

# Mental Health Law Project:

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## **THE EFFECTS OF GROUP HOMES ON NEIGHBORING PROPERTY AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Boekh, J., Dear, M. and Taylor, S. Property Values and mental Health Facilities in Metropolitan Toronto. XXIV Canadian Geographic (McMaster University) 270 (1980). 16 pages.

A comprehensive review of a systematic assessment of the effect of group homes on property value, looking at five mental health facilities in lower-, middle- and upper-class neighborhoods. (Four group homes and one outpatient clinic for the mentally ill). Selling price and turnover rate in the area of the facilities were compared with prices and turnover in areas without such facilities. The presence of mental health facilities did not affect sales price, sales activity or property values. The characteristics of a house (e.g., size and particularly number of rooms) had more influence on selling price than any other factor.

Breslow, Stuart. The Effect of Siting Group Homes on the Surrounding Environs. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University (Nov. 1976). 33 pages.

This research study sampled six group homes, two halfway houses, a hostel, two Veterans Administration homes, four adult proprietary homes and an agency-operated boarding home. All were in White Plains, New York (a suburb of New York City). Breslow introduces the model used and obtained from the Philadelphia study by Michael Dear to support and compare his two research themes: (1) Does a group home have a disruptive impact on the neighborhood? and (2) does a group home threaten surrounding neighborhoods and decrease land value? Breslow summarizes his results as fairly inconclusive. He found that community residential facilities have no downgrading effect on the neighborhood, that facilities are in the same or better condition than their surrounding neighbors and that, in all but one of 16 cases, property value increased.

Developmental Disabilities Program. Policy Analysis #11: An Analysis of MN Property Values of Community Intermediate Care Facilities for Mentally Retarded (ICF-MRs). St. Paul, MN: Developmental Disabilities Program, Department of Energy, Planning and Development (July 1984)\* 9 pages.

This analysis compares the property value of the year preceding vs. the year following establishment of a group home and then compares those findings with the property value of similar neighborhoods without a group home. Fourteen neighborhoods with group homes were sampled in Minnesota; the findings are consistent with other research on group-home impact: (1) Property-value changes are not related to the presence of a group home, and (2) the number or the timing of property transactions in a neighborhood is not related to the establishment of a group home.

Dolan, Lawrence and Wolpert, Julian, Long Term Neighborhood Property Impacts of Group Homes for Mentally Retarded People. Princeton, N.J. Princeton University (November 1982). €8 pages.

This study analyzed market prices and turnover rates for properties neighboring 32 group homes (of 42 studied in 1978) in eight of the original communities. A survey was done to assess the condition of group homes relative to their neighbors. The updated study shows that (1) proximity of properties to a group home did not affect their market value; (2) establishment of group homes did not affect property turnover; (3) group homes were taken care of well; and (4) neighborhoods with established group homes have not been targeted for additional homes for retarded people.

Gardner, P., Pfaff, G. and Irwin, S. Community Acceptance of Group Homes in Ohio. Columbus, Ohio: Association for the Developmentally Disabled (1982). 29 pages.

The Association for the Developmentally Disabled in Columbus surveyed 24 neighborhoods with a group home. Three types of people were interviewed: group-home operators, neighbors and individuals with developmental disabilities. This report discusses the historical perspective of deinstitutionalization and the factors likely to lead to the opposition of group living arrangements, and provides recommendations for a community education program.

General Accounting Office. An Analysis of Zoning & Other Problems Affecting the Establishment of Group Homes for the Mentally Disabled. Washington DC: General Accounting Office (Aug. 1983). 78 pages.

This report discusses the effects that zoning and land-use policies have had in efforts to establish small group homes for

Hopperton, Robert J. Zoning for Community Homes: Handbook for Local Legislative Chancre. Columbus, Ohio: Law Reform Project, Ohio State university (Nov. 1975). 27 pages.

