To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Nedra Lucille Jones entitled "Infill Housing: A Case Study on Residential Development in Inner City Neighborhoods." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Planning.

Annette Anderson, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:

Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

Infill Housing: A Case Study on Residential Development in Inner City Neighborhoods

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Nedra Lucille Jones
December 1997

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation to my major professor, Annette Anderson. Thank you for your words of encouragement and support throughout my thesis writing experience. My committee members, George Bowen, Ken Kenney and James Spencer deserve special recognition for guiding my thoughts in the right direction. I am also extremely grateful to those individuals who participated in interviews to share their wealth of knowledge and information.

I am particularly appreciative to Kevin DuBose, who supplied valuable information to my research, and to my friends and family for their unwavering support (Phillippians 3:14).

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify and explain those factors that have either contibuted to or impeded the implementation of infill housing in Knoxville's inner city neighborhoods. A chronological report of the city's efforts to institute projects and programs documents successes and failures with infill housing since the late 1970s. The experiences of several local non-profit and for-profit developers were considered in the assessment of conditions that affect new housing construction on vacant lots in the inner city. An evaluation of three neighborhoods - Parkridge, Five Points, and Mechanicsville - is based on previous research that identified characteristics of neighborhoods having low potential for infill development. The study also addresses other issues that are pertinent to the implementation of infill housing. It analyzes public and private partnerships, the market for infill housing in Knoxville's inner city, and the economic and social consequences for each study area.

This research required a thorough analysis of neighborhood plans, reports and other published documents. Personal interviews were conducted with representatives from local non-profit organizations, officials from the city's Department of Community Development, and private developers.

The results indicate that developers of infill homes, both public and private, were skeptical about the market for new housing in the inner city. Consequently, new construction was not a priority for most developers and most efforts were directed towards housing rehabilitation. The city committed more funds to housing rehabilitation programs than programs dedicated to new housing construction. As a result, non-profit organizations whose budgets depend greatly on funding from the city and other federal

programs, concentrated most of their effort on rehabilitating housing in the inner city. Their financial restrictions also greatly limited their ability to hire necessary staff to administer infill programs and to satisfy the needs of the potential homebuyer. There were very few private developers willing to build affordable housing in the inner city. Small private contractors had difficulty securing construction financing and the larger developers simply did not find infill housing to be a profitable market.

Initially, I anticipated radical differences among the three neighborhoods in terms of success and failure with infill housing, but found that they share similar impediments and opportunities. The results of this study show that there is potential for infill housing in the inner city. An important question for planners, developers and city officials is not whether infill is feasible, but what can be done to make it an attractive development option? Cities across the United States are implementing legal statues that allow better management of derelict properties and vacant lots. With continued support from city officials, residents and non-profit organizations, infill housing can become a viable tool for revitalizing inner city neighborhoods.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		Page
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	Statement of the Problems	2
	Previous Research	3
	Purpose of Research	6
	Methodology	8
	Study Areas	9
2.	KNOXVILLE AND THE NATIONAL EXPERIENCE	17
	Knoxville's Experience	18
	Early Infill Projects and Programs	21
	Challenges of Infill Housing	23
	Affordability	27
	Quality and Compatibility	32
	Financing Infill Housing	35
3.	LOCAL DEVELOPERS OF INFILL HOUSING	40
	Non-Profit Developers	42
	Private Developers of Infill Housing	59
4.	NEIGHBORHOOD POTENTIAL FOR INFILL HOUSING	63
	Parkridge	64
	Five Points	66
	Mechanicsville	66
	Impediments within each Neighborhood	68

Opportunities for Infill Housing..... 74

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... 80

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 91

VITA..... 96

LIST OF TABLES

1-1 Housing Conditions by Neigbhorhood..... 12

1-2 Housing Conditions by City Sector..... 13

1-3 Demographic Data by Neighborhood..... 14

2-1 City of Knoxville Home Sales by Price..... 30

2-2 Cost of Development..... 31

4-1 Housing Sales in East Knoxville..... 72

4-2 Housing Sales in Mechanicsville..... 73

LIST OF FIGURES

1-1 City of Knoxville 1990 Census Map..... 10

2-1 Delaney Court project..... 25

2-2 A Habitat Home at 2351 Linden Avenue..... 34

2-3 A Craftman style Home adjacent to Habitat Home..... 34

3-1 Habitat for Humanity Floor Plan..... 43

3-2 Habitat Home illustrating front porch design..... 45

3-3 Construction of an Infill Home at 134 Douglass Avenue..... 50

3-4 Victorian Home at 1007 Oak in Mechanicsville..... 52

4-1 Parkridge Location Map..... 65

4-2 Five Points Location Map..... 67

4-3 Mechanicsville Location Map..... 69

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Many of America's inner city neighborhoods have been bypassed by suburban migration. Neighborhoods which were once decent and safe living environments are now enclaves of bombed-out storefronts, dilapidated houses and vacant lots. Social decay has accompanied the physical devastation. Residents become victims of a weak social fabric and a declining economy. They are plagued with high unemployment, crime, poor housing and inadequate schools.

To address these social ills, federal and local governments have instituted several programs over the years for the redevelopment and rehabilitation of urban neighborhoods. Under the Housing Act of 1949, the Urban Renewal program made available funds to local jurisdictions for the removal and clearance of slums and rehabilitation of deteriorated, substandard areas. Although the intent of the program was to improve housing quality and spur downtown redevelopment, most expenditures went toward land assembly and public infrastructure (Walker, 1996). Opponents of urban renewal criticize the program for its disenfranchisement and displacement of African -American families and small businesses. Many communities across the United States experienced first-hand the consequences of urban renewal. The City of Knoxville instituted four urban renewal projects: Riverfront/Willow Street project, the Yale Avenue project, the Mountain View project and the Morningside project (Riley, 1995). Residents and business owners in

the Mountain View area were pushed further east in the city to what is now the Five Points and Parkridge communities.

Other federally assisted programs committed to urban restoration include the Model Cities program in 1966 and the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. The Community Development Block Grant Program which was introduced in the Housing Act of 1974 gave local communities more discretion in administering funds and deciding which neighborhoods would benefit from the program. The City of Knoxville received roughtly $12 million in CDBG funds for fiscal year 1996. For fiscal 1995-1996, the City's proposed budget included $506,218 for property acquisition, clearance and demolition of vacant lots and blighted properties. A study conducted in 1974 by the East Tennessee Community Design Center shows that there were 4,849 vacant lots in Knoxville. Presently, there are 1159 vacant lots in the three study areas.

Statement of the Problem

Vacant lots and blighted properties weaken the stablilty and vitality of neighborhoods. They fragment the community in terms of its social, physical, and economic well-being and are susceptible to the accumulation of trash, graffiti, arson and other problems that reduce the value of surrounding properties (Suchman 1996). Many properties become dens of criminal activity. Abandoned or condemned structures become hide-aways for drug abusers, prostitution or refuge for homeless individuals. Residents who continue to live in urban areas want to preserve the

character and quality of their neighborhoods. However, they cannot prevent many circumstances that negatively affect the condition of properties. In some cases, the property owner is not in the position, physically or financially, to maintain the property. Also, owners who have been long-time residents of the neighborhood bequeath their homes and other property to heirs who no longer choose to live in the neighborhood. Consequently, the property is sold or left to deteriorate. Another factor that can tremedously affect the character of a neighborhood is the filtering process. When upper and middle income people opt for the serenity of the suburbs, typically their homes are bought by lower income people (Kirby, 1979).

Today, many cities are adopting programs aimed at land acquisition and disposition to confront problems associated with vacant and abandoned property. Infilll development is an approach many cities are undertaking. Federal and local governments use infill as a mechanism for managing growth and stimulating the revitalization of urban areas. It has proven effective for some communities, but the complexties of distressed urban communities continue to present overwhelming challenges to cities with few resources.

Previous Research

Research on the subject of infill has been encouraged by studies conducted at the national level. The Real Estate Research Corporation commissioned by the Department of Housing and Urban Development completed a study on the implications of urban sprawl (RERC, 1982). The document titled The Cost of

Sprawl, discusses the need for more compact development and the cost of low-density development versus higher-density development. In 1979, RERC conducted a two year study on the feasibility of infill development. The corporation examined three metropolitan counties, Dade County in Miami, Florida, King County in Seattle, Washington, and Monroe County in Rochester, New York. A report of the study details the opportunities and constraints of urban infill land, and the tools and strategies to encourage investment on bypassed sites (RERC, 1982). The purpose of the research was to provide guidance for cities and developers (Brett, 1982). Infill land was examined in terms of physical characteristics, its location and marketability, ownership and availability for development. The study found that markets having the lowest potential for infill development are those which have limited new household growth; dispersed employment centers; little investment in existing building stock; primarily low income residents; steep land prices and limited growth guidance.

Based on RERC findings, the Urban Land Institute along with the American Planning Association published a book in 1985 on development guidelines for infill projects. The book, Making Infill Projects Work discusses ways in which to stimulate interaction between private developers and public agencies.

In 1983, HUD Secretary Samuel Pierce, Jr. initiated the Joint Venture for Affordable Housing. The venture involved a partnership among organizations interested in making housing more affordable (HUD, 1983). Initially, the demonstration program was developed to identify ways "for reducing housing costs in

real projects and to provide information on the costs savings that resulted." As interest in infill development grew among public and private entities, HUD expanded the program to include infill housing projects. The study examined cities in New Jersey, New York, Vermont, Kentucky and Massachusetts. Findings of the report show that a significant factor in the success of development and marketing of the projects was the cooperation between the developer/builder and the local government.

Other initiatives to encourage infill development include the Citizen's Action Manual. Published by the Trust for Public Land, the manual provides information on how residents can preserve the character of neighborhoods. It suggests ways in which citizens can recycle vacant property and eliminate blight.

In relation to national infill research, many city and regional agencies conducted individual studies on the problems and opportunities of infill that were consistent with HUD's research efforts (CDRPC, 1980). Although many problems were unique to each area, there are some general impediments the cities confronted, such as financing infill projects, establishing public/private interaction, and acquiring the property. Cities are beginning to share information about the opportunities and barriers to infill implementation. Requests can be found from cities, big and small seeking assistance via the internet on infill housing programs. Cities are requesting information on how to adopt and implement infill development programs. The Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington requested examples of studies, programs and ordinance provisions designed to encourage infill. Cities like

Portland, Oregon posted information on recent amendments to its zoning ordinance. The ordinance provides for amendments to allow infill housing on existing lots that do not meet the minimum requirements of the current zone. Orange County Florida advertised its LotAcquistion/Infill Affordable Housing Program. The program provides assistance to eligible low and very low income home buyers. The potential buyers enter into agreements with selected developers for construction of an affordable home on an infill lot.

Purpose of Research

Infill can be defined in very broad terms and serve a variety of purposes. It has been defined as the re-use of vacant or skipped over parcels of land within built environments. The Department of Housing and Urban Development has defined infill as " the economic use of vacant land in urban areas where water, sewer, and public services are already in place." Infill can be applied to various types of development or redevelopment of residential, commercial and industrial property. It has been used to transform vacant lots into centerpieces for neighborhoods. Vacant lots have been used for gardens plots, parking lots, and new housing.

For the purpose of this research, infill will be defined as the construction of new housing on previously platted residential lots that are presently vacant lots or lots with an existing housing structure scheduled for demolition within built urban environments. Rehabilitation of dilipated housing structures can also be considered infill, but because fewer programs exist to construct new housing in the inner city,

this study focuses primarily on new construction as a tool for revitalization. The purpose of this research is two-fold. First, the intent is to examine the success of infill housing within markets having the lowest potential for development. The study targets low income neighborhoods, specifically, because of the urgent and pervasive need to revitalize these areas. Residents living in these communities are most vulnerable to social and economic inequities. If cities are to sustain themselves and attempt to reduce inequities across economic and social lines, attention should be given to the growth and stability of both urban and suburban communities. Second, it aims to analyze the various agencies and organizations engaged in infill implementation and their individual and coordinated efforts to do infill housing projects.

Previous research identified the characteristics of markets having the lowest potential for infill development as areas located in urban, low income neighborhoods with limited population growth, and dispersed employment centers (Brett, 1982). Many cities are adopting infill as a strategy for revitalizing inner city neighborhoods. As a tool for redevelopment, infill can serve a dual purpose. It can help create housing and home ownership opportunities while providing a cost efficient way for cities to support affordable housing. If Knoxville and other cities are to effectively implement infill housing within the most vulnerable communities, they must understand the dynamics of the neighborhoods and the consequences of their initiatives and programs. The findings of this study should provide answers to the

following questions:

1. What have been the impediments to infill housing implementation among the various initiators?

2. What public/private relationship exists among initiators of infill housing construction?

3. What is the market for infill housing within the study areas?

4. What are the economic and social consequences of infill housing within the study areas?

The harsh realities of inner city neighborhoods serve only as a reminder of the continued decentralization within our urban cores. Infill housing should represent an integration of people and their built environment into the existing social fabric, not their separation or exclusion (Hermanuz, 1988). This research attempts to show the benefits of infill housing and how cities and neighborhoods can work together to ensure its success within neighborhoods that have already been deemed unmarketable.

Methodology

Qualitative research techniques have been adopted for the study. A case study approach allowed for the analysis of published documents, reports and plans. Data have been gathered through personal interviews and field observations. Interviews were conducted with city officials in the Department of Community Development, the Knoxville Community Development Corporation, the Knox Housing Partnership,

Knoxville Neighborhood Housing and Commercial Services, Habitat for Humanity, private developers and contractors, neighborhood associations and owners of infill housing.

Study Areas

The study evaluates three neighborhoods within the Knoxville Metropolitan Area; Parkridge, Five Points and Mechanicsville. In August 1995, the City of Knoxville designated Parkridge and Five Points as neighborhoods targeted for revitalization. Each neighborhood developed a plan that identifies issues of concern which include transportation improvements, housing, reinvestment and beautification. Based on their stated need for infill housing construction, the Parkridge and Five Points neighborhoods were selected for the study. The Mechanicsville neighborhood was chosen for its historic significance in planning for residential development which included infill housing. In 1989, the City for the first time designed a redevelopment plan and infill for residential development in the Mechanicsville neighborhood.

