Cities." *Columbia Law Review*, vol. 62, no. 6, Columbia Law Review Association, Inc., 1962, pp. 959–91, https://doi.org/10.2307/1120796.

[95] United States, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *Census of Housing: 1950, Volume I General Characteristics, Part 3 Idaho-Massachusetts.* Government Printing Office, 1953.

[96] City of Pittsfield, Ma, Planning Board. *1946 Housing Survey and Report.* 1 Sept. 1946.

[97]"Conversation With James Baldwin, A; James Baldwin Interview." 06/24/1963. GBH Archives. Web. March 3, 2022. <http://openvault.wgbh.org/catalog/V_C03ED1927DCF46B5A8C82275DF4239F9>

[98] Freeman, Richard. "The 1949 Housing Act versus 'urban renewal'." *Executive Intelligence Review.* vol. 23, no. 50, 1996, pp. 27-9.

[99] Mirroring the early 1940s debates in Pittsfield regarding the Wilson and Victory Hill Projects

[100] McGraw, B. T. "The Housing Act of 1954 and Implications for Minorities." *Phylon (1940-1956)*, vol. 16, no. 2, Clark Atlanta University, 1955, pp. 171–82, https://doi.org/10.2307/272718.

through encouraging realtors and lenders–those same local actors involved in enforcing segregation–to show Black families housing opportunities. Those neighborhoods in Pittsfield were homogenous by explicit and implicit design. Provisions of the act did call for the relocation of displaced families to housing that was suitable, but until the passage of the 1968 Fair Housing Act, formally outlawing housing discrimination, this provision was without civil rights substance.

As in the 1949 Housing Act, the 1954 Act required municipalities to meet certain conditions in order to access federal funding, including adequate codes and enforcement in addition to comprehensive community development plans. Utilizing federal (or state) funding to address the housing shortages in the city had a history of resistance from developers (and their corporations), contractors (and their home building associations), residents (and their neighborhood organizations), and city councilors. Additionally, two separate mayors resisted requirements to adequately staff the health department with code compliance inspectors. One mayor resisted *after* the PHA had submitted their plans for urban renewal, jeopardizing Pittsfield's eligibility for federal funding. Furthermore, the decade preceding the 1954 Housing Act had seen a relative boom in single-family home construction in Pittsfield. Despite the DMS neighborhood and a section of the Westside north along both sides of the river being identified as slum areas, it was the Pittsfield zeitgeist to ignore opportunities to address this issue.

It was not until the 1961 Omnibus Housing Act that Pittsfield would pursue federally funded slum clearance and urban renewal. It may be expected that, as of late adopters, Pittsfield would have the opportunity to avoid the shortcomings that characterized 1950s urban renewal. This expectation is unfounded.

Pittsfield's urban renewal period began during the last decade of the time period we study in this report. The primary focus of Pittsfield's Urban Renewal Plan was reinvigorating the Central Business District (today's Downtown), addressing the traffic congestion created by commuters, and getting rid of blight.[101] There were two major projects in Pittsfield, known as the Jubilee and Columbus projects, respectively. In early 1962, the PHA, the authorized agency to pursue urban renewal in Pittsfield, submitted before the city council for approval the "Jubilee Project." The project area was fifty-nine acres of land bordering both sides of the Boston & Albany railroad tracks, from where it crossed the West Branch of the Housatonic River to where it passed under North Street (at the intersection of Columbus Avenue and North Street). This land was to be surveyed and cataloged in order to submit a more detailed urban renewal plan to the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency.[102] Three years later, the Columbus Project had its application approved by the federal Urban Renewal Authority. The Columbus Project Area was immediate to the north of the Jubilee Project.

Intentional or not, explicitly prejudicial or not, urban renewal in Pittsfield fundamentally

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[101] Candeub, Flessib & Associates. *Comprehensive Master Plan, City of Pittsfield, Massachusetts.* 1962

[102] In the map accompanying *Berkshire Eagle* reporting, the Wendell Hotel was not included, but the DMS neighborhood and Union Train Station were, as well as the stretch of mixed-use buildings on the northern border of West Street from North Street to where West Street ended at the time (the railroad tracks). It is this latter area that Mary Todd identified.

reshaped the Westside neighborhood's architectural and commercial landscape. In the process reshaping opportunities that Westsiders had then and those that exist today. Reflecting in the early 1990s on the erosion of community,[103] Mary Todd, who had lived in the Westside since at least 1930, wrote a letter to the editor of the *Berkshire Eagle*, titled "Afro-American Businesses bustled on West Street":

> Where the parking garage is at the Berkshire Hilton, John Stevens had a tailor shop. Next to him, Henry Walker had a garage. Where Kay Bee Toy property extends to Columbus Avenue, Harry West ran a social club on the second floor of a building and a pool hall on the ground level. In that same area John Persip had a popular little restaurant. Jim Keffred had a busy barber shop. Other Afro-Americans who were prominent in the community included Bill DeWitt, our first disk jockey for radio station WBEC… Van DeWitt and Charlie Gaulden had a two-car taxi service. We even had a little two-page newspaper, called "The Tattler"... *I want our young people to know that years ago, their forebears, had businesses on West Street and were active in the community*[emphasis added].[104]

One of the most visible urban renewal projects was the construction of Center Street. Rothstein elucidates in *The Color of Law* that mid-century highways were often planned for Black and minority neighborhoods, providing numerous benefits to the non-Black and non-minority communities around them. These highways provided a basis for slum clearance, erected legal physical barriers that enforced segregation, and created a way for white suburbanites to bypass people they did not see as their neighbors.[105] The FHA favored mortgages where such barriers existed: "[n]atural or artificially established barriers will prove effective in protecting a neighborhood and the locations within it from adverse influences... includ[ing] prevention of infiltration of… lower class occupancy, and inharmonious racial groups."[106] Center Street is just such a barrier between the Westside and the Central Business district.

Though there were other planned highway projects that were never constructed, it is still important to study them in order to get the full picture of how national policies and planning strategies that devalued Blackness have been mirrored in Pittsfield. In 1961 or 1962, the PHA hired a firm to help determine an exact funding request the PHA would make from the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency. The city would also rely on this organization to develop a "Master Plan," and Central Business District Plan–a comprehensive economic development plan that was necessary for federal approval of an urban renewal plan.

Among the many maps that were created, one sticks out–a land-use plan with details for two bypasses: a parkway along the East branch of the Housatonic and an arterial bypass for the west

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[103] Mary Todd also focused on a particular section of West Street that was entirely demolished during urban renewal. In this way, she may have been alluding to a direct connection between the erosion of community and urban renewal.

[104] Todd, Mary. "Afro-American Business bustled on West Street." Editorial. *The Berkshire Eagle,* 2 Oct. 1992.

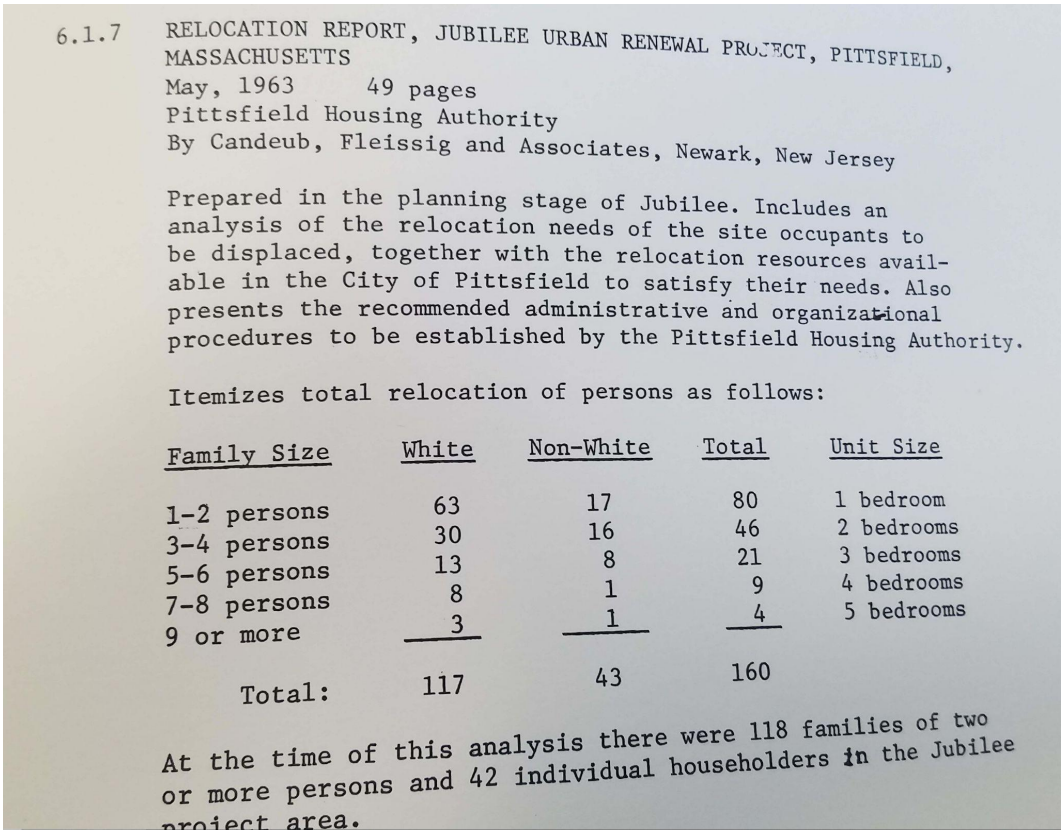
[105] The Urban Land Institute (ULI) was instrumental in linking highway construction and slum clearance nationally, recommending "city governments survey the 'extent to which blighted areas may provide suitable highway routes'" (Rothstein p.128). Founded in 1936, the ULI published technical manuals pertinent to municipalities urban renewal plans.

[106] Rothstein, 65

branch of the Housatonic.[107] This arterial bypass would have cleaved the Westside in two. It was laid directly atop the DMS neighborhood and had three planned interchanges at West Housatonic Street, West Street, and Danforth Avenue. The consultants assured the city that "the completion of this system will make all sections of the central area much more accessible from the *outlying residential areas and neighboring communities*[emphasis added]."[108] A later 1966 Urban Land Institute Panel Study Map would plan to reroute this proposed bypass further west, on Onota Street. This route would have circumscribed the R-3 and R-6 (multifamily) zoned Westside, to the east and down the hill, from the R-1-C and R-2 (single-family, 6,000 and 10,000 square feet respectively) zoned areas atop the hill and west of Onota Street.

This focus on servicing outlying residential areas and neighboring communities, while demolishing the slums Black families lived in due to segregation, are hallmarks Rothstein describes of the disparate impact 1960s urban renewal had on Black neighborhoods. This disparate impact can also be seen by the immensely disproportionate number of Black families–43 out of 160 families–relocated during the initial and largest urban renewal project, the Jubilee Urban Renewal Project.[109] Although this larger highway system was never constructed, as detailed above low-income housing *was* concentrated in the Westside. The largest factor in locating public and private low-income housing was opposition by non-Westside neighborhoods. Additionally, those Westsiders relocated during the Jubilee Urban Renewal Project, and the later Columbus Project also desired to remain in the neighborhoods they had built relationships in. As opposed to being relocated to the former location of the Victory Hill Projects, or (the proposed) Melbourne Road project south of route 20 and 3 miles west from the DMS neighborhood, or the eventually completed April Lane "middle income" development on Dalton Division Road 4 miles east.

[107] See appendix F Candeus, Flessig and Associates Traffic Circulation Plan 1962
[108] Central Business District Report p 52-3
[109] The "Relocation Report, Jubilee Urban Renewal Project, Pittsfield, Ma", completed May of 1963 by Candeus, Fleissig, and Associates for the PHA was itself unable to be located. However, this report, along with numerous studies, was provided to the 1966 ULI Central Business District Panel Study. A "reference library" of materials provided to the panel was able to be located.



6.1.7 RELOCATION REPORT, JUBILEE URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT, PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
May, 1963 49 pages
Pittsfield Housing Authority
By Candeub, Fleissig and Associates, Newark, New Jersey

Prepared in the planning stage of Jubilee. Includes an analysis of the relocation needs of the site occupants to be displaced, together with the relocation resources available in the City of Pittsfield to satisfy their needs. Also presents the recommended administrative and organizational procedures to be established by the Pittsfield Housing Authority.

Itemizes total relocation of persons as follows:

Family Size	White	Non-White	Total	Unit Size
1-2 persons	63	17	80	1 bedroom
3-4 persons	30	16	46	2 bedrooms
5-6 persons	13	8	21	3 bedrooms
7-8 persons	8	1	9	4 bedrooms
9 or more	3	1	4	5 bedrooms
Total:	117	43	160	

At the time of this analysis there were 118 families of two or more persons and 42 individual householders in the Jubilee project area.

Figure 16

In 1963, *Berkshire Eagle* reporter Edward J. Farrel wrote about new Massachusetts state legislation aimed at ending housing discrimination, saying:

> Pittsfield social and welfare authorities are quietly rejoicing at a combination of events that will eventually wipe out the last pocket of "de facto" segregation in Pittsfield."[110]

The combination of events was anti-discriminatory housing laws and an influx of federal money to demolish substandard housing, relocating families, and offer subsidized land to commercial interests to develop as they saw fit. While numerous Black families were living in housing beyond repair or in need of deep renovations, Pittsfield was planning to replace what little housing Blacks had been welcome in with highways, high rise projects, and general business districts–and this was seen as a positive development. The "progress" represented by these combined factors was late in arriving, as no new, non-elderly, housing was built in the Westside until the 1970s. Arguably the progress has never arrived.[111] In 2010 the low-income, non-elderly,

[110] Farrell, Edward. "De Facto Segregation Doomed by Housing Law." The Berkshire Eagle, 6 Jul. 1963, p. 6.

[111] One dynamic the research Tessa Kelly has done suggests that while the mid-1950s saw a flourishing of Westside businesses owned by white residents, at some point they packed up shop and left the neighborhood, some to less heavily settled areas of the city and county. This freed up housing for many Black families, and by 1960, when a majority of Black families had lived in the Deering-Mill-Satinet neighborhood in 1940, only 10 percent remained, *but* 60 percent of Black families still lived within a half mile radius. Black families had fled the inner ring of the ghetto for *the ghettos* suburban fringes. What was the impetus for these white owned businesses to close up shop?

housing project built to replace the razed houses in the DMS neighborhood was just as Farrell warned it could become in the same 1963 article. “This Particular Phase of the project may work in reverse. Unless the number of non-white families is limited, the city will recreate the de facto segregation situation.”[112] Indeed, the proceeding Figure 17 is a racial dot map compiled by the University of Virginia, Weldon Cooper Center For Public Service. Each dot represents the race of a person according to the 2010 census. Green dots represent African Americans. The concentration of green dots, center right, is Berkshire Peak Apartments, the low-income housing development built by the Berkshire Life Insurance Company after the DMS neighborhood was razed during urban renewal.

Figure 17

During this time period, the PHA had found itself at the center of controversy. Occasionally due to ineffectiveness, often by community organizations advocating for high-quality housing, often too when politicians made bids for power, and always when proposing public housing projects outside of the Westside. The attempt by the PHA in 1959 to build 40-50 units of state-allocated housing for low-income seniors, prior to its responsibility for enacting urban renewal, illuminates that locating low-income housing nearly exclusively in the Westside Neighborhood[113] *may* have been an inevitability.

Either way, we know that Black residents filled these vacancies, too, although too late to effectively push back against urban renewal--see Mary Todd’s letter to the editor in 1992.

[112] Farrell, Edward. “De Facto Segregation Doomed by Housing Law.” The Berkshire Eagle, 6 Jul. 1963, p. 6.

[113] And thereby concentrating poverty, creating and then reinforcing ideologies and stigmas about the Westside neighborhood more broadly.

After a review of dozens of parcels, several locations the PHA found most suitable were identified: a property at 147 Pomeroy Avenue, a plot used by the County Jail that would become the Morningside Community Elementary School, and a site on Upper North Street. The property at 147 Pomeroy Avenue was met with derision and opposition from residents nearby. Their primary objection, according to PHA Chairman Ralph Froio was "that such a project would lower property values."[114] The site owned by the County Jail was subject to approval by the Berkshire County Commissioners. And the site on upper North Street was met with general disbelief by the citizens of Pittsfield–and potentially also by the mayor and PHA executive director–because it was so far from Downtown. A *Berkshire Eagle* editorial suggested a site in "the Columbus and Francis Avenues area, for instance–where eminent domain proceedings could provide a convenient site while getting rid of some unattractive substandard housing at the same time."[115]

This pattern of events is descriptive of every PHA project attempted that would utilize funding from the 1961 Omnibus Housing Act. By 1970, when the city hired Technical Planning Associates to study the housing conditions in the city, the prior three decades of public debate on how best to address the issue of insufficient, substandard, and segregated housing in Pittsfield had yet to yield a solution.

Houses are People

The story of Florence Edmonds provides a portrait of the Westside. Mrs. Edmonds' story comes to us via a 1980 interview that her daughter conducted for an oral history project with the Schlesinger Library of Radcliffe College.[116] The project collected the stories of black women specifically because their stories have gone unrecorded and, therefore, researchers do not have the full context of their lives, which runs parallel to the erasure we see in the stories of the Westside.

Florence Edmonds was born in Pittsfield in 1890, and with the exception of a stint in New York City for nurse training, she lived her entire life there, a life which spanned both world wars and the Civil Rights movement. She was deeply embedded in the community–the daughter of the Rev. Harrison and an active church and community member her entire life. She was present for the second migration of Blacks to the area and a homeowner during the time period this report examines.

Mrs. Edmonds' story shows us discrimination at work in Pittsfield. The founding of the first black church was a response to the Congregational Church refusing to give black members communion. "It wasn't a matter of waiting until the whites were through…[they] just couldn't have it."[117] Though her family had a lot of social standing, and though they lived in a

[114] "Housing For Aged" p. 11
[115] "Central Location Is Essential In Housing the Elderly" p. 18
[116] Edmonds, Florence. "Black Woman Oral History Project," interview by Ruth Edmonds Hill on January 5, 1980 in Pittsfield, MA (Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on The History of Women in America, Radcliffe College)
[117] Ibid, 5

predominantly white neighborhood, she notes that people "didn't do much mingling" and the only time she encountered whites was during school.[118] They "didn't go to dances"[119] and there weren't any "mixed" clubs aside from The Girls Club.[120] Even though she was the valedictorian of her class and spent many years working in a doctor's office when she approached the local hospital about joining the nursing program, they "didn't say no, they just said it had never been done before," *it* specifically referring to having a Black student.[121] Edmonds ended up in New York at the Lincoln Hospital nursing school, one of the few Black nursing schools in the country. Many of her classmates were from the South and looking for better opportunities in the North. She remained in New York after graduation, working as a visiting nurse whose beat included both white patients and Black. She noted that she never felt unsafe.

In 1922, she married William Bailey Edmonds, a man she knew from Pittsfield who had followed her down to New York. They decided to move back to Pittsfield to start a family. They had been "more or less scouting around" the suburbs of New York, but he decided Pittsfield was the best option. "I'm glad he [decided on Pittsfield]!" Edmonds said. "I really like Pittsfield myself."[122]

Due to the previous discrimination, and the responsibilities of raising children, she did not return to nursing until 1945 when World War II created a shortage of doctors. She first tried The House of Mercy, who said they would get back to her, but never did. She went in person to St. Luke's so they'd have to tell her no to her face,[123] but they did not. She began with teaching first aid courses, but, before long, one of her fellow teachers gave her an application for a job as a visiting nurse. "The board has already accepted you. Will you see that your application gets in," she was told. And so she became the only nurse with a college degree and began her practice "what turned out to be more of the black district…although," she notes, "It was a mixed district, on the west side of town. In fact I had more white patients than I did Blacks."[124]

Mrs. Edmonds worked as a visiting nurse for eleven years, from 1945 to 1956, walking from door to door to treat patients. During that time, she exper I'mienced both warm and inviting homes and outright discrimination, like the time she was turned away from checking on a dying woman because the family "didn't want someone Black to take care of her."[125] In the interview, there is another specific story of a family refusing her because they didn't want a Black nurse, even though that family knew Edmonds' family.[126]

Mrs. Edmonds found more general acceptance while teaching prenatal classes. With this job, she had the opportunity to not only get to know white Pittsfielders, but also expectant parents who looked to her to assuage their doubts. One wonders about those Black families who did not have that chance to prove their skill, compassion, and humanity.

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[118] Ibid, 8
[119] Ibid, 12
[120] Ibid, 45
[121] Ibid, 13
[122] Ibid, 20
[123] Ibid, 29
[124] Ibid, 31
[125] Ibid, 32
[126] Ibid, 34

For the purposes of our report, one of the most striking parts of the interview is Mrs. Edmonds' reflections on the loss of community. She feels it began with the migration of Southern Blacks during WWII:

> Well, they began to come, of course, during wartime, when there was an influx of them from the South to the North for labor…And the sad part, whereas they were really church people in the South, they more or less got away from the church when they came North, more or less. There is a goodly number of people you see on the streets--it's reached the point where I feel like I'm the stranger, although I've lived here all my life…[127]

She also notes: "As far as the blacks working in professions, we have quite a few that work at GE, men, but they're from the outside and…a good many have come here for training, and they keep 'em, say, about a year or so, and then they move them on elsewhere." Edmonds concludes with:

> All the old families have died out around here. They're all, you might as well say, newcomers, 'cause there are very few of the old, old families left around here. There were certain names that you always thought of, and they're pretty well along in years, and those that did have children, their children are grown and they've all gone elsewhere and made their names elsewhere .[128]

Mrs. Edmonds also gives her opinion on the state of the Black family in Pittsfield. She shares how important she sees having more than a high school education is and laments how the parents of Black children in Pittsfield do not push their children to excel in education. She makes it clear, within the context of other remarks she makes, that the Black parents she is talking about are "newcomers," who left the South for jobs and left their religion behind them. To the modern observer, these comments would seem in stark contrast to the life experiences she shares with us and the ultimate effect it had on her children, almost all of whom moved out of Pittsfield to find success in places as disparate as Germany, Washington State, Yale, Chicago, and Harvard.

Edmonds notes "'Cause when they finished college there would be really nothing here for them, and they've all gone elsewhere and made their names elsewhere." Ruth–her daughter conducting the interview–admits, "That's what we had to do."[129]

Now place this exchange within the context of Florence Edmonds' life experiences. She was the only Black person on the board of the Salvation Army (a building placed at the intersection of New West Street and West Street on land some Black families recall having been promised by the Pittsfield Housing Authority for housing). While raising children, she did not have the time to be a "club woman" who joined the NAACP, Urban League, or other such clubs (at least three such clubs were associated with the Second Congregational Church). When Ruth Edmonds was reminiscing about her childhood, "most of our social life was at home. You know, we weren't a family that did a lot of that kind of thing." Mrs. Florence Edmonds response, "there weren't

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[127] Ibid, 46
[128] Ibid, 46
[129] Ibid, 46

many activities that were strictly black either, for you to go to. And the only mixed thing would be the Girls' Club," might also reveal something of the challenges those wartime Black immigrants faced in a new place; It would seem Mrs. Florence Edmonds was recognizing an unspoken force shaping how she raised her children, how her children thought about returning to their hometown after college, and that to this observer appeared to continue to the time of her interview in the 1980s. The house that Mrs. Edmonds' grandfather struggled to purchase in 1850 remained in the family until it was given to a nonprofit organization, the Samuel Harrison Society, in 2004 to turn into a museum to honor Rev. Harrison and his work for the Pittsfield community.

The Ongoing Effects

In a society that gives priority and power to property owners–a society created in no small part by the same New Deal policies and programs that also created redlining–what happens to people who have been specifically prevented from owning property? The answer is clear in both this report and by looking at the current conditions in the Westside. The contemporary prevailing socioeconomic conditions in the Westside Neighborhood in Pittsfiganization eld, Massachusetts, are what is expected in a neighborhood subjected to redlining and other forms of housing discrimination. We hope that in understanding how the situation in the Westside came to be, we can better address it.

So what are the current conditions? Westsiders have lower average lifespans, Black homeownership rates have decreased (compared to 1950), and the median income for Black Westsiders is less than 40% of the median income in Pittsfield. In this report, we have shown how the housing conditions on the Westside have been notoriously poor since the early 1900s. Black residents continue to face environmental hazards due to housing segregation. The river and railroad tracks are dangerous boundaries, and there are many stories of injuries and deaths with only recent changes preventing more tragedy. A notorious dump on King Street (which once held a high concentration of Black homeowners) is a persistent source of pollution, unremediated today. The Dorothy Amos Park was built atop a junkyard and required multiple remediation efforts. And for the newest park in the city, the Westside Riverway Park, the environmental study found that without remediation, exposure to the grass and soil would significantly increase the chances of developing cancer; the remediation strategy for this stretch of property located at the bottom of a hill and directly adjacent to the West Branch of the Housatonic River was to cap this polluted soil with six-inches of clean fill. The plots of land developed into the Westside Riverway Park are, unfortunately, not extraordinary or unique, and it is difficult–if not impossible–for individual homeowners to access the limited resources to pursue remediation.

We have introduced how the presence of blight eventually led to areas of the Westside being labeled as slums and being marked for slum clearance then targeted during urban renewal. How the initial intent was later significantly expanded, and through a combination of political and social factors resulted in Pittsfield's implementation of these programs concentrating low-income public and private housing projects in the Westside; creating a street (and planning more) that act as physical barriers disconnecting the Westside and Downtown; and, destroying symbolic and tangible landscapes–residential, commercial, *and* environmental–of the Westside. This loss is best exemplified by the demolition of the Wendell Sheraton Hotel and the block of mixed-use

brick and mortar buildings lining the north side of West Street, both intimately intertwined with the Black community of Pittsfield.

Another ongoing problem influenced by redlining and urban renewal is what we describe as "zombie properties". Demolished in the name of blight prevention utilizing these properties carry significant liens. This is currently an ongoing dynamic. As of June 2021, there were 35 properties with condemnation and demolition orders issued against them in the Westside. If and when these buildings are demolished, they will be further burdened by a lien charging the cost of demolition against the property owner, in addition to likely tax arrearages. Some of the vacant lots that have already gone through this process have liens in excess of $80,000, which prevents community members from purchasing and returning these properties to productive uses. The demolition of these buildings is funded via Community Development Block Grant monies allocated to Pittsfield by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The most recent housing needs assessment conducted by the city of Pittsfield[130] promotes a strategy of amassing these vacant lots in the Westside and offering them to a private developer. Copying the strategy used during the Jubilee and Columbus Urban Renewal Projects of the 1960s, and 70s.[131]

Furthermore, while the exact deliberations regarding how the federally designated "Opportunity Zones" were defined in Pittsfield are not entirely known, these designated areas are known in some instances to mirror "Historically Underserved Business Districts." With the demolition of the commercial zones that extended into the Westside along West Street and Columbus Avenue, along with the contraction of neighborhood-serving businesses scattered throughout the Westside,[132] only a fraction of the Westside currently qualifies for this federal designation designed to incentivize reinvestment in neighborhoods like the Westside.

Crucial to this report is evidence of a long-standing pattern of discrimination in the public and private mortgage market places. The rate of homeownership according to the American Community Survey 5-year estimate in 2019 for Pittsfield is 62.8%. For Black citizens of Pittsfield, it is 25.5%. The current rate of homeownership for Blacks in Pittsfield is 7.6 percentage points ***lower*** than in 1950, according to the 1950 federal census of housing. The homeownership rate for whites in Pittsfield is 13 percentage points higher today than in 1950.[133]

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[130] Dietz & Company Architects, GLC. *Housing Needs Analysis & Development Recommendations: Westside and Morningside Neighborhoods.* The city of Pittsfield, Department of Community Development, 2009.

