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This study focuses on the spatial claims that the Obama Foundation and South Side Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) Coalition make regarding the Obama Presidential Center, in the context of Jackson Park, the Woodlawn neighborhood, and the wider South Side. The study analyzes the public discourse of these two groups to investigate their geographical assertions, visions, and the ways in which they justify and legitimize their claims.

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Space for Whom? Negotiating Displacement
and Development:
the Obama Presidential Center and
South Side Community Benefits Agreement
Coalition

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Theoretical Problem and Research Question

A presidential library, Barack Obama's no less, will be built in Jackson Park in the South Side's Woodlawn neighborhood. The Obama Presidential Center has been controversial since its inception, provoking both excitement and fear within Woodlawn and surrounding neighborhoods such as Hyde Park, South Shore, and Washington Park (see figure 1). Some community groups whole-heartedly praise and support the Obama Foundation's plans; some deplore the use of publicly-owned parkland as the site for the Center; and still others celebrate the possibilities, but fear displacement stemming from development. In September 2016,¹ a coalition of South Side community organizations launched a campaign for a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA), with the objective of obtaining the signatures of the Obama Foundation Chairman Martin Nesbit, City of Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, and University of Chicago President Robert Zimmer. This agreement² would legally bind the three institutions to completing specific measures concerning affordable housing, jobs, economic development, sustainability, education, and transportation infrastructure in the five-mile radius around the Center.

The Obama Foundation has declined this request, saying that CBAs are strategies appropriate for developers³ wanting to make a profit out of a community, not for a

¹ Meredith Ogilvie, "Local organizations launch Community Benefits Agreement campaign," *Hyde Park Herald*, September 30, 2016, <http://hpherald.com/2016/09/30/local-organizations-launch-community-benefits-agreement-campaign/> (accessed Mar 20, 2018).

² The first CBA in the United States was established in 2001, negotiated between Los Angeles residents, businesses, and organizations and the L.A. City Council's Sports and Entertainment District development. Partnership for Working Families, "Los Angeles Sports and Entertainment District CBA," *Partnership for Working Families*, 2015, <http://www.forworkingfamilies.org/resources/staples-cba>, (accessed April 24, 2018).

³ Given that the Foundation made this statement in response to the question of displacement and fear of gentrification, "developer" refers to a company that buys land and builds houses, factories, and stores on it, or alternatively, buys old buildings and makes them more modern, thereby extracting capital from the land.

nonprofit organization whose goal is to invest in the community.⁴ It also states that the Center will not cause gentrification in the near future.⁵ The City of Chicago has been similarly reticent. After organizers showed up unannounced at the Mayor's Office, the Office granted the Coalition a meeting with a deputy mayor, who said the City would need to look more at CBAs signed in other cities before it could make a decision. This meeting, however, did not result in any progress; as of February of 2018, it was the last time the Coalition had heard from the Mayor's Office.⁶ The CBA coalition nonetheless persists, arguing that unless a CBA is negotiated, low-income black residents will be displaced.

The Obama Foundation has a unique and unusual status because it is neither a for-profit developer, nor a public project, in the sense that it is not funded by the U.S. government. It is a private, nonprofit organization using its own funds—obtained through fundraising—and no federal funding. It conceives its project, the Obama Center, as a benefit to the South Side and as a space for collaborative civic engagement. The peculiarity of this situation is enhanced by the fact that the construction of the Center will be on publicly-owned Jackson Park (see figures 1-8), which the Foundation is able to use without purchasing the land from the City. Thus, the Foundation takes up a liminal space between the connotations or common conceptions of "private" and "public" organizations.

⁴ Lolly Bowean, "Obama personally answers questions at Chicago presidential library forum," *Chicago Tribune*, Sept 15, 2017, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/obamacenter/ct-obama-public-forum-library-20170915-story.html> (accessed Oct 20, 2018).

⁵ Lolly Bowean and Blair Kamin, "Obama makes pitch for his center in Jackson Park: 'Too much development' has not been a problem for the South Side," *Chicago Tribune*, Feb 27, 2018, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/obamacenter/ct-met-obama-presidential-center-20180227-story.html> (accessed Feb 28, 2018).

⁶ Lolly Bowean and Blair Kamin, "Obama makes pitch for his center in Jackson Park: 'Too much development' has not been a problem for the South Side," *Chicago Tribune*.