Parkridge--Located in East Knoxville, the Parkridge neighborhood lies mainly within census tract 5 and part of census tract 4 (Figure 1-1). The neighborhood has houses of various sizes and styles ranging from space efficient "shotguns" and roomy bungalows to detailed Queen Anne designs (Parkridge Neighborhood Plan, 1994). Data on the year of construction from the 1990 Census show that 71 percent of the homes were built prior to 1959 and only 4 percent or 54 home were constructed between 1980 and 1990. There are a total of 1006 residential

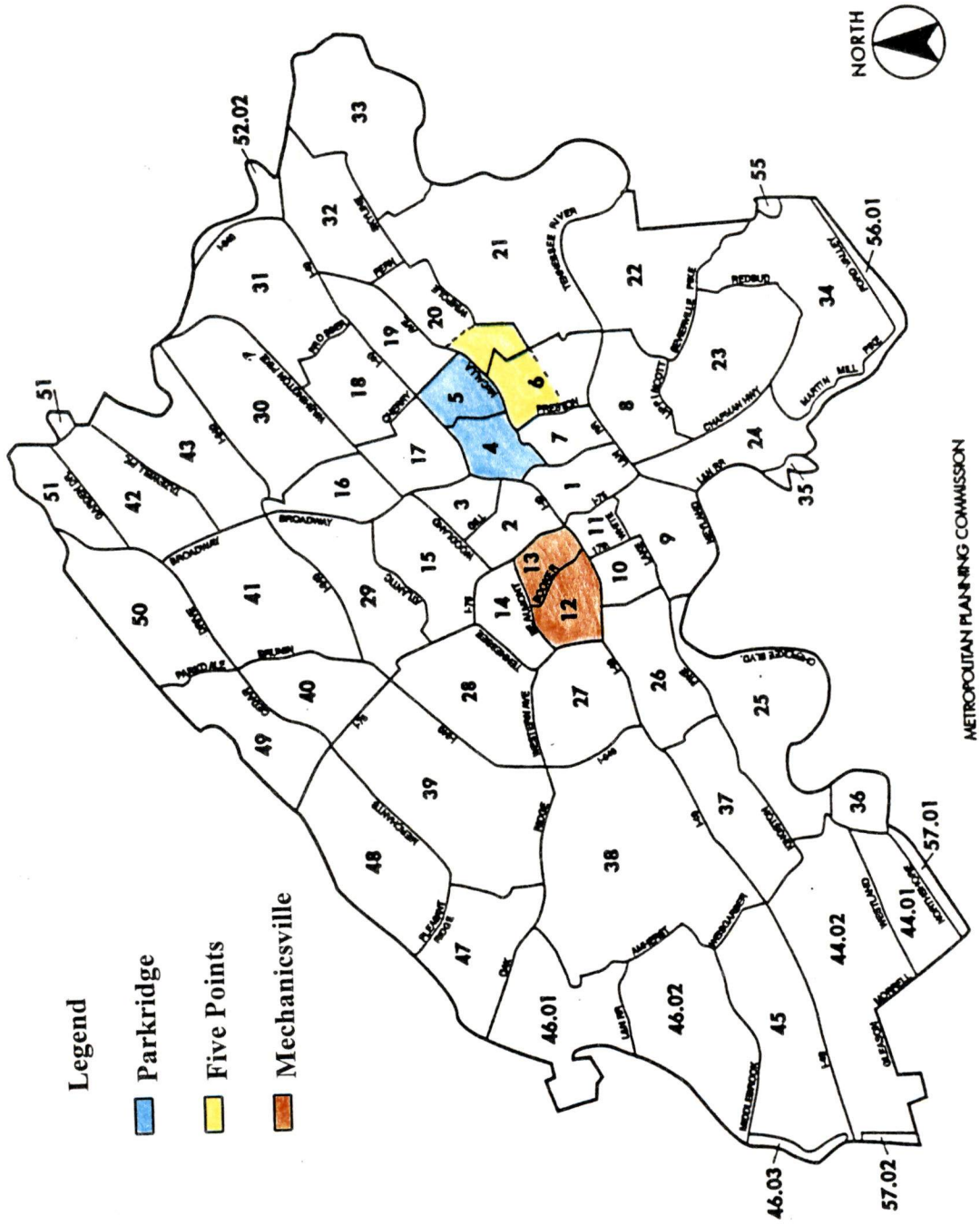

Figure 1-1. City of Knoxville 1990 Census

structures in Parkridge. Forty percent are classified as fair, 30 percent are average and 22 percent are poor (Table 1-1). Most of the City's housing stock is in good to fair condition (Table 1-2). Currently, there are about 42 homes listed as condemned, abandoned or vacant and 157 lots or 11 percent that include some land zoned for agriculture in the area (MPC, 1996). Two homes are scheduled for demolition by the city and 11 homes are scheduled for review by the Better Building Board.

The area has a population of 2602 residents. Minority residents make up 43 percent of the total population and 76 percent of the total population are moderate to low income. The median family income for the area is $15,042 (Table 1-3).

Five Points--The Five Points neighborhood is located in East Knoxville also and is approximately five minutes east of Downtown Knoxville. It is situated within census tracts 5 and portions of census tracts 6 and 20 (Figure 1-1). The majority of the homes are single family detached dwellings with the exception of Walter P. Taylorpublic housing development (Metropolitan Planning Commission, 1992). A housing condition survey conducted by the Metropolitan Planning Commission in 1996 recorded the external condition of homes in the area. There are approximately 310 housing structures in the Five Points area, 49 percent of the houses were classified as fair, 37 percent were considered average and 15 percent were poor (Table 1-2). The East Knoxville area has 609 lots that are vacant or classified as agriculture land. The city's redevelopment plan for Five Points targets the area between Linden Avenue, Selma Avenue, Kellar Street and Harrison Street.

Table 1-1

Housing Conditions by Neighborhood

	Parkridge %	**Five Points %**	**Mechanicsville %**
Very Good	1	1	1
Good	1	1	1
Average	30	27	18
Fair	40	49	51
Poor	22	15	24
Very Poor	4	4	1
Unknown	2	2	3
Total	100	100	100

Source: Metropolitan Planning Commission, 1996.

Table 1-2

Housing Conditions by City Sector (percentages)

	Good	Fair	Poor	Substandard
Central	53.3	36.5	9.8	0.4
North	87.1	9.9	3.0	0.0
East	59.6	32.0	8.4	*
South	78.3	16.7	4.8	0.3
West	95.9	3.1	0.9	0.1
Northwest	91.2	7.2	1.5	0.1
City Total	74.4	20.0	5.4	0.2

*Not available

Source: Metropolitan Planning Commission, 1990/1991.

Table 1-3

Demographic Data by Neighborhood

	Parkridge	Five Points	Mechanicsville	Knoxville
Population	2,601	2,603	3,694	165,121
Minority	43%	86%	72%	16%
Low/Moderate	76%	66%	79%	42%
Owner Occupied	43%	55%	36%	46%
Female Headed	20%	21%	54%	15%
Persons/Household	2.13	2.39	3.34	2.2
MFI	$15,042	$20,196	$12,267	$34,702

Source: 1990 Census

The small area redevelopment plan identifies a total of 367 parcels; 310 residential, 49 commercial and 8 classified as public structures. There are 102 vacant lots including both residential and commercial lots just in phase one of the plan. Approximately 23 percent of residential lots are vacant, while an additional 26 percent have substandard homes on site (Five Points Redevelopment Plan, 1996).

The total combined population in census tract 5, 6 and 20 is 9,501. Minorities represent 86 percent of the total population and 66 percent of all residents are moderate to low income. The median family income is $20,196 (Table 1-3).

Mechanicsville--The Mechanicsville neighborhood is located northwest of Knoxville's Downtown area. The area lies within census tracts 12 and 13 (Figure 1-1). In 1989, the Knoxville Community Development Corporation administered a re-development plan for Mechanicsville. The redevelopment boundaries are I-75 to the east; University Avenue on the west; Fifth Avenue on the north; and Western Avenue on the south. Within the larger area a small project area was identified for better manageability of the plan. An inventory of existing conditions showed that were 331 parcels and 115 vacant lots in the project area, approximately 218 residential housing units that are single family detached homes (Metropolitan Planning Commission, 1996). The larger study area has approximately 393 lots that are vacant or zoned for agricultural use. The old residential character gives rise to diverse architectural designs that combine varying dwelling sizes. The styles include the "shotgun" design and the traditional Victorian design. Housing conditions for the entire area show that

over half or 51 percent are in fair condition, 18 percent are average and 24 percent are in poor condition (Table 1-1).

The 1990 Census Population figures for the entire Mechanicsville area is 3,694. Minorities make up 72 percent of the total population and 79 percent of the residents are classified as low to moderate income. The median family income is $12,267 (Table 1-3).

Demographic and economic data for the study areas show some similarites and differences among the three neighborhoods. The information, along with other neighborhood characteristics will aid in the analysis of factors affecting residential infill development within each area.

CHAPTER TWO

Infill Housing: Knoxville and the National Experience

Legislative actions to control problem properties in urban areas began as early as the New York tenement laws in 1857. Housing codes are now common-place among states to ensure the minimum health, safety and welfare of public citizens (Listokin, 1985). State and local governments have employed a variety of legal actions to maintain decent and safe living environments. The exercise of state police power, eminent domain and receivership laws has become a common remedy for today's problem parcels. Local governments are finding ways to get around problems associated with land assembly and faulty titles by taxing vacant land at higher rates, providing foreclosed properties at little or no cost to a developer and/or creating joint ventures with private developers for surplus land (Suchman, 1996). Cities across the United States are adopting these strategies and others to get vacant lots and abandoned properties into productive use. Knoxville's Blighted Property Ordinance provides for the clearing of titles through eminent domain proceedings (Department of Community Development, 1991). Both Portland, Oregon and Baltimore, Maryland have receivership programs which transfer ownership of deficient property to a public or private receiver who becomes responsible for rehabilitation (Listokin, 1985).

Portland's program, known as the Housing Receivership Program places strict fines on properties that are in violation of Portland's housing maintenance code. The fines range from $55 to $165 per month on any property that has a history of

unresolved violations (Ways, 1997). If property owners fail to make repairs, the city can either file a complaint with the city's hearing officer or initiate a receivership action. Baltimore's receivership program involves community organizations identifying vacant houses in need of rehabilitation as part of a community development plan (Ways, 1997). Unlike Knoxville and Portland, Baltimore designated one non-profit organization, known as Save A Neighborhood to oversee rehabilitation of properties (Ways, 1997). Property owners have only 10 days to make necessary repairs, as opposed to 60 day notices and 90 day notices issued by Portland and Knoxville, respectively. If rehabilitation does not occur, a case is filed in district court within 30 days by Save A Neighborhood. Baltimore's program has resulted in 585 receivership actions. Portland has initiated 80 receiverships and five have been appointed receivers (Ways, 1997).

Receivership programs like many infill lot programs help cities and non-profits acquire property to create more affordable housing opportunities. These programs increase the availability of housing and aid in revitalizing many distressed neighborhoods.

Knoxville's Experience

The City of Knoxville has made several attempts to create a viable mechanism for encouraging reuse of vacant land and abandoned properties. In 1987, the city through the Department of Community Development adopted an infill program known as the Homemakers program. It establishes an orderly transfer of lots and

houses acquired as part of the efforts to clear blight and encourage infill housing development. It provides a procedure for selecting purchasers and/or developers of property that has been acquired for a specific community development objective and/or has a restrictive reuse requirement due to acquisition methods or financing (Department of Community Development, 1995). The Homemakers Program was first applied to the Mechanicsville Redevelopment Plan area in 1989. The Plan allowed for acquisition of both residential and non-residential properties through eminent domain or voluntary sale. The program was used successfully for the disposition of properties within Mechanicsville, but it was limited in its impact on property acquisition. The program depended on voluntary sales for acquisition of property and it had no provision to clear faulty titles (Department of Community Development, 1995). However, through new State enabling legislation, the city acquired more control in acquiring blighted properties. In 1991, the Blighted Property Ordinance authorized the acquisiton of blighted vacant residential properties on a spot basis using eminent domain. This greatly expanded the power of the city's ability to deal with blighted residential properties throughout the city (Department of Community Development, 1995). Property owners receive an aquisition order from the city stating the conditions that contribute to the blighted or deteriorated determination (Department of Community Development, 1991). They have 90 days to repair conditons or make arrangements to transfer the property to the city. Amendments to the Homemakers program in 1995 help to create a more uniform

policy of property transfer. Properties are available for sale to individuals, non-profits, and for-profit organizations. The city's Department of Community Development provides a list of vacant lots and lots with substandard structures in the DCD office which includes the location of the property and any restriction on the re-use. All applicants must propose to construct a new house or rehabilitate the existing house on the parcel and any proposed reuse must comply with the neighborhood zoning or the MPC One Year Plan, DCD rehabilitation standards in the case of rehab, and local building codes for new construction (Department of Community Development, 1997). The city has 10 vacant lots and 8 houses that are currently for sale on the Homemakers list. Five lots are located in Mechanicsville, three lots and one house are located in East Knoxville, and four houses are located in Parkridge. Other properties are outside the three study areas.

The city has also targeted other inner city neighborhoods for opportunities to do infill housing in the Heart of Knoxville Empowerment Zone Strategic Plan. The plan identifies urgent problems facing most of Knoxville's inner city neighborhoods and lays out a vision for long-term community development (Department of Community Development, 1994). The strategy area includes 22 inner city census tracts which encompass 37.2 percent of the city's population. One of the goals in the plan is to rehabilitate 35 owner-occupied houses per year and reuse 10 properties per year through the Homemakers Program. Between March 1994 and July 1997, the City has sold 17 vacant lots for new housing construction since March 1994, and

rehabilitated about 1500 homes in the strategy area.

Developers participating in the Homemakers program have included local non-profit organizations such as the Knox Housing Partnership, Knoxville Neighborhood Housing and Commercial Services, Habitat for Humanity and the Inner City Community Development Corporation. For-profit developers include several out-of-state developers and some local developers. Each applicant must complete an application that requires a copy of the site plan and floor plan, information regarding the affordability of the home for a low to moderate income household, the proposed rent/sales price, sources of funding and financing commitments.

Early Infill Projects and Programs

Prior to the Homemakers program, the Metropolitan Planning Commission initiated its first infill program in 1979. The Lot Homesteading Program was a local response to an emerging national problem. The program offered possible solutions to the problem of deliquent property taxes that diminished resources in urban areas. The lack of sufficient funds hindered the provision of basic public service and the implementation of necessary capital improvements (Department of Community Development, 1979). The purpose of the program was to 1.) ". . .develop a mechanism wherby vacant, or undeveloped city parcels, under ownership of one of the several municipal agencies, - City of Knoxville, Knoxville Board of Education, KCDC, etc.-- can be classified and evaluated for possible residential redevelopment,"

and 2.) ". . . to begin to identify the basic framework for an on-going inventory process whereby the city can maintain a current parcel listing and utilize an evaluation process that will identify parcels to satisfy specific property and facility needs." The program proved somewhat unsuccessful and resulted in several lots being sold to a developer who did not complete proposed projects (Gerard, 1997).