[131] Here our definition of "zombie properties" focuses not on the status of private ownership and Massachusetts Land Courts, a definition found here: Formach, Ben. Mallach, Alan. *Building Communities of Promise and Possibility.* 2019. By understanding the dynamics that create "zombie properties" in the Westside over a longer span timespan, the effects of structural racism informing public policy are revealed. This is not to deny that legal status does impose development hurdles, mainly through extending development timelines. It is to shift the focus onto how, by limiting *who* can acquire and redevelop those properties, locally levied and enforced liens compound past housing discrimination.

[132] See appendix E, *John Street Comparative Zoning and Business Density Maps*

[133] The 1950 census reported statistics using, white, negro, and other races categories. Additionally, contemporary tenure status data for the census tract 9006 corroborating with the Westside, disaggregated by race, have large margins for error.

The thing is, at every turn in this story, there were voices and studies that pointed a way out of the situation, and at almost every turn, those solutions were ignored, or, in many cases, actively blocked. Both the 1946 and 1970 city-commissioned reports concluded that the construction of public housing and rezoning for higher population density would help improve the quality of life for those affected by segregational policies. Subsequent studies all over the country continue to come to the same conclusion.

Without courageous, dedicated, and collaborative effort to redress the historical harms of redlining and segregation, how can we expect the experience of Black Pittsfield residents to differ from Florence Edmonds' 1980 recollection of young people having to leave Pittsfield in order to succeed: "'Cause when they finished college there would be really nothing here for them, and they've all gone elsewhere and made their names elsewhere."[134]

How can we alleviate the ongoing effects?

The answer to repairing these harms will not be found in one list of recommendations. The work of repair is a process that requires dedicated resources over time that is steadfast across changes to leadership, and that centers on those who have been harmed. It may also ask us to reconsider some basic assumptions. Is all economic growth good? What does it mean to be wealthy? What kinds of opportunities are offered, and who defined those as opportunities?

Viewing potential recommendations through that lens of repair, it is essential first to understand broadly what that may mean: 1) Restitution 2) Compensation 3) Rehabilitation; 4) Satisfaction, and 5) Guarantees of non-repetition.

How can we repair the broken bonds of the human covenant between Black Westsiders and local government, financial institutions, and other city residents caused by segregation, housing discrimination, and disinvestment?

A. Below are examples of initiatives, organizations, and actions taken by residents, municipalities, and financial institutions in communities throughout the country to address income and wealth inequality, fair housing, homeownership, and the empowerment of self-determined liberation.
   - Study the history of the city
   - Make a solid commitment to equity
   - Revise policies that are inherently racist.
   - Incentivize investment in economically deprived areas
   - Give loans to people who want to remodel or refurbish their homes
   - Encourage bankers of color to become homeowners
   - Make collateral investments in schools and cultural institutions

[134] Edmonds, Oral History Interview

- Create opportunity zones
- Design and implement equity policies and practices
- Assist in zoning changes
- Intensive training to learn how to use and align an equity lens and practices
- Identify racist barriers that can be removed from city regulations
- Increase meaningful Diversity across city boards and committees, nonprofits, and financial institutions
- Increase opportunity for Black homeownership
- Invest in distressed, racially segregated communities (Westside of Pittsfield)
- Strengthen multi-sector partnerships
- Engage in the strategic use and analysis of data
- Developing community voice through authentic civic engagement

B.The Westside has been the home to many Black Pittsfield families for generations. Returning those families to our original homelands is outlandish (restitution). Just as incredible is rebuilding in its entirety the Deering-Mill-Satinet neighborhood and restoring the West Street and Columbus Avenue businesses that were demolished through urban renewal (restitution). Likewise, recommending a dollar figure sufficient to cover the opportunity cost and emotional harm caused by segregation and urban renewal entirely ignores the rehabilitation of those who oversaw, implemented, enforced, and profited from both. Satisfaction and guarantee to not re-offend are both built on trust and law (compensation). The following recommendations are the beginning of a process. They can be characterized as hyper-local, place-based solutions that attempt to build on successes found elsewhere.

- The City of Pittsfield formally recognizes the detrimental impacts that redlining, segregation, and urban renewal projects have had on Black residents of the Westside by establishing a *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*.
- Investigate developing structures that empower neighborhood residents. For example, Community Land Trusts, Community Development Corporations, Housing Cooperatives.
- Update the current ordinances restricting development on the Westside in partnership with Westside residents. Do so in socially responsible ways that recognize the history of the Westside. A starting point can be had with Boston's AFFH zoning ordinance.
- Organize to influence state legislation that will increase funding for affordable residential development, strengthen tenant rights, and stabilize neighborhoods for those who currently live in them. (Some Commonwealth specific examples: Mass Housings' various programs, Tenants Opportunity to Purchase Act, a variety of Transfer Fees, Fair Share Amendment, HOMES Act, et al.).

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Weil, Richard. "Last Victory Hill Building Goes To School." *The Berkshire Eagle,* 4 Mar. 1967, p. 7.

"Why The Fixation On Victory Hill?" *The Berkshire Eagle,* 13 Apr. 1967, p. 18.

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"Zone Changes Opposed By Many." *The Berkshire Evening Eagle,* 8 Apr. 1930, p. 2.

"Zone Changes Opposed By Many: Neighbors Protest Making Villa Itchingham Into Two-Family House." *The Berkshire County Eagle,* 28 Sept. 1932, p. 2.

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"1-Price Policy Expected for Renewal Area." *The Berkshire Eagle,* 10 Jun. 1966, p. 15.

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APPENDICES

A. Annotated Bibliography

Annotated Bibliography

Aaronson, D., Faber, J., Hartley, D., Mazumder, B., & Sharkey, P. (2021). The long-run effects of HOLC "redlining" maps on place-based measures of economic opportunity and socioeconomic success. *Regional Science and Urban Economics*. 81. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2020.103622

> Aaronson et al. attempt to study the effects of the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) redlining maps on census tract-level measures of economic mobility of cohorts born decades after the maps were constructed. Using digitized HOLC maps and 1910 and 1930 census data, in their first identification strategy, they model differences across a quarter of a mile or longer on each side of actual HOLC boundaries separating one grade difference neighborhoods, e.g. D versus C or C versus B and compare it to a comparison group of boundaries that had similar pre-existing differences as the actual boundaries. In their second identification strategy, the authors use the propensity scores to identify HOLC borders that did not have pre-existing trends in observable outcomes. They then use the Opportunity Atlas (Chetty et al., 2018) to estimate the aggregate characteristics of socioeconomic outcomes across these boundaries over time. They conclude that the HOLC ratings of creditworthiness have a causal and economically meaningful effect on socioeconomic outcomes in neighborhoods for at least the four decades observed after their inception.

Apparicio, P., Martori, J.C., Pearson, A.L., Fournier, E., & Apparicio, D. (2014). An open-source software for calculating indices of urban residential segregation. *Social Science Computer Review*, 32(1): 117-128. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439313504539

Apparicio et al introduces the free, open-source software called Geo-Segregation Analyzer, which can calculate 43 residential segregation indices if provided with a Shapefile geographic file with “counts of population groups that differ in ethnic origin, birth country, age, or income across a metropolitan area at a small area level (e.g., census tracts.)” It should be functional on Windows, Mac OS X, and Linux operating systems.

Bracey, Jr., J.H.(ed.), Meier, A.(ed.), & Rudwick, E. (ed.). (1971). *The Rise of the Ghetto*. Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc.

This anthology of writings pertinent to the creation of ghettos in America contains 29 essays by academics living within the time periods being described and do cover antebellum segregation, the great migration, various private and state action contributing to ghettoization and future prospects. However, these essays also do lend themselves to discussing much more than many of the others opinions on exactly what political, economic, and social interests various actors had in maintaining ghettos, including perspectives on Black consciousness movements for or against segregation. This book also contains key excerps from the Tauber’s Negros in Cities and Weaver’s The Negro Ghetto.

DeBats, D.A., & Gregory, I.N. (2011). Introduction to historical GIS and the study of urban history. *Social Science History 35*(4), 455-463. https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/460772.

This article provides a brief overview defining the term and going over a concise history of geographic information systems (GIS) before introducing a series of essary that provide further depth on the topic. Hillier (2002, 2003a) is cited and summarized with a comparison to Diamond and Bodenhamer (2001) which uses a similar method as her study of Philadelphia in the 1930s to instead study white flight in 1950s Indianapolis.

Ellen, I.G. (2000). *Sharing America’s Neighborhood: The Prospects for a Stable Racial Integration*. Harvard College.

Ellen introduces integration with a paraphrasing of Saul Alinsky, defining it as “the time between when the first black moves in and the last white moves out.” She then develops arguments regarding the perceived lack of stability of racially integrated neighborhoods, contending that it is not white flight that is the primary driving the lack of integrated neighborhoods but rather the white avoidance of racially integrated neighborhoods. Ellen presents the hypothesis of “race-based neighborhood stereotyping” arguing that white households tend to use racial composition as an indicator for neighborhood quality, and increases in integration as a signal of neighborhood instability and decline. This hypothesis informs her policy proposals which focus on creating confidence in neighborhood quality to support economic and social incentives.

Fishback, P., Flores-Lagunes, A., Horace, W. C., Kantor, S., & Treber, J. (2010). Influence of the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation on housing markets during the 1930s. *The Review of Financial Studies*. 24(6): 1782-1813. https://doi.org/10.1093/rfs/hhq144

This article focuses on the effects that HOLC mortgage refinancing had on the housing market’s supply and demand during the 1930s. It does make observations regardings the prices and number of units within both the rental and owner markets, however it doesn’t give much attention to disparities and focuses instead on the aggregate. Using

estimates of the effects using reduced-form equations and including an instrumental variable to account for the endogeneity arising from the unequal distribution of HOLC funds to areas of more troubled markets, they estimate the size of the impact HOLC had on the rental and owner housing markets. The authors also put it into context within larger financial/credit markets of the time and put the effects of HOLC in the 1930s in conversation with the Homes Affordable Modification Program (HAMP) implemented recently.

Fishback, P., Shertzer, A., LaVoice, J., & Walsh, R. (2020). Race, risk and the emergence of federal redlining. *NCER Working Paper Series.* https://www.nber.org/papers/w28146

Conducting a formal boundary analysis of the differences in economic characteristics of homes close to C-D borders using census data from the 1930s, being on the lower side of a boundary was associated with a 10% fall in housing prices and 1.1 to 1.3 point drop in occupational income scores. They also look at whether the placement of security zone boundaries reflected racial bias and conclude that it seems that reassigning Blacks who were potentially racially targeted in HOLC maps from red-lined zones to yellow-lined zones would only result in a reduction of Black households from D zones of 3%. These conclusions support Hillier (2003a) in stating that the maps likely had little effect on changing the outcomes of Black families in the housing credit market. And thus, these authors conclude, the maps simply acted to accurately reflect the economic impact disadvantage and discrimination already pre-existant affected Black households.

Gotham, K. (2000). Racialization and the state: the Housing Act of 1934 and the creation of the Federal Housing Administration. *Sociological Perspectives*. 43(2): 291-317. https://doi.org/10.2307/1389798

Using the framework of race as politically constructed, Gotham argues how this conceptualization may be used to research state policy. Specifically using governmental housing reports and analysis, real estate industry documents, and congressional testimony, Gotham observes how the formation of the Housing Act of 1934 and actions of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) build upon actions of the Federal Home Loan Bank Act (FHLB) and the HOLC, and thus how the FHA acted as a racialized state structure to disseminate and legitimize racial discrimination as “a necessary and normal characteristic of all housing market transactions, housing appraisal, and mortgage lending. This article is useful in drawing out the history and sociological context upon which the FHA operated.

Gries, J.M. (ed.), & Ford, J. (ed.). (1969). *Negro Housing: Report of the Committee On Negro Housing*. Negro Universities Press, a division of Greenwood Publishing Corp.

Originally published in 1932, this commission called by President Hoover published a rather extensive study of housing in the United States that covered both cities in the North and South. It may be said that several times, the authors do provide credence to claims that contemporary scholars would doubt much more. This includes a rather ambiguous answer as to if Black families moving into a white neighborhood causes a decrease in property values. The report also tries to be objective, but in doing so often does assume a neutral attitude towards Black populations, that other more contemporary scholarship might challenge. However, the authors also provide arguments against several popular fallacies of the time, e.g. citing from some lending institutions that Black

families have a reasonable or good credit risk to undertake due to their legal and social pressure to comply.

Hernandez, J. (2009). Redlining revisited: Mortgage lending patterns in Sacramento 1930-2004. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research.* 33(2): 291-313. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2009.00873.x

Hernandez uses HOLC Residential Security maps and appraisal data from 1938, census data from 1950 to 2000, interviews with residents, government reports, oral histories, newspapers and county records to report on the history of racial stratification through the mortgage lending market with Sacramento acting as her case study. She divides the history of redlining in Sacramento into 3 phases: one from 1930-50 which racialized the housing credits, one from 1950-80 in which sought urban renewal through the redevelopment of primarily Black and non-white residential areas into commercial and industrial areas and relocation of those residents, and then one from 1980-2004 focusing on the deregulation of lending activity and the disproportionate targeting of minority communities in the subprime mortgage market. She also does reference a similar, but later work of Gotham's from 2003 to acknowledge the linkage between race and markets, specifically the U.S. housing market as a racialized structure which produces racial inequality.

Hillier, A. (2003a). Redlining and the Homeowners' Loan Corporation. *Departmental Papers (City and Regional Planning)*. 3. http://repository.upenn.edu/cplan_papers/3

Hillier argues that redlining preceded the creation of HOLC maps using archival material and journal articles. Her claims are then supported with GIS and spatial statistical models to analyze address-level data from Philadelphia. She concludes that areas assigned red did not receive fewer mortgages and no group of lenders "categorically" refused to make loans to these areas. Additionally, stating that the HOLC maps were not widely distributed, as lenders would have access to other information informing them of neighborhood characteristics. Hillier argues that instead the FHA had more of an effect in establishing and promoting standards for neighborhood appraisals and institutionalizing redlining than any other agency. Hillier is contending with a belief prevalent in academia following the publication of Jackson's *Crabgrass Frontier*, which argued that the FHA and private lenders obtained copies of the HOLC maps and that these maps affected their own lending practices.

Hillier, A. (2003b). Spatial analysis of historical redlining: A methodological explanation. *Journal of Housing Research*. 14(1), 137-168. https://repository.upenn.edu/cplan_papers/9/

Hillier described various methods to test redlining through 2 spatial regression models, a hot spot analysis and finally a surface interpolation to draw out conclusions regarding redlining and mortgage lending practices. She is often referential to her previous work in Hillier (2003a) to show such methods in practice.

Hillier, A. (2005). Residential security maps and neighborhood appraisals. The Homeowners' Loan Corporation and the case of Philadelphia. *Social Science History*. 29(2), 207-233.https://repository.upenn.edu/cplan_papers/5/

Hillier builds upon her previous 2003 publications to further her case study of how HOLC operated and the limits to their operations and impact within Philadelphia.

Hirsch, A. R. (1983). *Making the Second Ghetto: Race & Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960.* Cambridge University Press.

Hirsch provides a case study of Chicago in order to illustrate how northern cities, defined by the institutions and individual actors which comprise them, reacted to the Great Migration. He argues that Chicago pioneered tactics to the creation and maintenance of ghettos and dedicates a fair amount of time to describing the activism, riots, and racial violence in the city in addition to the history of public policy that grounds the book. His description of a “second ghetto” includes the federal government's intentional segregating of Black populations from the period of 1933-1968.

***Jones, M. S., Black, L., Walker, F. T., McClennen, A., Wood, J. E., Carrington, W. C., Jackson, W. C., Woodridge, B., Loving, R., Loving, M., & Johnson, R. M. (principal correspondents). *Housing problems, urban renewal, and housing programs and legislation in Massachusetts.* (1956-1963). https://congressional.proquest.com/histvault?q=000004-006-0562&accountid=15054

This is a folder containing Housing Committee documents from the Berkshire NAACP, newspaper clippings, letters, etc. from 1956-1963, focused on Massachusetts but often discussing or containing discourse by members of Berkshire County and Pittsfield.

Jackson, K. (1985). *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. Oxford University Press.

Attempting to explain the unique positionality of the United States to produce its uniquely American suburban experience, Jackson also addresses several aspects relating to the urban landscape. As previously mentioned, some contemporary scholars, e.g. Hillier and Michney, do critique Jackson for overstating the importance of the HOLC maps which he uncovered and drew attention to. However, this work was largely impactful in the field of redlining because of its discovery of the HOLC residential security maps, investigation into the impact of the FHA, and suggestions of environmental and structural racism through zoning and transportation innovations.

Kimble, J. (2007). Insuring inequality: The role of the Federal Housing Administration in the urban ghettoization of African Americans. *Law and Social Inquiry.* 32(2): 399-434. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20108708

Kimble argues that the FHA had an agenda to isolate Black urban neighborhoods more than previous scholarship had established. He cites FHA underwriting manuals and publications as the source of his claims, writing a history of FHA pushing a racist story warning of depreciating house prices upon the “invasion” of non-white residents in white neighborhoods as a form of real estate “science.” He then also proposes methods by which the FHA was able to blame private market actors for policies and procedures that they originated to avoid legal responsibility following Supreme Court decisions aiming to addressing housing discrimination. Although de-emphasizing the role of HOLC, Kimble is building upon Jackson’s claim that no agency had as “pervasive or powerful” impact on the American people as the FHA and is building upon the narrative underpinning the history of ghettoization that Jackson built.

Luttrell, J.D. (1966). The Public Housing Administration and discrimination in federally assisted low-rent housing. *Michigan Law Review*. 64(5): 871-890. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1286914

Luttrell outlines a general history of the origin of the Public Housing Administration (PHA) and attempts by congressional action to provide decent housing for those who can not afford in the private market. He points to the responsibility that the PHA put in local authorities to seek out and administer the housing envisioned by the Housing Act of 1937 as a source of segregation patterns as they reflected the segregation dominating those communities. The article then covers how the PHA avoided any actions to fix the discriminatory administration of its loans through Executive Order 11063 and Title VI partially through their free choice plan. The article then argues why the PHA has an obligation to demand change from the local authorities which acted under it.

*** Massachusetts State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. (December 1966). *Housing Discrimination in the Springfield-Holyoke-Chicopee Metropolitan Area*.

McGrew, T. (2018). The history of residential segregation in the United States, Title XIII, and the homeownership remedy. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology.* 77(3,4): 1013-1048. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajes.12243

This article quite broadly covers the topics outlined in its title, while covering some more generalized historical context of national conversations than previous sources cited. It uses the case study of Oakland, California to provide specificity to the national historical narrative it draws.

Michney, T. & Winley L. (2019). New perspectives on New Deal housing policy: Explicating and mapping HOLC loans to African American. *Journal of Urban History*. 46(1): 150-180. https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144218819429

These authors stress the importance of the 2 phases of HOLC's mission, namely a 1933-1935 "rescue" phase in which HOLC refinanced mortgages on generous terms and a 1935-1951 "consolidation" phase where it managed and sold off its housing inventory. Their analysis lends evidence that HOLC lent to Black-owned properties roughly in proportion to the ownership of Black properties in most locales. However, by refinancing such homes, HOLC had functioned to keep Black residents in established Black neighborhoods. Their analysis can relatively easily corroborate the work done by Hillier.

Michney, T. (2021). How the city survey's redlining maps were made: A closer look at HOLC's mortgagee rehabilitation division. *Journal of Planning History.* https://doi.org/10.1177/15385132211013361

Michney here provides more solidified answers to the speculations offered by Jackson and Hillier regarding the HOLC maps creation and uses by reviewing the very recently discovered General Administrative Correspondence of HOLC. He confirms some of the racial and nativist biases present in the HOLC's views as well as their insistence to note population trends including race from the early stages of their City Survey. However, he does explicitly challenge Jackson's assumption that the HOLC security areas had an empirical basis. And Michney instead reaffirms Hillier's claim that there was some level of arbitration in the grading of the neighborhoods and claims that ideas about race in the mapmaking process were "idiosyncratic, arbitrary and variable rather than systematic."

Mitchell, B.,& Franco, J. (2018). HOLC "redlining" maps: The persistent structure of segregation and economic inequality. *National Community Reinvestment Coalition.* https://ncrc.org/holc/

Although possibly still drawing on assumptions which Michney and Hillier claim overestimate the impact of the HOLC maps on the overall housing landscape, this study does study the digitized HOLC maps taken from the University of Richmond's "Mapping Inequality" project alongside 2010 Decennial Census data to track and summarize the socioeconomic outcomes of neighborhoods of various HOLC grades.

Nelson, R. K., Winling, L., Marciano, R., et al. Mapping inequality: redlining in New Deal America. https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=9/42.323/-73.361

O'Flaherty, Brendan. (2015). *The Economics of Race in the United States*. Harvard College.

The book focuses on providing the reader with economic tools to describe race in America and then also summarizes economic studies and historical backgrounds to provide context to the concepts it describes. The chapters most pertinent to the study of housing discrimination are chapter 9 "Housing and Neighborhoods," which attempts to summarize measures of segregation, centralization, housing quality, racial neighborhood composition preferences and the some on the measures consequences of segregation, and 10 "Homeownership, Mortgage, Bubbles, and Foreclosure," which for the most part provides summary statistics of previous studies of the homeownership market as well as a brief history on lending discrimination. However, other chapters, like those on employment, wealth and reparations do support one's understanding of housing a bit more fully.

Safransky, S. (2019). Geographies of algorithmic violence: Redlining the smart city. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. 44(2): 200-218. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12833

This article analyzes the Market Value Analysis (MVA) approach undertaken by many development institutions in cities in America. She argues that the data-driven analytics that planners and government officials present as objectives must be re-politicized to properly address the potential harms they impose. Although referencial to the history of HOLC and 1930s redlining, this analysis is firmly in the present, but could be useful in providing guiding policy recommendations.

***Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. (1905-1955) Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from Pittsfield, Berkshire County, Massachusetts. https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn03824_007/.

This archive contains 90 images of various maps over the aforementioned time period published by the Sanborn Map Company.

Stuart, Guy. (2003). *Discriminating Risk: U.S. Mortgage Lending Industry in the Twentieth Century*. Cornell University Press.

Taeuber, K.E. & Taeuber, A.F. (1965). *Negroes in Cities: Residential Segregation and Neighborhood Change*. Aldrine Publishing Company.

The authors provide a comparative statistical analysis of major U.S. cities. In their principal findings, the authors claim that economic factors can only account for more than a small portion of observed levels of racial residential segregation, claiming that

economic improvements of Black households will do little to improve integration efforts in the U.S. This contrasts greatly with largely dismissive claims made in *Negro Housing: Report of the Committee On Negro Housing.* The authors also track and summarize the process of neighborhood change claiming that in Northern cities Black households often moved into formerly white areas, as opposed to in the South where Black households moved into housing set aside for them. Then, they explain the impacts such movement had on the socioeconomic status characteristic of neighborhoods, with Northern neighborhoods holding generally their socioeconomic status characteristics when undergoing racial composition changes while Southern cities have little associations between the socioeconomic characteristics of white and Black households living in the same neighborhood. Being heavily quantitatively based, this book has an extensive amount of empirical evidence about U.S. housing discrimination relative to the other book selections presented here.

Weaver, R. C. (1967). *Negro Ghetto*. Russell & Russell, a division of Atheneum Publishers, Inc.

Recommended by Richard Rothstein, often cited in contemporary academic articles, and first published in 1948, this book was one of the first comprehensive accounts of residential segregation in the North. Weaver states a purpose in providing an economic analysis of housing discrimination, but it should be noted that due to his largely intersectional analysis his contributions to the historical and social study of this time period are significant.

***Willison, G.F. (1957). *The History of Pittsfield, Massachusetts: 1916-1955*. City of Pittsfield. https://hdl.handle.net/2027/wu.89067489104.

This book provides a rather extensive history of the city outlining major shifts in the city's government, schools, health care, literature, businesses, housing, clubs and organizations, etc. As it relates to housing, the book does provide a chronology to many periods within the city. In 1937, Willison described federal jobs provided by the WPA, PWA, and various federal agencies for public works projects. In 1942, he states that there was a housing shortage that the Federal Public Housing Authority responded to with a $500,000 project for local war-workers and their families. Between 1945-1955, Willison describes a housing boom afforded by the Federal Housing Administration in white 2600 dwellings of small one-family houses were made. When taken into context with Rothstein, one may anticipate that despite the book only making one mention of the Black population of Pittsfield (a short passage mentioning the unanimous support for a school for Black children in 1827), that they were likely mostly or uniformly excluded from these homes and projects. But this book could provide a good resource for development trends and major industry/occupational changes within Pittsfield.

Woods II, L. L. (2012). The Federal Home Loan Bank Board, redlining and the national proliferation of racial lending discrimination, 1921-1950. https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144211435126

Woods used the annual and reports and monthly journals of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board (FHLBB), which was the parent bureau to the HOLC, to explain how the board unified national lending standards to incorporate neighborhood appraisals which included discriminatory practices against non-white and low-income city residents.

B. Questions Asked By Rothstein

1. Were there public housing projects in Pittsfield? How did they change as different laws were introduced?
    a. “Problem: A lack of public concern for meeting the housing needs of Pittsfield has contributed to the severity of the problem. Though studies in the past have pointed out the great need for housing, steps were not taken to alleviate the condition. Urban Renewal projects have been largely concerned with commercial development, further complicating the housing shortage by the necessity of relocating families without providing new housing for them.” [TPA 1970]
    b. “Problem: There has been little construction of Public Housing in Pittsfield since the early 1940s. Lack of public housing facilities for families and individuals with low and moderate income has added further to the housing crisis. These people have been forced to live in deteriorating and dilapidated housing where rents between $90 and $100 per month are available. It is not economically feasible to build new housing and charge less than $130 per month rent for a one bedroom apartment. According to estimated family incomes for 1969, at least 30% of the population cannot afford to pay this amount, and many of the families in this category need apartments larger than one bedroom. Hence there is a sizeable need for subsidized multi-family units which will provide a decent living environment for those of low, moderate or fixed incomes.” [TPA 1970]
    c. “Obstacle: Local government has failed to recognize subsidized housing as a necessity. The misconception that public programs and subsidies are strictly devoted to providing housing for the very poor has prevailed for many years. Actually, recent government involvement and assistance has largely aided middle and upper income households through federal income tax deductions, capital gains, and advanced depreciation allowances. Public awareness of the value and importance of organizing and planning for subsidized housing is necessary if local and private groups are to become involved in the program. A lack of realistic subsidies to those who need them amounts to a subtle form of housing discrimination. Local government officials must lend their support to the elimination of this situation.” [TPA 1970]
    d. “Problem: There is an acute shortage of multi-family housing. In the past, Pittsfield’s zoning map did not designate areas for the construction of multi-family housing. As a result, there now exists an acute shortage of such housing, though the demand for it exists. The zoning ordinance now provides for a maximum of 15,600 units in areas zoned RG and RM, without the necessity of removing existing structures. The designation of large areas of land for possible multi-family development has the advantage of keeping the price of such land down by providing the choice of many areas to the developer. If all the existing vacant land were built to its zoning capacity, 51.5% of the new dwelling units would be provided in multi-family housing.” - **TPA 1970 Pittsfield Housing Survey**
    e. Victory Hill housing project
        i. Lots of contention
2. How were facilities, amenities, services, and maintenance in neighborhoods?
    a. Housatonic River led to drowning, humidity concerns in homes (see newspaper articles on Housatonic River)

   b. The use of their river as a dumping ground, the proximity of the river which lacks a barrier which has historically and recently resulted in the drowning of children
3. Were there economic/racial/industrial zoning laws in Pittsfield?
   a. See zoning timeline
4. What were news articles/leaflets saying about segregation and integration? Was there fear-mongering?
   a. See letters to the editor and newspaper features on race
5. What were local politicians saying?
   a. Sep 30 1957 - Louis Cusato said problem of dumping cellulose waste into the river from mills must be stopped
6. How much did black homeowners pay for their homes? Compared to white homeowners?
   a. We were unable to compare by race, but see Pittsfield Housing Survey statistics for differences by ward
7. Did housing developments in Pittsfield have racially restrictive covenants?
   a. Underwriting Manual (1936) p. 284 - Recorded deed restrictions should strengthen and supplement zoning ordinances and to be really effective should include the provisions listed below. (g) Prohibition of the occupancy of properties except by the race for which they are intended.
8. Were any properties condemned for recreational use in Pittsfield? Where were those properties located? What agencies condemned those properties? What are the time periods and when did it start?
   --Contemporarily see Westside Riverway Park, Dewey Avenue
   --See also the contentious PHA plan for what is now called “Kirvin Park”, Brattle Park, Springside Park.
9. How are roads/highways planned in Pittsfield? Do they create spatial separations between Black and white communities?
   a. Railroad tracks
   b. Development plans on the outskirts of the City for low income
   c. Proposed and built streets/boulevards/bypasses see 1966 Urban Land Institute Map, which proposed building “center street” parallel to North St.
10. How did the involvement/recommendations of federal organizations (PWA, FWA, FHA, and USHA) impact the decisions of local governments and local bank institutions regarding homeowner loans?
    a. Urban Land Institute Panel Study 1966
11. What role did the segregation of schools and jobs have in residential segregation?
    a. De facto segregation at the elementary level. Tucker, Bartlett, and Briggs schools have the heaviest concentration with 147 out of 183 non-white pupils in the city’s 19 elementary schools. (from Aug 10 1966) Where were these schools located?

