

# Undoing The Racist Legacy of Planning

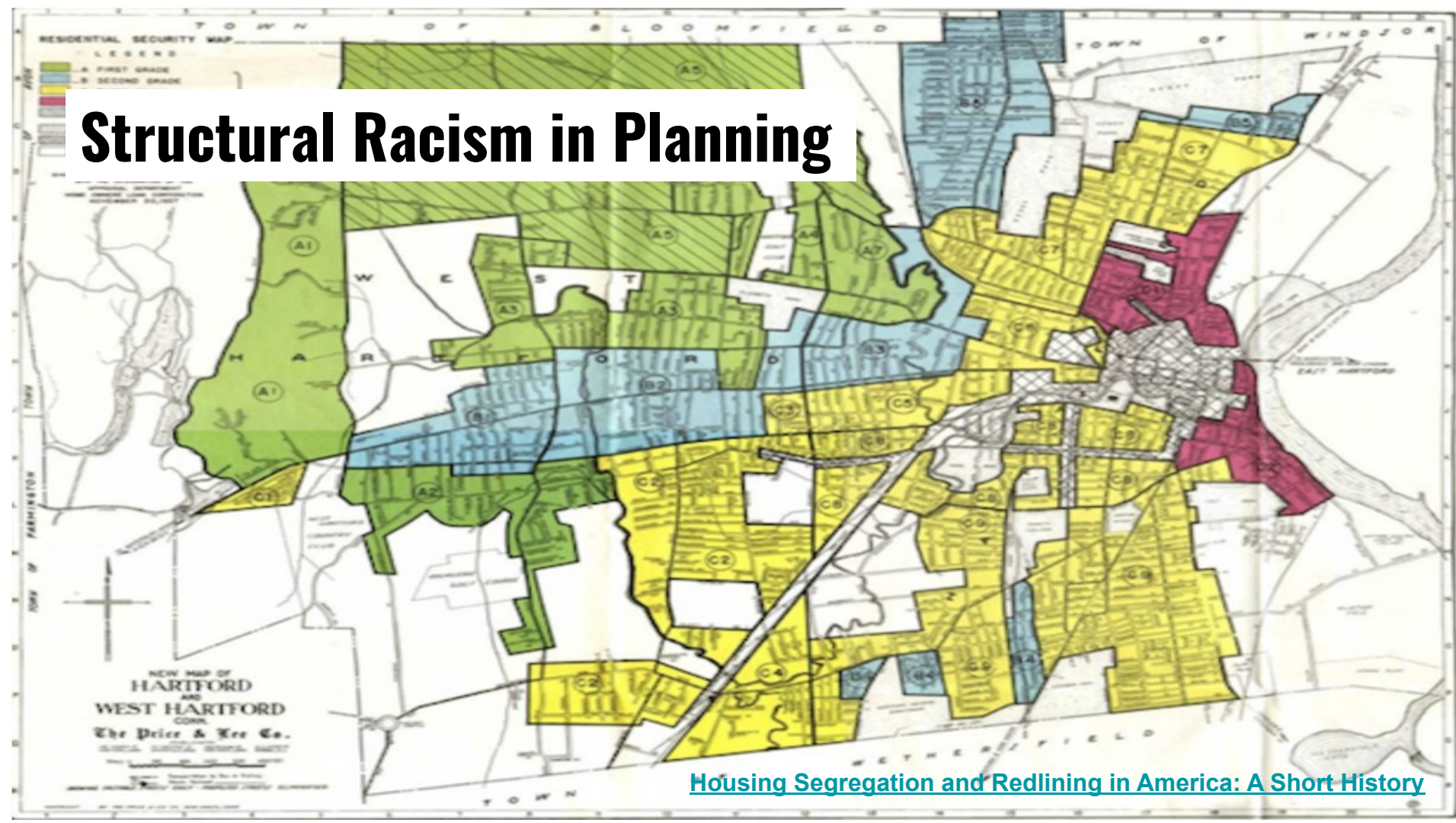
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# Objectives