In this jargon-free guide for local legislative change, Hopperton begins with a definition of family-care group homes. He discusses Ohio current zoning ordinances, recommends zoning treatment for both family-care homes and group homes, and follows with a checklist for the legislative process and a discussion of key legal issues,

Johnson, Dirk. "Taxes Cut for Neighbors of Home for Mentally Ill" The New York Times. April 11, 1985. 1 page.

This article presents an opinion about the action of the Greenwich, Connecticut tax review board, which reduced property taxes for nine neighbors of a halfway house for former psychiatric patients. Professionals interviewed fear the ruling might stigmatize mentally ill people- Greenwich real estate agents differ. One agent points out that because the facility is well kept-up its presence will not influence the current increase in values.

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Ranter, Arlene, Recent Zoning Cases Uphold Establishment, of Group Homes for the Mentally Disabled. 18 Clearinghouse Review 515 (Oct. 1984). 4 pages.

Kanter summarizes the shifting trend from institutionalization to community responsibility and notes that the key issue is balancing the interests of neighbors against the interests of those leaving the institutions. The three types of zoning ordinances preventing group-home establishment are outlined, as are two cases that have presented constitutional challenges to exclusionary zoning. Even though courts have upheld the rights of people leaving institutions, the article points out, that the need is still great to foster community acceptance of mentally disabled people and to provide a more organized and effective means of delivering services to them in the least restrictive environment.

Knowles, Eric S. and Baba, Ronald K- The Social Impact of Group Homes: A study of small residential service programs in first residential areas. Green Bay, WI: University of Wisconsin (June 1973). 52 pages.

This study examines three areas - (1) neighbors' awareness and acceptance of group homes, through a random sample of telephone interviews in five neighborhoods with existing group homes? {2) residential turnover, through data from the city assessor's office regarding the number of housing sales and the values of purchased homes in areas with group homes; and (3) property value - by researching zoning laws that concern group homes in every

Linowes, Lisa. The Effect of Group Care facilities on Property Values. Pas Memo. Chicago, Illinois: American Planning Association (Nov. 1983) 5 pages.

Linowes reviews six studies conducted between 1966 and 1983. Five of the studies confirm the absence of any impact on property values. Only one of the studies showed a significant relationship between the presence of a group home and changes in property value, Linowes considers all the reports together to reach a conclusion, that careful planning can maintain the quality of the community and ensure effective delivery of services to clients,

Lippincott, Marcia K. "A Sanctuary for People"; Strategies for Overcoming Zoning. Restrictions on Community Homes for Retarded Persons. 31 Stanford Law Rev. 767 (April 1979). 17 pages.

Recommending specific strategies to enable a community home to succeed, Lippincott begins with an overview of the need for community homes for retarded people. She outlines her article to include the primary objective of group homes, the barriers of community resistance and zoning, the strategies to overcome zoning restrictions through advocacy and the need for long-term reform through legislative change at the state and local levels, including the elements necessary in an appropriate statute. She makes a plea for lawyers to take immediate steps so that retarded citizens can benefit from normal community living. .

Louisiana Center for Public Interest. Impact of Group Homes on Property Values and. the Surrounding Neighborhoods. 11 Links 1 (February 1981). 2 pages.

The Louisiana Center for Public Interest compiled significant findings from studies of group-home impact and used them to support two points: (1) that group homes had no appreciable effect on property value and on the turnover rate of housing in the neighborhood and (2) that establishment of a group home did not change the character of the neighborhood.

Mambort, Terence, Thomas, Elvia and Few, Rebecca. Community Acceptance: & Realistic Approach. Montgomery County, OH: Montgomery County Board for the Mentally Retarded and Developmentally Disabled (March 1981). Summarized in 11 Links 1 (July 1981) Ohio Studies Assess Community Acceptance at Group Homes... 48 pages.