C. Timeline of Construction/Zoning Changes/Housing Policy in Pittsfield:

Constructed from Newspapers, Berkshire Athenaeum Local History Records, and PHA Records

1920s

1920	●
1921	● June 29- James Maloney of 260 South Street was rescued from drowning in

1920	●
	the Pontoosuc Lake by Francis Kempf June 28th.
1922	●
1923	●
1924	●
1925	●
1926	●
1927	●
1928	●
1929	● May 6 - The Planning Board meeting with hearings on various proposed modifications of the zoning ordinance as it was found in Chapter 29 of the General Laws was postponed to the 16th. “It is entitled an act relative to the repeal or modification of zoning by-laws in towns ● May 17 - Board meeting notes ○ Sinclair Refining company asked to have its property on West Housatonic St near the underpass changed from residence B to a business classification ○ James J Callahan petitioned one parcel of land at the corner of Burbank and Tyler street to residence B and the parcel at the corner of Kellog and Parker streets to be changed from residence C to business B ○ Thomas Nolan asked to have property on Third street to business B (two objectors by letter) ○ Edward Dubois wanted Thomas island changed from residence A to business B (committee recommended reclassifying to residence D) ○ John W Thomson asked to have property on Dawes avenue from residence A to B ○ George W Edwards petitioned to have property at corner of Elm and East sts from residence B to business C ○ John Solon asked to have property on Kellogg St to business B ○ McMahon family petitioned to have west side of Northrup street from residence C to business B

1930s

1930	● Feb. 7- The Berkshire Gravel company petitioned the board of appeals for a variation in the zoning ordinance to allow erection of a small gravel plant north of the municipal sewer beds. The Board would hold a hearing for this on the 13th. ● Apr. 8- Seventy-five people were at the aldermanic chamber of city hall to oppose two zoning petitions. M.D Hashim petitioned for a change in the classification of his property at the corner of West Housatonic and Mill streets

	from resident B to business B. Daniel J. Walsh petitioned for a reclassification of his lot at the corner of Cromwell and North Street. There was also a George D. Ferris who had petitioned for a change in zone for his property on North Street near Lakeview street, but who withdrew his petition. ● July 17- Wellington & Crosier was seeking to move their headquarters to the corner of East Street and Pomeroy Avenue at the Swift place, currently in a Residence C zone and change it to operate a funeral home. Filling a petition to be reviewed by the Board of Appeals on July 22nd.
1931	● July 14- Joseph W. Condron filed a petition for zoning change to allow 26 Maplewood Avenue to use the frame dwelling for a funeral home, changing the classification from residential to business. Salvadore Rocco also wished to change the zone at 58 Third street from Residence C to a business zone to allow him to use the premises as a store. ● Aug. 4- The planning board was supposed to hold a public hearing on four petitions submitted for zoning changes: ○ Thomas H. and Rebecca McDermott, upper North Street, Residence B to Business B ○ Katherine M. Kallman, South Street, Residence A to Business C ○ Henry Callan, Madison Avenue, Residence C to Business C ○ E. Liborio, Baker Road, Residence B to Business A. ● Aug. 14-The planning board was supposed to hold a public hearing on four petitions submitted for zoning changes: ○ Thomas H. and Rebecca McDermott, upper North Street, Residence B to Business B ○ Catherine M. Kallman, South Street, Residence A to Business C ○ Harty (not sure of spelling due to quality of copy) Callan, Madison Avenue, Residence C to Business C ○ E. Liborio, Baker Road, Residence B to Business A. ● Oct. 28- The planning board was to hold a meeting Nov. 6 on the petition of H.L. and Katherine Doran, Mrs. R.M. Conway, Mrs. Bessie B. Adams and Michael J and Mary C. Cone for a change in the zoning of property on West Housatonic St. from Residence C to Business B from the section involving the south side of West Housatonic street from a point 300 feet westerly of South Street to a point 337 feet easterly of Henry avenue. Notices had been sent out to the 67 property owners in that region. ●
1932	● Apr. 28- A U. & S. Beef and Provision Company faced opposition by 249 citizens regarding its plans to request a zone change for a plant on its East Street Property. The Planning Board voted to give the company a leave to withdraw, allowing the petition to be brought up again at a different time within the year in its present or an altered form, postponing the actual vote. There was also a petition by Owen Hogarty for a zone change to reclassify four lots on Thomas “Island” from Residence D to Business A, there was opposition by William E Goetz and I.P. Thompson, president of the Girl’s League. A petition was filed by Nicholas Palmer to reclassify the lots on East Street between Copley Terrace and Gordon street from Residence C to Business B. A petition was also filed for a lot on Copley Terrace. A petition of Henry Kelly was taken under consideration for lots on Francis and Daniels Avenues from Residence

	C to Business B was taken under consideration without opposition. Ernest Seddon and Charles Mellon requested a change from Residence B to Business B involving three lots on Edison Terrace. Finally, F. A. Mannining withdraw a petition for a change in the lot at the corner of First and Orchard Streets because the petition was improperly drawn. ● May 13- Opposition was voiced against the petition of George T. Denny for the zoning of his property on the corner of South and Buel Streets from residential to business to conduct a business not specified within his petition or known to the public. Opposition also arose against Clarence Dwyer for a license to conduct a lunch cart on the corner of South and East Housatonic Streets. Additionally, Cecil C. Gamwell, one of the older residents of South Street, issued a challenge to the Berkshire Hills Conference stating that he wouldn't further fund them if they didn't take a stance against gas stations, signs, and other unsightly objects incident to business on South Street. He had previously done work to oppose the cutting down of several Elms on the street and only managed to save two. ● Sept. 28- The Board of Appeals from Zoning Ordinance held a hearing for 2 petitions. One was for Harold R. Haffner about creating a gas station in the residential section of West Street. This faced opposition from Attorney John M. Shea who represented a group of nearby residents who presented a petition containing numerous signatures. The second petition was for Margaret M. Borgo who submitted a petition for the former VIlla Itchingham to become a two-family home on 155 Wendell Avenue. This faced opposition from neighboring residents Robert W. McCracken, Mrs. E. A. Jones, Mrs. L. P. Burgess and Dr. A. C. England who stated opposition to any change in the ordinance affecting their section as there were no two-family homes in that section of Wendell Avenue. ● Dec. 8 - The Board reviewed several petitions: ○ The Board favored a petition by Harold V. Dunn to reclassify his property on the corner of First and Dam Streets to be used for business purposes, presumed to be a gasoline station ○ The petition of Frank A Mangan for reclassification of his property on the corner of First and Orchard Streets to business B was recommended to be granted by the Board. However, Attorney George A. Prediger and one other resident appeared in opposition. ○ The petition of Charles Hughes for reclassification of his property on the corner of Wellington Avenue and Orchard Street for a small retail story and apartment house was voted to not be granted by the Board. Attorney Prediger and eight other residents appeared in opposition. ○ Seventeen neighboring residents led by F. L. Frances opposed a petition by Daniel J. Walsh's petition for re-classification of a tract of land on Upper North Street between Cromwell and Crane Avenue. ○ Israel Samuel's petition for reclassifying his property on Dewey Avenue in order to enlarge a store was voted to be recommended by the board. ○ A petition for Henry J. Callan was also granted for reclassification of a property at Linden and Seymour Streets.
1933	● Jan. 23- A petition signed by nearly 100 landlords was submitted to the Board of Aldermen at its regular meeting asking for the city to pay for the rent they've

	been unable to collect from the city's welfare recipients. A petition by Robert A Walker, President of the Pittsfield Taxpayers Association requested that the Council take proper action in paying the landlords. ● Feb. 1 - The net death rate for Pittsifed was found to be 9.8 per 1000, which was a low rate for time. Diphtheria was low, having only 2 cases. And 2 cases of smallpox happened in Pittsfield as an extension of the epidemic in Bennington, but both were isolated. Rabies reappeared in the Berkshires, specifically Pittsfield, after not being seen in 2 years. There was one typhoid case. Milk control work was also very effective in the past year. Overall, the health conservation contest the city entered with the U. S. Chamber of Commerce ranked it highest amongst industrial cities. However, due to the depression, poor housing, and poor nutrition it was expected for there to be an increase in TB in 1933 and 1934, if there weren't concentrated efforts to prevent such and isolate every case. ● Feb. 9- Dorothy Lead daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Lear of 16 Deering Street was saved from drowning in the West Housatonic River by Charles Board of 27 Mill Street.
1934	● July 14- In an editorial The Eagle described how South Street has controversially evolved from one of the city's finest residential sections to a business zone and so the South Street of old no more. They state that the same situation is occurring on East Street between First and Elm and that an owner of a vacant lot at the corner of East and Second wished for it to be zoned from residential to business so that he may seek some revenue from the land. ● Aug. 16 - The Government had campaigned to stimulate home repairs through the cooperation of banks to make loans for these improvements, under the Federal Housing Administration. 20 banks in the state and 1,131 had made pledges to this campaign. However, no Pittsfield organizations had, saying they were awaiting for further clarifying regulations from the FHA. ● Aug. 28 - Sinclair Refining Company petitioned to erect a 99,000-gallon capacity gas storage tank next to one of the city's largest and most popular playgrounds at Clapp Park. Other petitions by Berkshire Rubber Company, 88 Columbus Avenue, and Williams S. Farrar, 160 South Street, for storage tanks of 500 and 1000 gallons, respectively, were granted while a petition from Firestone Service Stores, Inc., 180 South Street, for a tank of 1315 gallon capacity was tabled. ● Aug. 29 - For the first time in "the memory of the present city administration," Pittsfield was confirmed to begin a tree planting program which would begin in the start of spring 1955 with a budget proposed by Mayor Allen H. Braggs of between $1000 and $2000. The topic of what kind of trees and where the trees should go was discussed, with the mayor saying there was a request for 70 trees along Silver Lake boulevard. However, Thomas G. Lynch wondered if that made sense since the lake had been used as a dump and the shores were littered with "old cans and discarded materials." Additionally, GE said they were willing to cooperate in this project. Additionally a housing program was to be discussed by the planning board, referred to by the mayor as the most important board in the city, possibly even above City Council. The board expressed interest in the Federal Housing Administration's program, and authorized Attorney Donna and Mr. Ferry to communicate with Pittsfield banks

	to ascertain their plans about the program and find out what way the board may be of assistance.
1935	● Feb. 21 - The City Council anticipates protest following the submission of many petitions following the rising anxiety about whether or not South Street will be turned over to business ○ George T. Denny petitioned for the reclassification of the Brown Property on the northwest corner of South and Buel Streets from Residence C to Business A. ○ Nannie Peirson Coogan petitioned for the reclassification of a lot on the southwest corner of South Street and Clinton Avenue from Residence C to Business A. ○ Joseph H. Morgan sought the reclassification of his property at the southwest corner of East Street and Pomeroy Avenue from Residence C to Business B. ○ Margaret Kinaid sought reclassification of a property from Residence B to Business B at the southwest corner of West Housatonic and Hollister Street. ○ John Newberry filed a petition reclassifying property some distance east of the junction of Elm and William Streets from Residence B to Business A ● Feb. 21 - A city shack used as shelter by the custodian of a city dump near King St. burns down. ● Apr. 6 - The petitioners of controversial zoning changes, not specified, failed to file orders amending the zoning ordinance to carry out the changes that they petitioned and so although the Council members had viewed properties involved in the petitions, it would be at least a month to put through the changes. ● May 2 - The Eagle wrote an editorial responding to a William Pickens, described as a zealot for the colored race. He had stated in his talk that newspapers exaggerate “Negro crime,” however they contest this by saying that if anything newspapers try to erase most mentions and underestimate involvement of Black people in society, and thus claim that this is a different kind of discrimination than he claims. The Eagle’s editorial stated that there “is a great deal of bunk in racial pleas. It is especially marked when persons are out to create sympathy. ● May 11 - Cecil C. Gamwell described as, “one of the one of the older residents of South Street and prominent citizen and coal dealer” sent a communication to the Mayor and City Council expressing that he was opposed to further rezoning of South Street unless they plan to rezone the entire section through the Lenox Line. He explains his opposition to the furthering of business sections at the expense of the trees, general beauty, and residential sections of the city. He also expresses an opposition to the blocks in which the floors are occupied “above the first floor by apartments,” which to his judgement is “dangerous and should not be allowed.”
1936	1.
1937	● Oct 30 - Investor Syndicate of Minneapolis conducted a nationwide study of housing from 1931 to 1936 and found that from 1933-1936, the city was only

	able to provide housing for 50.4% for the estimated gain population in Pittsfield.
1938	• Feb.10 - A bill was filed with Massachusetts's state legislature by the Recess Commission on Taxation and Public Expenditures to allow slum-clearance and the construction of low-rent housing projects by cities and towns of the State with the aid of Federal funds. The bill provided that each city or town create a corporation known as the Housing Authority and that that authority couldn't enact business transactions until it gained a certification of organization from the State Secretary and after determination by the City Council with the approval of the mayor or the vote of a special town meeting. The authority should be 5 members, four selected by municipality, one selected by the Housing Board.Commission on Taxation and Public Expenditures. • May 11 - The Eagle reports that the absence of a slum area in Pittsfield excludes the city from the share of $31,700,000 allocated for Massachusetts slum clearance by the U.S. Housing Administrator Straus.
1939	• Mar. 25 - Henry A. Crady, of 1716 West Housatonic Street, in Residence B zone, asked for use of a portion of his basement of his automobile service station for the repair of autos. Sadie I. Huntington of 174 Dalton Avenue, in Residence B petitioned to use the basement of her home for the sale of antiques and to erect a sign advertising the same. These would be heard by the Board of Appeals at their April 5 meeting.

1940s

1940	• May 2 - Poor housing conditions are reported by social workers. Pittsfield listed as standard on zoning laws, but no housing regulations on health and sanitation, or building rules other than minimum state law. Had "insufficient" rating on State Housing Board report
	  ○ On North St near business section, family of five living in damp basement
	  ○ Family of 8 near Pontoosuc Lake section where outdoor toilets were a health hazard
	  ○ Mill Street area family of 5 had leaking roof, ceiling fell and almost hit child
	  ○ Shortage of house seen as contributing cause of low housing standards
	• May 29 - A.D. Cosgrin of the United States Housing Authority in a meeting with the members of the Junior League at the Women's Club said Pittsfield could profit from the USHA slum clearance project.
	• June 1 - A.D. Cosgrin of the United States Housing Authority spoke before the Pittsfield Council of Social Agencies and the League of Women Voters to make a number of points: He suggested a revision of present building code, advised bad housing is costly to taxpayers, explained private enterprise not able to build homes for low incomes groups because cost of land, labor, building material and money are too high, admonished Pittsfield for not enough city planning, and also discusses "real slum elimination," as for one sub-standard home must be eliminated for a new unit.
	• June 20- Charles Edward Williamson, a five year old son of Mr. and Mrs.

	James Williamson of 15 Deering Street, had died from an accidental drowning in the Housatonic river while attempting to build a linoleum hut near the river with a group of boys. He was survived by his parents, brothers James Jr., Robert, and Clifford and his two sisters, Rosemary and Lilian. ● July 1 - Mrs. Charles Evans responded to Miss Albano's letter, saying that rent payers should not be blamed for poor conditions of housing. ● July 8 - Residents of Deerings Street and others in surrounding area submit a petition of 200 names for the city to remedy some of the conditions affecting their area: namely, the use of their river as a dumping ground, the proximity of the river which lacks a barrier which has historically and recently resulted in the drowning of children (including recently a Charles Williamson), and the poor quality of housing. ("the majority of these houses are unsightly and may be justly called Pittsfield's slum area.") ● Sept. 20- Pittsfield Taxpayers Association completes a six-month study of the city's welfare department. The report includes 3 sections including an analysis of the adequateness of the public welfare personnel, a case study of the type of relief in the welfare program, and a study of administrative methods and fiscal policy (including an inquiry into the expenditure of welfare funds from 1933 to 1939.)
1941	●
1942	● Feb 25 - Mayor James Fallon's budget filed for consideration by the City Council had been $111,559 less than the previous year. This included a due of WPA materials from $90,000 to $48,775 for all its departments, providing no funding for work under the Park Department. Public Works budget $10,000 less than year before
1943	● Jun 29 - Proposed Metal Hydrides plant near Dalton Ave would connect GE's hydrogen gas waste ● Jul 24 - A dispute was raised regarding how many members of City Council constitute a 2/3rds majority when there are 10 members with one member having been unable to attend the meeting due to a fall. This debate occurred in anticipation of a zoning change to permit erection of a plant by Metal Hydrides to rezone 22 acres of Dalton Ave land. ● Oct 1- Benjamin H. Goldy of 9 Tower Drive writes a letter to the editor of the Eagle defending the Victory Hill federal defense housing project, as a resident within it and employee of GE, against claims being made by Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Conley of the Pittsfield Taxpayers Association in the Eagle. Goldy claims the housing shortage for families is still going to occur even with an adequate number of housing units in Pittsfield due to landlords' refusal to rent to people with children. Goldy states that those in the project are "well pleased with our small house and find it very comfortable." And that they as well as, "other occupants of Victory Hill take pride in our new homes and deeply regret that certain civic organizations have found it necessary to condemn our homes in such an untrue and uncomplimentary manner."
1944	●
1945	● Apr 18 - 72 Berkshire residents were admitted to citizenship, including many

	to Pittsfield. And some to the Westside (addresses are listed). ● May 5 - The Berkshire Eagle publishes the article “Cleared Slum Sites Seen as Valuable City Property" which references advice from the magazine Practical Builder which claims that slum areas are often in central downtown districts which make the land expensive and valuable should the slums be cleared. They advise that public housing can and should be placed on less expensive land, which would reduce the subsidy required to live there and leave downtown areas available for municipal revenue. ● Aug 18 - The federal PHA halted all new contracts for government-financed war housing. And regional offices were instructed to move forward with plans for the eventual disposition of war housing. ● Oct 3 - A forum took place to talk about the near future of housing problems in Pittsfield. There several announcements took place: PHA announced that they made an application for a Federal Public Housing Authority low-rent housing project, also announcing an early comprehensive survey of the entire Pittsfield housing situation would be sponsored by the authority. Meanwhile an announcement of opposition to any public housing in Pittsfield or the county was made by the Berkshire County Real Estate Board and presented by their president Charles Garner.
1946	●
1947	● Jan. 13 - The Pittsfield Taxpayers Association working with the cooperation of the Public Works Department published a report of unaccepted streets to guide the department of the City Council and the public works commissioner and with the “growing stage” once again occurring in Pittsfield, the report was said to possibly be a guide to land developers and contractors. It indicated that there were as many accepted as unaccepted streets, with a total 350 unaccepted streets, 296 having housing on them. 2/3rds of these streets are on the outskirts of the city and represent 1900-1920 housing development. Figures were as follows: 230/296 occupied had no surface, 101/296 had no public water facilities. 77 were served by water mains of 4 inches or less; 198 had no hydrants, 168 had no public sewers. 271 had no drain, 135 had no gas, 79 no electricity and 200 had no street lights. ● Feb 11 - Executive secretary of the Pittsfield Taxpayers’ Association says to a Trinity Brotherhood meeting of 100 members that Pittsfield is more reactionary and unprogressive than those in it wish to believe and puts fault with its charter. Additionally he states that he is unsatisfied with the present state of the organization as it should expand beyond property owners, but its current 200 member size is evidence of the lack of interest. He cites indifference as an issue along with uninformed councilmen, an unfortunate relationship between the mayor and the council. And he cites problems in housing including at least 1000 families evicted, half of the veterans doubled up and a deterioration of rental housing. ● Apr 29 - Oliver Myers filed a petition for zone change on Harvard St, starting 150 ft north of Dalton Ave from residence B, which allows nothing larger than double houses, to C, which allows for multifamily dwellings. ● Jun 12 - Crawford C Stevens petition for zone change of lot at corner of Dalton Ave and Connecticut Ave from Residence B to Business A for the stake of making a variety store

	• Jul 19 - Residents of Cole Ave want the section of South St from Cole Ave to railroad bridge changed from Business C to Residence B, fearing the encroachment of businesses. Residents are also fighting a proposed freight truck terminal that would be built on the south side of New Haven railroad tracks off South St.
	• Aug 2 - Three zone change petitions to be heard on Friday, Aug 8
	  ○ Cole Ave from Business C to Residence C
	  ○ Arden Schilling wants a lot on SW corner of Dalton and Connecticut from Residence B to Business A
	  ○ Sam Vincent wants north side of Elm St between Dexter St and Wood Ave from Residence B to Business A
	• Sep 9 - The Pittsfield Chamber of Commerce formally voted almost unanimously against the proposed resolution under Chapter 372 for subsidized housing, claiming that the chapter believes that housing can be solved by private capital. All other organizations asked to approve the petition signed except for the Pittsfield Taxpayers Association and the PHA, which submitted its own recommendation to the city for garden-type apartments under Section 372.
	• Sep 10 - The motion presented by the Pittsfield Housing Co-Ordinating Committee to appropriate 1,200,000 for municipal housing to provide 150 units of housing for veterans' families was voted on by the City Council passing 8 to 3 and should the same members vote the same is expected in the future to vote to override the mayors rejection (which is expected to happen.) Chapter 372 is a law under which municipal housing projects are allowed by the city building units and selling them to private capital within five years, while the state reimburses the city for part of the loss while promoters content the city gains over the period of year due to the real estate taxes the city will gain when the units are sold to private investors.
	• Sep 30 - After the last hearing when two homeowners's requested permission to build extra apartments was rejected, 37 Hull and Pleasure Ave residents asked that all of Hull Ave and part of Pleasure Ave be changed from Residence B to C
	• Oct. 1 - The night before Frederick M. Myers, member of the planning board and president of the Tax Research Association, presented his proposal as an alternative to public low rental housing projects, of converting residences in Residence A and B zones of the city into multi-apartments, provided no changes be made to the exterior of the building with at least 750 square per apartment and 200 square feet per person. However, during the meeting, the question of whether or not the city could impose rent control upon the apartments ended up derailing the meeting.

1948	• Apr. 28 - In a survey by Pittsfield Tax Research Association and the League of Women Voters, the 450 Pittsfield High School seniors gave an overwhelming vote to the housing problem as the number one issue facing the city with many in favor of city-built housing. "There should be adequate housing for the many people who are coming to work at the GE, not cardboard and paste houses" • July 20 - The Tax Research Association (recently renamed from the "Pittsfield Taxpayers Association) launched a six-week campaign led by Berkshire Coca-Cola Bottling Company vice-president Charles E. Newton Jr. and

Birchard Buick Company president Arthur R. Birchard Jr. to bring in 1000 members despite its current <200 member size. The association had formerly been accredited with joining in the efforts to submit the streamlined city report adopted by Mayor Fallon and the City Council in 1921, keeping the Council's Public Works Committee supplied with information on unaccepted streets, and working with the Department of Public Works to set up a cost system which they claimed to have saved the city over $100,000 since 1940. They had been planning in the future to attempt to study the municipal garage, school redistricting, the new city infirmary, the master plan for recreation, and the city's financial situation.

- July 29- A special meeting of the City Council took place where Mayor Capeless had returned from a trip to Boston with a tentative reassurance that Pittsfield would receive enough to build the full 126 units called for in the original Wilson Park plans, this being understood to mean the low bid of $1,549,665 submitted to the PHA by the Ley Construction Company of Pittsfield. With no final commitments, the mayor also disclosed that it was probable for Pittsfield to receive a full total of 4,000,000 from the state under the provisions of Chapter 200 (a 200,000,000 state housing bill), with this being the full amount requested by the city, inclusive of the Wilson Park plan. Meanwhile Philip C. Ahern, the executive secretary of Pittsfield Tax Research Association called the per unit costs of the project excessive , demanding the PHA provide the public a full explanation of the costs with an analysis of its specifications being done by housing experts with recommendations that will lower the costs.
- July 30 - The directors of the Pittsfield Tax Research Association release a letter claiming that the $13,000 per unit cost of the Wilson Park housing development is in far excess of comparable community's per unit costs for veteran housing and that the PHA is obligated to explain the costs. The letter also asked whether the PHA considered obtaining units through another design besides multiple dwellings and considering heating the units per building rather than per unit basis.
- July 31- Another meeting of the City Council took place on the 30th discussing the Wilson Park plans, by approving two orders regarding the plan: the first officially moving the funding of the plan from the city to the Commonwealth by transferring it to the provisions of Chapter 200 and the second authorizing the city to begin letting contracts to complete the job. However, William J. Hurley, the chairman of the PHA said that there were still any legal issues to deal with within the project to the provisions of Chapter 200 that might not be finalized before the deadline set for accepting the construction bids that had been submitted. Major objections came from several Council members citing Ahern's analysis as well as from Roy F. Brown, who argued for changing the project from multiple units to single units.
- Aug. 4 - Frederick M. Myers, president of the Tax Research Association, made a statement saying that the contention that the $13,000 per unit price of the Wilson Park project should be accepted since it is being paid by the state is a "dangerous" and "faulty" idea as the state will pay for it through taxpayer money nonetheless.
- Aug. 6 - Frederick M. Myers and the Tax Research Association made claims expressing shock that the PHA had been in such a haste to accept the Springfield company's bid that they failed to properly give local contractors a

	full opportunity to bid, specifically citing three companies considering a bid proposing to split the work, as well as claiming that the PHA failed to wait for and listen the disinterested housing expert hired by the tax association to review their plans before the contract was signed. Mayor Capeless denied that this was the case stating that "the Pittsfield Tax Research Association has the peculiar idea that it is an official part of the city of Pittsfield and that the city government can't make a move without its consent," stating that the association had four weeks during which to examine plans before bids were made and three weeks to observe them after that. ● Aug. 7- Frederick M. Myers proposed an ordinance dubbed the Myers Plan which would encourage the conversion of old structurally sound single-family houses into multiple dwelling units in order to hopefully provide relief to GI families in need of relief. However, after eight weeks since its passage, no applications for building permits under its provisions have been filed. ● Aug. 11 - Edward J. Farrell Jr. writes a letter to the editor of the Eagle stating that he fails to understand how anyone could see the Pittsfield Tax Research Association and Myers as "anything but a detriment" or even sincere. He argues that the housing projects costs are being assumed by the state, 126 houses won't make a dent in the housing crises and are merely a token, and that the $13,000 per unit cost in the face of rising production costs is far from prohibitive using the "present prices of individual homes as a standard." He also questions the silence coming from the veterans' organizations of Pittsfield to not make any comments on the project which has ramifications for them while Mayor Capeless argues on their behalf. ● Aug. 26- Chairman of the PHA William J. Hurley reported that only fewer than 160 veterans out of the estimated 1000 vets in need of rental housing in the city had applied for Pittsfield's Wilson Park housing project. He said that future projects would hinge on the interest expressed in this current one, but he believed the indifference to this project was due to the housing defeatism which had grown since the war.
1949	● Feb. 12 - An "exhaustive" study had been published by Phillip C. Ahern evaluating the city's land use. He states that with proper use of Pittsfield's resources, the potential for development is nearly limitless, explaining that the industrial wages of Pittsfield at $60 a week runs ahead of other cities in the state, while the electric industry gives virtual assurance of the continuance of high wages. He then states that a planning problem of the city has been to develop the city's outskirts when more could be done by further developing the city's center as much of the foundation is already in place as opposed to the outskirts where new lines would have to be laid and water routes made. He generally encourages the city to try to absorb its suburban dwellers through making housing available for them in these areas. He states in the past the city has made home developments and then attended to services after there is demand, but now the city should try to make developments by targeting areas where services are available. ● Mar. 25 - Mayor Capeless and School Superintendent Edward J. Russell both released statements contending opposition with the Pittsfield Tax Research Associations implication that there was a connection between Pittsfield's revaluation program and the cost of erecting needed school buildings. They both stated that delaying school building in order to wait for a revaluation

	would be illogical as there is uncertainty that the tax rate would affect them in any particular direction.