- Understand the ways that planning has been used as a central tool of government at federal/state/local levels to perpetuate segregation and racial inequities
- Understand the ways that planning can be used to reduce barriers and create equity, including specific case studies

# Structural Racism in Planning



# Redlining

“The Federal Housing Administration underwriters warned that the presence of even one or two non-white families could undermine real estate values in the new suburbs. These government guidelines were widely adopted by private industry. Race had long played a role in local real estate practices. Starting in the 1930's, government officials institutionalized a national appraisal system, where race was as much a factor in real estate assessment as the condition of the property. Using this scheme, federal investigators evaluated 239 cities across the country for financial risk.”

**“The House We Live In” episode of *Race the Power of An Illusion***

# Protective Covenants in Vermont

a garage or other outbuilding located 60 feet or more from the front line, shall be located nearer than 15 feet to any side lot line.

(d) No residential structure shall be erected or placed on any building lot, which lot has an area of less than 8,000 square feet or a width of less than 75 feet at the front building setback line, as shown on the recorded plan.

(e) No noxious or offensive trade or activity shall be carried on upon any lot nor shall anything be done thereon which may be or become an annoyance or nuisance to the neighborhood.

(f) No persons of any race other than the white race shall use or occupy any buildings or any lot, except that this covenant shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race domiciled with an owner or tenant.

(g) No trailer, basement, tent, shack, garage, barn or other outbuilding erected in the tract shall at any time be used as a residence temporarily or permanently, nor shall any structure of a temporary character be used as a residence.

(h) No dwelling costing less than \$4,500. shall be permitted on any lot in the tract. The ground floor area of the main structure, exclusive of one-story open porches, and garages shall be not less than 625 square feet in the case of a one-story structure nor less than 570 square feet in the case of a one and one-half, two, or two and one-half story structure.

(i) An easement is reserved over the rear five feet of each lot for utility installation and maintenance.

No person of any race other than the white race shall use or occupy any buildings or any lot, except that this covenant shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants.

<https://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/discrimination-in-deed/Content?oid=2127529>

<https://mappingprejudice.umn.edu/what-are-covenants/>

# Greenlining



The Rye Meadows neighborhood in South Burlington's southeast quadrant on Monday, October 25, 2021. Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger



[Debate over conservation vs housing development comes to a head in South Burlington](#)

[Segregation in Vermont continues through restrictive housing policies](#)

# Development/ Urban Renewal Projects



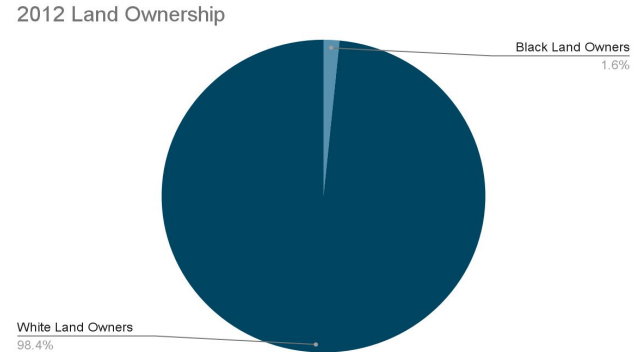
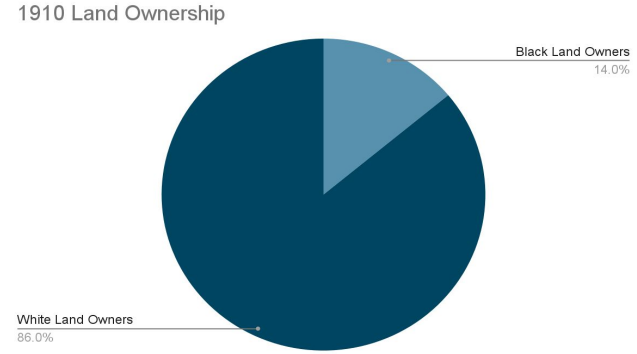
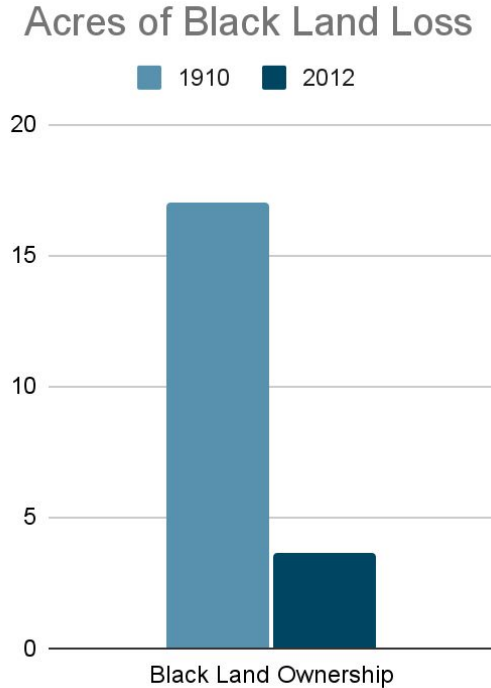
Burlington Town Center today