In the same year, the East Tennessee Community Design Center published the User's Handbook to Re-Using Knoxville's Vacant Lots. The purpose of the handbook was to show people in Knoxville ways to reuse stagnant vacant lots (East Tennessee Community Design Center, 1979). Two years later, in 1981, the Design Center in conjunction with Knoxville Heritage sponsored the Urban House Design Competition. The goal of the competition was to foster the design and construction of new single family houses or duplexes on narrow inner city lots (ETCDC, 1981). Three lots were selected for competitors to design and build the house for himself/herself, for a client, or for sale to the public. The lots were located at Marion Street in Beaumont, Cansler Street in Mechanicsville and Stewart Street in Old North Knoxville. The winner received a cash award provided that construction was undertaken. He also was responsible for all financing and preparation of construction documents and contracts. Submissons were judged on architectural quality and compatibility with existing old houses, marketability and affordability of the house or duplex in the area, construction feasibility of the proposed design, energy efficiency, and interior and exterior living amenities. Local architect, David Hutchins designed

the winning entry which was originally for the Cansler site, but financing was not available for the site. Instead, he was able to get financing for the Stewart property which became a two-story duplex.

In 1982, the Design Center published the Vacant Lots Recycling Handbook. It outlined approaches to property acquisition, design and development of lots and implementation of neighborhood vacant lot recycling projects. Using the Mechanicsville community as a demonstration site, the handbook provided "how to" instructions for groups in other cities to use in creating their own vacant lots recycling program (ETCDC, 1982).

Challenges of Infill Housing

Initiators of infill development are confronted by a number of impediments to development or redevelopment of inner city areas. Potential pitfalls associated with the market, competiton for development, the physical characteristics of the land and regulatory guidelines challenge almost every infill program and deserve considerable attention (Suchman, 1996).

The market for infill housing can sometimes be difficult to assess. Important questions for any developer should be who are the buyers, can they afford to buy and where are they buying (Suchman, 1996)? The market may not exist for several reasons. Potential buyers simply may not earn enough income to purchase a new home; they may prefer a particular neighborhood over another, a particular design or an existing home. This unpredictability affected the success of an infill project

known as Delaney Court located at Fifth Avenue and Arthur Street in Mechanicsville (Figure 2-1). This 3 to 4 acre site was sold to a private company known as Danco. The Knoxville Community Development Corporation assembled the property and cleared any title problems for Danco Inc., a private local contractor. The property was to be developed as a planned unit development with 18 new houses. Danco completed one model home and attempted to sell the house for around $60,000. The house stayed on the market for several months and eventually sold for well below market price (DeBruhl, 1997). It is assumed that the sale of the home was affected by a poor market. People who were interested in purchasing a home in that neighborhood could not afford the price. Danco transferred some of the property to Carlton Homes, a local manufacturer of modular housing to develop two-story modular housing and some single family dwellings. Carlton Homes was supposed to begin construction on the site in the summer of 1996. The home constructed by Danco is the only home on the site along with a home built by Habitat for Humanity. Carlton Homes still has a few months left on their contract to develop the site; however KCDC plans to reacquire the property and begin accepting proposals from other developers, if it is not developed.

Competition can serve as an advantage or a disadvantage for the developer. If the neighborhood is growing and other developments are taking place in the area, this might be indicative of potential growth and the need for additional housing options. Developers sometimes have to compete with the existing housing stock. In many low income neighborhoods, it is difficult to sell existing houses; homes can stay on the



Figure 2-1. Delaney Court project.

market for more than a year.

The physical characteristics of the land should also be examined prior to development. The site should be viewed for subsurface debris, access to infrasturcture and environmental constraints. Before construction could begin on the award-winning property at Stewart Street in Mechanicsville, the developer, David Hutchins of Hutchins and Assoicates architectural firm had to excavate debris from a previous home that was buried underneath the soil. He removed 2 feet of topsoil and replaced it with 20 loads of fill soil.

Regulatory guidelines for infill development are extremely important in the feasibility analysis (Suchman, 1996). Unusal configurations in lot size of infill sites can conflict with local zoning regulations and delay development, or the lots may be located in an historic district that requires certain design guidelines. Knoxville has made amendments to its local zoning ordinance to allow development of infill sites. Most inner city lots are relatively small, averaging 50x150 square feet. Provisions have been made to reduce sideyard requirements and to accomodate corner lots which usually are not wide enough for a typical footprint. The zoning ordinance also allows for non-conforming uses and exemptions as well as variances for substandard lots of record.

Other issues relate to the characteristics of infill housing. Developers are confronted with the affordability and the cost of construction, compatibility of design with existing housing, the quality of the homes, and financing opportunities.

On average most infill housing in the inner city is occupied by low to moderate income families. It is not only important for developers to create housing opportunities but to also make housing affordable to these families. Most of these homes are made affordable with financing assistance from local and federal sources. Although some private lenders participate in community development projects, most of them view infill projects as too risky and are apprehensive about supporting infill.

Affordablility

The "affordability gap" between the income needed to purchase or rent a home and the income earned by the average household has grown wider (Davis, 1994). Since the 1970s housing affordability for low income Americans has deteriorated more rapidly than any other group (Ford Foundation, 1989). With impending federal cutbacks in housing assistance programs, state and local governments will have to be creative in their efforts to provide affordable housing opportunities and improving homeownership for families with low to moderate incomes. More families are finding it increasingly difficult to find affordable housing. The affordable housing stock is steadily shrinking as low cost units are removed from the inventory through demolition, upgrading, or change to non-residential use (Harvard University, 1996). Infill housing has been tried and tested by cities across the nation as an avenue to affordable housing and homeowneship opportunities for low to moderate income families. By no means is infill development a panacea to the complex problems that afflict low income neighborhoods, but it can and has proven to

be an effective tool for aiding in the revitalization of many impoverished communities.

Housing affordability as defined by the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy is defined as the ratio of median family income to the income needed to purchase the median priced home based on current interest rates and underwriting standards. Low and moderate income families are finding it increasingly difficult to purchase a home in Knoxville. Fifty percent of all households in Knoxville had incomes less than 80 percent of the metropolitan statistical area median (Department of Community Development, 1995). HUD's estimate of 1995 median family income for Knoxville MSA was $35,400 (Department of Community Development, 1995). Purchasing a home with no financial assistance can be difficult for a family in Knoxville with an income below the MSA median.

A housing market analysis conducted by the Department of Community Development found that a family at 50 percent of the median family income, $17,700, (typical income for a family that would qualify for federal assistance) could afford approximately a $45,000 home if the loan is financed 95 percent, at 8 percent interest rate for 30 years, with 28 percent PITI/Income ratio and $100 per month escrow payment; assuming the family has the required downpayment and meets credit criteria.. The National Association of Realtors composite index value for the fourth quarter of 1994 shows that a family earning the median income of $35,400 had 131.3 percent of the income needed to purchase an average priced home. In Knoxville, the

average price for a home during the first five months of 1994 was $89,900 for a 3 bedroom house (Knoxville Board of Realtors). A family with the Knoxville MSA median income would be able to afford a $98,500 home using the above criteria except increasing the monthly escrow to $140 per month.

In the areas of Parkridge, Five Points and Mechanicsville, the average price of an infill home is usually between $42,000 and $59,000. Data from the Knoxville Board of Realtors show 3,392 sales in the under $50,000 price range from 1990 to 1994 (Table 2-1).

Within the Knoxville community, several organizations are involved in the construction of new housing on infill sites. They range from local non-profit agencies to indivdual developers. In the three study areas, there have been a total of 85 affordable homes constructed on infill lots. Roughly 37 infill lots are scheduled for new housing construction among the three study areas. Housing types range from conventional stick-built housing to modular homes. Most of the homes are intended for home ownership; however, some homes have been put on the market for rental occupancy. Developers of low cost housing should make efforts to ensure affordability for low income buyers; but, with any housing production, the high cost of production can make it difficult to pass any savings on to the consumer (Ford Foundation, 1989). The major factors contributing to high production costs are land and financing (Table 2-2).

Production costs for infill projects are not easily predicted. In examining infill

Table 2-1

City of Knoxville: Number of Home Sales by Price/Number of Bedrooms 1990-1994

Bedrooms	<$40,000	$40-50,000	$50-60,000	$60-70,000	>$70,000
2 or less	1,101	471	395	266	476
3	665	946	1,775	2,347	7,975
4 or more	102	107	240	375	7,091
Total	1,868	1,524	2,410	2,988	15,542

Source: Knoxville Consolidated Plan, 1995.

City of Knoxville Median Prices, 1990-1994

Bedrooms	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
2 or less	40,000	43,000	45,000	48,000	48,000
3	68,000	71,000	74,000	78,000	82,000
4 or more	120,000	122,000	126,000	135,000	140,000

Source: Knoxville Consolidated Plan, 1995.

Table 2-2

Costs of Development (%)
(Single Family Housing)

Cost Component	1949	1984
Land	11	22
Materials	36	31
Labor	33	16
Financing	5	11
Profit/Overhead	15	20
	100	100

Source: National Association of Homebuilders.

projects in the three study areas, most infill has been initiated by non -profit organizations and financing for those projects have come from a variety of sources. Land is sometimes donated or purchased at a discounted price, and financing can take the form of low interest loans, deferred loans and/or forgivable loans. The cost to construct a home on an infill site in a low income neighborhood can be complicated by theft and vandalism which can discourage development. The Knox Housing Partnership (KHP), a local non-profit housing agency purchased an infill site in Mechanicsville from the city for $500, less than 1 percent of the total cost of production of the house as opposed to a typical 22 percent. The total cost of production was $54,000, but the home sold for $45,000. The cost of production exceeded the maximum amount of subsidy dollars that KHP normally budgets for construction. Typically, excess costs are imposed on the consumer; however in order to make the home affordable, the developer in this case, KHP incurred the added costs. The organization considers this to be an indirect subsidy to the homebuyer. Internal guidelines of the organization restrict subsidy dollars for projects to a maximum of $15,000; this allows funding for more projects.

Quality and Compatibility

The quality of infill housing is an important aspect of development. What would appear to be a non-controversial issue is definitely a matter of concern among developers, potential buyers, neighboring residents, housing advocates, etc. Philosophies can differ among those involved in infill housing. Everyone seems to

have certain expectations for low income people and their housing needs. In 1982, the Enterprise Foundation was highly criticized for its attempt to produce affordable housing for low income families using the organization's own distinctive construction standards that allowed for limited restoration of properties and minimal rehabilitation. It is important that the developer understand the needs of the homebuyer without imposing his/her own perceptions of what constitutes a quality home. Quality can be based on an indvidual judgment or assessment, but as with all housing construction, certain standards are required. In the case of infill housing, development must comply not only with local building codes, but also federal specifications if the project is funded with federal dollars.

One of the most important visual factors in the neighborhood is contributed by the materials with which the buildings are constructed (Old North KnoxvilleDesign Guidelines, 1992). As a cost saving approach, many developers of infill use less expensive materials such as aluminum or vinyl siding. These materials can constrast with the design of neighboring properties and disrupt the continuity of the neighborhood. It is important that the materials used to construct infill housing be consistent with neighboring properties (Figure 2-2 and Figure 2-3). Although materials such as aluminum and vinyl siding are considered to be a more cost efficient way to produce housing for a low income family, developers should be conscious of possible opposition.

In Knoxville, neighborhood organizations insist that the design of infill



Figure 2-2. Habitat Home with vinyl exterior at 2351 Linden.



Figure 2-3. A craftsman style home at 2353 Linden.

housing and its compatibility with the existing housing stock follow the overall appearance of the neighborhood. Both Parkridge and Mechanicsville have historic districts. Residents of both neighborhoods have shown opposition to the style of homes built by Knoxville Habitat for Humanity. Many non-profit builders of infill are restricted by federal regulations or in the case of Habitat, restricted by design guidelines established by Habitat International. Design concerns include roof slopes, porches, doors, height of foundation and stones, walls, width of houses, chimneys and windows. Efforts have been made to do more detailing of the homes to make them blend into the neighborhood. The Metropolitan Planning Commission has published handbooks on design guidelines for neighborhoods containing historic districts. In the Old North Knoxville Historic District handbook, recommendations are suggested specifically for infill construction. MPC also published a handbook for the Mechanicsville historic district. The Mechanicsville Landmark District details the specific guidelines for new construction and rehabilitation of housing. The Parkridge Community Organization has requested that the Historic Zoning Commission develop architectural designs which are appropriate for historic neighborhoods and make the designs available to builders (Center for Neighborhood Development, 1994). The Five Points community has not established any historic districts, but many of the homes are well over 30 years in age and have distinct architectural designs.

Financing Infill Housing

A number of financing issues are specific to infill housing. In distressed

neighborhoods, property values tend to be low (Suchman, 1996). Consequently, financing can be a problem because the cost of construction is often higher than the market value of the completed units (Suchman, 1996). Sources and methods of financing vary according to the needs and opportunities presented by the project, and by the available public and private resources (Suchman, 1996). Most infill projects in the three study areas were financed by public sources. The projects are usually supported by non-profits organizations that receive money in the form of grants and loans from federal, state and local government agencies.

At the federal level, CDBG dollars have been used to support infill construction in low to moderate income neighborhoods, and such is the case in Knoxville. The city administers these funds and allocates money to various non-profits involved in projects that meet HUD's objectives for assisting low to moderate income communites. The Tennessee Housing Development Agency, the State housing finance agency, offers grants and loans to cities and non-profits for rehabilitation and new construction. The Affordable Housing Demonstration Fund (AHDF), the local housing trust organization, awards grants, loans and forgivable loans to to non-profit and for-profit developers. The fund supports the production, preservation, and rehabilitation of housing for low income households (Affordable Housing Demonstration Fund, 1996).

In a progress report issued in December 1996, AHDF awarded eighteen grants, loans, and forgivable loans to thirteen non-profit and for-profit developers.

While most of the awards involved conventionally constructed homes, one loan award will be used to place seven modular homes on inner city infill lots. Knoxville Habitat received three awards from the AHDF. One award of $48,300 will be used to construct six infill houses to be sold with no interest to very low income households in the East Knoxville community. Pioneer Builders, a for-profit developer, was awarded a $38,000 loan to build two infill houses in Parkridge. The developer received loans of $19,000 per property at 4 percent with a balloon payment at the sale of each house. This was the first award given to a for-profit developer.

The Inner City Community Development Corporation received a $150,000 loan, a $27,500 forgivable loan and a $22,000 grant to purchase seven modular homes to be erected on vacant lots in the Burlington community of East Knoxville. The Wesley House Community Center was awarded a $5,678 grant as part of a $56,931 project to build a house in Mechanicsville. The Knox Housing Partnership received a line of credit for construction loans with no interest for the first six month. KHP will use the loan to acquire and rehabilitate existing houses and acquire lots and build new homes. Carlton Homes a for-profit developer of manufactured housing was awarded $36,345 in loans to be forgiven over a five year period. The loans will be used to assist 15 low income homebuyers to purchase houses in an 18 unit development in Mechanicsville.