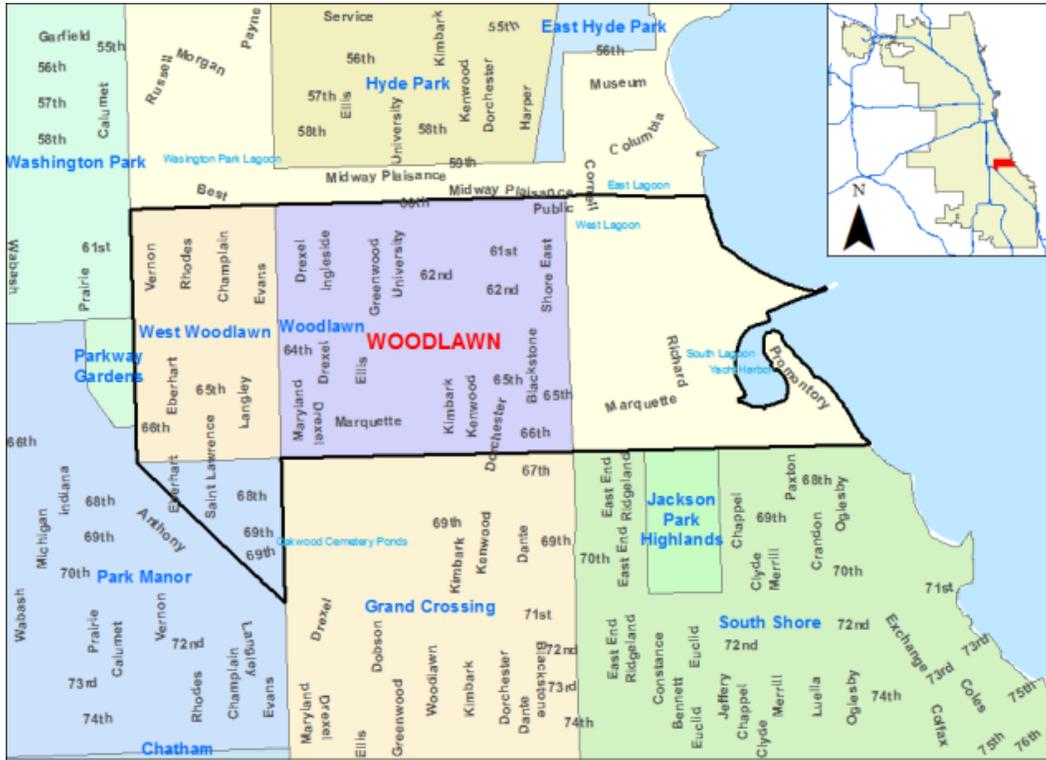
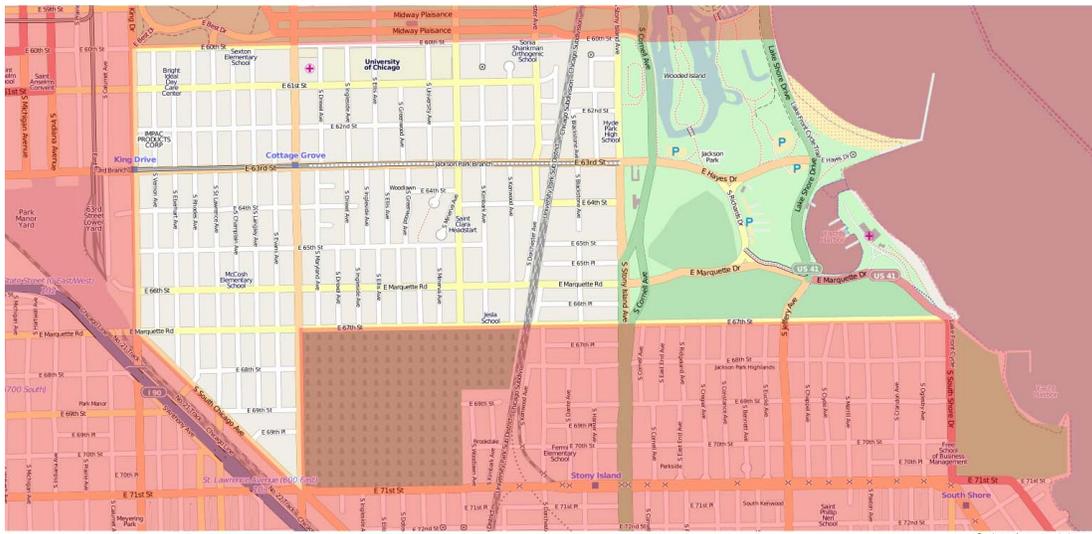


Fig. 1. Boundaries of Woodlawn (source unnamed)

WOODLAWN



Images of Woodlawn can be found at <http://www.ChicagoImageGate.com>

Fig. 2. Portion of Jackson Park (in green) in Woodlawn (courtesy of Chicago Image Gate)



Fig. 3. Jackson Park (in red) in context of City
(courtesy of the author)