This report is based on the results of a neighborhood opinion survey and a property-sales study monitoring the effects of seven group homes for mentally retarded or developmentally disabled people in an Ohio county. The professional appraiser who conducted the study was unable to find any evidence to indicate that group homes had an adverse effect on neighboring property values-

advance notice to neighbors. The results show that opposition is very likely from communities that become aware of the residences shortly before they open. Opposition is less likely when the community becomes aware of the residence either after it has opened or more than six months before occupancy. The implications of these findings for policy and practice are also discussed.

Sigelman, C, Spanhel, C. and Lorenzen, c. Community Reactions to Deinstitutionalization: Crime. Property Values and Other Bugbears. Journal of Rehab. 52 (Jan./Feb./March 1979). 4 pages-Community opposition to the establishment of community residential facilities (small group homes, halfway houses and independent Living arrangements) is often grounded in misconceptions and stereotypes. Calling these misconceptions "bugbears," Sigelman, Spanhel and Lorenzen present information to prove that community-based residential facilities do not increase crime rates, decrease property value or alter neighborhood lifestyles in any way. In fact, despite initial fears and opposition, neighbors become more favorably inclined toward the idea of community-based living by mentally disabled people and more positive about the individual residents over time\*

Stickney, Patricia (ed.), Gaining Community Acceptance A Hand-book for COMMUNITY Residence Planning. White Plains, New York: Westchester Community Services Council (June 1977). 46 pages.

The purpose of this handbook is to assist in developing community awareness and acceptance for residential programs. Information is presented from agencies, consumer advocates and community groups. Suggestions for gaining community support are made in a practical, methodological outline.

Teplin, L. A. The Criminality of. the Mentally Ill: A Dangerous Misconception. 142 American Journal of Psychiatry 593 (May 1985) . 7 pages.

Data from 1,072 police-citizen encounters help to disprove the myth that mentally ill people are dangerous and likely to commit violent crimes. The information was collected to study the validity of that assumption. The data show that people exhibiting signs of serious mental disorder were not suspected of serious crimes at a rate disproportionate to their number in the population. The patterns of crime were similar for people with and without a diagnosis of mental disorder.

remaining cases, homes within a one-block radius of the group home sold at a higher price than properties not near a group home.

Wolch, Jennifer and Gabriel, Stuart. Spillover Effects of Human Services Facilities in a Racially Segmented Housing Market, Los Angeles, CA: University of Southern California (School of Urban Regional Planning) (March 1983). 20 pages.

Wolch & Gabriel evaluated the effect of community-based facilities on property values and character of the neighborhood. They looked at the effects of (1) residential facilities, (2) non-residential facilities and (3) non-residential services for people with mental health, alcohol and drug-related problems in both white and non-white areas in Oakland, California. Regarding property value they surveyed 769 residential facilities (criminal justice, multi-purpose adult and child/youth). Their results vary by facility type and racial housing sub market. Approximately 32% of the facilities were in the white sub market and 68% were in the non-white sub market. Although both child/youth and adult residential facilities adversely affect property value, the study also found property-value differences within facility types. (Comparatively speaking, child/youth facilities have a higher property value than the adult facilities.)

Non-white lower socio-economic neighborhoods perceive public and nonprofit community services as positive amenities, Wolch and Gabriel assert, white sub markets were found to prefer private youth-recreation opportunities over public ones.

Wolch and Gabriel found results contradictory to 22 studies they examined, representing the mainstream of past research in this area.

Wolpert, Julian. Group Homes for the Mentally Retarded an investigation of neighborhood, property. impacts. Princeton, NJ; Princeton University, unpublished manuscript (August, 1978). 94 pages.

A professor at Princeton, Dr. Wolpert studied 42 communities in New York State from May-August 1978. He collected data on group-home impact on property value and real estate transactions. He compared his findings of communities with group homes to a control group of communities matched by socio-economic, geographic and physical characteristics. He found consistent results in regard to property value and real estate transactions; (1) Property value increased (or decreased) the same percentage in communities with and without group homes; (2) proximity of neighboring properties to a group home did not affect their market value; (3) the immediately adjacent properties did not experience a decrease in property value; (4) establishment of group homes had no effect on property turnover. This is the complete study