The City of Knoxville through its Department of Community Development offers financing assistance. The city used $10,000 from the general fund to help build

five new homes in the Five Points community. The Five Points Infill Housing Demonstration project was initiated to show that affordable homes can be constructed for low to moderate income families (Department of Community Development, 1995). The City set aside $193,550 of HOME money for single and/or multi-family residential rehabilitation and for new construction.

Financing from private lending institutions is usually in the form of mortgage loans or home improvement loans to low and moderate income borrowers. Many private efforts to finance new housing construction in low income neighborhoods have been considered too risky. Lenders are not always familiar with infill projects and therefore are not completely knowledgable of the opportunities that exist to do business in these neighborhoods (Suchman, 1996). Under the Community Reinvestment Act, local financial institutions are obligated to provide lending opportunities in low to moderate income neighborhood, small businesses and minority businesses. The Federal Home Loan Bank System provides funds through an Affordable Housing Program which provides financing for low and moderate income families (Department of Community Development, 1995). Federal Home Loan Banks lend to financial institutions that are member stockholders of a Federal Home Loan Bank (Department of Community Development, 1995). Others seeking funding from the program such as a non-profit, the City, or a community development corporation must establish a relationship with a member institution. Funds can be used for construction of new housing, purchase and/or rehabilitation of housing.

Other local lending institutions -- First American Bank, First Tennessee Bank, Home Federal Bank, NationsBank, Union Planter -- work with some of the non-profits to provide financing incentives for mortgage loans and rehabilitation.

CHAPTER THREE

Local Developers of Infill Housing

Residential infill development can be challenging for both non-profit and private developers. Knoxville has several non-profit organizations actively involved in the construction of new, affordable housing in the inner city and surrounding areas. Most, if not all, of the non-profits rely heavily on financial support from outside sources. Their primary source of income is usually in the form of grants and loans from federal, state or city governments. As a recipient, non-profits usually must comply with the guidelines set forth by the contributing agency. This can limit the flexibility and autonomy of the organization, leaving little room for creativity. Most non-profit organizations operate with small staffs and small budgets, and therefore lack the necessary capacity to do a large number of infill housing projects. But in spite of these limitations, one major advantage for the non-profits is their desire and commitment to make infill housing possible.

Locally, there are a number of organzations that have compeleted infill housing projects successfully. For most, residential infill development has only recently become an initiative. Many already had housing programs and services directed towards rehabilitating housing or getting low income families into existing housing. New housing construction is a relatively new undertaking for local non-profit organizations. Local non-profits involved in infill projects include Knoxville Habitat for Humanity, Knox Housing Partnership, Neighborhood Housing and

Commercial Services, Wesley House Community Center, Inner City Community Development Corporation and the local housing authority. Each of these agencies has worked to implement infill housing projects within one of the three study areas. Foresight and ingenuity have allowed these organizations to positively affect the lives of many low income families.

For-profit developers' experience with infill can be difficult to assess. Few private developers are initiating infill projects or producing affordable housing because of the uncertainty of the market in low income neighborhoods. Private developers know how to sell homes, but lack the expertise and knowledge to sell infill homes. They must have strong entrepreneurial skills, access to financing and a willingness to partner with the city government or a non-profit entity (Suchman, 1996).

Although somewhat apprehensive about infill projects, two local developers have started to take more interest in providing affordable housing. Pioneer Builders and Carlton Homes have found a market niche with infill housing by partnering with local non-profits. Pioneer Builders, a small but growing developer, has worked with Knoxville Community Devlopment Corporation to construct infill housing in East Knoxville, and Carlton Homes, a well-established developer of modular housing, has partnered with the Inner City Community Corporation to develop infill lots in East Knoxville. Both have become more familiar with infill housing and the benefits of producing infill housing. The two developers have recognized the benefits of infill

and find it more profitable when partnered with a non-profit organization.

Non-Profit Developers

Knoxville Habitat for Humanity has had the longest history with construction of infill housing in the inner city. In 1985, Knoxville established a local affiliate of Habitat International whose mission is to eliminate poverty housing in the world. Knoxville Habitat has put more than 80 families into new homes. They have worked independently, and in partnership with the city, county and other non-profit organizations to do new housing construction in low income neighborhoods. The group organizes volunteer labor to assist in the construction of affordable housing for homeownership.

Most of the homes are three bedroom units with one bath and average about 1165 square feet (Figure 3-1). The organization has been known to build four and five bedroom units to accomodate larger families. The homes are sold at a price that is equal to the cost of construction and range between $37,000 and $44,000. Property is either purchased from the city at no more than $2500 or donated to the organization which helps to make the home more affordable for the buyer. Although Habitat receives no financial assistance from the city or the federal government, the city does provide services in the form of demolition and clearance of lots for developement.

Habitat typically does not have problems finding a market for their homes (Scholtz, 1997). Potential homebuyers usually contact the organization seeking assistance. Applicants must be below 80 percent of the median income, have a need

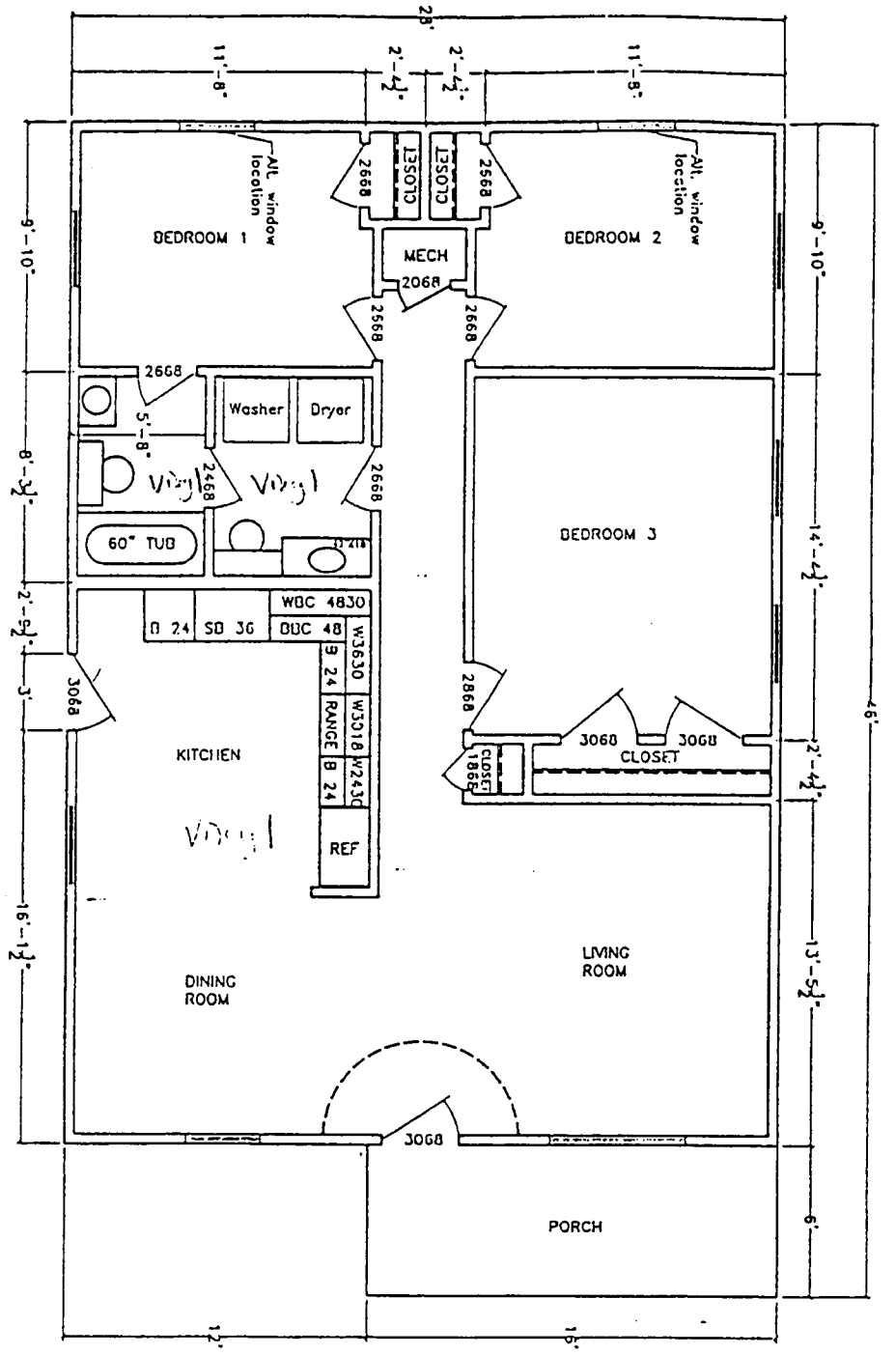

Figure 3-1. Floor plan of a three-bedroom house designed by Habitat for Humanity.

for housing, an ability to make the monthly payment and a willingness to partner, which means 500 hours of volunteerism or "sweat equity," and budgeting classes. Some applicants find the volunteerism to be somewhat arduous and drop out of the program. At least 50 percent or more of the homeowners are female-headed households and low income. The homes are deeded to the homeowner with a 20 year mortgage and no interest paid to Habitat. The monthly payments are recycled to fund the construction of more houses (Scholtz, 1997). Thus far, Habitat has had less than one percent foreclosure rate. The actual construction of the homes is done by a team of volunteers that includes local businesses and organizations such as the Tennessee Valley Authority, Knoxville Utilities Board, the local Homebuilders Associaton, local banks and churches. Construction of the homes can take from 10 to 13 weeks with volunteers working only on Saturdays. Materials for construction are donated or purchased by Habitat. Design standards are set by Habitat International and consist of several designs that are used interchangeably (Scholtz, 1997). There have been times when neighboring residents of Habitat homes voiced concerns about the style and design of the homes. In the Parkridge neighborhood some of the homes have front porches with detailed architectural designs; although Habitat can include a porch in the design of their homes, volunteer labor and lack of funds limits the organization's design capabilities (Figure 3-2). Currently Habitat is working with the Parkridge neighborhood to create a better design for front porches.

Of the three study areas, Knoxville Habitat has done most of its work in the



Figure 3-2. Habitat home illustrating front porch design.

Five Points neighborhood. Habitat has built 21 new homes in Five Points, 12 homes in Parkridge and 16 homes in Mechanicsville. Most of their work in the Five Points neighborhood is the Linden Place project. Habitat purchased land owned by Knoxville Neighborhood Housing and Commercial Services and constructed 13 new homes on the lots. The organization is currently constructing homes in Parkridge, and workingon a large infill site in East Knoxville. The project, located off Riverside Drive, will include eight new homes.

Knoxville Habitat considers itself extremely fortunate to be able to work in low income neighborhoods (Scholtz, 1997). Most developers are threatened by vandalism and theft of materials, yet Habitat has experienced minimal theft or vandalism of property. Executive director, Kelley Scholtz attributes this to the reputation of Habitat and the fact that it is helping people who choose to live in these neighborhoods. Residents in the community recognize the organzation and know, personally, people who live in homes built by Habitat (Scholtz, 1997).

The Knoxville Habitat office functions with a five person staff. It consists of a director, a family services director, an accountant and two construction supervisors. With volunteer labor for construction, the capacity to build the homes is relatively simple, but having a small staff can create some internal problems (Scholtz, 1997). The five member staff has to work long hours to keep the organization operating and to ensure the success of every project. Nevertheless, the staff is dedicated and is able to construct about 18 houses every year. The organization does intend to expand its

services to not only build houses, but to develop neighborhoods and communities. One of its goals is to construct larger developments, but Habitat would need assistance developing larger projects (Scholtz, 1997).

Knoxville Community Development Corporation (KCDC) is the public housing authority and redevelopment agency for the City of Knoxville. KCDC's past has not only involved managing public housing, but it also includes the building of homes. Recently, KCDC has been involved in the development and/or redevelopment of the Whittle Communications Building, the East and West Town Malls, TVA Towers, the Knoxville City and County Building, housing around the Hyatt Regency Hotel and the expansion of the University of Tennessee campus.

In 1988, KCDC deviated from the typical conventional public housing projects to develop a 26 unit scattered site development in Mechanicsville. The development contains single family detached housing and duplexes for low income families. The area was considered a demonstration site to show that public housing does not have to be the traditional "project type" development (DeBruhl, 1997).

KCDC attempted to work with several contractors and developers to create a model business venture that would result the best housing for its tenants. Initially, KCDC contracted with Danco, a private for-profit developer who attempted to build housing that was out of the affordability range for the average low to moderate income family (DeBruhl, 1997). The developer built a one unit showcase in Mechanicsville that stayed on the market for several months, and sold for well under

the desired price. This situation illustrates the importance of knowing the market and what it can afford. KCDC also attempted to form a consortium of small business contractors to develop a scattered site project. Most of the contractors worked primarily in rehabilitation of housing and lacked the capacity to do new construction. Most had difficulty getting bonded and did not have a working relationship with a bank to get financing. Knoxville Habitat for Humanity and a local for-profit contractor eventually became the primary developers of the site.

The agency recognizes the importance of infill housing not only as a filler for vacant lots, but also as an alternative to conventional public housing. Although the 26 unit site in Mechanicsville is occupied by renters, it is still considered a step towards self-sufficiency for residents of public housing (DeBruhl, 1997). Residents are not confined physically to the poor design of conventional public housing nor are they stigmatized by the negative images often associated with public housing. KCDC is gradually moving away from the traditional public housing design. The Mechanicsville site provided an opportunity to integrate a stable group of public housing tenants into the community. The ultimate goal of KCDC is to get public housing residents in a position to afford a home in the private market and become a tax paying homeowner (DeBruhl, 1997).

KCDC does intend to continue developing infill lots, but also recognizes the conditions necessary to ensure a successful product. The success of infill for KCDC will require a public/private relationship (DeBruhl, 1997). KCDC is currently

working with Pioneer Builders to build 16 units that will sell for $30,000 to 50,000. With both public and private resources and private developers working with non-profit groups to build more affordable housing, the projects can work. KCDC anticipates doing its own construction of infill housing in the near future (DeBruhl, 1997). The agency has a trained and skilled crew of workers who know how to construct homes and who currently do all the modernization for the public housing complexes.