1950s

1950	• July 3- Grand Union Co. and Eagle Street Realty petitioned to have a lot on South Street changed from a R-1-C to a C-3 classification to be made into a supermarket. However, citizens continued to protest, with this opposition led by Atty. John A. McGruer Jr. who claimed that this was an example of "spot zoning," which was held by the Supreme Court to be illegal. However, the companies claim that they are extending the zoning of one of the lots owned by the realty company, and thus not making an arbitrary change. However, McGruer states that changing a parcel of land for the benefit of one would be spot zoning. Further, they also were arguing over the value of the land, with some saying they fear the surrounding area would depreciate, with others stating the value of the existing lot is too high for anything except for a large commercial business to run there. There was one protest claiming the large rats in the area exempt the area from being capable of being a supermarket. (Birchard Buick Inc. was also mentioned as petitioning for a zone change on South Street from R-3 to C-3, involving portions of three lots on Taconic Street in the rear of the firm's garage at South and Taconic.) • Aug. 4- Four public hearings were conducted by the Planning Board, all with opposition with the exception of one. A Fredrick Wilson sought to have the "old Colt homestead" property on South Street to be rezoned from Residence C to Business B in order to make the zoning lines align with his lot's lines, and had no objectors, although the board recommended for the petition be denied in order to change his and other properties northerly to Taconic Street be rezoned to Business A. There was also a request by William Rodda and others to change the Rodda lot on Reed Street from Residence C to Business B. The Slye brothers of the Berkshire Air Conditioning company were in support of this because they could take advantage of the right of way to allow them access to Reed Street rather than a more congested South Street, as is the present case. There was opposition from Councilman Donald G. Butler, who said that the proposed change would add to the existing "misery" of his residents. He stated trucks load and unload in early hours of the morning while buses violate the one-way traffic, while the street is so narrow that to walk down it "a person takes his life in his own hands."
1951	•
1952	• Mar. 22 - In an annual report released the 21st it was announced that there was a membership increase from 300 to "nearly 2500" being listed as the Pittsfield Taxpayers Association's outstanding 1951 accomplishment. The report credited the city organization and its parent organization, the Massachusetts Federation of Taxpayers Association. Locally, the report emphasized the Taxpayers Association's "support of proposals for a city traffic commission and its study of wages and hours scales in the fire and police departments. • Apr. 24- A Charles McCarry writes a letter to the Eagle responding to a

	columnist Robert Smith he believes is vilifying Southerners while santifying blacks. He talks of being a member of one of the first unsegregated Army units at Camp Pickett, Virginia. He then essentially states that he believes in some sincere efforts within the South to improve conditions for Black people and that to erase the color lines would rid Black people of the race and color he is justifiably proud of as a sign of his suffering, courage and accomplishment. ● July 23- Mayor Capeless had put forth a proposal to the City Council to move forward in accepting the federal allocation of 200 units of public low-rent housing given under the 1949 Housing Act. His proposal was to construct 50 units as soon as possible, but only proceed with the others should sufficient need be expressed via surveying. However, this council meeting was sidetracked by Councilman-at-Large Robert N. Hart who denounced public housing as “socialism pure and unadulterated-- socialism in its complete form.” The proposal was after hours of debate defeated by one vote, and the issue was decided to be voted upon at another time. ● Sep 8 - Petition by Catherine M Clum to rezone her property at the corner of South St and Henry Ave from Residence C to Business A (property is former CC Gamwell homestead) for the purpose of selling her tourist home to an oil company wishing to set up a gas station. Councilmen Donald G. Butler and Leland C. Talbot of Ward 5 and 4, respectively, had alerted their constituents to voice opposition to the change. There was also supposed to be an appearance from the American Legion post, which the prior week passed a resolution opposing zoning changes south of Clinton Avenue on South Street.
1953	● Jan. 28- On the 27th, it was decided that state-proposed guidelines of what constitutes substandard housing was going to be studied through the Pittsfield Community Council and undertaken by the council's health division, and they would decide if those minimal standards would be adopted by the city. The city’s personnel administrator and secretary of the Planning Board Phillip C. Ahern, said that the 1946 survey of the city showed that about 18% of the 13,000 dwellings were substandard and showed a need of 1600 more houses were needed. He claimed that since then, private builders had put up 2000 units and the wartime shortage had disappeared. However, the sanitarian of the Public Health Department M. Michael Muszyka stated that in his three years in the position he has checked some 500 complaints of “nuisances” in connection to housing and that the basic condition of substandard housing has not changed much since the survey, but that the department hesitates to declare a dwelling unfit as it forces the landlord the choice of evicting tenants or making costly repairs.
1954	●

1955	• Apr 13 - The City Council had granted an open air parking lot for 48 cars to Mrs. Benjamin Minsky for 15-19 Center St. behind the Town Diner and local bus terminal. The City Council set a public hearing on Apr 26 for Bishop Christopher J Weldon's zoning change on Dalton Ave. The Springfield prelate asked that the property be changed from residential to commercial, change was approved by Planning Board because it will be more marketable • Jun 21 - Planning board rejects Joseph Dragone's petition for rezoning of two lots at corner of East St and Dalton Division Rd from residential to C-1 (shopping center zone) for a combined drug, variety, and grocery market needed in the neighborhood. However, dozens of homeowners objected to this change. • Sep 28 - Stanley P Benton's zoning change of 44 acres on north side of South Mountain Rd from R-1-A (single residences that require a lot of one acre in area) to R-1-B (requires lot area of 15,000 sq ft) approved. Also approved reclassification of C-1 zone on Hancock Rd near Ridge Ave established for a shopping center to R-1-C (single residences on lots at least 6000 ft in area). Gladys Robinson sought change to allow her to build a house at the corner
1956	• June 7- The Eagle makes a correction, stating it was Lafayette Walker not David Gunn who answered the question, "Where can a Negro live in Pittsfield?" and stated, "Negroes can live down by the river and the railroad tracks." • Dec. 1- The Eagle publishes a map made from studies made by the Pittsfield Planning Board's 1946 study showing a map with dotted areas where there was at least some housing with an average degree of substandardness and streets filled in with solid black where one or more Black families lived, this did seem mostly concentrated on the Westside that we've observed with some exceptions. The Eagle pairs this with quotes from the Nov. 18 issue of The Christian Century article "Homes for Sale" by Marian Perry Yankayer, an Albany attorney who speaks against the segregation of black populations within ghettos.
1957	• Mar 12 - Marian Perry Yankauer, national authority on interracial housing, says major objection to a sale of a home in a white area to a Negro family is fear of devaluation of property (even though not true). Advocated for interracial housing to Pittsfield Area Council of Churches • Mar. 30 - The Eagle reported 2 calls for desegregation in Pittsfield. One from a 17 yr old Barbara J. McMorris who called for desegregation in the Order of Rainbow for Girls, a religiously-oriented branch or Eastern Star. She and some of her fellow members campaigned for change despite opposition from adult members of the organization. The other call was from a delegatôion of six Pittfield residents attending a public hearing in boston on proposed state legislation to bar bias in the sale or rental of "publicly-assisted housing" which would include apartments three units or more and subdivisions 10 houses or more built with VA or FHA loans. This included John H. Diggs, a Black GE engineering assistant who made 82 calls for housing and was turned down because of color 50% of the time. Senator Conte called the bill too mild and proposed amendments to expand its coverage. Representative Crawford endorsed the bill, but also called for other changes including in AFL trade unions and general discrimination in labor.

	• June 11 - A representative from the state Commission Against Discrimination was sceduled to arrive in July in Berkshire county to complete plans for establishing an anti-discrimination educational committee. • Jul 8 - Several hundred residents of outer Williams Elm streets petitioned City Council to reclassify the 3.5 acre plot on Williams St near Elm St intersection from C-1 to "conform with surrounding residential zoning," which is classified as R-2 (single residence zone calling for home lots of at least 10,000 square feet.) This was brought about as a campaign against an announcement by contractor and developer Ermino Barbalunga to build a shopping center on that land. One of the leaders of the zone change movement, Mrs. E. W. Winslow of 66 Ann Dr. wrote to the Eagle that people bought homes under the assumption that there would be no commercialization.
1958	• Feb. 22 - A New England Regional Conference of the NAACP was to be held in Pittsfield April 26 and 27 to discuss Minority Group Housing. • Mar. 31- Governor Foster Furcolo reported a 10% unemployment rate in Pittsfield and high unemployment in other places, and thus proposed a 50 million dollar emergency public work program to combat the recession through work development projects and the construction of office buildings throughout the state. He also instructed the state Housing Board to help local communities speed up construction for 47 state-wide housing developments for the elderly. • Mar. 31- As a result of a decline in power transformer department employment, GE had been laying off employees. Despite a "normal" local employment of 10,000 to 11,000 employees in early 1957 and before, they had declined to 8742 by this paper and anticipated going down to 8,500 by June 30th.
1959	• Mar. 18 - The County Commissioners had agreed to reconsider using the county-owned land next to the County Jail as a site for an old-age project upon the request of Mayor Raymond Haughey and the Housing Authority officials. Chairman of the PHA Ralph J. Froio had stated there were 3 sites wanted for the project with 35 units each, but this one was best suited. • Mar. 21 - The Housing Authority wanted the former Dr. Mary Anna Wood property at 147 Pomeroy Ave. as a site for housing-for-the-elderly projects despite a petition submitted to PHA Chairman Froio signed by Clifford F. MArtin of 18 Laflin Ter. and 21 others from Laflin Ter. Broad Street and Pomeroy Avenue, mainly because such a project would lower the value of their property. Froio discounted the petition and said he was disappointed that the residents didn't wait before making up their minds that the project would lower property values instead of increase them. • May 21 - Grand Union would continue their fight for a zone change on Wendell Ave from R-1-C to C-3 for South St supermarket. Attorney Stanley Cooke argued that present zoning imposes financial and practical hardship on the realty firm. • Jul 1 - The Planning Board was to hold a meeting regarding the petition of Grand Union Co. and Eagle Street Realty for permission to build a $200,000 supermarket on South Street, asking for their C-3 zoning to be extended. The companies had made this request before, but this time they involved a 140 foot buffer strip between the rear of the supermarket property and the western

	side of Wendell Avenue. ● July 3 - For the second time in a little more than a month, a crows turned out opposing the petition of Grand Union Co. and the Eagle Street Realty Corp. for permission to build a supermarket on South Street ● July 27 - Robert Smith writes an editorial called “What’s This Jazz About a Rich Uncle Calling Slum Clearance ‘Extravagant’?” In this case, the rich uncle is Uncle Sam who should be able to help the poor through the clearing of slums for better housing, clearing the streets of crime, etc, rather than keep his money for the cheap option of leaving the situation of slums as is. ● July 28 - Martha Todd writes a Letter to the Editor asking why when slums or bad housing is mentioned Mill Street is the target of attacks. And so defended the people on Mill Street described as a shiftless lot, as working for the “well-to-do on the other side of town.” ● Aug. 12 - The petition of Eagle Street Realty Corp. and Grand Union stores for permission to build a supermarket on South Street was struck down for the third time by the City Council, following defeats by the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Board.

1960s

1960	● June 6- A hearing about the Gamwell Avenue Zoning change ends in booking and catcalls, ending it early ● June 21- Residents of Gamwell Avenue-Cole Avenue had in circulation 250-500 copies of a petition seeking support from those in the city to block the building of apartments by changing the C-2 zone status to R-1-C and “insure the investment of all the homeowners of the city against the encroachment by the vested interests in the future” ● July 1- Planning board completes public hearings on Gamwell Avenue change. ● July 9- The Berkshire Eagle publishes the editorial “Pittsfield Cannot Overlook the Problem of Its Slums” which condemned the city’s indifference towards the issue of its slums. It praises Health Commissioner Harold Stein for mentioning in his 1959 annual report that the problem existed and should be studied and quantified even if Pittsfield would find difficulty gaining the qualifications for an urban renewal program. However, the editorial cautions that by moving the slums from one location to another more problems may be underway, calling upon Pittsfield’s racial problem. They state that perhaps commissioning the study would educate the public on the racial problem of Black people living in the city slums. ● Oct. 26- Gamwell Avenue is changed from C-4 (heavy commercial) to R-1-C residential ○ This was the result of a petition by Ward 5 Councilman Samuel J. Quadrozzi and prevented the building of Lipton Realty Corp. to construct five apartment buildings
1961	● Dec. 9 - PHA gets approval from the Housing and Home Finance Agency to proceed with their proposed Urban Renewal Program. Showing that they had met preliminary requirements and had the intent to carry out intensive surveying in order to request specific aid. The preliminary fulfilments included showing that the city intended to use its own resources to “eliminate slums and

	blight." Thus the city reported an "adequate code system including building, plumbing, electrical, zoning and housing codes and advised HHFA officials that a code for natural gas installations is to be submitted for adoption in 1962." The PHA had entered into a $27,000 contract with the firm of Candeub, Fleissig and Associates of Newark, N.J. in order to conduct the survey which would concentrate on about 115 acres on both sides of the Boston & Albany Railroad tracks. The consulting firm was supposed to provide the city's master plan; a downtown business district study and a city-wide storm water drainage program. The city stated an intention to make provisions for the relocation of families displaced by code enforcements, highway construction, urban renewal and other government actions. There was also supposed to be a special sub-committee studying the housing problems of minority groups.
1962	• Feb. 12- A letter to the editor is sent to the Eagle in response to another stating that, "According to the Declaration of Independence, all men are endowed by their Creator with the right of the 'pursuit of happiness.' The government is charged with the responsibility of seeing that such rights are not impinged upon. No one demands that anyone associate with colored neighbors. People have freedom of choice, so do colored people. My family never objected when new *white* neighbors moved in and our association with them has always been pleasant." • Aug. 21- The health commissioner Dr. Harold Stein critiqued the Housing Authority for operating a "substandard housing project"in Pittsfield, suggesting that the city needs fluoridation of its water supply, the opening of a dental clinic, the funding of its virus department, increased garbage collection during summer and more Health Department personnel. • Aug 22 - The annual report of the state Commission Against Discrimination showed that in Pittsfield's 333 public housing units, there was only 1 Negro tenant • Sept. 7- The Housing Authority proposes a zone change from R-1-C (one family, one-quarter acre lots) to R-6 (multi-family dwellings) to allow for an elderly project on the northwest side of Elberon Avenue • Sept. 7- Work on a 1.2 million garden project off West Street is stalled by zoning designation, tax concessions and sewage and water facilities. The developer Abner Rosenburg argued that he'd only build 1 or 2 bedroom apartments, avoiding any substantial increase in the school population of the area. • Nov. 29- The city planning consultants did a block-by-block analysis of the downtown district indicating the future uses of the city's center
1963	• Feb. 23- The Pittsfield Urban Renewal Project is planned to start January 1964, in areas including both sides of the Boston & Albany Railroad tracks including parts of the Jubilee and Columbus projects. • May 25- The executive director of the Berkshire Hills Industrial Development Council, assisting in the Association of Business and Commerce in the valuation of Pittsfield, and former executive director of the Pittsfield Taxpayers Association Phillip C. Ahern publishes the first article in a series on the need for a new study by the ABC on assessed valuations in Pittsfield. The ABC had found that there was a general departure of 50% of building costs established as the tax base in 1949. In most extreme cases, an assessed valuation was

	200% higher than sales prices. And according to the kind of property and the location, they found variances in the amount of inequity. He then discusses the developments of post war residential growth which brought 4000 homes and over 100 streets to fill up former farmland, which had been a part of the city's "healthy development" and added "considerably to the city's assessed valuation." However, he highlights issues of congestion downtown and a growing number of vacancies in business building rental spaces. With a rising number of vacancies, came a rising number of petitions for abatements. By 1962, he states well over 1000 petitions had been filed. ● May 29- Charles H. Hodecker the welfare commissioner argues for why the "farm" should stay open, scheduled to meet that night to discuss the care of the 50 inmates when the farm closes, especially since spots where they might be housed will be demolished with the city's urban renewal ● June 5- The City Council's Health and Welfare Committee was considering retaining the land of the city infirmary located on outer West Street to use for establishing an elderly care residence and minor mental health facility. The rest of the land the city was considering turning over to the state for a new Berkshire Community College campus ● June 8- A Mr. Myers reports on the panel discussion on discrimination in Pittsfield (according to the following Letters to the editor. ● June 13- J. Alan McLean of 36 Russell Ter. writes a letter to the editor of the Eagle writes responding to criticism of the Berkshire NAACP as having selected their leaders by default and as lacking action in doing things of "constructive nature." McLean responds that they are not perfect, however since the fall of 1962 they have supported a Black woman's training in a local hairdressing school allowing her to support herself and family rather than solely rely on public welfare, making her a "full citizen of our community." He states the organization is not without fault, but needs "constructive criticism and responsible participation from within." ● June 13- Jesse Reid of 92 Danforth Ave. writes a letter to the editor stating that the Black panelists critiquing the NAACP would not have had the job opportunities given to them if not for past "complaints filed to the state and federal agencies by past NAACP leadership." She also cites that the NAACP and the Social Action Committee of Pittsfield Council of Churches are jointly sponsoring the first Black girl to attend hairdressing school in Pittsfield. Saying that "The basic civil rights work is done quietly, without publicity and without pay." ● Jun 14 - Lawrence A. Caesar of 448 High St., Dalton wrote a critique of a Mr. Myers in his report of the panel discussion in Pittsfield essentially critiqued that his choice of Black speakers was not representational of the Black community as apparent from their anti-NAACP views. And makes a distinction between critiquing an organization as an active member of the community trying to create progress and of those, especially of the intelligentsia, who "sit back and criticize.
1964	● Sept. 19 - A J. Alan McLean of 36 Russell Ter. wrote a letter to the editor called Dixie Logic in which they critique a previous letter written by two men from Shaw, Mississippi. McLean argues that the men are expressing classic Southern segregationist viewpoints. McLean states that some southerners will forever not believe that in the north Blacks have been proven as people

	capable of living along alongside whites and that these southerners are " still playing the role of the paternalistic white father who knows what is best for the Negro."
1965	• May 5 - A representative from the Housing and Home Finance Agency was supposed to meet with city officials on May 7th in order to explain the need for an additional housing inspector for the Health Department. The City Planner Gerald McNeal and Housing Authority Executive Arthur McGill told the mayor Dillon and the council that their failure to hire an additional inspector threatened their federal grants for community renewal and other projects. However, the Health Commissioner Dr. Harold Stein had been against it as he didn't believe it was necessary unless the housing units would be condemned and he didn't want personnel in his office directly responsible to him for other work. • Sept. 13 - Reverend James Rae Whyte of the South Congregational Church urged his parishioners to sign a petition to the Pittsfield Housing Authority to drop its plans for a 50 unit low-rent housing project at the Victory Hill site on Benedict Road, stating "to escape the small ghetto in the small city, Pittsfield needs 'diversity by design' not a new pen to which to confine to poor" as he viewed the project as an economic form of segregation. Whyte gained 82 signatures from this. The article says his plea was in line with 116 citizens who would be displaced by the city's urban renewal project and stated that the proposed project would endorse "segregation by income." Whyte claims that the arrangement if the URA and PHA under the same roof gives too much power to one administration and lacks checks of power. • Dec. 23- The Urban Renewal Administration gave approval for a grant of $3,345,822 for the Jubilee urban renewal project alongside a federal loan amounting to 4,503,822 to finance a 61 acre project. This area was described as primarily a commercial area. The residents of the area were said to be offered immediate relocation aids. • Dec. 29- The City Council kills a zone change on the Crane Avenue property to allow for garden apartments (which could be built by a group headed by the owner of the property) and nursing homes (suggested by Councilman who initiated call) •
1966	• May 20 - The PHA was seeking permission from the city council to move to a scattered-site housing approach. PHA chairman Ralph J. Frolio said the approval was necessary before the PHA could start the scattered housing approach set up by Congress the year prior and that 40 units were in the process of being approved for scattered housing. However, the first need he said would be to find several large homes to house those families displaced by the Jubilee urban renewal. • May 20 - Hinsdale Selectman Louis J. Carmel charged Pittsfield with "bully tactics" in seeking "blank checks" to take land for water usage in Savoy, Windsor, Hinsdale, and Dalton communities. • Aug. 15 - Napoleon Reid of 180 Cole Ave. writes a letter to the editor of the Eagle writing that a Farrell (probably Edward J. Farrell) should be commended for his attempt to bring awareness to Black housing issues. However, criticizes his lack of naming the real estate agencies and people being referred to within

	Farrell's criticism. He also states in regards to depreciating properties, that "Negroes are put on the defensive when we move into a neighborhood. It has been long held in the white community that wherever we move the valuation of property drops. We are therefore more conscientious than others in keeping up our property, for the first sign of a piece of paper on a Negro's lawn would bring a retort of, 'I told you so.'" ● Aug. 19 - Mrs. Ward S. Calebaugh of 119 Harryel St. writes a letter to the editor responding to Edward Farrell, stating that it is no surprise that he speaks in generalities given that the they live in a city "where the laws governing the selling of property to Negros are written in invisible ink," and, "secure in our impregnable, white shell, we never hear the trickle until it becomes a flood." Calebaugh states that the violence arising at Black protests is to be expected given the treatment of Black people and that they must take the initial steps to right the injustices. ● Aug. 19 - Alice McNiff of Stockbridge responds to Farrell stating that her study of "every Berkshire County Negro family south of Pittsfield documents all his findings." However, McNiff believes no documentation is needed since, "we know enough," suggesting actions including using the neighborhood techniques of the Red Feather drives and could obtain signatures of families willing to help nonwhite families, publish a list of all realtors willing to work actively to obtain housing, and form a countywide volunteer group to initiate action.
1967	● June 8 - The PHA was scheduled to discuss the Columbus urban renewal project-control after it had rejected the mayor's request to relinquish its command over the Columbus and larger Jubilee renewal project two months before on April 8. Mayor Del Gallo had shifted his approach the week before, by saying if it was not put into the hands of his Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) he would not sign the $3 million loan and grant contract needed to put Columbus in the executive stage. The session was also meant to discuss possibilities of scattered site housing and be conducted as a joint meeting with the URA. ● June 8 - Del Gallo has suggested that Circular Avenue be added to the Columbus urban renewal plan. This would increase the project's scope and importance. The plan was drawn by Principle Planner Bruce P. Clark earmarked the area for urban renewal. Planning director emphasized that the plan should be on rehabilitation rather than demolition ● June 20 - Mayor Del Gallo organized a task force providing more low-cost housing in Pittsfield. This was headed by Bruce P. Clark, and included five city departments, Action for Opportunity (an anti-poverty organization) and Micah Corp. of Berkshire County (an interfaith corporation of clergymen and private citizens promoting adequate housing for low income families.) One of the biggest skeptics towards the aims of the group was Welfare Commissioner Raymond T. Quinn who stated that housing has to come from the PHA and also that the space on Victory Hill should just be used (this vacant area being the an area off of Benedict Road which in 1964 was cleared for a 50 unit development, but whose development was blocked due to criticism that it'd create a ghetto of low income people.) ● Aug. 2- An opinion by Peter Potomac was published in the Eagle responding to Cambridge and Newark riots of Black citizens. The article compares the

	Black Power movement as well as the SNCC to the KKK and basically draws out the idea that it seems that a Civil War is on the horizon should the "responsible Negro leadership" fail to find out where others stand as there is only so long they can "restrain the whites from open retaliation." ● Aug. 4 - The Eagle published an opinion by Joseph Alsop. Within this opinion, he basically advocates that a lot of emphasis has been put on the "moral cart" of integration and segregation," which are good ultimate aims but that the "practical horse" must also be furthered before the cart. This practical being to improve conditions "inside the ghetto" by furthering the education of children within it, induce industry within ghettos by generous tax inducements, and providing emergency relief programs, like an urban WPA and an improved welfare program. ● Sep 14 - Action for Opportunity, the city's antipoverty agency was announced by Thomas M Connolly, AFO president, to be holding a meeting the upcoming week with the PHA and welfare department to discuss issues of the city following a report by the AFO neighborhood aides to the board stating that the city needed at least 200 to 300 units to even put a dent in the issues. The issue of evictions was brought up with anecdotes of the Welfare Department moving families with children to Pickwick Hotel (108 West St.). Additionally anecdotally most rents were said to have raised substantially within the last year. One member of the AFO argued for an office to open up in low-income sections of the city since their headquarters were at 54 Wendell Ave., which is viewed as being in an "uptown" on the rich side of the tracks.
1968	● Jan 23 - Code Enforcement Director Christopher Niebuhr gave Mayor Donald G. Butler figures on the 1960s census of 3215 substandard housing of which 2158 were occupied by renters, 685 by owners and 485 were vacant. The mayor reportedly wished to prove that there were less than 3215 total in order to lower the number of health inspectors that the city expected them to hire, which was 3 out of the 4 they were being asked to have. He said that he both doubts the figure due to the lack of qualifications of the census takers to appraise construction and that the conditions of the housing has changed in the last 7 years due to actions by the Health Department and urban renewal programs. ● Feb 3 - The demolition for the proposed Berkshire Life Insurance Co. development meant that the urban renewal office had to be relocated to 104 West Street. ● Mar 1 - The city of Pittsfield faced an eligibility for federal funds requiring certification from HUD. HUD insisted that Pittfield hire the equivalent of 3 and a half to 4 full-time health inspectors to housing, while Pittfield since early 1967 had only possessed the equivalent of less than one. If the city failed to receive certification it would not prevent the funds already earmarked for projects, like the Jubilee and Columbus urban renewal projects, but would not allow other programs (like the city's proposed code enforcement program to clear a 110 acre portion of the north east quadrant of First Street dubbed "slum housing," the making of a new urban renewal area in the city's Jubilee sector, the constructing of a Senior Citizens Center within the Columbus urban renewal area.) However the application/workable program to be sent was within an indefinite "typing stage" due to a shortage of typists despite having to be approved by City Council and signed by the mayor which would meet March