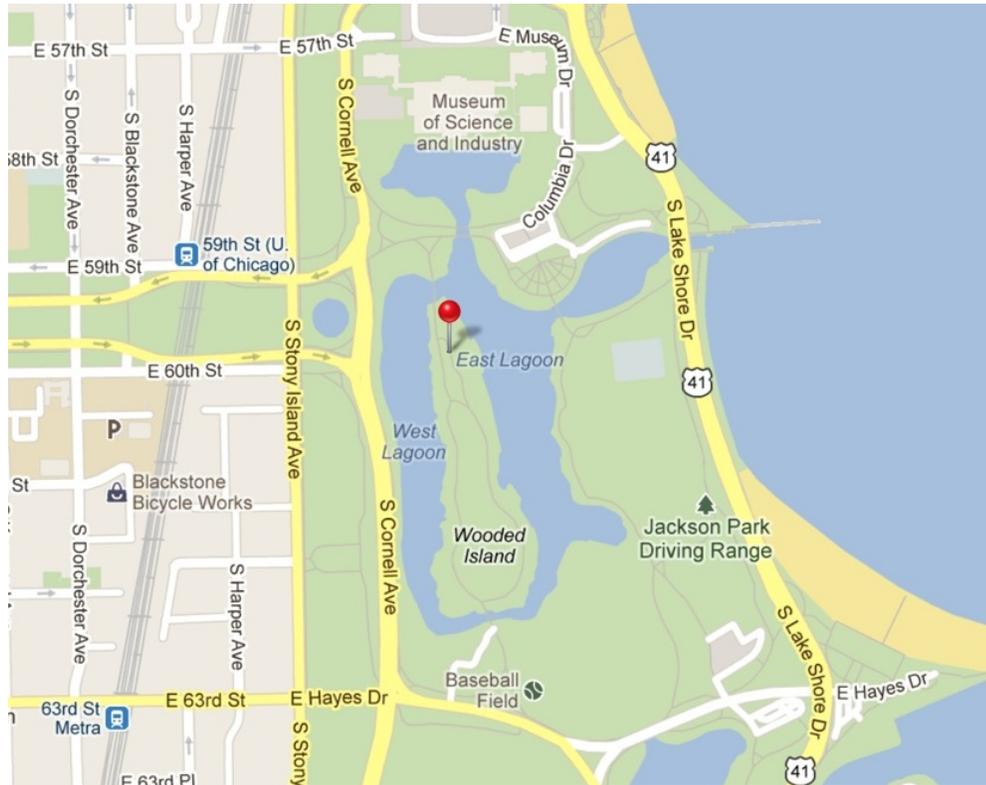


Fig. 4. Portion of Jackson Park, between 57th and 63rd St.
(courtesy of U.S. Japanese Gardens)

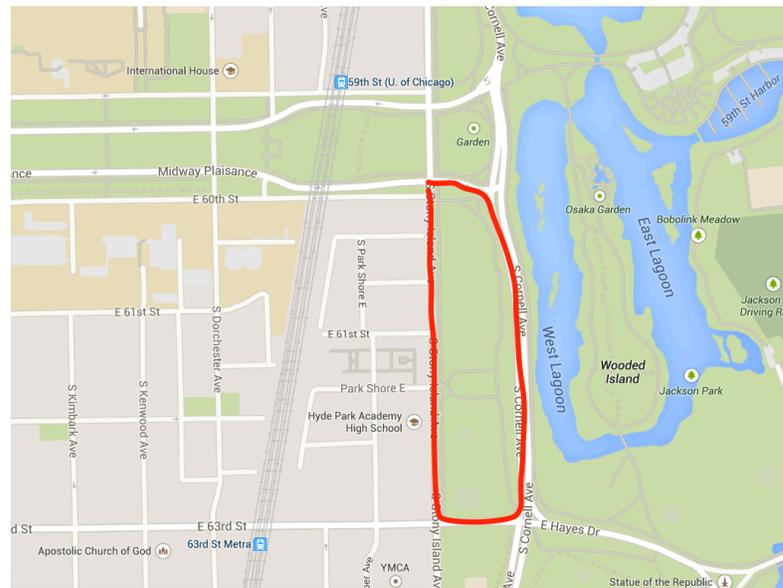


Fig. 5. Site of Center within Jackson Park, between 63rd and 60th St.
(courtesy of Chicago Curbed)