Knox Housing Partnership (KHP) is a non-profit organzation whose main objective is to facilitate homeownership through rehabilitation and new construction. It was charted in 1991 undert the Partnership for Neighborhood Improvement (PNI). PNI is a collaboration of lenders, public officials and neighborhood leaders in response to neighborhood reaction to Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) non-compliance by banks. Recently the KHP completed its first infill home. The home is located on London Circle in North Hills. It is a 4 bedroom house with approximately 1140 square feet. The home was sold to a single mother of five for $59,000. In addition, KHP is also developing 3 infill lots; 134 Douglas and 1712 Delaware in Mechanicsville; and 2868 Linden in East Knoxville (Figure 3-3). Two of the homes have been pre-sold and one house has been built for speculative sale. KHP has concentrated its efforts in Mechanicsville; however they do intend to do more work outside the area. The agency has purchased property from the city's Homemakers program and the private market for future development. Like other local non-profit



Figure 3-3. Construction of an infill house at 134 Douglass.

developers of infill, KHP has received criticism for the design of its homes. In the historic district of Mechanicsville, many of the homes are two-story dwellings with distinct architectural characteristics (Figure 3-4). The four homes constructed by KHP are single story with minimal architectural details.

Although a weak market and limited financial resources have made KHP skeptical about infill projects, the organization has made a commitment to work with the city to accomplish some of its objectives for infill development outlined in the Heart of Knoxville Revitalization Strategy Plan. KHP is funding its infill projects primarily with state and federal resources. The organization receives a revolving grant from State H.O.U.S.E. funds for $200,000 and subsidy money from the Federal HOME program. They also receive construction financing from the East Tennessee Foundation's Affordable Housing Demonstration Fund with six months free interest. The City of Knoxville provides assistance through its HOPE 3 program and the First Home program. As a recipient of HOPE 3, KHP receives a subsidy for very low income individuals to purchase property owned by HUD for rehabilitation. The First Home program allows KHP to use CDBG funds to offer housing rehabiltiation and facilitate homeownership opportunities with downpayment and closing costs assistance.

The organization mainly serves low and very low income people. A problem that is common among most organizations like KHP is finding qualified homebuyers (Perry, 1997). To address the problem, they have created a first-time homebuyer



Figure 3-4. Victorian home at 1007 Oak in Mechanicsville.

program that includes orientation sessions on budgeting, the mortgage application process and home maintenance. The program is very important to the success of the other programs and services offered by KHP (Perry, 1997). In many cases, the applicants are not credit worthy or simply do not have enough income to purchase a home. The sessions help KHP identify people who are in need of credit counseling or other services to secure a home. KHP can receive as many as 900 inquiries for its First Home program, but only 86 or so applicants qualify, and 36 to 38 applicants will actually close on a home (Perry, 1997). If KHP is not able to assist those applicants who do not qualify for home, the organization will refer them applicants to other non-profits for further assistance.

Another barrier to the success of infill projects for KHP is real estate appraisals. Often times the appraised value for property is so low that KHP has to provide more subsidy money either directly or indirectly for project costs (Perry, 1997). Program guidelines require KHP to sell each home at its appraised value. KHP's goal for the year is to rehabilitate 18 houses and build at least 12 new homes. Currently, KHP is working with the City of Knoxville, Knox County and other non-profits to develop Knoxville's bicenntial neighborhood which is located in South Knoxville. The City of Knoxville received a $2 million grant from the State to foster neighborhood revitalization in the Vestal community.

Knoxville Neighborhood Housing and Commercial Services (KNHCS) is a private, non-profit organization whose primary mission is to revitalize the housing

stock in lower income neighborhoods, and provide affordable housing opportunities for residents within those neighborhoods (Consolidated Plan, 1995). At this time, the organization works exclusively in East Knoxville (Park City/Five Points/Burlington). The organization was created in 1989 through the efforts of the city and the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation. The organization's history with infill began with the Linden Place project. KNHCS purchased from the city property that was once occupied by a condemned school. The lots were sold to Knoxville Habitat to build 13 new homes. Recently, KNHCS acquired two vacant lots on Louise Avenue in the Five Points neighborhood. The agency has an agreement with First American Bank for a line of credit to develop the lots. KNHCS has also secured a $50,000 grant to help with future projects (Crawford, 1997). KNHCS works with the credit bureau to locate renters in the neighborhood who might qualify as potential homeowners (Sudderth, 1997). It is policy for KNHCS not to build houses for speculative sale. The organization wants to guarantee the sale of the home by pre-selling any it builds.

Another major part of KNHCS' work with infill includes housing rehabilitation. Homes that are condemned or abandoned eventually are demolished because of decay and result in another blighted vacant lot. The organization tries to prevent demolition by purchasing the houses for rehabilitation and selling them on the open market. KNHCS anticipates working with small minority contractors to develop the two lots on Louise Avenue and with contractors who have developed lots acquired

from the Homemaker's list.

The organization has a 27 member board that consists of residents, private lenders and government officials. The committee meets to discuss housing issues relevant to the city's redevelopment plan for the Five Points community. The city has been extremely supportive of KNHCS, providing money for operating costs and temporary staff for administrative support (Crawford, 1997). The organization could provide better services if it were fully staffed. Presently, KNHCS has one housing coordinator, and is in need of an executive director and office manager. The small staff finds it difficult to provide quality services, and, in turn, to positively affect the community.

Wesley House Community Organization is a non-profit that provides services and support in the Mechanicsville, Lonsdale and Beaumont neighborhoods. The group's housing efforts have included new construction for homeownership, home repair, purchase and rehabilitation of houses for sale to low and moderate income households (Consolidated Plan, 1995). Wesley House has built four new houses on vacant lots; three in Lonsdale on Massachusetts Avenue and one house in Mechanicsville on Dunbar Avenue. The organization completed those homes with the help of the United Methodist Church, foundations and local lending institutions (Bates, 1997). With monetary assistance and free labor for construction, Wesley House was able to get low income families into affordable housing as homeowners. The average three bedroom house sold for $43,500 and the four bedroom units sold

for $49,500. The organization anticipates doing four to six more infill homes on Dameron Avenue in Mechanicsville; completing only one to two house per year. The organization has rehabilitated seven homes in Mechanicsville. Those projects were completed with loans and grants from the city. Although fairly successful with past infill projects, future projects could be jeopardized by limited staff time, lack of money and few qualified applicants.

Inner City Community Development Corporation is a non-profit organization committed to the reinvestment and redevelopment of Knoxville's inner city and rural communities. The corporation's goal is to promote economic development for the growth and stability of neighborhoods. Inner City began as a neighborhood grassroots organization that evolved out of a local church. Initially, the corporation only provided loans for home purchases and small business loans. They have exapnded their services to include rehabilitation and new construction of housing. In 1995 the corporation received designation as a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO). As a CHDO, they are entitled to HOME funds and thus provide more housing services. Inner City has also received $172,000 in grant money from the East Tennessee Foundation's Affordable Housing Demonstration Fund. The funds are administered through Inner City's Affordable Housing and Rehab divisions of the corporation. The two divisions were created in response to the needs of the community. An analysis of housing conditions in East Knoxville revealed an overwhelming number of vacant lots in the area, and a need to

provide better housing for residents (Swink, 1997). Results also revealed that several organizations maintained programs committed to rehabilitating housing, but few, if any were involved in new construction. The Affordable Housing Division was designed to facilitate new construction and homeownership. The division provides a vehicle for residents to empower themselves and improve the quality of the neighborhood (Swink, 1997).

In the past three years, Inner City has contributed more than $500,000 in redevelopment activity for East Knoxville. Since 1995, it has completed 13 infill projects; purchasing eight lots off the open market and five from the city's Homemaker's program. The homes are located in the Five Points and Burlington neighborhoods on Sunset, Wilson, Lilac, and Shields. The average cost of construction was $47,000, and the homes sold between $44,000 and $54,000. Mortgage financing was provided by Home Federal Bank and Suntrust Bank. Financing for construction was provided by the East Tennessee Foundation Development Fund and the city's housing development fund. Construction of the homes was financed at zero percent interest and the loans were repaid once the homes sold.

Inner City has distinguished itself from other non-profits in terms of its approach to selling houses. None of the 13 houses were pre-sold. The houses were constructed and put on the market for speculative sale (Swink, 1997). Inner City received 75 applicants for the first five houses built on Lilac in East Knoxville. The

corporation adopted a few tactics private developers often employ to sell homes. Inner City marketed some model homes and furnished them with all new appliances. Most homes are equipped with a washer and dryer, refrigerator, stove and garbage disposal. Units funded with federal money did not include washers and dryers. The city would not allow Inner City to cover that expense with federal money, citing guidelines that identify certain housing amenities that are not considered necessary to provide a decent home. Inner City believes that the amenities were essential for marketing of the houses, as well as for the stablity of the residents (Swink, 1997). Many low income households do not have the disposable income to repair appliances or purchase new ones. Inner City wanted the quality of their homes to be so good that first-time homebuyers would not have to overextend themselves financially to purchase new appliances or have to repair old appliances. Swink attributes the quick sale of the houses to a good quality product. The homes are comparable to surrounding properties in size and design. The 2 bedroom homes average 800 square feet and 3 bedrooms average 950 square feet. The exterior of the homes are constructed with vinyl siding.

The corporation considers its infill projects to be successful. The homes sold in a reasonable amount of time and all are occupied for homeownership. To continue doing infill successfully in East Knoxville, Inner City will need more capacity and money (Swink, 1997). The corporation, itself has 12 staff members. The affordable housing division has one staff member who is responsible for administration of the

program, and oversight of construction projects. At this time, the needs and commitments of the corporation are directed towards other programs and services, and it is restricted in its ability to get additional administrative support for the affordable housing division (Swink, 1997).

Private Developers of Infill Housing

Pioneer Builders is one of a few for-profit developers of housing in the inner city. Albert Beasley, sole proprietor of Pioneer Builders, started the company in 1982 after moving from Savannah, Georgia to Knoxville. Beasley purchased a 50 year old house for himself in the inner city and completed all the renovations on the home. Initially, the company's work involved renovating and rehabilitating housing, but it has since moved into construction of residential and commercial properties. Sharing time between Oak Ridge and Knoxville, Pioneer Builders has constructed four new houses and rehabilitated as many as 17 houses.

In 1993, Beasley purchased his first two vacant lots on Washington Avenue in Parkridge. He negotiated a deal with a private owner to purchase both properties and constructed two single family units. The houses took several months to sell and resulted in the company's losing money on the project. Beasley considers the project to be a learning experience. The company expected a low profit margin because the houses were built to be affordable, but the time it took to sell the units resulted in profits going towards the interest payments. Beasley found it difficult to sell the homes for one of two reasons. Either the buyer was attracted to the neighborhood and

could not afford the house, or could afford the home, but did not like the neighborhood. Eventually, the homes did sell; one was sold to a family who qualified for federal assistance and another to a family who received no subsidies.

Beasley has since completed two additional houses in Parkridge. Financing for construction was provided by the East Tennessee Foundation's Affordable Housing Demonstration Fund. The company received a $38,000 loan at 4 percent with balloon payments at the sale of each house (AHDF, 1996). Sales prices of the homes averaged $47,500 and were appraised at $52,000 and $53,000. Pioneer Builders is currently working with KCDC to develop an inner city subdivision. With $125,000 in grant money from the East Tennessee Foundation, Pioneer Builders and KCDC acquired 6 1/2 acres of land to construct 22 units mixed income households on Brooks Road in East Knoxville. The partnership helps lower costs associated with land acquisition and infrastructure. By reducing these costs, the homes are made more affordable for low income homebuyers. They anticipate selling some homes to pre-qualifying low income buyers, as well as marketing the subdivision for some speculative sales (Beasley, 1997).

Beasley does see a future for Pioneer Builders in the construction of affordable housing in the inner city. His main concern is the market for infill housing. Beasley believes the company has a better understanding of what it takes to be successful with infill projects, but like most private developers he has reservations about the market.

Carlton Homes is the largest private developer to get involved in the construction of infill housing in Knoxville. The company partnered with the Inner City Community Development Corporation to build ten infill homes on Lilac and Selma Street in Five Points. Carlton Homes constructed the homes and Inner City was responsible for selling the homes. Inner City was also responsible for adding the heating and air system, carpet and minor sheetrock completion of the marriage walls (Martin, 1997).

Carlton Homes has been in business for approximately 12 years. The company built over 1200 homes, mainly in subdivisions developed by Carlton Homes. The company has always specialized in "affordable" housing with prices starting at $59,000. The company builds modular housing that is constructed in a factory, shipped to a lot site and placed on a foundation. For Carlton Homes, this is a more cost efficient way to build homes and pass the benefits on to the consumer. Building the homes in a factory helps eliminate the threat of vandalism or theft of materials and shortens the time to actually construct the house.

Carlton constructs two and three bedroom units; some houses have a single or double garage. Most of the homes have vaulted ceilings, spacious open design and are single level. Carlton has recently completed new housing communities with home values ranging from $59,900 to $109,000. In providing affordable housing, the company realizes that in order to make a profit, it has to build and sell homes in large volumes. So far this year, the company has sold 80 homes averaging approximately

$71,000. The company targets its homes to apartment dwellers. Renters usually spend a large percentage of their income on rent and can probably pay for a mortgage with payments equal to or less than the amount the paid for rent.

At present, Carlton Homes is not working on any infill projects. Its biggest problem is that there are a very few qualified buyers who want to live in inner city areas. However, partnering with an organization like Inner City presented an ideal situation for the company to build homes in Five Points. If presented with similar circumstances where the partner owns the lot, provides the foundation and does all the fininshing work, Carlton Homes would be willing to construct more affordable housing for low income households (Martin, 1997). Carlton Homes provides 95 percent complete modular homes.

CHAPTER FOUR

Neighborhood Potential for Infill Housing

Research has shown that markets having the lowest potential for infill development generally are affected by one or more of the following factors; limited growth, dispersed employment centers, little or no investment in building stock or public facilities, large concentrations of low income households, steep land prices compared to fringe areas, no guidance for growth, and little in the way of impact fees (Brett, 1982).

In examining the three study areas; Parkridge, Five Points and Mechanicsville, the author has attempted to ascertain those problems and opportunities that have either hindered or contributed to the success of infill within each neighborhood. Each neighborhood has identified a need to address problems associated with blighted properties and vacant lots. Several non-profit and for-profit developers, along with the city's Department of Community Development, have implemented infill housing projects as an effort to encourage reinvestment and revitalization in these areas. Each neighborhood is experiencing a variety of dynamics that either positively or negatively affect the quality of living for its residents. The intent here is to make distinctions between problems and opportunities for infilll housing that occur in each neighborhood, and offer recommendations on how to improve or maintain conditions that are conducive to residential infill development.