	12, before it could be sent to HUD. ● Mar 21 - A motion for a mixed income housing project on Victory Hill was rejected by the Action for Opportunity board with a vote of 9-8. Although still in opposition, this was a change from the first proposal proposed 3 years ago by the PHA to make 50 houses on Victory Hill where all but one on the AFO board were opposed, this was in response to action from the Organization for Community Action (OCA), which was an antipoverty neighborhood action unit for the downtown area to the west of north street, arguing that the project was "segregation by income." ● April 8 - The Berkshire Eagle releases an editorial reacting to the murder of MLK. They argue that the problems of discrimination can be solved now with the U.S. current wealth and with the city's current landscape through attention to the city's slums, better funding for schooling of and social services towards black residents. They also argue the potential of hiring Black workers to construction jobs where they are currently barred from skilled unions, etc. ● July 31 - The Human Relations Committee's report of the Black population and poverty, which had found only "subtle" discrimination, within the city was rejected by the City Council the night previous. And this morning Mayor Donald G. Butler stated that he will name an integrated committee to study Pittsfield's racial problem as a result of the views of Black citizens expressed at the council's meeting, despite the mayor having claimed twice during the meeting that he believed that there was no discrimination. There were several anecdotes of Black residents claiming racial discrimination in housing including a 40 yr old Floyd Walker, who said that he encountered discrimination in obtaining a bank loan. Others like white lawyer George B. Crane said he's also seen such discrimination in real estate, urging Blacks in the area to make their own indictment against the white community and submit tit to the committee. ● Aug. 20 - Residents of the Springside hired a lawyer to oppose the building of a mixed-income housing project on parkland in their area. The project had previously been proposed for a site on Victory Hill in 1965, but was stopped by anti-poverty activists arguing that the project would create "segregation by income." HOPE and NEW, two anti-poverty groups indicated that they favored the Victory Hill site while the NAACP indicated that they favored the Springside site. ● Oct. 26- Hotel Wendell on West Street was closed and in its place the Berkshire Commons complex is supposed to undergo development
1969	● Feb 8 - PHA gets authorization from the HUD to proceed with the plans and specifications for 26 units of low-income housing on Victory Hill. But PHA's executive director Arthur C. McGill did not get authorization for 24 of the scattered site low income housing they planned and were asked to rework towards the validation of those units which were planned for 3 or 4 sites across the city. They were also unable to get approval for the development of a 100-unit eldery housing project planned for the Columbus urban renewal area. ● March 25- Donald J. Stack, Pittsfield Welfare director opened meeting for a branch of the National Welfare Rights Organization with a dissertation on puritan work ethic and a warning that the city's taxpayers are disturbed and ready to revolt, to the upset of 25 "welfare mothers" ● Jun 12 - BLICO, Berkshire Life Insurance Co., warned the Planning Board that they planned to quit building 120 low-income apartments if the closing of Mill

	St. is not settled within two weeks. The City Council had tabled this issue, but opposition had come from Eaton Paper Co and a group of West Housatonic Street business men who believed it would negatively affect their companies and businesses. The president of the company Lawrence W. Strattner said that the commitment was entered into with the understanding the Mill Street issue was decided. And that they would never build the apartments on Deering Street if they thought Mills would continue to operate because it would be an "instant slum." ● Jun 17 - James M. Richmany of 55 Hawthorne Avenue writes a Letter to the Editor of the Eagle that rebukes Lawrence W. Strattner for his arrogance to simplify keeping Mill St. open as a matter benefitting a few "businessmen" as he states that they are many small businesses which support families and their way of living. And that this is a fight for the "little guy" making a comparison to Queen Marie Antoinett telling the peasants to eat cake and pushing them into revolution. ● Jul 16 - Ralph J. Froio, head of the Central Labor Council's drive to build mixed-income housing in Pittsfield, had his sights still on erecting a 136-unit apartment project off of Melbourne Road. The location had been ruled out due to a 7-4 vote against the rezoning the garden apartments would require. However, Froio had hoped that the revised citywide zoning ordinance might still enable such a project. Tenant selection for the program would be made by a committee consisting of the directors of a nonprofit housing corporation set up by the CLC. 20% would be those receiving rent supplements and the remaining 80% would be those of a minimum income set at least 35% above those set for admission to public housing. ● Oct. 4 - The Urban Land Institute's reports slow progress in the private sector of Pittsfield community to meet its recommendations. However, the city does outscore other cities in improving the downtown sector of the city. However, progress on many areas, like the Deering Street-Mills Street area which is planned for a 124 unit mixed income housing, had stalled progress despite being cleared out leaving overgrown weed-ridden lots. ● Nov. 22 - Edward J. Farrell gives an overview of the situation related to Hodgson Houses in Millis attempting to develop a public housing project of 100 federally sponsored housing units on Osceola Street. He discusses how Osceola residents have hired a lawyer to argue that they will face depreciating housing values should the low-income development be built in order to hide their hatred for the idea of poor people living amongst them. He compares it to an attempt by the Central Labor Council to put a low-income development on Melbourne Road and the ensuing opposition, as well as opposition from Morningside residents to put a development on Springside Park. ● Osceola first opposes public housing (based on March 7, 1973 article)

1970s

1970	● Dec. 5- Phyllis DiOrio, the first woman and the first representative of antipoverty and housing action groups, is appointed to the PHA
1971	● Mar. 10- Wasserman Development Corp. proposed a $15 million Jubilee urban renewal development combining middle-income apartments (with explicitly no

	low or moderate income apartments), a department store and an enclosed shopping mall. This would require a zone change in order to allow for the apartments to be built ● Mar. 26- PHA Executive Director assures that his agency is not bankrupt, stating that they have the funds to complete Columbus urban renewal project and the larger Jubilee project ● July 9- STOP (the Sensible Taxpayers of Pittsfield) were seeking a referendum limiting subsidized housing to 10% of all housing built in Pittsfield annually. The Urban Coalition took a stand against STOP, seeking zoning changes for an outer East Street development. ● July 10- STOP filed a 1821 name petition in support of their referendum to limit subsidized housing ● Nov. 4- The Land Court ruled in favor of the developer Jay R. Raddock claimed a zone change if Williams St. area was invalid due to its lack of public hearing before the city Planning Board, this zone change would have allowed for R-8 status, which would permit garden apartments. But the originally proposed R-20 status allowing for single-family homes of lots of at least half acres was never approved. And the earlier zoning ordinance was already stuck by the Council, leaving no fall back designation. Making the area zoneless, along with potentially 30 other parcels in the city which zone designations occurred without public hearings.
1972	● Mar. 22- PHA voted unanimously on the 21st for a new lease that gives the tenants of public housing the rights to contest eviction through a grievance procedure, withhold rent when repairs are not made, and to organize and join tenant councils that “may engage in collective bargaining with management.” This least follows a model provided by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the National Tenants Association. ● July 13- Southeast area residents oppose proposed garden-apartment zone at end of Birch Grove and Maple Grove, this being one of 6 garden-apartment zones proposed by the City Council created in the 1972 master-zoning ordinance under consideration. ● Aug. 15- A petition opposing a 27-acre garden-apartment zone adjacent to Brattlebrook Park gets 104 signatures from residents of Birch Grove and Maple Grove areas is submitted ● Nov. 21- 1972 master-zoning ordinance comes before City Council for debate, most controversially is the establishment of zones where two-story apartments could be constructed ● Nov. 21- The Urban Coalition leadership asks its members to lobby for the passage of 1972 master-zoning ordinance, citing the 2000 substandard or deteriorating housing units and high cost of single-family homes ●
1973	● Jan 5- PHA argued over a proposed Osceola project. The original plan was for the project to accommodate large families, having homes with four and five bedrooms. The majority of the PHA however favored building it for small families , making two to three bedroom homes. Phyllis DiOrio and James R. Stimpson hoped to persuade the others, led by Nicholas J. Speranzo, to agree to retaining a larger number of large family homes. ● Jan. 19- Zoning disputes occur on South Street (whether it should be changed

	from residential per status quo to commercial) and Pomeroy Ave (whether it should be multifamily residential per status quo or business) ● Mar. 7- PHA makes efforts to construct 46 units of public housing on Osceola Street, which had historically looked at the PHA unfavorably. The area of concern being the number of bedrooms being for large families and two family housing units. ● Aug. 21- The city's real estate tax bills set a city record at $8,504,529. The tax rate had risen %.540 that year to %6.58. Total billing is up by $1.68 million from 1962.
1974	● Sept. 21- The PRA begins to study Jubilee Hill as a site for rehabilitation. Jubilee Hill is characterized as a racially integrated neighborhood with many multi-family homes.
1975	● Feb. 13- Jubilee Hill is noted by the Pittsfield Redevelopment Authority (PRA) as the focus of the city's federally financed community development program, with 70% of the first year funding going to this neighborhood in plan unanimously approved by the City Council and mayor the prior night ○ $325,000 for housing rehabilitation loans and grants ○ $340,000 for reconstruction of Circular Avenue, Jubilee Terrace, Division Street and the portion of Robbins Avenue running through the Circular Avenue district ○ $260,000 for the acquisition and demolition of about six deteriorated houses on the hill with another six being cited as probable for demolition the next year
1976	● Feb. 21- The nearly million dollars of federal funds available for use on Jubilee Hill has yet to result in major change. The loans for housing rehabilitation by the PRA have only provided $65,000 to 10 property owners. Some cite the haste in which the government moved and information asymmetries in the total costs to homeowners, eligibility for the loans, what's been promised and what's even available.
1977	● Mar. 28- "Urban renewal us a tax bonus for Pittsfield " (pictures included of West Street's north side and Columbus Avenue), To this date, it cites $13 million dollars in costs for the urban renewal, 92 business dislocations, and 121 families dislocation.
1978	●
1979	●

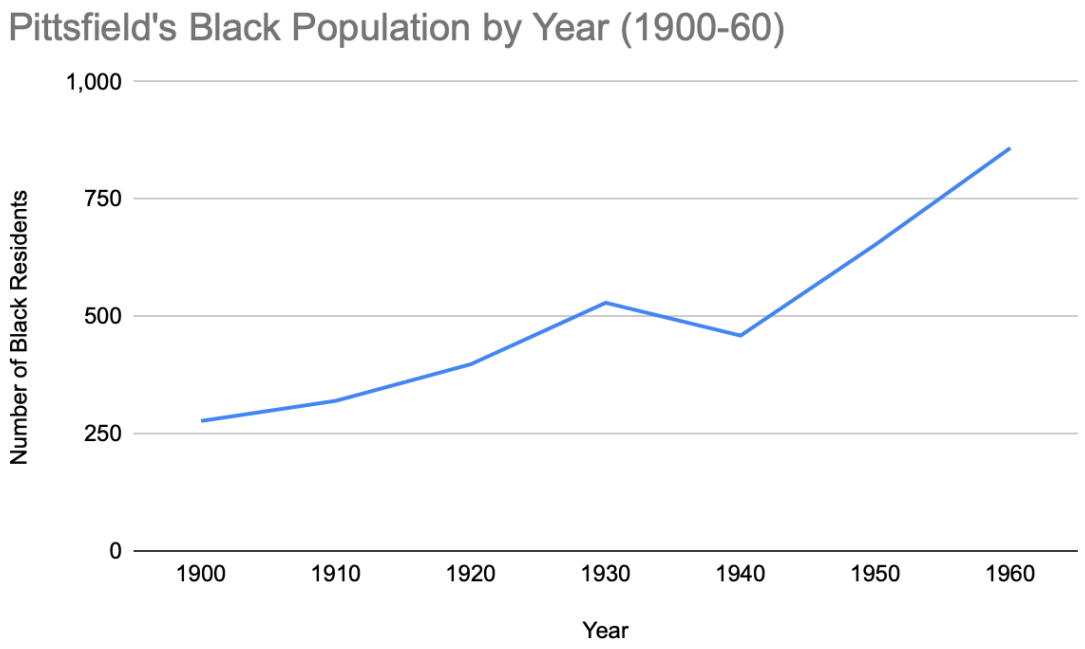
1980

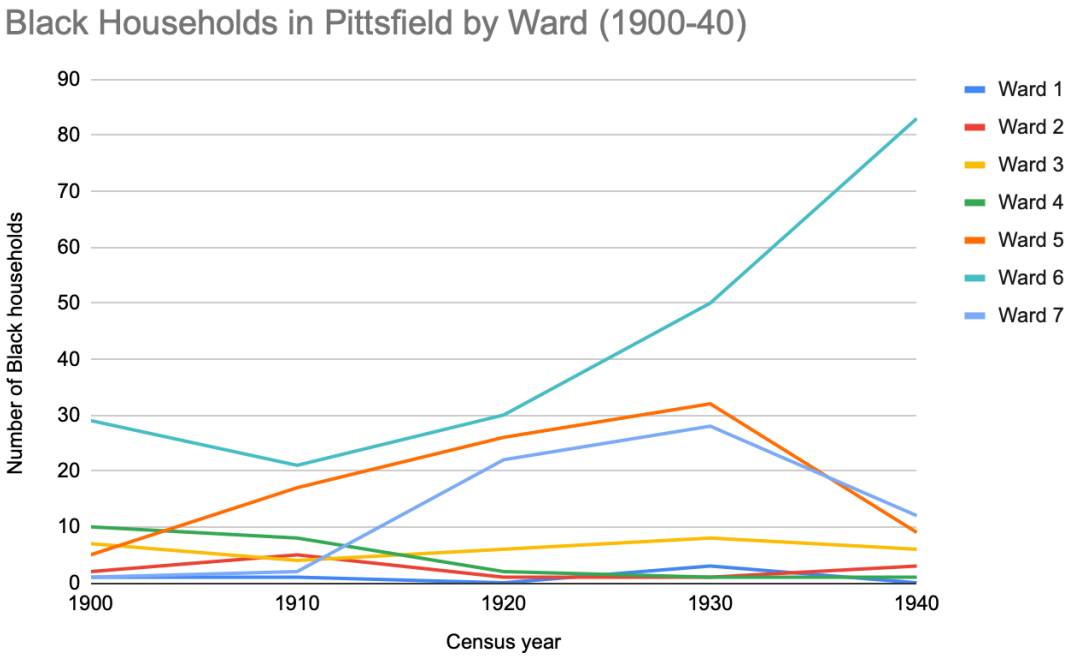
1980	●
1981	●
1982	●
1983	●

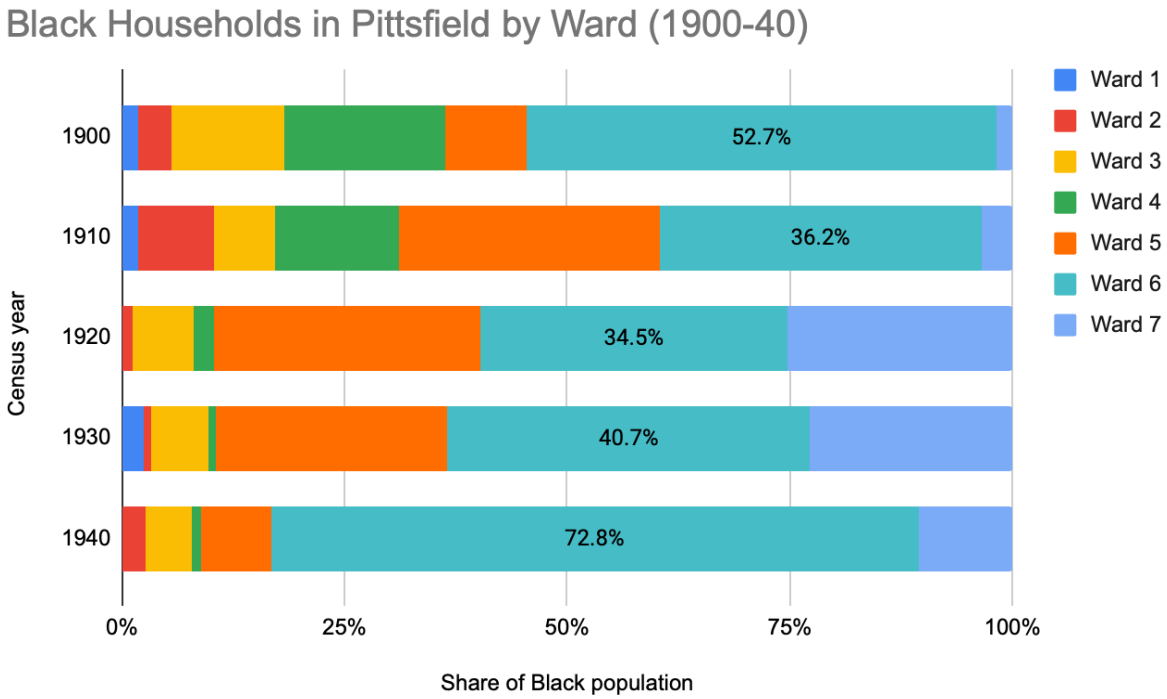
1984	● Jan. 16- Architects critique the demolition of the West Street area, stating that it could have been a prime candidate for restoration instead of the wholesale demolition during urban renewal ● Nov. 10- A picture of 1962 West Street is taken to point out that all buildings within the photo were razed in urban renewal
1985	●
1986	2.
1987	●
1988	
1989	

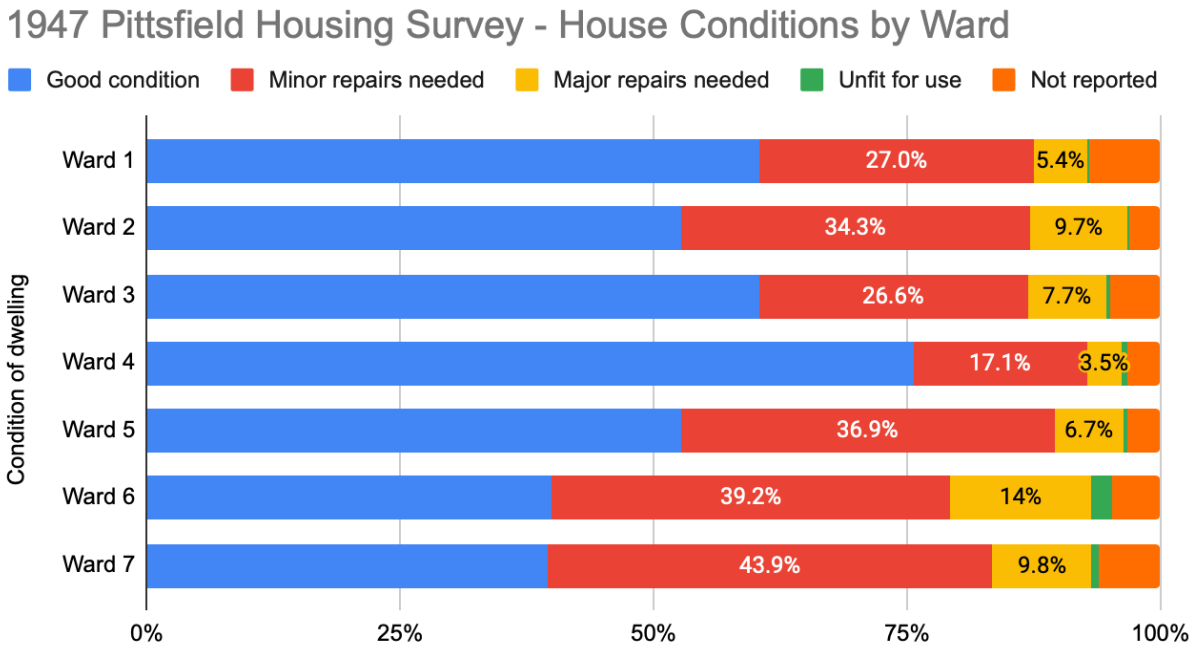
D. Pittsfield Historical Population and Housing Statistics

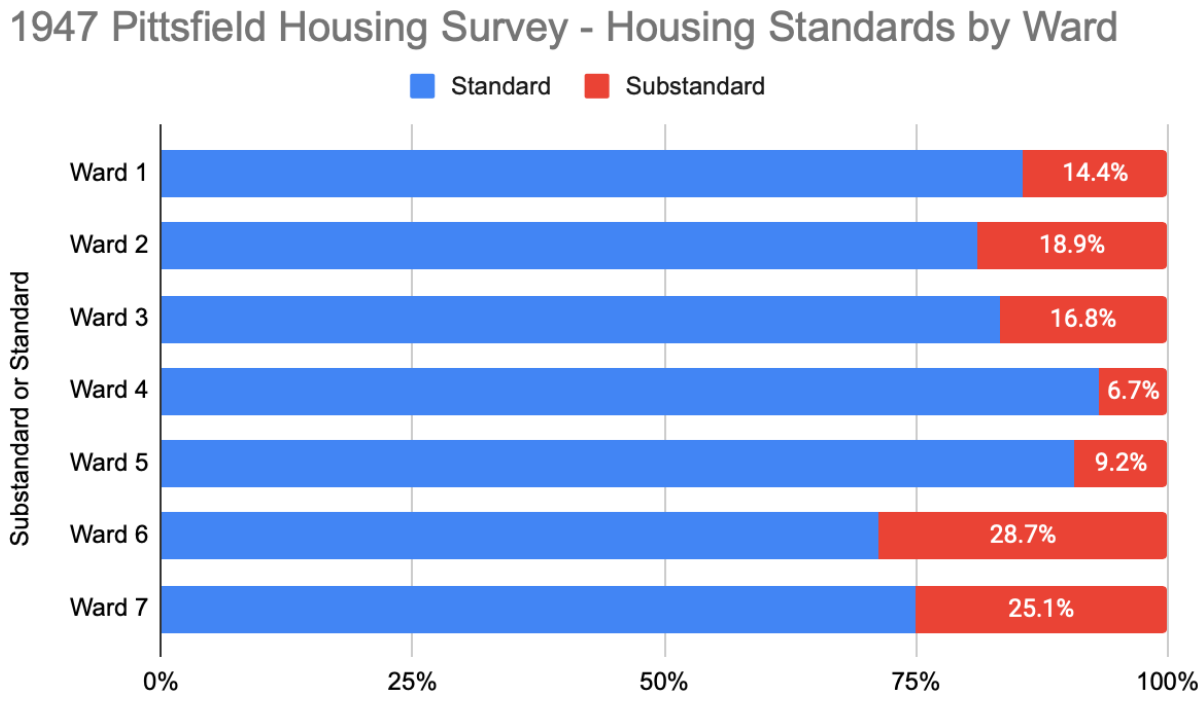
Year	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960
Black	277	320	398	529	459	653	859
White	21,474	31,765	33,118	49,114	49,209	52,672	56,939
Other races	15	36	36	34	16	23	81
Population	21,766	32,121	41,763	49,677	49,684	53,348	57,879

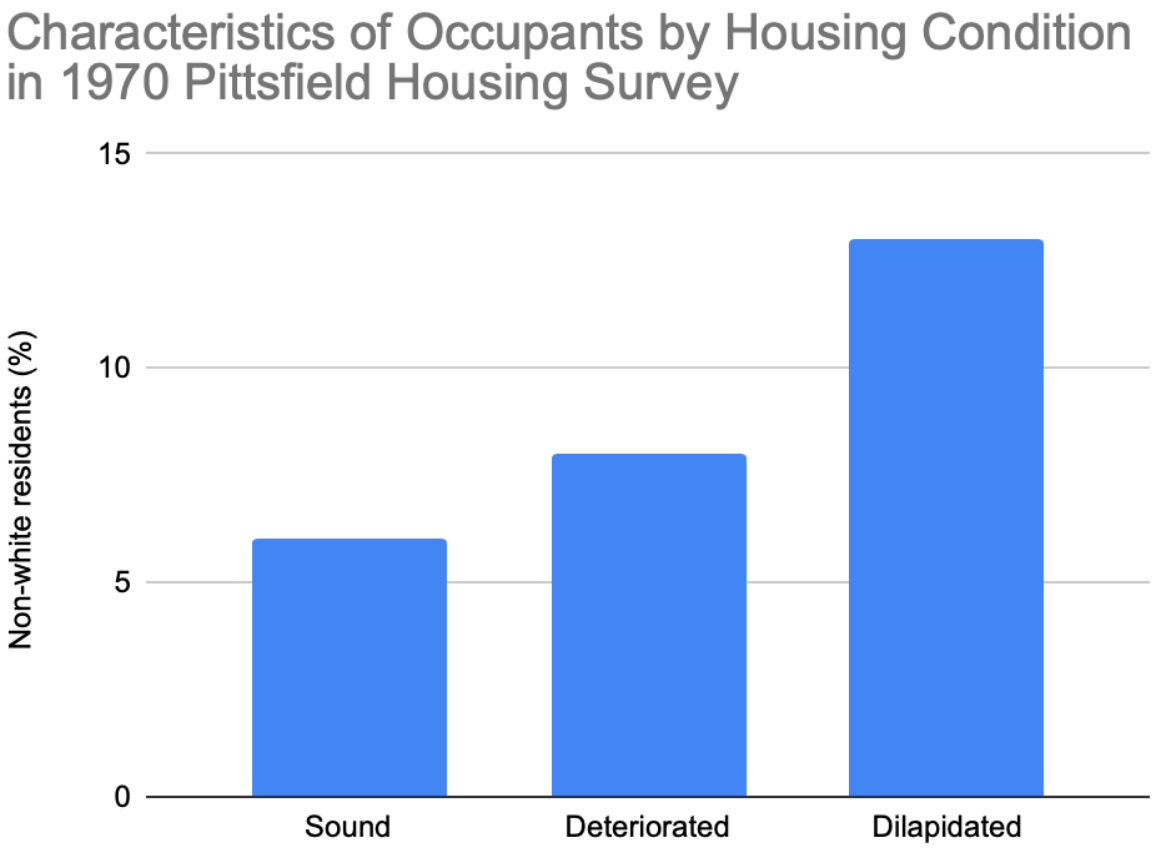



Black Households in Pittsfield by Ward (1900-40)
Number of Black households
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1900
1910
1920
1930
1940
Census year
Ward 1
Ward 2
Ward 3
Ward 4
Ward 5
Ward 6
Ward 7


Black Households in Pittsfield by Ward (1900-40)
Census year
1900
1910
1920
1930
1940
52.7%
36.2%
34.5%
40.7%
72.8%
0%
25%
50%
75%
100%
Share of Black population
Ward 1
Ward 2
Ward 3
Ward 4
Ward 5
Ward 6
Ward 7