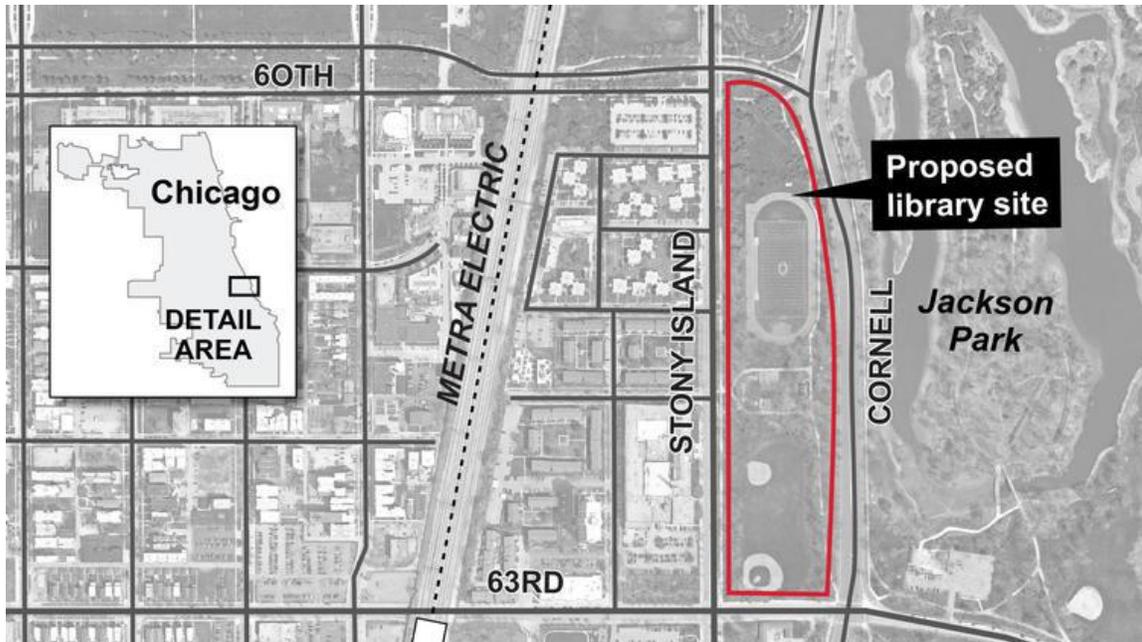


Fig. 6. Site of Center
(courtesy of *Chicago Tribune*)



Fig. 7. Aerial view of Jackson Park
(courtesy of *Chicago Architecture*)



Fig. 8. Center building to be built on red track
(courtesy of *Chicago Tribune*)

Out of this situation emerges a question: When an organization leading a major development project arrives in the neighborhood, how do such incoming organizations and neighborhood residents make geographic assertions? In other words, how do they justify and legitimize their use of a particular space? What happens when the residents are of low-income? How is this process complicated by the development project's participation in and departure from the tradition of presidential libraries? How are the geographic assertions further complicated by Barack Obama's status as a beloved political figure in Chicago, and by his role as an icon both for the Obama Center and the South Side? How does this process unfold around the Presidential Obama Center, specifically in Woodlawn? This study will focus on a particular group of residents, the CBA Coalition, recognizing, however, that the Coalition is one among many interested groups, and that the Coalition's members do not speak for the entire neighborhood. It represents, rather, the interests of low-income residents and allied groups. In our contemporary urban landscape, in which rapid gentrification is pushing people of color out of their neighborhoods and cities, these are relevant questions to ask of developer-resident interactions. What are the tools that both use to claim their "right to the city?" How does an institutional status versus a residential status, especially that of low-income residents, affect the way groups leverage identity, history, and world view to assert themselves as legitimate users of a space? How does the dominant understanding of what factors legitimize a person's claim to a particular urban space affect the way that neighborhood residents assert their claims? In other words, how do low-income black residents claim the right to an urban space, when they do not have the credentials mandated by wider society? Besides their relevance to wider discussions about power and space, these questions are also important because future presidential libraries may likewise step out of their canon and present or envision themselves as community centers or platforms for growing a city's global reputation.

What makes the Woodlawn neighborhood an interesting setting for such study, besides the fact that it will house the Obama Center? Its rich history of black culture, historical and contemporary experience of institutional racism and disinvestment, and its current changing status and rising reputation as a "hot market" for real estate developers, means it is a neighborhood whose status is in flux, where changes are high-stakes for

residents and other interested parties, not only because of the contemporary and tangible consequences of these changes, but also because of the neighborhood's historical experience of racism, etched in the memories of its residents.