Parkridge

The Parkridge neighborhood has a personality all its own. The historic homes and diversity among residents help to distinguish it from the other neighborhoods. Bounded by Interstate 40 to the north, Magnolia Avenue to the south, Cherry Street to the east and Winona street to the west, Parkridge functions as the cornerstone of East Knoxville (Figure 4-1). Over the years, the neighborhood has experienced a multitude of social and physical changes (Center for Neighborhood Development, 1994). Parkridge developed as a suburb of East Knoxville in 1890 with the extension of two streetcar lanes into the area (CND, 1994). Residential development increased between 1920 and 1940. Residents were primarily wealthy merchants or professionals. During that time, Parkridge also experienced industrial development along Cherry Street and the Southern Railroad tracks (CND, 1994). The population started to decline after employment cuts by major industries and the construction of Interstate 40. Many residents were displaced by construction and relocated to other parts of the city.

The social climate of the 1960s brought with it school desegregation and urban renewal. Black residents of the Mountain View area were displaced and moved futher east in the city; adding to the small community of African-Americans already living in Parkridge. By the 1960s much of the housing stock was close to 40 years old and deteriorating (CND, 1994). Many homes have since been demolished, creating a surplus of vacant lots in the area. Residents in the Parkridge community

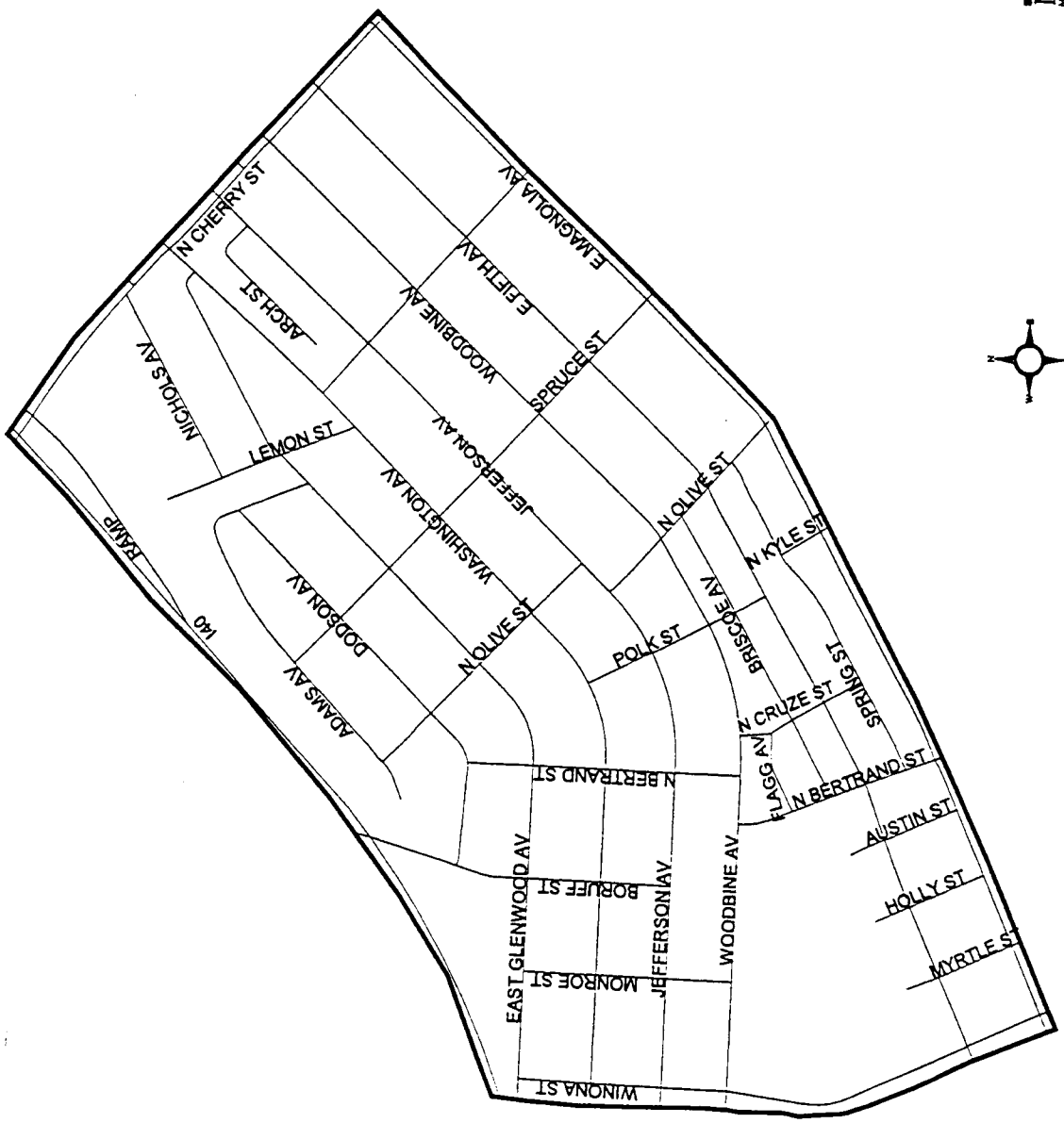

Figure 4-1. Parkridge location map.

recognize the implications associated with vacant lots and dilapidated structures and are working to save their neighborhood.

Five Points

Five Points is bounded by Magnolia to the north, Bethel and Selma to the south; Klye to the west and the Harrison to the east (Figure 4-2). Thirty years ago, the Five Points area was part of a vibrant community, with excellent housing, neighborhood services and thriving businesses (Department of Community Development, 1996). Dismantled by the backlash of urban renewal and middle class flight, Five Points continues to re-establish itself as a neighborhood worthy of redevelopment and reinvestment. City officials and community advocates for Five Points have tried in the past and are continuing efforts to revitalize the neighborhood by improving the housing stock, revitalizing the commercial and business districts and increasing public services. In the last two decades, several reports and studies have been conducted to determine ways in which to revive the neighborhood (DCD, 1996). Each study documents the same prominent issues for residents and merchants: crime prevention, commercial revitalization, jobs, housing, public services, accessible transportation, commercial and economic development (DCD, 1996).

Mechanicsville

Mechanicsville, one of Knoxville's oldest neighbohoods has long been an area targeted for redevelopment and revitalization. The City of Knoxville began focusing redevelopment efforts in Mechanicsville following a plan to revitalize Downtown

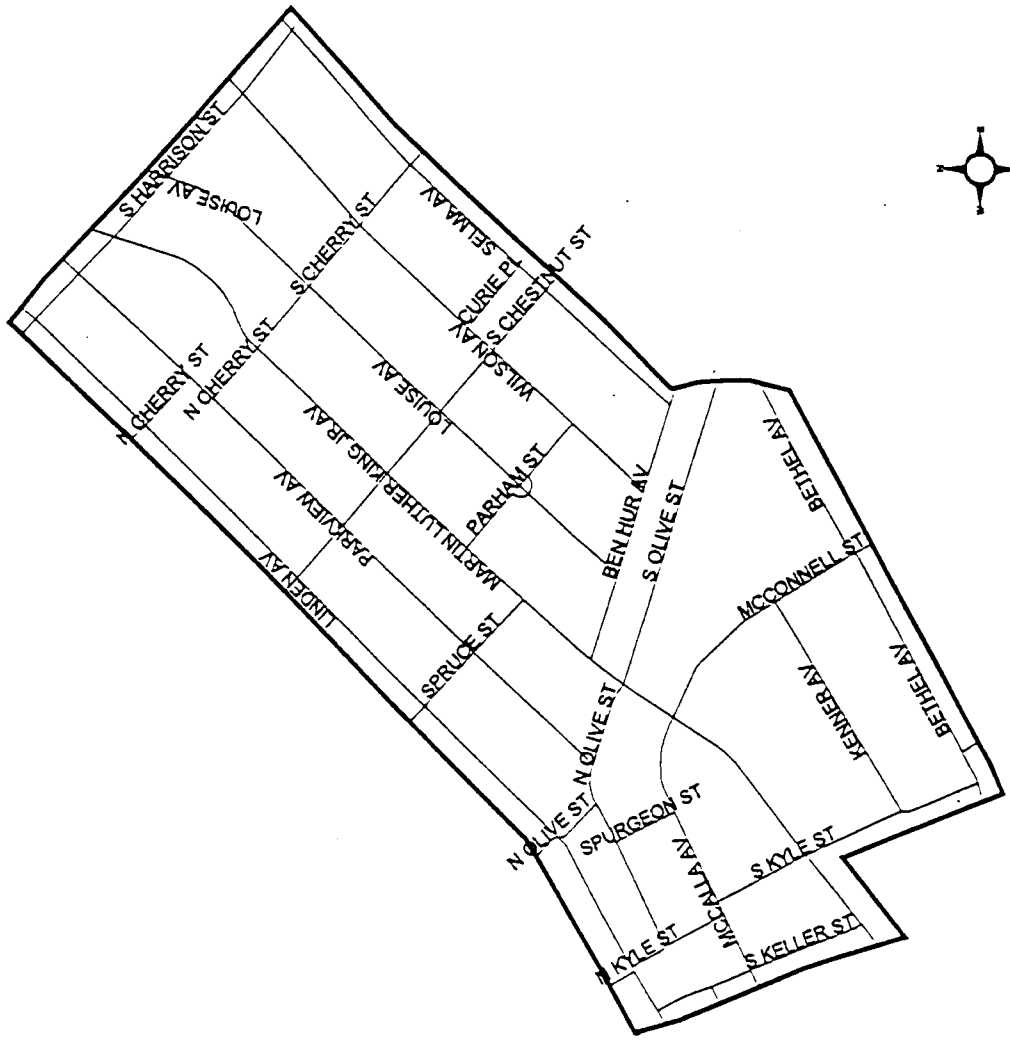

Figure 4-2. Five Points location map.

Knoxville. City officials realized the success of Downtown Knoxville also was contingent upon the success of surrounding communities. Mechanicsville, located in northwest Knoxville, was one of several neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown Knoxville that needed revitalizing (Figure 4-3). Its boundaries are Beaumont to the north, Western Avenue to the south, Interstate 75 to the east and Keith to the west. Early Mechanicsville was a thriving suburban community of Knoxville in 1868 (Department of Community Development, 1992). The area was known for its iron industries which employed many of the residents who were mechanics and laborers, hence the name Mechanicsville. The demise of Mechanicsville started shortly after the turn of the century (Department of Community Development, 1992). The more affluent residents relocated to the newer suburbs of Knoxville leaving behind lower income residents who were primarily African-American. Social and physical deterioration of Mechanicsville continued throughout the 1950s and two decades later. Since reinvestment began in the mid-1980s, Mechanicsville has improved dramatically. Residents have since tried to reclaim the neighborhood and create a more attractive living environment.

Impediments Within Each Neighborhood

Each neighborhood has identified a need for revitalization, but there many problems and issues that impede implementation of infill housing. Factors that negatively affect residential infill development in the study areas are large concentrations of low income residents, little investment in the building stock, poor

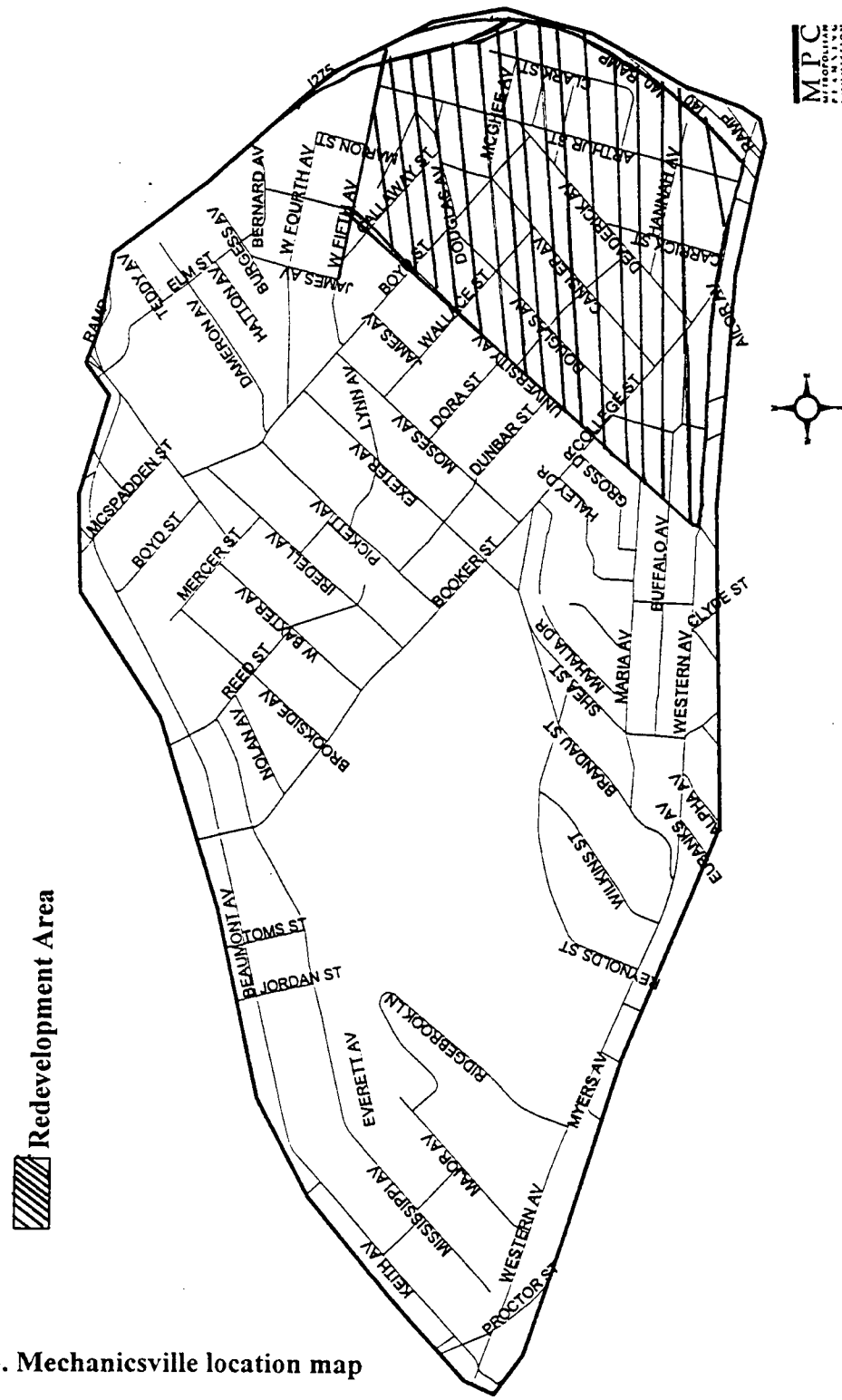

Figure 4-3. Mechanicsville location map

neighborhood perception and criminal activity.