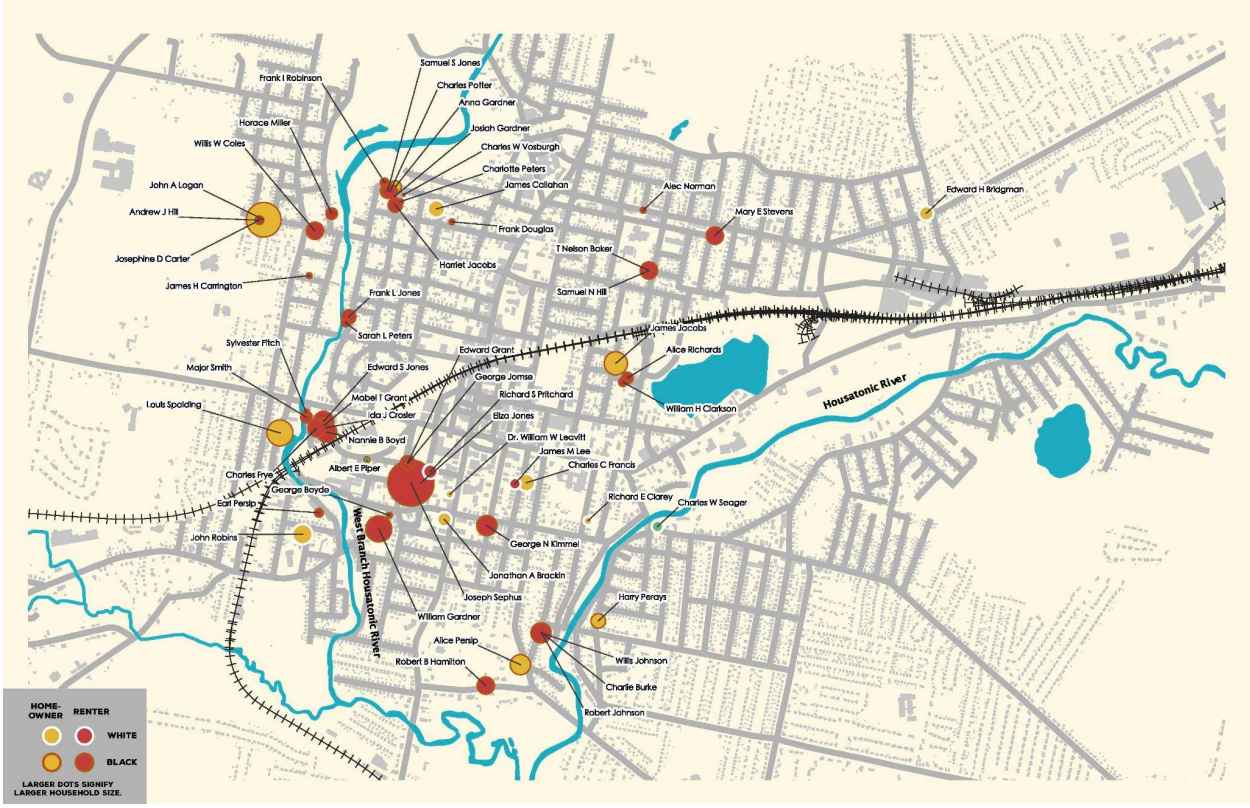

1947 Pittsfield Housing Survey - House Conditions by Ward
Good condition
Minor repairs needed
Major repairs needed
Unfit for use
Not reported
Condition of dwelling
Ward 1
Ward 2
Ward 3
Ward 4
Ward 5
Ward 6
Ward 7
27.0%
5.4%
34.3%
9.7%
26.6%
7.7%
17.1%
3.5%
36.9%
6.7%
39.2%
14%
43.9%
9.8%
0%
25%
50%
75%
100%


1947 Pittsfield Housing Survey - Housing Standards by Ward
Standard
Substandard
Substandard or Standard
Ward 1
Ward 2
Ward 3
Ward 4
Ward 5
Ward 6
Ward 7
14.4%
18.9%
16.8%
6.7%
9.2%
28.7%
25.1%
0%
25%
50%
75%
100%

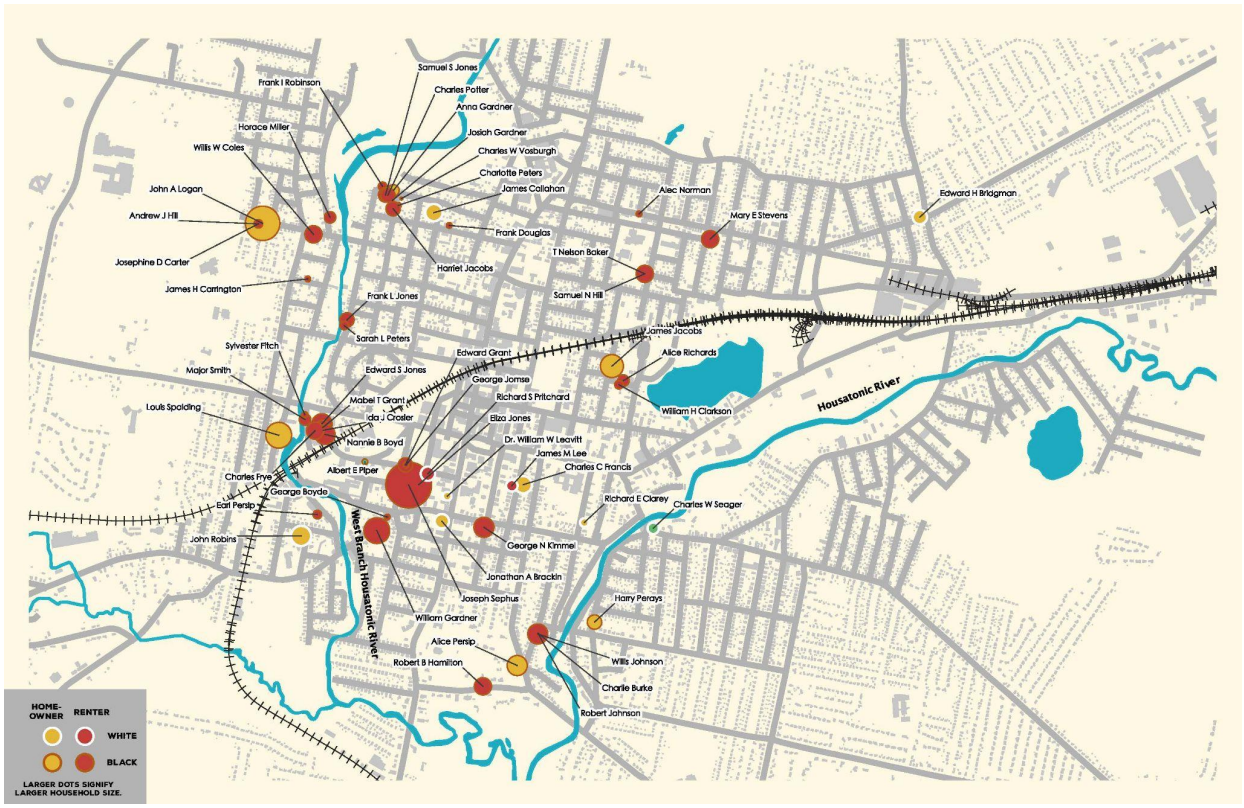

Characteristics of Occupants by Housing Condition in 1970 Pittsfield Housing Survey
Non-white residents (%)
15
10
5
0
Sound
Deteriorated
Dilapidated

E. 1900-1950 residential settlement maps of Black families.

1900 (federal census data)

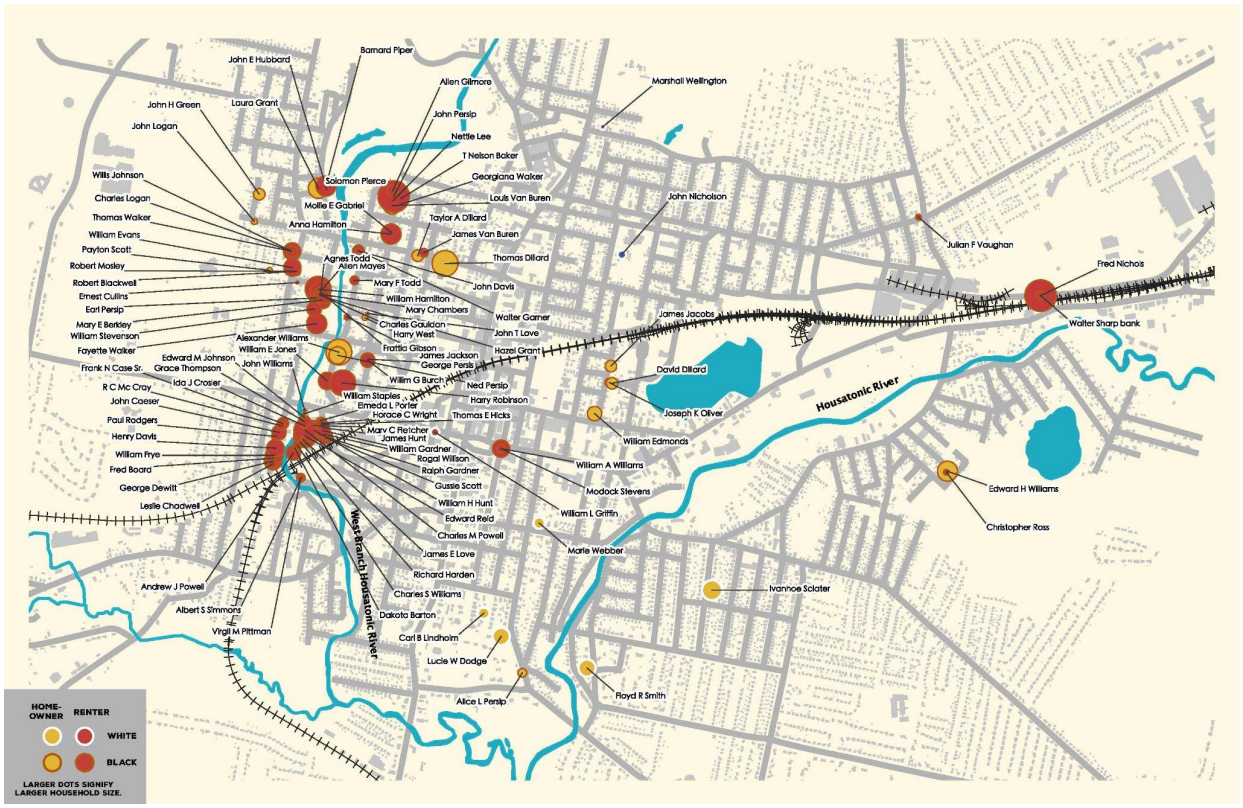


1910 (federal census data)

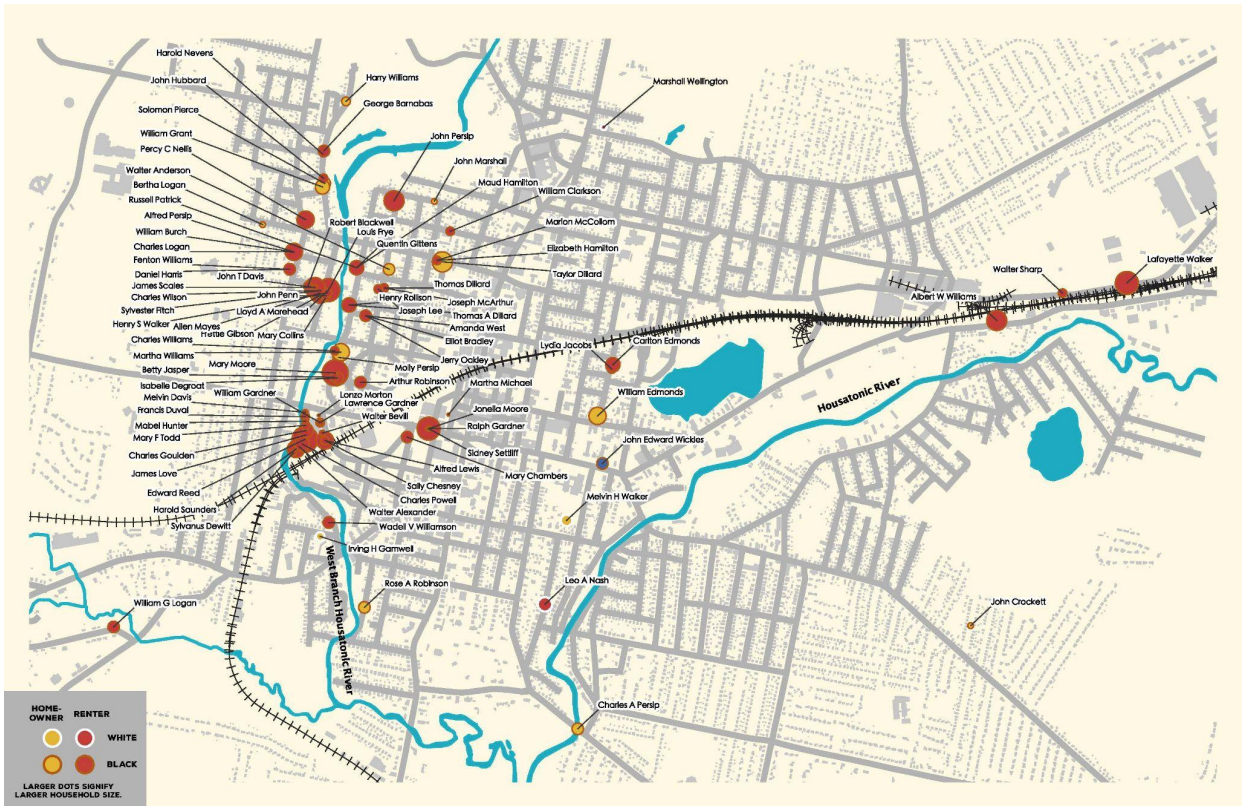


1920 (federal census data)

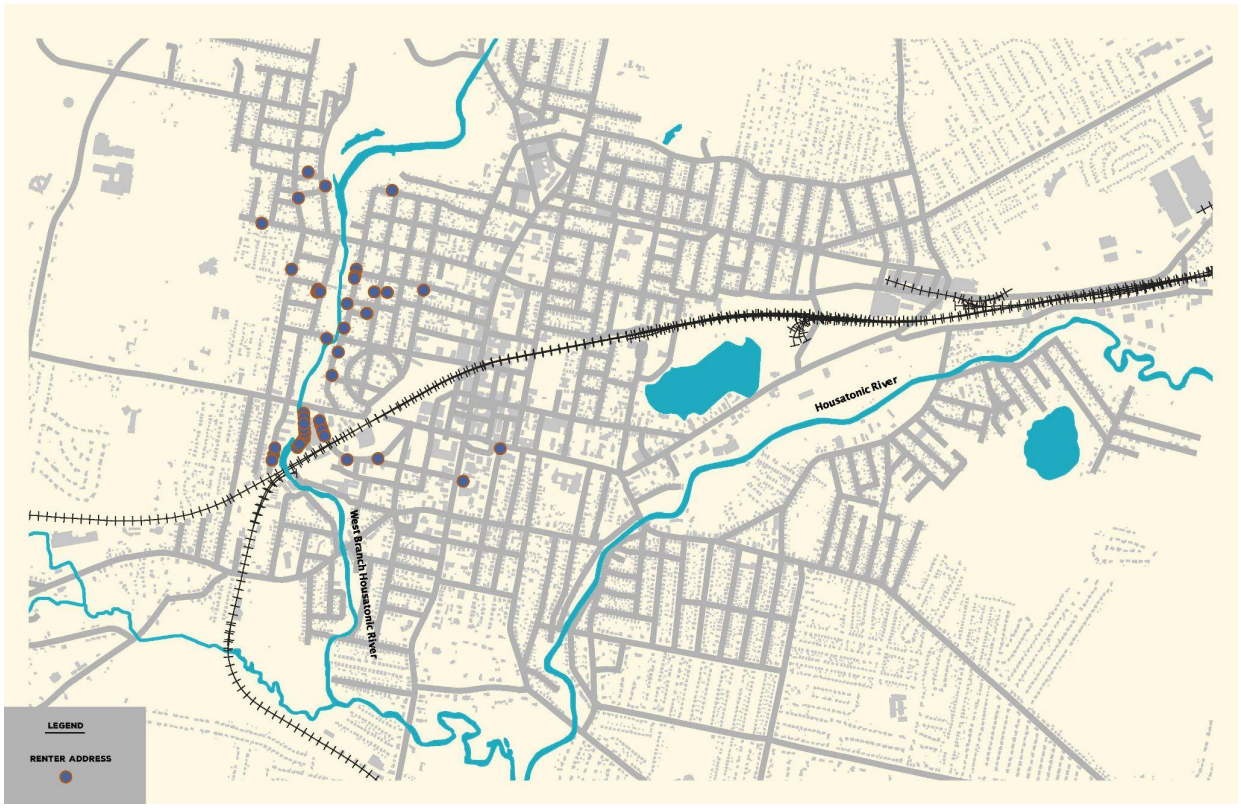
1930 (federal census data)



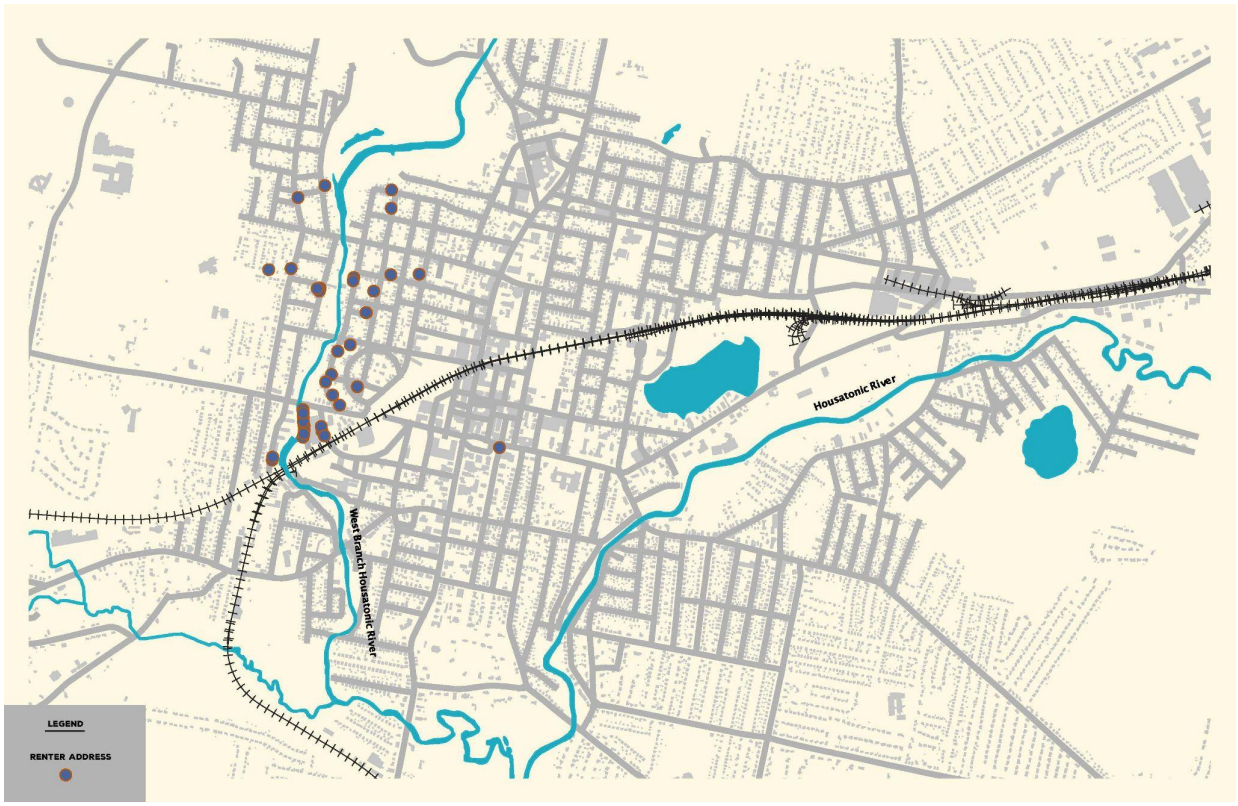
1940 (federal census data)



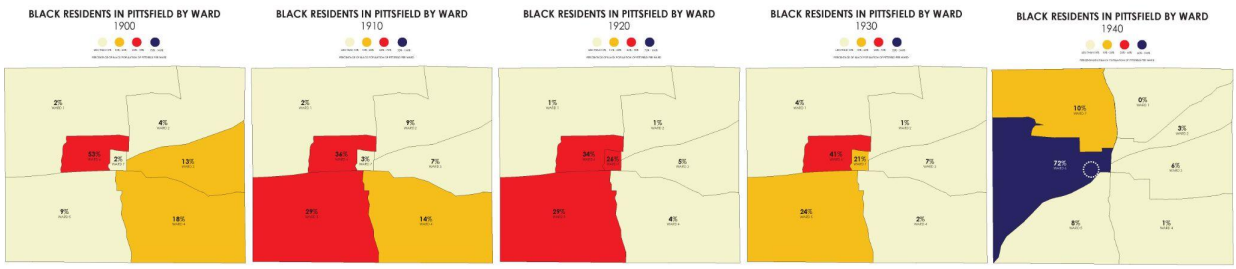
1950 (city directory data, using heads of house from 1940 census)



1960 (city directory data, using heads of house from 1940 census)

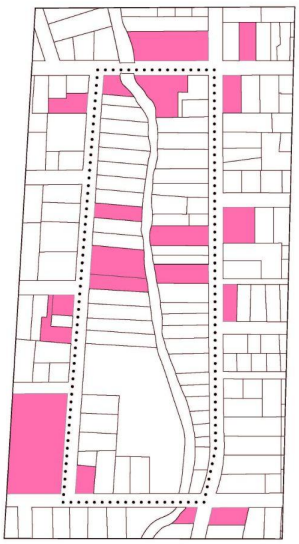


Pittsfield Black Homeowner Chronological Census Maps



Between 1900 and 1930, the percentage of Black Homeowners in Pittsfield gradually became concentrated on the West Side of the city. In 1940, ward boundaries were redrawn, encapsulating a supermajority of the city's Black population into a single ward: Ward 6.

John Street Comparative Zoning and Business Density Maps



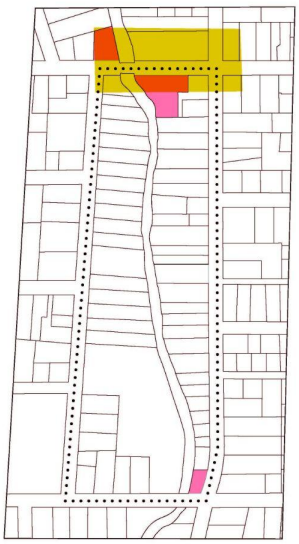
Businesses in 1955
Mixed-Use Neighborhood

JOHN STREET
43: First English Pentecostal Mission
55: John Street Variety
56: Joseph Scelsi, Grocer
56: Scelsi's Bakery
62: Pittsfield Junk Company
76: Harry Mindlin, junk dealer
101: Bernard Lay Plumbing Co.

LINDEN STREET
163: Congregation Knesset Isreal
171: Nazelschmidt Brothers Grocers
183: West End Barber Shop
193: Ricardi's Italian American Foods

DEWEY AVE
154: M. Horelly & Son, Kosher Meats
156: Sam Mandel, Delicatessen
173: Padding Sign Service Storage
176: Johnson's Shoe Hospital
181: Jerry Oakley, Barber
181: Cooper Beverages

COLUMBUS AVE
297: Columbus Barber Shop
229-301: Riverside Cafe
334: A.M. Ryan & Son Confection
352: Siegel Furniture Store
352: Greylock Creation Religious Goods
360: Berkshire Manufacturing Co.
360: Greylock Paper Box Co.



Businesses in 2021
Extents of G-B Business Zone in Yellow

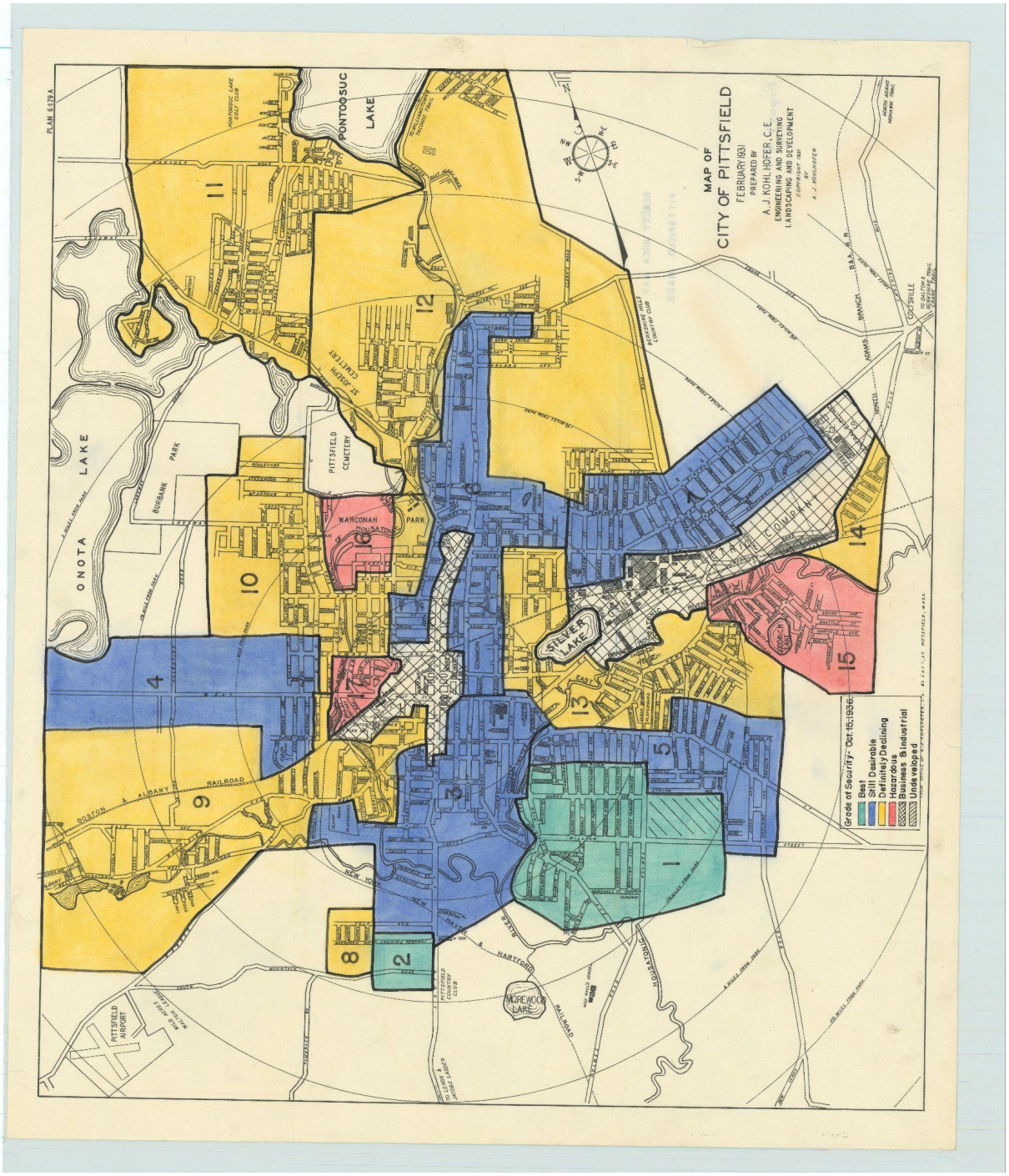
LINDEN STREET
155: KLS Auto Repair
187: Cumberland Farms

COLUMBUS AVE
302: BB's Hot Spot

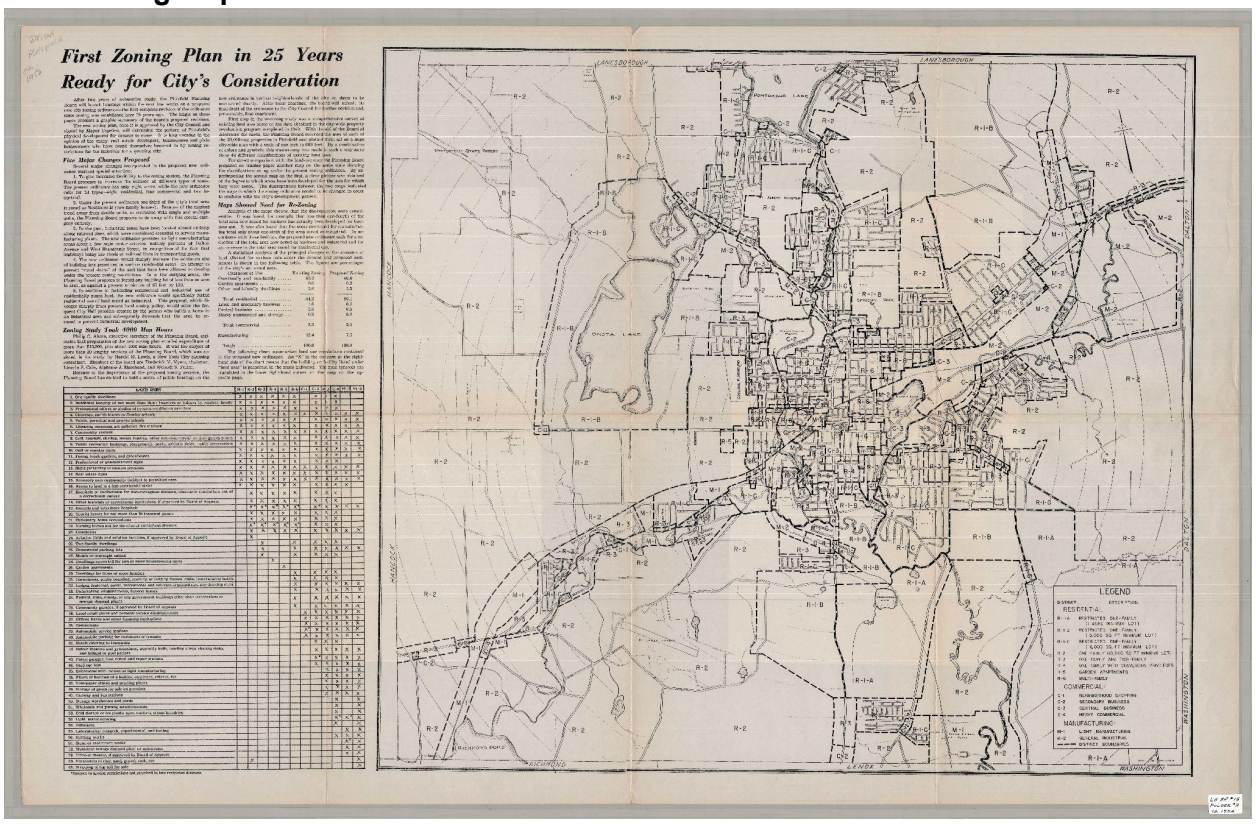
In the 1990s, demolitions began around the John Street-Linden Ave-Dewey Ave-Columbus Ave loop. New zoning left nearly no opportunity for small businesses in the Westside. Demolitions continue throughout the neighborhood. 34 Westside properties are currently listed.