Literature Review and Methodology

In order to hone this study's guiding research questions, exploratory interviews were conducted with Woodlawn residents, public community meetings were attended, and a two-month ethnographic survey was carried out in one of Woodlawn's community gardens, which included participating in the communal work-days and speaking one-on-one with garden participants. This took place from September 2016 to September 2017. These interviews, conversations, and interactions sought to establish neighborhood identity, the dynamics of displacement and gentrification, and residents' experiences of these changes. It was through talking to Woodlawn residents that the focus on the Center emerged; the arrival of the Obama Presidential Center, then still called the Obama Presidential Library, consistently came up in conversation and generated rich responses from interviewees and conversation partners. The Center emerged as a way to investigate the topics of neighborhood identity and change. While the study relies on textual data rather than on ethnographic and interview data, the field work provided the clay that was consequently given form by the theoretical frameworks and examples of case studies by the following scholars.

The most important methodological guide for the study has been cultural anthropologist and linguist Gabriella Gahlia Modan's work in *Turf Wars: Discourse, Diversity, and the Politics of Place*. Drawing on sociolinguistics, urban geography, and anthropology's ethnographic method, Modan conducts a study on a multi-ethnic D.C. neighborhood undergoing gentrification in the 1990s. She uses "discourse analysis" to study how different groups use language to paint conflicting images of their neighborhood, Mt. Pleasant. In the context of rapid gentrification, residents' "negotiations over claims to neighborhood identity and neighborhood space"⁷ had material consequences for what kind of place Mt. Pleasant would be, and what kind of people would live there. In Modan's own words, she examines "how community

⁷ Tim Cresswell, *In Place/out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 6.

members in Mt. Pleasant create and contest visions of their neighborhood through discourses of identity, both sociogeographic and personal.”⁸

In order to study how neighborhood groups use language to project specific images of the neighborhood, Modan analyzes linguistic data, focusing both on spoken and written texts. She draws from casual conversations, community meetings, and the social gatherings of organizations for the spoken data, as well as grant proposals, email list hosts, press, and other literature put out by individuals or organizations.⁹ Her working definition of “discourse” is the “ways of talking, writing, and signing; patterns of recurring themes, linguistic forms, and modes of conversational interaction.”¹⁰ In her framework, discourse is relevant because how we talk about a place affects how a place changes and develops materially.¹¹ The meaning we give a place affects how we use it in practice, and vice versa: the way we use a space affects the way we make meaning of it. This feedback loop overlaps with geographer Tim Cresswell’s idea of the dialectical relationship between the *use* of space—“practice”—and the *meaning* of space: “Meaning is invoked in space through the practice of people who act according to their interpretations of space, which in turn, gives their action meaning.”¹² In the case of Mt. Pleasant, “practice” is the language that describes what actions are “appropriate” in particular spaces of the neighborhood. There are two protagonist groups of stakeholders in Mt. Pleasant who decide what is “appropriate:” Caucasian, middle-income residents and low-to-middle income residents of color. With this “practice” comes a particular “meaning,” using Cresswell’s terms. The “meaning” in Mt. Pleasant’s spatial negotiations is comprised by the values and ideas about identity that residents apply to these spaces.

Public discourse sheds light on community groups’ ideas about neighborhood legitimacy, rights, and the change in the meaning of spaces. Modan differentiates between two kinds of discourse: “Big D” and “little d.” “Big D” discourse analysis asks how the use of language constructs social categories— such as age, race, and geographical boundaries—and how these categories promote particular power relations.

⁸ Gabriella Gahlia Modan, *Turf Wars: Discourse, Diversity, and the Politics of Place*, (Malden: Blackwell, 2007), 6.

⁹ Modan, *Turf Wars*, 24.

¹⁰ Modan, 6.

¹¹ Modan, 7.

¹² Tim Cresswell, *In Place/out of Place*, 16-17.

This approach looks at the general content of written and spoken statements without focusing on linguistic structure¹³ or on “specific instances of discourse...as objects of commentary or analysis”¹⁴ Other scholars analyze “little d” discourse, examining the “organization and structure of linguistic form”¹⁵ in its social context. This is a more “technical study” of spoken and written texts observed empirically. The basic unit is an “utterance”—an actually-spoken sentence. These utterances engage “social knowledge, attitudes, and values,”¹⁶ because they invoke particular world views. Statements “promote certain perspectives, while backgrounding others.”¹⁷

One of the theoretical categories that examines this privileging of certain perspectives versus others is a discourse's “deictic center.” Modan defines this term as “the base point where a speaker locates themselves spatially, temporally, and socially”¹⁸ in his or her utterances. In linguistics, a deictic center is only determined through context; it exists relative to a group on the margins.¹⁹ Looking at the grammatical structure of utterances, Modan asks, who does a particular discourse portray as the “deictic center” of the community? Who is a core member and who is a marginal member? For example, who are the “real” residents of a neighborhood? The deictic center is described with active verbs—as an actor with agency. Conversely, the group at the margins is described with passive and active verbs that suggest passivity, making it so that it grammatically lacks agency.²⁰ Modan uses the “little d” approach in her analysis of the effect of utterances’ linguistic structures, context, and content on their meaning, but remains in dialogue with “Big D” discourse in framing her neighborhood-level study by questions regarding the ways of talking about urban life on a societal level.²¹

Using Modan's theoretical lenses and methodology as a guide—and her bridging of the “little d” and “big D” approaches— this study analyzes the Obama Foundation and CBA Coalition's discourse by examining written and spoken texts. These include the

¹³ Modan, *Turf Wars*, 274.