All three study areas have high concentrations of low income residents and limited new household formation. Sixty percent of the residents in Parkridge earn lessthan $15,000 per year, although some professionals reside in the area. From 1980 to 1990, Five Points has experienced a net loss of 25 percent in population and practically no new household formation. Fifty-one percent of the Five Points residents live below the poverty level, and over a third of the households have incomes less than $5000. Like Parkridge and Five Points, the residents in Mechanicsville are mainly low income. Sixty-four percent of the residents have household incomes under $15,000 per year.

Investment in the existing housing stock and in new housing construction are essential in maintaining neighborhood appeal. An inventory conducted by the Metropolitan Planning Commission shows that of 1006 residential structures in Parkridge, less than one percent were considered to be in good or very good condition. Most dwellings are either in fair to average condition. In 1996, very few permits were issued for new construction within census tracts four and five in which Parkridge is located. Development data on residential building permits show that in 1996 one permit was issued for construction of a single family dwelling and one for a multifamily dwelling in tract five. Two permits were issued for multifamily residences in census tract four. Based on data from MPC, Parkridge has 168 dwellings classified as multifamily residences. Residents want to restrict any future

development of multiple occupany dwellings in the area to cut down on the number of rental properties and encourage homeownership.

Residential building conditions in Five Points show that of a total of 2525 structures, 56 percent or over half of the buildings are in fair to average condition. Only 47 structures or nearly two percent are in good condition. According to development data from the city's Department of Community Development, 20 building permits for single family construction were issued in census tract 20 for 1996. There were no building permits issued for multi-family or commercial development in the Five Points area for 1996. Housing sales in the East Knoxville totaled 55 in 1996. The average sale price was $45,340 and took an average of 61 days to sell (Table 4-1).

An inventory by MPC shows that most structures in Mechanicsville are classified as fair to average. Only eight structures are considered to be in good condition and one structure in very good condition. The area has 28 multifamily residences. Structural conditions in the area show that 24 percent of 846 residential dwellings are in poor condition. New housing construction in the area totaled two single family units in census tract 12 and five single family units in census tract 13. In 1996, 28 homes in Mechanicsville sold for an average price of $37,551 and took an average of 71.75 days to sell (Table 4-2).

In addition to other characteristics that are indicative of neighborhoods' low potential for infill, neighborhood perception is an important factor. How both

Table 4-1

Housing Sales in East Knoxville: 1986-1996

Year	# Sold	Average Listed Price	Average Sale Price	Average Days
1986	68	$29,721	$27,281	118.26
1987	77	$27,364	$25,577	87.28
1988	71	$36,074	$33,559	91.28
1989	65	$32,110	$29,523	99.07
1990	69	$33,629	$31,277	74.85
1991	42	$46,041	$43,795	77.46
1992	55	$31,003	$27,852	90.54
1993	58	$33,381	$30,377	77.60
1994	56	$33,516	$31,049	73.58
1995	84	$39,076	$36,413	75.83
1996	55	$45,340	$42,932	61.00

Note: The figures listed above represent data collected for the entire Mechanicsville community including Beaumont and Lonsdale.

Source: The Knoxville Association of Realtors, Multiple Listings Service Summaries, 1986 - 1996.

Table 4-2

Housing Sales in Mechanicsville: 1986-1996

Year	# Sold	Average Listed Price	Average Sale Price	Average Days
1986	13	$21,723	$19,734	109.69
1987	19	$22,368	$20,563	77.15
1988	22	$23,236	$20,563	70.59
1989	5	$26,540	$23,680	128.40
1990	16	$28,006	$24,439	70.25
1991	7	$41,100	$39,356	91.00
1992	11	$25,906	$21,881	88.09
1993	17	$28,185	$24,500	89.88
1994	25	$31,288	$27,848	73.00
1995	24	$60,466	$58,848	51.66
1996	28	$39,953	$37,551	71.75

Note: The figures listed above represent data collected for Five Points and other neighborhoods in East Knoxville.

Source: The Knoxville Association of Realtors, Multiple Listings Service Summaries, 1986–1996.

residents and outsiders perceive the quality of the neighborhood is important. The Parkridge Community Organization is working to change negative perceptions and create a "sense of pride" among residents. The neighborhood intends to work with the Knoxville Police Department to combat criminal and illicit activity in the area. Residents have witnessed the sale of illegal drugs and the solicitation of prostitution along Magnolia Avenue. Criminal activity in the Five Points neighborhood is also of concern for residents, city officials and potential developers. Reports from the Knoxville Police Department show that a large percentage of criminal activity in the area occurs along Magnolia Avenue. The Mechanicsville neighborhood struggles as well to improve its neighborhood image. The neighborhood might be able to attract new families to the area if neighborhood services were improved. Presently, residents lack important neighborhood services such as a grocery store, and only recently has a new retail store moved into the area, on the corner of Western Avenue and University. Residents in all three areas have stressed a need for more public services in the form of medical facilities, social and professional services.

Opportunities for Infill Housing

Vacant lots and abandoned houses create opportunity for infill development to occur in the study areas. Each neighborhood has created redevelopment plans or strategic plans in the past or currently to encourage reinvestment and to guide growth and development. Other factors that improve each neighborhood's potential for infill are strong neighborhood organizations, cheap land prices, existing infrastructure, and

access to large employment centers.

In 1989, PCO began working with the Center for Neighborhood Development to develop a comprehensive neighborhood plan. CND published a document on behalf of PCO that outlines the goals and objectives for the neighborhood. It establishes policies for housing initiatives aimed at infill development and historic preservation programs. The goal is to make vacant lots available for recreation and open space, and to establish an historic overlay for one section of the neighborhood to help preserve the historic homes. The neighborhood has been able to retain some of its historic features such as wide streets, sidewalks and alleys. The plan also identifies policies for capital improvements to damaged sidewalks, storm drains and street lighting. Thus far, there have been a total of 26 infill units built in Parkridge and 38 homes have been rehabilitated through the housing rehabilitation program offered by the city. Presently, the Homemakers program has made available four vacant houses in Parkridge.

From the mid-eighties to 1990, local organizations and individuals issued studies and reports on the revitalization of Five Points. A market feasibility study was completed in 1986; a report on commercial revitalization was drafted by the Knoxville Minority Business Bureau; and the East Tennessee Community Design Center issued a revitalization report on Five Points in 1990. Based on these studies and reports, along with community input from residents and merchants, the City of Knoxville has created a redevelopment plan for Five Points. The need for residential

infill development on vacant lots is pervasive throughout the Five Points Small Area Plan published by MPC and the Five Points Redevelopment Plan published by the city's Department of Community Development. The small area plan for Five Points identifies the existing conditions in the neighborhood from housing to economic development and outlines goals and polices to manage and accommodate future development.

The Five Points Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan outlines short and long term goals for revitalizing the area and the policies needed for implementation. It specifically addresses the need for infill development on vacant lots; there are over 100 vacant lots within phase one of the plan. The housing section of the plan includes strategies for land assembly, title curing, floor plan drawings and lot information. Each action is followed by a proposed deadline for completion and the facilitator of the action. It details ways in which to make residential infill development more attainable for private and non-profit developers through plans for property disposition, financing, land acquisition and relocation. The Plan proposes to use property owned by KNHCS as an infill demonstration project to illustrate the benefits of public/private partnerships. One of the goals for housing in the redevelopment plan is to acquire 75 lots for infill housing. There have been a total of 26 infill homes built and 135 homes rehabilitated in Five Points.

Community advocates and the city have implemented plans to guide the growth and development of Mechanicsville. In 1989, the Knoxville's Community

Development Corporation administerd a redevelopment plan for Mechanicsville. The plan targeted a small area within Mechanicsville and identified several objectives for redevelopment that included the elimination of blighting conditions and the construction of new, afforadable housing on vacant land. Most major objectives were met. Over 70 vacant lots and substandard structurs were acquired and 85 percent were conveyed to a private owner or developer and roughly 25 private historic structures have been rehabilitated. The city's Department of Community Development recently made amendments to the plan to allow alternative use of buildable lots and reuse options for certain parcels and a sunset provision. Although the redevelopment plan accomplished most of its objectives, revitalizaton efforts need to be expanded throughout Mechanicsville in order to stabilize the entire community. The city plans to acquire an additional 16 properties and rezone at least eight properties for either commercial, residential, office, health clinic or mixed use projects. The redevelopment plan proposes that ten additional sites be developed for infill housing. There have been a total of 43 infill houses built and 60 home rehabilitated in Mechanicsville.

Strong neighborhood support is an asset for any community. Each of the three study areas have numerous organizations that work individualy and sometimes collectively to address various issues that are significant to neighborhood residents. Neighborhood support services located in Parkridge are the Center for Neighborhood Development, the Volunteers of America, Child and Family Services, area churches

and the neighborhood watch association. In a non-profit partnership of private lenders, city officials and neighborhood residents, the Knoxville Neigborhood Housing and Commercial Services was created in Parkridge. The agency is presently located in Five Points and focuses its efforts in that area.

Infill housing development in Five Points has been initiated by organizations throughout the city. The Inner City Community Development Corporation and the Knoxville Neighborhood Housing and Commercial Services are located in the Five Points neighborhood and are actively involved in creating more housing opportunities for residents in the area. Opportunities exist for private developers to work with neighborhood organizations that have successfully developed and sold infill housing in the community. Other organizations include the Urban League, the Community Action Committee, and the Tabernacle Community Training Center.

Mechanicsville has several organizations located in the area that work to improve the neighborhood. The Knox Housing Partnership and Wesley House Community Center each have housing initiatives for Mechanicsville. Restoration Outreach is another neighborhood organization that takes a holistic approach to revitalizing Mechanicsville. The organization is a Christian community ministry that was founded seven years ago. Its goal is to create a racially and economically mixed community by restoring the housing stock and encouraging community reinvestment. Other neighborhood groups include TribeOne, OMNI (Old Mechanicsville Neighborhood Interest) and the Mechanicsville Community Development

Corporation. Infill lots within the study areas are relatively inexpensive for developers, both for-profit and non-profit developers. Although lot sizes tend to be smaller with unusual configurations (50x150), land prices can range from $0 to $2500.

Other opportunities that help make infill housing more attainable in the study areas are investments in the public infrastructure. Each neighborhood is located in an urban area that has access to full water and sewer services (MPC, 1994). This helps to ease the cost of construction for developers. Improvements to the public infrastructure system were a priority for Mechanicsville. Since the redevelopment plan , the neighborhood has seen dramatic public improvements to the streets, storm drainage, sidewalks, curbs and gutters. The city has also invested a lot of time and money into capital improvements for Parkridge and Five Points. Other public facilities within each neighborhood include several churches, firestations, parks and recreation centers, day care centers and elderly care homes.

Each neighborhood is in close proximity to the central business district which is in the process of revitalization as well. Major employers in East Knoxville include large manufacturers and distributing companies such as Levi Strauss and John Deere Company. There are also office and commercial strips along Magnolia and Martin Luther King Boulevard. Many Mechanicsville residents have access two of the largest employment centers in Knoxville; the central business district and the University of Tennessee. Other employers in the area are Pepsi Cola and Coca-Cola.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Knoxville's initial efforts to support a vacant lots program were largely unsuccessful. However, knowledge from early experience led to more effective methods of addressing problems associated with vacant lots and blighted properties. The Homemaker's program and the Blighted Property Ordinance have provided much needed mechanisms to deal with issues of land assembly, acquisition and property disposition. The Department of Community Development continues to be challenged by the tedious processes of identifying property owners, collecting taxes on deliquent properties, and ensuring the development of property once it has been sold. These circumstances have made Knoxville's experience with infill housing quite similar to that of other cities.

Developers in Knoxville, both public and private, have expressed doubts about the feasibility of infill in the inner city. The most prevalent issue among developers is the market. Non-profit and for-profit developers shared the same unresolved problem of a scarce market for infill housing in the inner city. Most of the non-profit organizations "created" a market for their homes. Organizations such as the Knox Housing Partnership and Habitat for Humanity established housing assistance programs that work to help low to moderate income families become homeowners. They helped clients attain affordable housing by offering financial

counseling on budgeting for a new home, and improving credit and income. Only one non-profit organization was able to build homes for speculative sale in the inner city. The Inner City Community Development Corportation sold 13 homes on the open market to low-income families in the Five Points neighborhood. Inner City attributes its success to the fact that a market does exist in the inner city, and residents do want to own a home. Its success is due in part to residents' familiarity with the organization. The corporation evolved out of the Inner City Community Church as a grassroots effort. Residents in Five Points are aware of the services it provides in terms of economic development, housing and commercial activity.

The two private developers, Pioneer Builders and Carlton Homes, established a partnership with non-profit agencies to gurantee the sale of their homes. Pioneer Builders, a small contractor worked with the East Tennessee Foundation to build and sell houses in Parkridge. Carlton Homes, a much larger company, worked with the Inner City Community Development Corporation to build homes in Five Points. A representative from Carlton Homes stated that the company has no immediate plans to do more infill construction in the inner city. The company has been so successful with developing its own residential communities that business does not warrant building more housing in the inner city.

Typically, housing in the inner city is built to be affordable for families who otherwise could not buy a new home. In order to make a profit, private developers have to build infill housing in large volume or partner with a non-profit organization.

But either alternative can be complicated. Most homes in this study sold between $40,000 and $54,000. Building one or two homes in this price range simply did not make good business sense for a developer looking to make a large profit. Developers would normally build on large tracts of land, which is difficult to come by in inner city neighborhoods. The non-profits in the study were primarily local organizations that worked to address the concerns of residents on a neighborhood level. In many cases, the non-profit developer would provide direct subsidies to home buyers in the form of low interest or zero percent interest loans. They also provided indirect subsidies by paying for the cost of the land and exceeding the maximum amount budgeted for construction. Partnerships between private and public entities to construct infill housing are few. There were some partnerships created where the non-profit purchased the land and a private developer constructed the homes. Often times, as was the situation for KCDC, the organization had intentions of working with small private contractors, but because most were not bonded, and did not have a relationship with any financial lender, the partnership failed.

In addition to an extremely limited market and small profit margins for infill housing, many of the developers had internal problems that restricted their ability to build more housing. Most of the non-profits had little experience with new housing construction and lacked the necessary staff and expertise to carry out projects. The non-profits, as well as small private contractors, operated with staffs of five or less. The Knoxville Neighborhood Housing and Commercial Services is experiencing

severe staffing problems. The organization has no executive director and is presently staffed with a housing coordinator and temporary staff from the city's Department of Community Development. Although the city intends to fill vacant positions and increase the staff, projects will be delayed and services inadequate until the organization improves capacity. KNHCS acquired two vacant lots to construct infill houses which were to serve as a demostration project in the Five Points redevelopment plan. If circumstances persist for KNHCS, it is likely that development of the lots will be prolonged indefinitely.