MATTHEW THORSEN

[Before Burlington's Proposed Mall Makeover, They Called It 'Urban Renewal'](#)

[What It Looks Like to Reconnect Black Communities Torn Apart by Highways](#)

# Black Land Loss & Property Law



Black Land Loss Statistics from the USDA: <https://inequality.org/research/owns-land/>

How Property Law Is Used to Appropriately Black Land, Vice News: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Is3P\\_FicO7I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Is3P_FicO7I)

# Black Homeownership in Chittenden County

## HOMEOWNERSHIP



Homeownership among Black and African American households is significantly lower than White households.

Of Black and African American households in Chittenden County:

**83%**  
Rent

**17%**  
Own

Of White households in Chittenden County:

**36%**  
Rent

**64%**  
Own

*Source: American Community Survey 2019 5-Year Estimates*

# The Possibilities for Racially Equitable Planning



# Counter-Mapping to Undo Racism

- A digital map for reparations for Black and indigenous farmers
- L.A. Equity index



Participants in Soul Fire Farm's Black Latinx Farmers Immersion program prepare a bed for planting.

**Digital map for reparations for Black & indigenous farmers:**

<https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2018/02/21/a-digital-map-leads-to-reparations-for-black-and-indigenous-farmers>

**LA Equity Index:** <https://lacontroller.org/data-stories-and-maps/equityindex/>

# Community Land Trusts



Photo from Vermont Land Trust

King County Equity Now: <https://www.kingcountyequitynow.com/solutions/black-land-ownership/>

Land, Community and Local Control: <http://mechanismsforcommunitycontrol.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/community-land-trusts/>

Champlain Housing Trust: <https://www.getahome.org/>

New Communities Inc.: <https://www.newcommunitiesinc.com/>

Fannie Lou Hammer Community Land Trust, Cooperation Jackson: <https://cooperationjackson.org/sustainable-communities-initiative>

Pine Island Community Farm: <https://vlt.org/pineisland>

# Placemaking



Chicano Park in San Diego

[Fifty Years Ago, Fed Up With the City's Neglect, a San Diego Community Rose Up to Create Chicano Park, Smithsonian Mag](#)

# Making Planning Public



Photos from the Design Studio for Social Intervention



Uphams Corner Street Lab:

<https://www.ds4si.org/civic-engagement/2015/12/29/street-lab-uphams>

M/B/T/A Lab: <https://www.ds4si.org/creativity-labs/mbta-lab>

People's Redevelopment Authority: <https://www.ds4si.org/civic-engagement/pr>

# So...how can planning play a role in racial equity?

- Provide opportunities for community participation (not top down) and community driven solutions
- Provide opportunities to bring planning into the public space
- Provide opportunities for innovation outside of traditional planning tools that challenge power relationships and investigate issues of racial and economic inequity

**Asante.**

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**Thank you!**