¹⁴ Modan, 293.

¹⁵ Modan, 275

¹⁶ Modan, 276.

¹⁷ Modan, 277.

¹⁸ Modan, 148.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Modan, 157.

²¹ Modan, 277.

organization's websites, flyers, social media, as well as spoken statements by individual members of the organizations recorded in the press or the organization's own official material. The study also uses images to illustrate particular patterns in the discourse. In addressing the Coalition's discourse, it uses excerpts of previously conducted interviews to illustrate the ideas present in the discourse that also resonate with residents outside the Coalition. Some of the interviewees have been given pseudonyms in order to protect their privacy. The working definition of the expression "use of language" refers to the way that the organizations speak and write. Here the term "discourse" means the pattern of themes and linguistic forms that emerge in this use of language, which in turn suggest particular views and ideas on the part of the speakers. The focus is primarily on thematic content and examines linguistic form only in the context of locating the deictic center of speakers' discourse.

Following Modan, the study begins by looking at the nexus of discourse and neighborhood identity. The question initially at the center of the study is: What does the Foundation and Coalition's use of language around the Obama Presidential Center say about Woodlawn's neighborhood identity in the eyes of the Foundation and particular groups within the neighborhood? How do both groups perceive the changes in Woodlawn? It was predicted that both would leverage ideas about the "true" identity of the neighborhood in order to advance their goals, perhaps referencing South Side history and culture, as well as the figure of Barack Obama. Further reading of the Coalition's and Foundation's texts in more depth, however, revealed that the consistent thread of the discourse of both groups is not a particular conception of Woodlawn identity, but *justification and legitimization of their use of space* in Woodlawn. In other words, both groups explicitly and implicitly give reasons why they have a right to use and shape the space of Woodlawn, and why their reasoning is credible or authoritative. Individual members of the Coalition, as well as the Coalition as a whole, focusing on the issue of the impending displacement of black low-income residents, explicitly talk about their desire and right to remain in Woodlawn and benefit from the positive changes in Woodlawn. In the Foundation's presentation of the character and goals of the Center, it implicitly justifies the location of the Center on the South Side, its plans to bring change to the South Side, and the lack of need for a CBA. As expected, the Foundation and Coalition

justify and legitimize their goals and assertions by evoking South Side history, Barack Obama's relationship to the South Side, and his political career. Both organizations likewise leverage their self-description, an out-of-canon presidential library turned community center and a group of Woodlawn or South Side community organizers respectively.

In this study, "justification" refers to the ideas used by the organizations to respond to the question, "why do you have a right to use and change this space?" "Legitimization" is the process by which the organizations answer the question, "how are you credible or authoritative enough to make these claims?" These terms are in dialogue with the deictic center of the organization's discourse because the organization's conceptions and presentations of power affect the ideas they use to justify and legitimize their geographic claims. The deictic center of a discourse shows what the speaker sees, or at least presents to the public, as the core group with the most power and the marginal group with the least power.

The study also draws from the volume *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*, edited by geographers Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods. In McKittrick's chapter, titled "Freedom Is a Secret," she studies a novel that reimagines the Underground Railroad as a window through which to examine the way particular historicizations of the Underground Railroad produce "geographic assertions." In her study, the geographic assertions are about who has knowledge and where this is mapped—listed as "the claim of black geographic ignorance, the intimate knowledge that black slaves had about their surroundings; and how the Underground Railroad, in the present, gets mapped as a knowable location."²² This expression, "geographic assertions" is adapted here to mean: claims about the use and change of space. In this study, the Foundation and Coalition make geographic assertions when they express their desire to use and remain in the space of Woodlawn.

²² Katherine McKittrick, "Freedom is a Secret" in *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*, ed. Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Adrian Woods, (Toronto, Ont.; Cambridge, Mass.: Between the Lines; South End Press, 2007), 97-111.