F. Maps of Pittsfield

1936 HOLC Securities Map of Pittsfield


MAP OF
CITY OF PITTSFIELD
FEBRUARY 1937
PREPARED BY
A.J. KOHL HOFER, C.E.
ENGINEERING AND SURVEYING
LANDSCAPING AND DEVELOPMENT
Grade of Security - Oct-15-1936
Best
Still Desirable
Definitely Declining
Hazardous
Business & Industrial
Undeveloped
PONTOOSUC LAKE
ONOTA LAKE
SILVER LAKE
MOREWOOD LAKE
BURBANK PARK
WAHCONAH PARK
PITTSFIELD CEMETERY
PITTSFIELD AIRPORT
BOSTON & ALBANY RAILROAD
NEW YORK, NEW HAVEN & HARTFORD RAILROAD
HOUSATONIC
COLTSVILLE
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16

1952 Zoning Map of Pittsfield

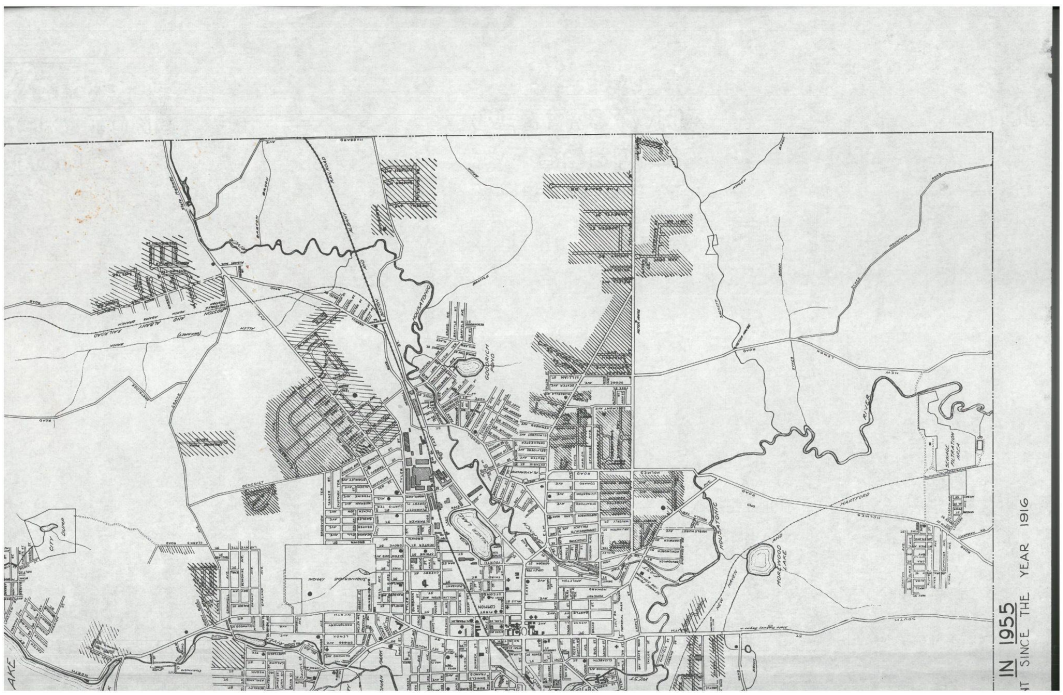


First Zoning Plan in 25 Years
Ready for City's Consideration

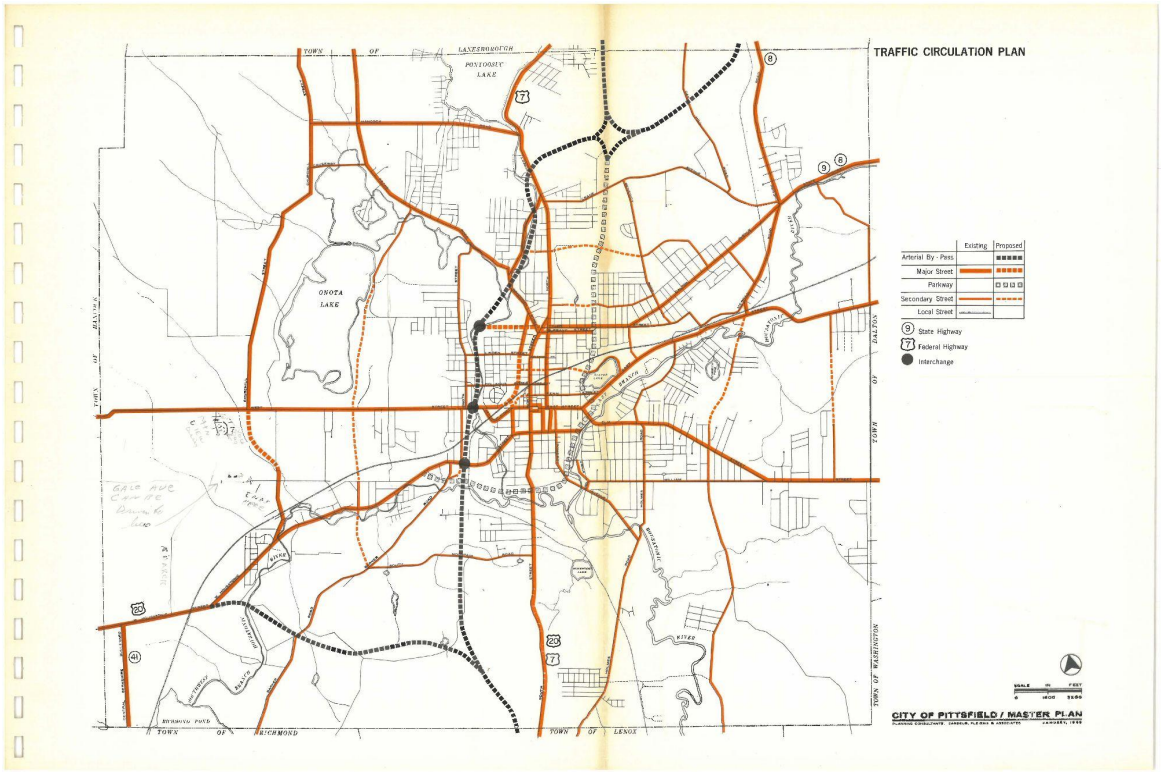
LEGEND
RESIDENTIAL
R-1-A RESTRICTED ONE-FAMILY (1 ACRE MIN. SIZE LOT)
R-1-B RESTRICTED ONE FAMILY (15,000 SQ. FT. MINIMUM LOT)
R-1-C RESTRICTED ONE FAMILY (10,000 SQ. FT. MINIMUM LOT)
R-2 ONE FAMILY (10,000 SQ. FT. MINIMUM LOT)
R-3 ONE FAMILY AND TWO FAMILY
R-4 ONE FAMILY WITH CONDITIONAL PROVISIONS
R-5 GARDEN APARTMENTS
R-6 MULTI-FAMILY
COMMERCIAL
C-1 NEIGHBORHOOD SHOPPING
C-2 SECONDARY BUSINESS
C-3 CENTRAL BUSINESS
C-4 HEAVY COMMERCIAL
MANUFACTURING
M-1 LIGHT MANUFACTURING
M-2 GENERAL MANUFACTURING
DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

1955 Map of Pittsfield with development since 1916, left panel

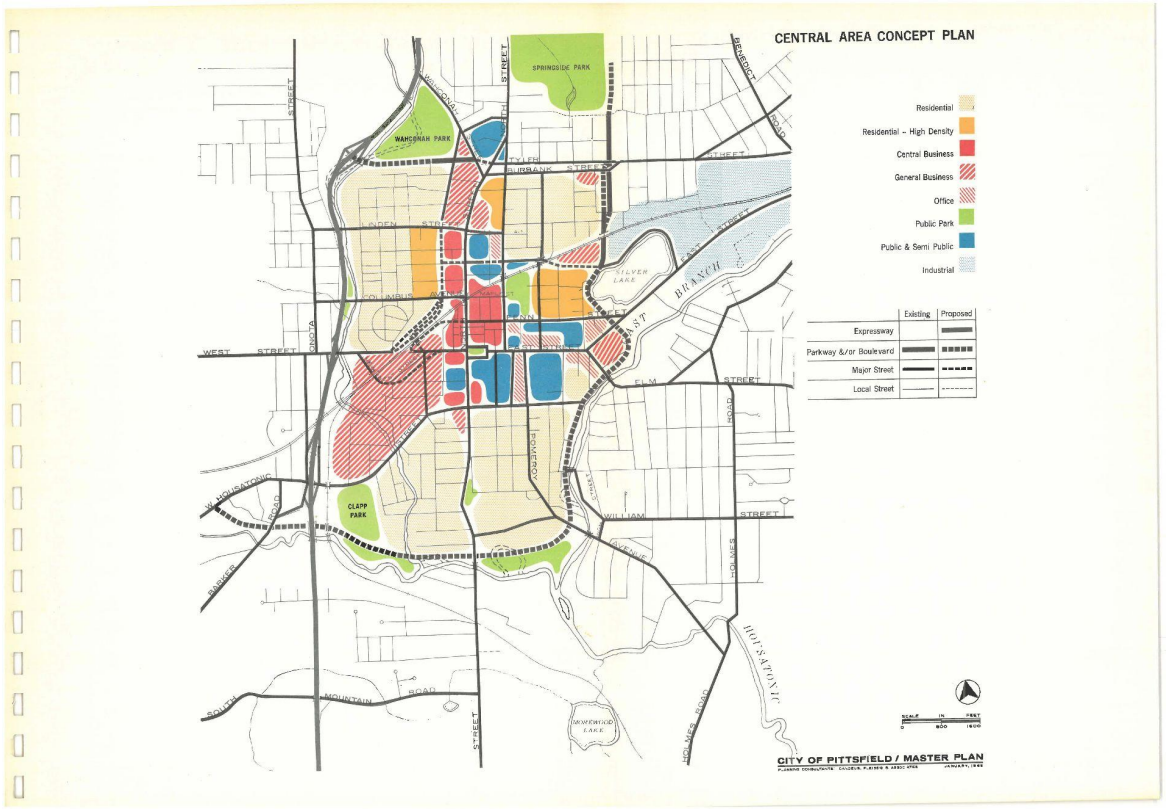
1955 Map of Pittsfield with development since 1916 right panel



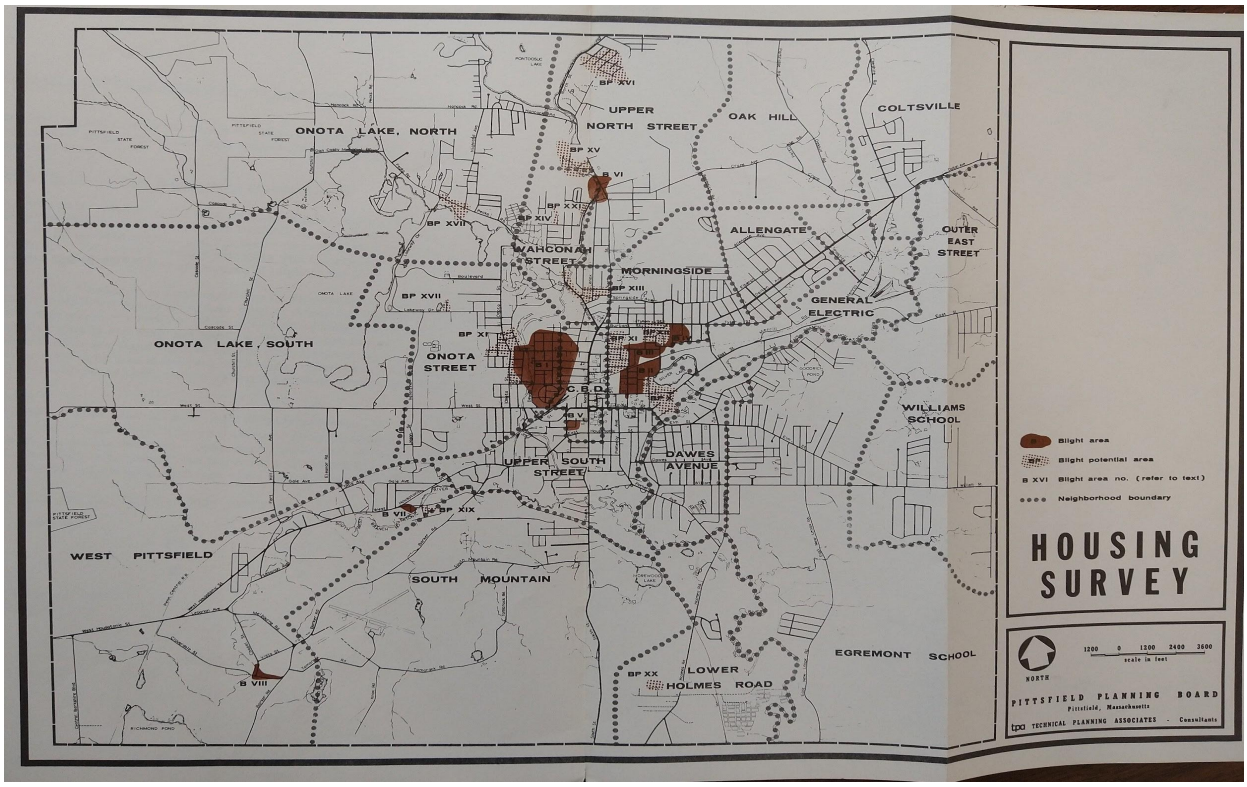
Candeus, Flessig and Associates Traffic Circulation Plan 1962



Candeus, Flessig and Associates 1962 Central Area Concept Plan

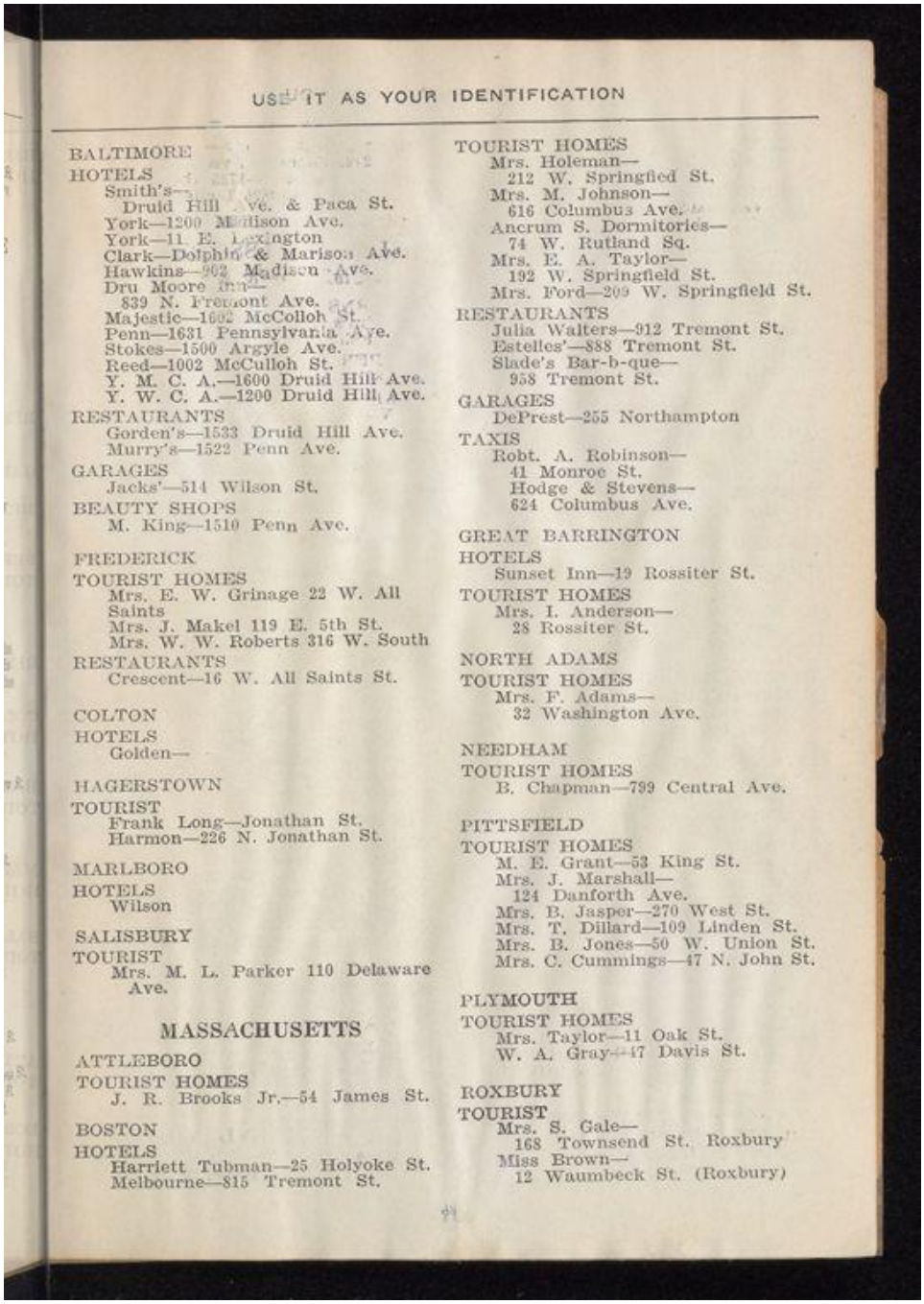


Technical Planning Associates Housing Survey 1970



G. Green Books

1939



USE IT AS YOUR IDENTIFICATION

BALTIMORE
HOTELS
Smith's—
Druid Hill Ave. & Paca St.
York—1200 Madison Ave.
York—11 E. Lexington
Clark—Dolphin & Marison Ave.
Hawkins—902 Madison Ave.
Dru Moore Inn—
839 N. Fremont Ave.
Majestic—1602 McColloh St.
Penn—1631 Pennsylvania Ave.
Stokes—1500 Argyle Ave.
Reed—1002 McCulloh St.
Y. M. C. A.—1600 Druid Hill Ave.
Y. W. C. A.—1200 Druid Hill Ave.
RESTAURANTS
Gorden's—1533 Druid Hill Ave.
Murry's—1522 Penn Ave.
GARAGES
Jacks'—514 Wilson St.
BEAUTY SHOPS
M. King—1510 Penn Ave.

FREDERICK
TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. E. W. Grinage 22 W. All Saints
Mrs. J. Makel 119 E. 5th St.
Mrs. W. W. Roberts 316 W. South
RESTAURANTS
Crescent—16 W. All Saints St.

COLTON
HOTELS
Golden—

HAGERSTOWN
TOURIST
Frank Long—Jonathan St.
Harmon—226 N. Jonathan St.

MARLBORO
HOTELS
Wilson

SALISBURY
TOURIST
Mrs. M. L. Parker 110 Delaware Ave.

MASSACHUSETTS

ATTLEBORO
TOURIST HOMES
J. R. Brooks Jr.—54 James St.

BOSTON
HOTELS
Harriett Tubman—25 Holyoke St.
Melbourne—815 Tremont St.

TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. Holeman—
212 W. Springfied St.
Mrs. M. Johnson—
616 Columbus Ave.
Ancrum S. Dormitories—
74 W. Rutland Sq.
Mrs. E. A. Taylor—
192 W. Springfield St.
Mrs. Ford—209 W. Springfield St.
RESTAURANTS
Julia Walters—912 Tremont St.
Estelles'—888 Tremont St.
Slade's Bar-b-que—
958 Tremont St.
GARAGES
DePrest—255 Northampton
TAXIS
Robt. A. Robinson—
41 Monroe St.
Hodge & Stevens—
624 Columbus Ave.

GREAT BARRINGTON
HOTELS
Sunset Inn—19 Rossiter St.
TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. I. Anderson—
28 Rossiter St.

NORTH ADAMS
TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. F. Adams—
32 Washington Ave.

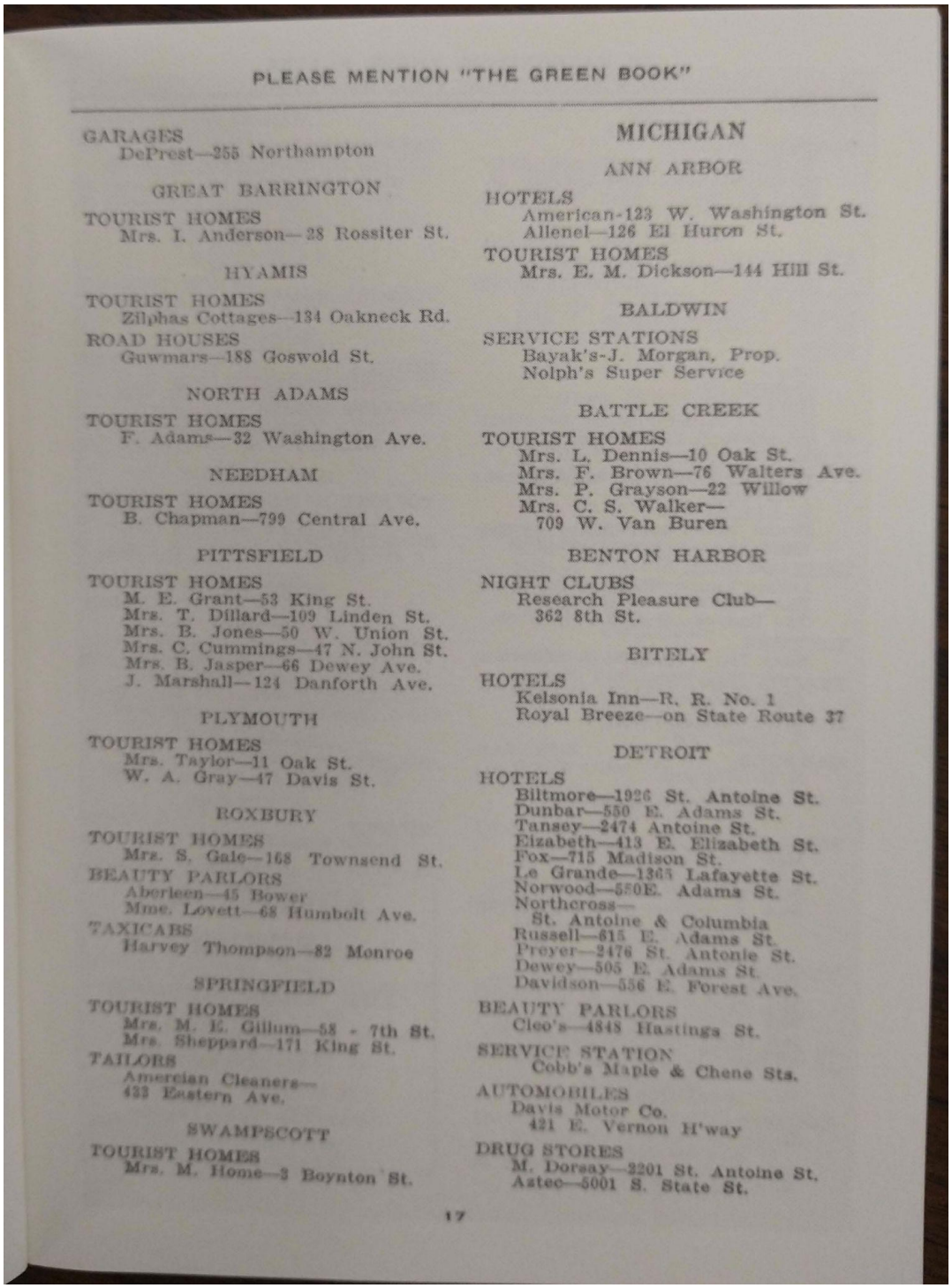
NEEDHAM
TOURIST HOMES
B. Chapman—799 Central Ave.

PITTSFIELD
TOURIST HOMES
M. E. Grant—53 King St.
Mrs. J. Marshall—
124 Danforth Ave.
Mrs. B. Jasper—270 West St.
Mrs. T. Dillard—109 Linden St.
Mrs. B. Jones—50 W. Union St.
Mrs. C. Cummings—47 N. John St.

PLYMOUTH
TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. Taylor—11 Oak St.
W. A. Gray—47 Davis St.

ROXBURY
TOURIST
Mrs. S. Gale—
168 Townsend St. Roxbury
Miss Brown—
12 Waumbeck St. (Roxbury)

1940



GARAGES
DePrest—255 Northampton

GREAT BARRINGTON

TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. I. Anderson—28 Rossiter St.

HYAMIS

TOURIST HOMES
Zilphas Cottages—134 Oakneck Rd.
ROAD HOUSES
Guwmars—188 Goswold St.

NORTH ADAMS

TOURIST HOMES
F. Adams—32 Washington Ave.

NEEDHAM

TOURIST HOMES
B. Chapman—799 Central Ave.

PITTSFIELD

TOURIST HOMES
M. E. Grant—53 King St.
Mrs. T. Dillard—109 Linden St.
Mrs. B. Jones—50 W. Union St.
Mrs. C. Cummings—47 N. John St.
Mrs. B. Jasper—66 Dewey Ave.
J. Marshall—124 Danforth Ave.

PLYMOUTH

TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. Taylor—11 Oak St.
W. A. Gray—47 Davis St.

ROXBURY

TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. S. Gale—168 Townsend St.
BEAUTY PARLORS
Aberleen—45 Bower
Mme. Lovett—68 Humbolt Ave.
TAXICABS
Harvey Thompson—82 Monroe

SPRINGFIELD

TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. M. E. Gillum—58 - 7th St.
Mrs. Sheppard—171 King St.
TAILORS
Amercian Cleaners—
433 Eastern Ave.