In June of this year, the Inner City Community Development Corporation laid off 10 of its employees. Jerry Upton, executive director stated the corporation simply took on more than it could handle, and lacked funding to carry on most of its programs. They offered a variety of services to the community that included a housing rehabilitation program, credit and budget seminars, and a new housing construction program. The Affordable Housing Divison, which was primarily responsible for new housing construction built and sold several new homes in Five Points.

Non-profit organizations also are restricted by federal and local guidelines for developing infill housing. The organizations rely heavily on financial support from the federal and local government which typically means adhering to design specifications outlined in policies and objectives for new housing construction. The flexibility of non-profits is limited, making it difficult to satisfy the needs and wants

of potential buyers and neighborhood residents. Habitat for Humanity is the only non-profit that does not receive direct financial assistance from the city or the federal government. It has been able to finance its own projects and set its own design guidelines.

The various initiators of infill housing projects within the three study areas recognized an opportunity for development. The expectations of each in terms of the success of their projects are based on individual assessments. Among the non-profits, a successful project was defined as the ability to find a buyer, sell the home at an affordable price, and avoid any foreclosures. Pioneer Builders was the only for-private developer whose initial infill projects were done independently of any non-profit. Being able to sell the home within enough time to generate a profit meant the project was successful.

Regardless of their reasoning for doing infill projects, all developers must be realistic about their goals and expectations for success. Infill housing is definitely not a lucrative alternative in the housing industry, but it can be a niche for some developers. It takes geniune concern for the neighborhood and a desire to make a difference in the community. Equipped with valuable information and realistic expectations, developers, both private and non-profit, city officials and residents can receive tremendous benefits.

In evaluating the three study areas, those factors that are charcteristic of neighborhoods having low potential for infill were examined to determine problems

and opportunities for each neighborhood. Reinvestment in each neighborhood has been jeopardized by little or no population growth, large concentrations of low income households, few investments in the existing building stock, poor neighborhood perceptions and inadequate neighborhood services. However, opportunities for infill abound in each neighborhood. There are plenty of vacant lots with access to public infrastructure at no additional cost to the developer. Land costs in each neighborhood are low, ranging from absolutely no cost to $2500, neighborhood support is strong and all are in close proximity to employment centers.

Five Points is the most critical of the three neighborhoods. The area has the most vacant lots and severe housing problems. An asset for the neighborhood is its redevelopment plan. The plan identifies specific goals and objectives to improve conditions. The city began the plan in 1996. It will take several more years before improvements are noticeable in the neighborhood. Plans for redevelopment area are to acquire 75 vacant lots and rehabilitate 150 homes. Five Points has to take a holistic approach to redevelopment that encompasses reinvestment in commercial, residential, and economic activity. The Inner City Community Corporation and the Knoxville Neighborhood Housing and Commercial Services are the two main organizations that can contribute to the redevelopment effort. The city works closely with these organizations to get housing projects completed; it will be extremely difficult to do future projects if the organizations are not saved.

Mechanicsville has experienced drastic improvements since redevelopment

began in 1985. When the redevelopment plan is terminated in 1998, the city will continue to aquire land and properties through the Blighted Property Ordinance. KCDC has plans to develop more property through the Hope 6 program, if approved by HUD. The housing authority plans to redevelop the College Homes housing development and replace it with single family residences. Mechanicsville will need to work to maintain itself once the redevelopment plan is terminated. Neighborhood residents and groups have yet to establish any organized effort to work with the city or among themselves to ensure continued reinvestment and revitalization.

Parkridge has strong neighborhood support. Residents are well organized and are adamant in their demands for more infill housing construction. Compared to Five Points and Mechanicsville the area is much smaller, which helps to make problems in the area more manageable. The area continues to deal with some critical issues that could be better dealt with by a Neighborhood Community Development Corporation. The Parkridge Community Organization works closely with the Center for Neighborhood Development, but CND is not involved in the construction or rehabilitation of housing. Parkridge needs an organization such as the Knox Housing Partnership to address its specific housing concerns.

Recommendations

Infill housing is a growing phenomena for Knoxville. Since HUD spurred national attention to the subject, cities across the United States have employed their own methods and techniques for addressing the issue locally. Knoxville has created a

model program for infill lots. Collectively, the city and non-profits have provided a variety of affordable infill homes in the inner city. Vacant lots and abandoned houses that dimished property values are now back on the tax rolls generating revenue for the city, as well as improving the appearance of the neighborhoods. A total of 85 affordable homes have been constructed within the three study areas and among the various non-profit organizations and the city, roughly 37 lots have been acquired for new construction.

The following recommendations are intended to serve neighborhood residents, local developers of infill, city officials and any other groups or individuals interested in infill housing. The intent is to offer suggestions to improve existing initiatives and create new projects and programs that are most feasible for anyone interested infill housing.

1. The City of Knoxville should give more attention to non-profit organizations involved with infill. Many of the local non-profits have successfully completed projects and sold homes in the inner city. They might be able to do more new construction if the Department of Community Development allocated more federal funds for new construction. This is not to suggest that private, for-profit developers be ignored, but, realistically, very few have shown an interest for infill, and most are not confident enough in the market to invest in new construction within the inner city. Private developers require more incentives than simply offering low cost land.

2. Developers of infill housing need accurate information. Both private and non-

profit developers should be made aware of the resources available through the DCD and other sources that have been receptive, and willing to support infill projects. Large financial institutions, Suntrust, First Tennessee Bank, Home Federal and First American have financed construction of several projects throughout the three study areas. Developers should have access to information regarding sources of financing, availability of land, land prices, partnership opportunities, etc. A marketing campaign to promote infill to developers as well as potential homebuyers would create broad awareness of the projects and programs offered by the city and non-profit organizations. It would also help if the Department of Community Development worked with the Metropolitan Planning Commission to maintain an inventory of properties in each neighborhood that are vacant or deteriorating so that developers know what is available to them.

3. Neighborhood non-profit organizations involved in new housing construction should coordinate efforts to do infill development. Each neighborhood has two or more agencies working to achieve the same objectives. Their efforts might prove more effective and beneficial for themselves and the neighborhood, if they worked together, or at least had an understanding of their individuals goals and objectives for new construction. The formation of neighborhood task forces, similar to that in Parkridge, would converge ideas for improving the neighborhood as a whole, and help the organizations understand each others' position in the process of revitalization.

4. Developers should seek the expert advice and opinions of architects, planners, designers, etc. when constructing infill housing. Most of the non-profits and private developers operate with small staffs and small budgets, if they are not able to employ such specializations, it would be beneficial to consult with them on a volunteer basis. Experienced professionals could assist in helping developers meet design requirements in historic districts, or suggest alternatives for building materials to make designs compatible with neighboring properties. The non-profits might also consider working with students of the various professions who are in graduate or professional programs at the University of Tennessee.

5. The Metropolitan Planning Commission should publish a set of design guidelines and standards for infill construction. MPC has available for the public handbooks on design guidelines for Mechanicsville and Old North Knoxville. The handbooks specify the requirements for construction of infill housing. Similar documents should be produced for Parkridge and the Five Points neighborhoods. Parkridge has an historic overlay district, while Five Points simply needs to maintain consistency and compatibility with existing homes.

6. Non-profits should put more money into credit and bugeting programs. Many non-profits were able to sell their homes because they worked with potential homebuyers so that they would qualify for a home. Programs that provide credit and budget assistance help to secure a market for infill homes.

7. A lease-purchase program would help more low income households become

homeowners. Initially, the tenant rents the home to establish a history of consistent payment and to improve his or her financial situation. After a period of two to three years, they can begin mortgage payments. A lease-purchase program helps deal with issues of marketability in the inner city and profit-margins for developers. It helps keep down the cost of land and construction to the developer and makes buying a home more affordable to low income families.

The evidence from this study shows that infill housing development presented a number of challenges to the City of Knoxville, developers and residents. But, inspite of the difficulties, it proved to be rewarding for all participants. Infill housing is a viable solution for inner city neighborhoods that must confront the problem of vacant lots and abandoned properties. Based on this study, the success or failure of an infill project depends greatly upon the actors involved. Coordinated and collaborative efforts among city officials, residents and developers, both for-profit and non-profit organizations allow better and more efficient planning for neighborhood revitalization.

Bibliography

Bolton, Charles. A Guide To Recycling Vacant Property In Your Neighborhood. Trust for Public Land. February 1979.

Brett, Deborah L. Assessing the Feasibility of Infill Development. Urban Land. April 1982.

Capital District Regional Planning Commission. Urban Infill: Conditions and Opportunities. Technical Report. June 1980.

Center for Neighborhood Development. *Transforming Neighborhoods Together: Parkridge Plan*, 1994.

Colman, William G. State and Local Government and Public-Private Partnerships. New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1989.

Davis, Sam. The Architecture of Affordable Housing. Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 1995.

Department of Community Development. *Homemakers Program as Amended*, 1995.

_____. *Homemakers Program: Fact Sheet.* 199?.

_____. *Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development*, 1995.

East Tennessee Community Design Center. The User's Handbook to Re-Using Knoxville's Vacant Lots. November 1979.

_____. Vacant lots Recycling Handbook. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Community Services and Administration and local Community Development Block Grant, 1982.

_____. *Urban House Design Competition*, 1981.

East Tennessee Foundation. *Affordable Housing Demonstration Fund Advisory Board Progress Report*, 1996.

Ford Foundation. Affordable Housing: The Five Years Ahead. Ford Foundation. New York, NY, 1989.

Garvin, Alexander. The American City. McGraw-Hill: New York, New York, 1991.

Gibson, Michael S; Langstaff, Michael J. An Introduction to Urban Renewal. Hutchinson: London, 1982.

Graduate School of Planning. Urban Infilling... Implications of a National Policy. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee, 1980.

Hermanuz, Ghilaine. Reweaving the urban fabric: Approaches to infill housing. New York State Council on the Arts: Princeton Architectural Press, 1989.

Joint Center for Housing Studies. "The State of the Nation's Housing: Into the 21st Century," Harvard University, 1996.

Kirby, David. Slum Housing and Residential Renewal. Longman: New York, NY, 1979.

Knoxville Community Development Corporation. *Redevelopment Plan for Historic Mechanicsville,* 1989.

_____. *Amendment No.1 to the Historic Mechanicsville Redevelopment Plan*, 1996.

Knoxville/Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission. *Development Data*, 1997.

_____. *Lot Homesteading Program: Concept*, 1979.

_____. *Central City Sector Plan, July, 1995*

_____. *Five Points Small Area Plan*, 1994.

_____. Old North Knoxville Historic District: Design Guidelines. Knoxville, TN: Knoxville/Knox County Historic Zoning Commission, 1992.

_____. Design Guidelines For the Mechanicsville Landmark District. Knoxville, TN: Knoxville/Knox County Historic Zoning Commission, 1991.

Larsson, Gerhard. Land Readjustment: Modern Approach to Urbanization. Brookfield, VT: Avebury, 1993.

Listokin, David. Housing Receivership and Self-Help Neighborhood Revitalization. Center for Urban Policy Research, 1985.

Mechanicsville Community Development Corporation. *Mechanicsville Neighborhood Strategic Plan*, 1992-1993.

National Association of Home Builders. Land Development. National Association of Home Builders: Washington, DC, 1987.

Newell, Binmatty. "Infill Housing: Five Years Later - City of St. John's" Issues in Housing and Neighborhood Rehabilitation. Institute of Urban Studies: Winnipeg, 1990.

Pickman, James; Roberts, Benson F. Producing Lower Income Housing. The Bureau of National Affairs: Washington, D.C. 1986.

Porter, Michael E. "The Competitive Advantage of the Inner City." Harvard Business School: Boston, MA, 20 May 1994.

Real Estate Research Corporation. Infill Development Strategies. Urban Land Institute and American Planning Association: Washington DC, 1982.

Riley, Colin. "Reinvestment in Inner City Historic Space." Thesis. University of Tennessee, 1995.

Salins, Peter. "Review of Real Estate Research Corporation: Urban Infill: Its Potential as a Development Strategy." Journal of the American Planning Association, Vol 49: 1983.

Seidel, Stephen R. Housing Cost and Government Regulations: Confronting the Regulatory Maze. New Brunswick, NJ: The Center for Urban Policy Research, 1978.

Smart, Eric. Making Infill Projects Works. Washington, DC: Urban Land Institute, 1985.

Suchman, Diane R. "Infill Housing: Opportunities and Strategies for Inner-City Neighborhoods." Urban Land Institute, 1996.

Walker, Chistopher. "Nonprofit Housing Development: Status, Trends, and Propects." Housing Policy Debate, 1995.

Ways, Howard. "Property Receivership: The First Line of Code Enforcement." Planning and the Black Community Division News, Summer 1997.

Willis, Carol and Genevro, Rosalie, eds. Vacant Lots. New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1989.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Affordable Infill Housing: Five Case Studies. Office of Policy Development and Research, Washington, DC, 1987.

Personal Interviews

Beasley Albert, President, Pioneer Builders, 22 May 1997.

Bates, Sandra, Executive Director, Wesley House Community Center, 13 May 1997.

Carter, Terrance, Community Development Project Specialist,Department of Community Development, 14 Feb. 1997.

Crawford, Doris, Chairperson, KNHCS Housing Strategy Committee, 29 Apr. 1997.

DeBruhl, Fred, Executive Director, Knoxville Community Development Corporation, 9 Apr. 1997.

Doughty, Rogers, Construction Management Supervisor, Department of Community Development, 5 Mar. 1997.

Gerard, Diana, Housing and Development Section Manager, Department of Community Development, 17 Jan. 1997.

Martin, Angie, Director of Sales, Carlton Homes, 2 Jun. 1997.

Perry, Ed, Project Manager, Knox Housing Partnership, 10 Apr. 1997.

Richardson, Keith, Director, Affordable Housing Demonstration Fund, 19 Jun. 1997.

Scholtz, Kelley, Executive Director, Knoxville Habitat for Humanity, 8 Apr. 1997.

Swink, Saundra, Director of Affordable Housing, Inner City Community Development Corporation, 28 May 1997.

Sudderth, Marsha, Housing Coordinator Knoxville Neighborhood Housing and Commercial Services, 14 Apr. 1997.

VITA

Nedra Lucille Jones was born March 19, 1972. She attended elementary and secondary schools in Memphis, Tennessee, where she graduated from Whitehaven High School in June 1990. In August 1990, she entered the University of Tennessee and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Communications in May 1994. She returned to the university in August 1995 and entered the School of Planning. She received a Master of Science degree in Planning in 1997. During her course of study, she was the recipient of a graduate fellowship and a graduate assistantship. She was an intern at the Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department, and a student volunteer with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. She is a member of the American Planning Association and the Planning and the Black Community Division.