Of related interest for this study is geographer Don Mitchell's *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*, inspired by Henri Lefevre's pioneering concept of "the right to the city." Mitchell applies this concept to examine situations in which public spaces are used "wrongly" when an idea prevents marginalized groups from using urban public spaces, for example when homeless populations are prevented from sleeping or sitting in public parks. He asks: What uses of space are considered "appropriate"? Who are the groups setting these norms? How does individual property function as a guarantee of urban citizenship? These questions are tangential to this study, because its focus is not about what is an "appropriate" use of Jackson Park. Though critics of the Obama Center have raised this question, the focus of the Foundation's and Coalition's discourses are about claiming the right to use the space that each group already has. There is no doubt that the Foundation will build the Center in Jackson Park; the Coalition is not primarily concerned about whether or not the Center has the "right" to use this space, but rather, whether their members will be able to stay in the neighborhood as low-income residents when rents rise as a result of the Center's presence. Though the idea of "rights" is in the background, the organizations do not explicitly articulate their assertions in terms of "rights."

The geographic assertions are framed in terms of desire and vision in the case of the Coalition. Members want to remain in their neighborhood, not only to avoid displacement, but also envisioning a kind of development that can benefit them, not only the new residents who will replace former residents. The Foundation frames its geographic assertions in terms of mission and legitimacy: its mission is to bring resources into the South Side and its leadership by a figure whose home is the South Side. Their claims operate on two distinct scales: neighborhood and district.

Chapter 2

Historical Inheritances and Contemporary Dynamics

History of Woodlawn

The area now known as Woodlawn—a portion of the present-day South Side—was annexed to the city of Chicago in 1889. At the time, the majority of the neighborhood's residents were Dutch farmers who had settled there 40 years before and supported themselves by selling produce to residents of Chicago. They numbered between 500 and 1,000. In 1893, however, the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition brought 20,000 new residents, resulting in a sharp increase in population. Until the 1950s, Woodlawn remained mostly white and middle class.²³ In 1940 the neighborhood was 9.01% black while in 1950 the neighborhood was 37.65% black.²⁴ Restrictive covenants that discriminated against black tenants and homebuyers were widely enforced until 1948 when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled them as unenforceable.²⁵ The neighborhood's demographics began to shift with the Great Migration and the resulting White Flight, and by 1960 the area was predominantly black, with more than 80,000 residents. Woodlawn experienced great economic activity in the time after World War II. 63rd Street, one of its main thoroughfares, was called the "Miracle Mile" because of its restaurants, hotels, jazz and blues clubs, banks, ballrooms, and taverns, which added up to nearly 800 businesses and zero vacant lots in the surrounding area of 112 blocks.²⁶

By the 1970s, however, these businesses had gone under, with 63rd Street in decay and with many vacancies.²⁷ Violence had become an organizing force in residents' lives—the result of the large extent of the drug trade, easy access to handguns,

²³ Loïc Wacquant, *Urban Outcasts: Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality*, (Maiden, MA: Polity Press, 2008), 53.

²⁴ "Social Explorer." <http://www.socialexplorer.com/> (accessed October 16, 2016).

²⁵ Emanuel Adeshina, "In Chicago's Woodlawn Neighborhood, Untapped Economic Opportunity," *Chicago Reporter*, July 1, 2015, <http://chicagoreporter.com/in-chicagos-woodlawn-neighborhood-untapped-economic-opportunity/> (accessed October 5, 2016).

²⁶ Wacquant, *Urban Outcasts*, 53.

²⁷ Wacquant, 54.

marginalization from wage labor, and exclusion from City services and home buyer's mortgages. By the late 80s and early 90s, homes, businesses, and schools were heavily secured, with multiple layers of gates and bars.²⁸ What Woodlawn experienced through the second half of the twentieth century fit into the pattern of the surrounding areas: the heart of the South Side lost almost half its population between 1950 and 1980.²⁹ It was during this period that "urban renewal" as an urban planning and development model emerged: the kind of "public policy... [that] played a key role in fostering, sustaining, and, not infrequently, intensifying the separation of the races even in the absence of Jim Crow legislation."³⁰

The history and current fabric of Woodlawn is deeply affected by the "urban renewal" policies heavily influenced by the University of Chicago during the 1950s, when black residents began to move past the former barrier of Cottage Grove Avenue that separated the University from the "Black Belt."³¹ The so-called "Black Belt" was the area on the West and South Side of Chicago to which black Chicagoans had been limited by restrictive covenants and redlining. In the 1930s the "Black Belt" extended from 12th to 79th Streets between Wentworth and Cottage Grove Avenues.³² During the 30s and 40s—the years that led up to the expansion of the "Black Belt" during the postwar era—black people experienced an extreme housing shortage with accompanying spikes in rent.³³ The subsequent overcrowding of the "Black Belt" came with dismal living conditions:

A special 1934 census found that the average black household contained 6.8 persons compared to the 4.7 persons found in the average white household; 66% of the white families studied had fewer than one person per room, whereas only 25.8% of the black families examined met that standard. "Kitchenette" apartments proliferated as real estate speculators and absentee landlords exploited the situation by cutting up large apartments into numerous small ones. These units frequently lacked plumbing and often a solitary bathroom served all the families on a floor. A Chicago Urban League investigation of the Armour Square neighborhood found many homes lacking

²⁸ Wacquant, *Urban Outcasts*, 55.