SWAMPSCOTT

TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. M. Home—3 Boynton St.

MICHIGAN

ANN ARBOR

HOTELS
American-123 W. Washington St.
Allenel—126 El Huron St.
TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. E. M. Dickson—144 Hill St.

BALDWIN

SERVICE STATIONS
Bayak's-J. Morgan, Prop.
Nolph's Super Service

BATTLE CREEK

TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. L. Dennis—10 Oak St.
Mrs. F. Brown—76 Walters Ave.
Mrs. P. Grayson—22 Willow
Mrs. C. S. Walker—
709 W. Van Buren

BENTON HARBOR

NIGHT CLUBS
Research Pleasure Club—
362 8th St.

BITELY

HOTELS
Kelsonia Inn—R. R. No. 1
Royal Breeze—on State Route 37

DETROIT

HOTELS
Biltmore—1926 St. Antoine St.
Dunbar—550 E. Adams St.
Tansey—2474 Antoine St.
Elzabeth—413 E. Elizabeth St.
Fox—715 Madison St.
Le Grande—1365 Lafayette St.
Norwood—550E. Adams St.
Northcross—
St. Antoine & Columbia
Russell—615 E. Adams St.
Preyer—2476 St. Antonie St.
Dewey—505 E. Adams St.
Davidson—536 E. Forest Ave.

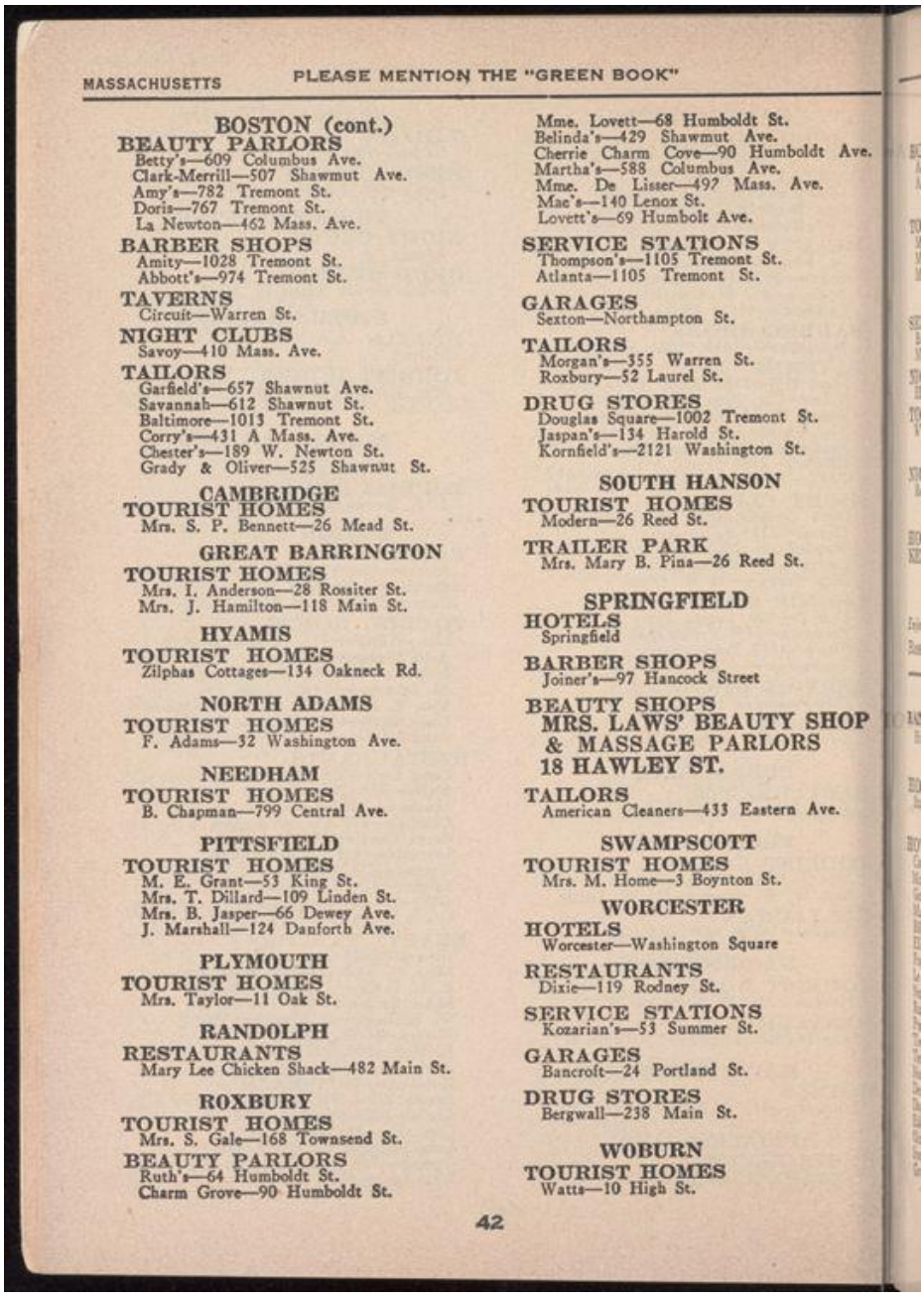
BEAUTY PARLORS
Cleo's—4848 Hastings St.

SERVICE STATION
Cobb's Maple & Chene Sts.

AUTOMOBILES
Davis Motor Co.
421 E. Vernon H'way

DRUG STORES
M. Dorsay—2201 St. Antoine St.
Aztec—5001 S. State St.

1950



BOSTON (cont.)

BEAUTY PARLORS
Betty's—609 Columbus Ave.
Clark-Merrill—507 Shawmut Ave.
Amy's—782 Tremont St.
Doris—767 Tremont St.
La Newton—462 Mass. Ave.

BARBER SHOPS
Amity—1028 Tremont St.
Abbott's—974 Tremont St.

TAVERNS
Circuit—Warren St.

NIGHT CLUBS
Savoy—410 Mass. Ave.

TAILORS
Garfield's—657 Shawnut Ave.
Savannah—612 Shawnut St.
Baltimore—1013 Tremont St.
Corry's—431 A Mass. Ave.
Chester's—189 W. Newton St.
Grady & Oliver—525 Shawnut St.

CAMBRIDGE

TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. S. P. Bennett—26 Mead St.

GREAT BARRINGTON

TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. I. Anderson—28 Rossiter St.
Mrs. J. Hamilton—118 Main St.

HYAMIS

TOURIST HOMES
Zilphas Cottages—134 Oakneck Rd.

NORTH ADAMS

TOURIST HOMES
F. Adams—32 Washington Ave.

NEEDHAM

TOURIST HOMES
B. Chapman—799 Central Ave.

PITTSFIELD

TOURIST HOMES
M. E. Grant—53 King St.
Mrs. T. Dillard—109 Linden St.
Mrs. B. Jasper—66 Dewey Ave.
J. Marshall—124 Danforth Ave.

PLYMOUTH

TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. Taylor—11 Oak St.

RANDOLPH

RESTAURANTS
Mary Lee Chicken Shack—482 Main St.

ROXBURY

TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. S. Gale—168 Townsend St.

BEAUTY PARLORS
Ruth's—64 Humboldt St.
Charm Grove—90 Humboldt St.
Mme. Lovett—68 Humboldt St.
Belinda's—429 Shawmut Ave.
Cherrie Charm Cove—90 Humboldt Ave.
Martha's—588 Columbus Ave.
Mme. De Lisser—497 Mass. Ave.
Mae's—140 Lenox St.
Lovett's—69 Humbolt Ave.

SERVICE STATIONS
Thompson's—1105 Tremont St.
Atlanta—1105 Tremont St.

GARAGES
Sexton—Northampton St.

TAILORS
Morgan's—355 Warren St.
Roxbury—52 Laurel St.

DRUG STORES
Douglas Square—1002 Tremont St.
Jaspan's—134 Harold St.
Kornfield's—2121 Washington St.

SOUTH HANSON

TOURIST HOMES
Modern—26 Reed St.

TRAILER PARK
Mrs. Mary B. Pina—26 Reed St.

SPRINGFIELD

HOTELS
Springfield

BARBER SHOPS
Joiner's—97 Hancock Street

BEAUTY SHOPS
MRS. LAWS' BEAUTY SHOP & MASSAGE PARLORS 18 HAWLEY ST.

TAILORS
American Cleaners—433 Eastern Ave.

SWAMPSCOTT

TOURIST HOMES
Mrs. M. Home—3 Boynton St.

WORCESTER

HOTELS
Worcester—Washington Square

RESTAURANTS
Dixie—119 Rodney St.

SERVICE STATIONS
Kozarian's—53 Summer St.

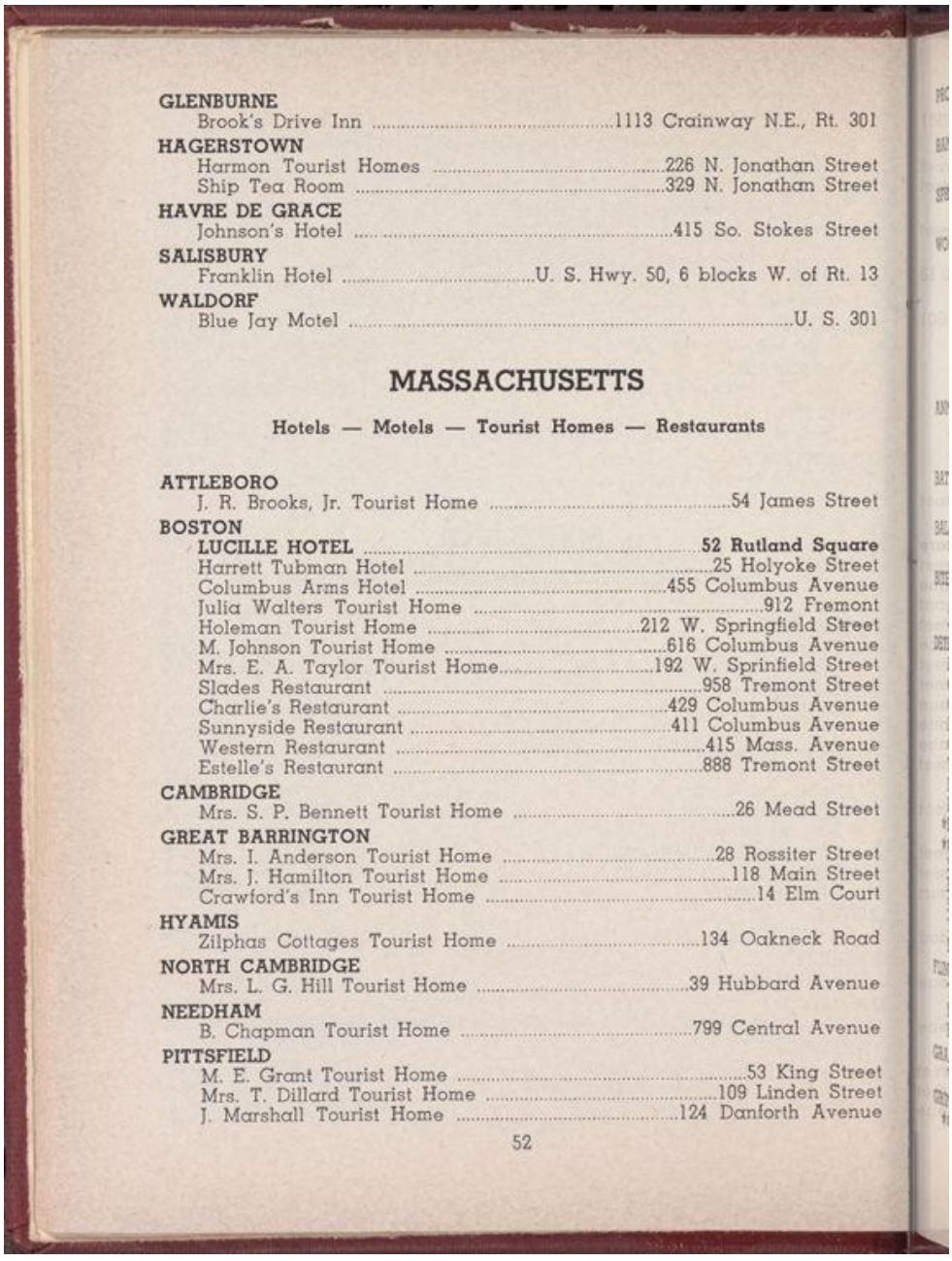
GARAGES
Bancroft—24 Portland St.

DRUG STORES
Bergwall—238 Main St.

WOBURN

TOURIST HOMES
Watts—10 High St.

1960



GLENBURNE
Brook's Drive Inn ..... 1113 Crainway N.E., Rt. 301

HAGERSTOWN
Harmon Tourist Homes ..... 226 N. Jonathan Street
Ship Tea Room ..... 329 N. Jonathan Street

HAVRE DE GRACE
Johnson's Hotel ..... 415 So. Stokes Street

SALISBURY
Franklin Hotel ..... U. S. Hwy. 50, 6 blocks W. of Rt. 13

WALDORF
Blue Jay Motel ..... U. S. 301

MASSACHUSETTS

Hotels — Motels — Tourist Homes — Restaurants

ATTLEBORO
J. R. Brooks, Jr. Tourist Home ..... 54 James Street

BOSTON
LUCILLE HOTEL ..... 52 Rutland Square
Harrett Tubman Hotel ..... 25 Holyoke Street
Columbus Arms Hotel ..... 455 Columbus Avenue
Julia Walters Tourist Home ..... 912 Fremont
Holeman Tourist Home ..... 212 W. Springfield Street
M. Johnson Tourist Home ..... 616 Columbus Avenue
Mrs. E. A. Taylor Tourist Home ..... 192 W. Sprinfield Street
Slades Restaurant ..... 958 Tremont Street
Charlie's Restaurant ..... 429 Columbus Avenue
Sunnyside Restaurant ..... 411 Columbus Avenue
Western Restaurant ..... 415 Mass. Avenue
Estelle's Restaurant ..... 888 Tremont Street

CAMBRIDGE
Mrs. S. P. Bennett Tourist Home ..... 26 Mead Street

GREAT BARRINGTON
Mrs. I. Anderson Tourist Home ..... 28 Rossiter Street
Mrs. J. Hamilton Tourist Home ..... 118 Main Street
Crawford's Inn Tourist Home ..... 14 Elm Court

HYAMIS
Zilphas Cottages Tourist Home ..... 134 Oakneck Road

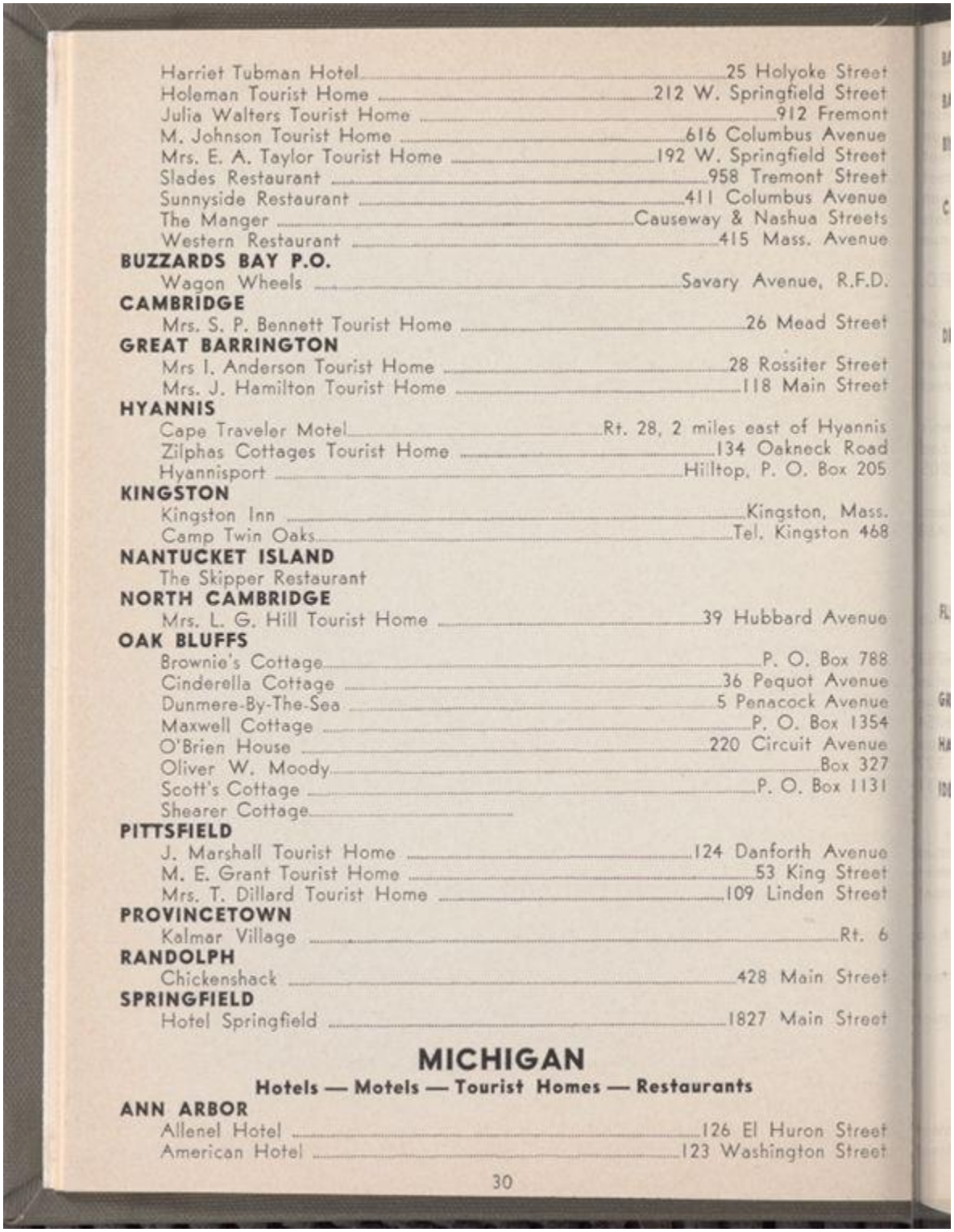
NORTH CAMBRIDGE
Mrs. L. G. Hill Tourist Home ..... 39 Hubbard Avenue

NEEDHAM
B. Chapman Tourist Home ..... 799 Central Avenue

PITTSFIELD
M. E. Grant Tourist Home ..... 53 King Street
Mrs. T. Dillard Tourist Home ..... 109 Linden Street
J. Marshall Tourist Home ..... 124 Danforth Avenue

52

1966/67



Harriet Tubman Hotel ..... 25 Holyoke Street
Holeman Tourist Home ..... 212 W. Springfield Street
Julia Walters Tourist Home ..... 912 Fremont
M. Johnson Tourist Home ..... 616 Columbus Avenue
Mrs. E. A. Taylor Tourist Home ..... 192 W. Springfield Street
Slades Restaurant ..... 958 Tremont Street
Sunnyside Restaurant ..... 411 Columbus Avenue
The Manger ..... Causeway & Nashua Streets
Western Restaurant ..... 415 Mass. Avenue

BUZZARDS BAY P.O.

Wagon Wheels ..... Savary Avenue, R.F.D.

CAMBRIDGE

Mrs. S. P. Bennett Tourist Home ..... 26 Mead Street

GREAT BARRINGTON

Mrs I. Anderson Tourist Home ..... 28 Rossiter Street
Mrs. J. Hamilton Tourist Home ..... 118 Main Street

HYANNIS

Cape Traveler Motel ..... Rt. 28, 2 miles east of Hyannis
Zilphas Cottages Tourist Home ..... 134 Oakneck Road
Hyannisport ..... Hilltop, P. O. Box 205

KINGSTON

Kingston Inn ..... Kingston, Mass.
Camp Twin Oaks ..... Tel. Kingston 468

NANTUCKET ISLAND

The Skipper Restaurant

NORTH CAMBRIDGE

Mrs. L. G. Hill Tourist Home ..... 39 Hubbard Avenue

OAK BLUFFS

Brownie's Cottage ..... P. O. Box 788
Cinderella Cottage ..... 36 Pequot Avenue
Dunmere-By-The-Sea ..... 5 Penacock Avenue
Maxwell Cottage ..... P. O. Box 1354
O'Brien House ..... 220 Circuit Avenue
Oliver W. Moody ..... Box 327
Scott's Cottage ..... P. O. Box 1131
Shearer Cottage .....

PITTSFIELD

J. Marshall Tourist Home ..... 124 Danforth Avenue
M. E. Grant Tourist Home ..... 53 King Street
Mrs. T. Dillard Tourist Home ..... 109 Linden Street

PROVINCETOWN

Kalmar Village ..... Rt. 6

RANDOLPH

Chickenshack ..... 428 Main Street

SPRINGFIELD

Hotel Springfield ..... 1827 Main Street

MICHIGAN

Hotels — Motels — Tourist Homes — Restaurants

ANN ARBOR

Allenel Hotel ..... 126 El Huron Street
American Hotel ..... 123 Washington Street

H. Stories of Two Black Families

The study of two families–the Robinsons and the Williamsons– help inform our cross sectional analyses of the 1946 and 1970 housing studies. Their stories help elucidate different experiences of Black families in Pittsfield and the Westside. These case studies take the form of a genealogical investigation that can be reasonably said to represent a longitudinal study. Cataloging place of residence, tenure status, and place of employment or employer, where archival sources were available. Sources used for the genealogical research included city directories, city tax records, federal censuses, and archival editions of the Berkshire Eagle newspaper. A significantly less intensive cataloging of these factors was conducted for Black residents whose families were enumerated in the 1940 federal census, and subsequently were listed in the city directories from 1940-1968. Tentatively, this secondary cataloging reinforces the themes, narratives and analyses presented by the more in depth study of the Robinson and Williamson families, respectively.

The Robinson family patriarch had ancestors living in Berkshire County since at least 1850. Two of these ancestors were likely born as free men in Columbia County, New York. Henry Robinson Sr. and Rose Robinson relocated to Pittsfield between 1900-1910. Prior to marrying neither lived on the Westside, after marrying they rented throughout the Westside exclusively. In 1927 they purchased a plot of land (or a home) on Atwood Avenue, on the east bank of the West Branch of the Housatonic River (south of Route 20). In 1933 they moved to 75 Atwood Avenue. Henry Sr. passed away a year later. By 1941 Rose Robinson was living alone at 75 Atwood Avenue, only one of her four children still lived in Pittsfield, and she sold her home to another Black family. Upon selling she moved to Deering Street. The case study of the Robinsons revealed the precarity of Black homeownership during a period of time when New Deal legislation had sought to financially secure homeowners, and the G.I. Bill provided resources for veterans (Harry Robinson Jr., a son, fought in World War 2).

The Williamson family is representative of the Reidsville, North Carolina to Pittsfield, Massachusetts “Great Migration”, though Catherine Williamson was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. James Williamson Sr., her husband, was born in Danville, Virginia, and spent his childhood after age 5 in Reidsville. In the last years of the 1920s and first few years of the 1930s James Williamson moved to Pittsfield. Living on West Street and Deering Street. In 1940 their five year old child Charles accidentally fell into the West Branch of the Housatonic River and drowned. This led residents of the Deering, Mill, Satinet (DMS) streets neighborhood to petition the city council. Revealed in this tragedy was a lack of action on the part of Pittsfield government. This lack of action was informed by a lawsuit homeowners living along the East branch of the Housatonic River had executed against the city in 1940. Revealing the connection between owning a home and effectively utilizing the mechanisms of local government to protect one’s life. Catherine Williamson lived in the DMS neighborhood until the 1960s. An apartments she lived in on Deering Street was reported as having caught fire three separate times in 1949. Showing the aging condition of electrical and heating systems, although the structures themselves were never condemned.

Taken together these two stories also show that the Westside from at least 1910 onward was a neighborhood where Black residents of Pittsfield found accommodations. Environmental and housing hazards notwithstanding the Westside, and the DMS neighborhood, served as homes where families built community. New Deal programs to secure homeownership were not as readily available to one Black family–the Robinsons. City government showed a greater willingness to act on behalf of its home-owning population. Those Black people who were able, often left to access opportunities unavailable to them in Pittsfield.

I. Recent Pittsfield Scholarship

Dominguez, Clarissa. Orluk, Nate. *Morningside and Westside in Pittsfield, Ma: A Historical Perspective.* 19 Dec. 2021.

Hadden, Kara. Toney, Nicole. *The Ongoing History of Housing Discrimination in Pittsfield, Ma*: 27 January 2022.

J. Recommended Readings:

I. History of anti-Black exclusionary federal policies

-Beckert, Sven. *Empire of Cotton.* Vintage Press, 2015.

-Du Bois, W.E.B. *Black Reconstruction in America.* 1935. Transaction Publishers, 2013.

-Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. *An Indigenous Peoples' History Of The United States.* Beacon Press, 2014.

-Trounstine, Jessica. *Segregation By Design.* Cambridge University Press, 2018

-Yamahtta-Taylor, Keeanga. *Race For Profit.* The University of North Carolina Press, 2019.

II. Neighborhood Stability and Homeownership

-Mallach, Alan. "Homeownership and the Stability of Middle Neighborhoods." *Community Development Investment Review,* vol. 11, no. 1. 24 Aug 2016, pp. 63-83.

-Mallach, Alan. "Neighborhood Change, Leveraging research to advance community revitalization. supplement." *VPRN Research & Policy Brief,* no. 3, 2016.https://vacantpropertyresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Companion-Brief_Neighborhood-Change-FINAL.pdf

-McCabe, Brian. "Homeownership and Social Trust in Neighbors." *City & Community,* vol. 1, no. 4, December 2012
doi: 10.1111/j.1540-6040.2012.01416.x

-Jia Miao, Xiaogang Wu, Social Consequences of Homeownership: Evidence from the Home Ownership Scheme in Hong Kong, *Social Forces*, 2022;, soac011, https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soac011

-Boehm, Thomas. Schlottman, Alan. "The dynamics of race, income, and homeownership." *Journal Of Urban Economics,* vol. 55, 2004, 113-130

-Freeman, Lance. "The Impact of Assisted Housing Developments on Concentrated Poverty." *Housing Policy Debate*, vol. 14, 2003, pp. 103-141. 10.1080/10511482.2003.9521470.

III. Redlining Impacts on Social Determinants of Health

-Aaronson, D. et al. “The long-run effects of the 1930s HOLC ‘redlining’ maps on place-based measures of economic opportunity and socioeconomic success”. *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, 86, 2021.
-Anderson, Dana. “Redlining’s Legacy of Inequality: 212,200 Less Home Equity, Low Homeownership Rates For Black Families.” *Redfin,* https://www.redfin.com/news/redlining-real-estate-racial-wealth-gap/
-Mujahid, M. et al. “Historical Redlining and Cardiovascular Health.” *PNAS,* 13 Dec. 2021. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2110986118
-Lukes, Dylan, and Christopher Cleveland. (2021). The Lingering Legacy of Redlining on School Funding,
Diversity, and Performance. (EdWorkingPaper: 21-363). Retrieved from Annenberg Institute at Brown University: https://doi.org/10.26300/qeer-8c25
-De Los Santos, Hannah, et al. “From Redlining to Gentrification: The Policy of the Past that Effects Health Outcomes Today”. *Center For Primary Care Harvard Medical School,*
https://info.primarycare.hms.harvard.edu/review/redlining-gentrification-health-outcomes
-Lee, Eun Kyung et al. “Health outcomes in redlined versus non-redlined neighborhoods: A systematic review and meta-analysis.” *Social science & medicine (1982)* vol. 294 (2022): 114696. doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114696