²⁹ Wacquant, 57-58.

³⁰ Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960*, (1998 ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1983), viii.

³¹ Hirsch, 5.

³² Chicago Public Library, "Housing and Race in Chicago," CPL, Apr 23, 2018, <https://www.chipublic.org/housing/> (accessed April 26, 2018).

³³ For example, black welfare recipients paid rent two to three times as much as rent paid by white welfare recipients. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 18.

the most "ordinary conveniences," such as water and toilets, and the widespread use of kerosene lamps. The infant mortality rate for the area was 16% higher than that for the city as a whole, the tuberculosis rate was twice as high, and the general mortality rate was 5% higher.³⁴

These were the conditions leading up to the "Black Belt" expanding and to its black residents moving into the neighborhoods of Hyde Park, Oakland, and Kenwood.³⁵

The University of Chicago and other Hyde Park community groups such as the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference and the South East Chicago Commission perceived Hyde Park as being in "danger" of becoming part of the neighboring "Black Belt,"³⁶ and thus collaborated in "urban renewal" efforts. By the time this collaboration formed, the City of Chicago had shifted its focus away from razing slums to preserving or "conserving" certain areas of the city under perceived threat, including Hyde Park on its list of areas to "conserve."³⁷

The Blighted Areas Redevelopment Act of 1947 enabled the University to implement a development model, first in Hyde Park and later in Woodlawn, which would serve as a template for federal legislation across the country concerning development.³⁸ A prominent Chicago lawyer called Julian H. Levi (a University of Chicago graduate) helped the University develop an urban renewal plan, persuading the Illinois State Legislature to revise the related "Neighborhood Redevelopment Corporation Act of 1947 to give the University the right of eminent domain (if a redevelopment corporation secured the approval of 60 percent of the owners of property in a specific area, the corporation could take independent legal action to remove blighted properties)."³⁹ Historian Arnold Hirsch argues that the University tried to "create an economically upgraded and predominantly white neighborhood,"⁴⁰ an effort which extended into the Woodlawn neighborhood and resulted in the demolition of "blighted" properties and subsequent forced housing relocations.⁴¹

³⁴ Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 18.

³⁵ Hirsch, 5.

³⁶ Hirsch, 136.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Hirsch, 137.

³⁹ John W. Boyer, *The University of Chicago: A History*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 346.

⁴⁰ Hirsch, 127.

⁴¹ Boyer, *The University of Chicago: A History*, 35.

Contemporary Woodlawn: Development and the Obama Presidential Center

According to the most recent U.S. census in 2010, the population of Woodlawn at the time was 23,740, out of Chicago's 2,695,598—0.88% of the City's total population—with a population density of 11,447 people per square mile. The income per capita was \$18,928 and the percent of households below the poverty level was 28.3%. The unemployment rate was 17.3%.⁴² Woodlawn's residents are 89.8% black (“alone or in combination”) and 7.7% white non-Hispanic.⁴³

The Obama Center comes as Woodlawn's real estate market is growing with rapidly mounting speed, with the neighborhood's vacant lots offering opportunities for development (see figures 9-12). A 2015 study by architecture firm Gentler found that Woodlawn has an “estimated 59 acres of vacant city-owned land, with an additional 85 acres of vacant land owned privately.”⁴⁴ Woodlawn's real estate market was recognized nationally in 2017 by real estate brokerage Redfin: “In January, we published our 5th annual Hottest Neighborhoods report, identifying the 10 neighborhoods across the country that, based on Redfin.com user data and insights from local Redfin agents, were likely to see fast growth in home values this year.”⁴⁵

⁴² “Woodlawn -- Crime in Chicagoland -- Chicagotribune.com,” *Crime in Chicagoland*. <http://crime.chicagotribune.com/chicago/community/woodlawn> (accessed Oct 20, 2016).

⁴³ Jennifer, Clary, “Chicago Neighborhood Indicators 2000-2011, Social IMPACT Research Center's analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2000 Decennial Census and 2007-2011 5-year American Community Survey,” *Social IMPACT Research Center, a Heartland Alliance Program*, Jan 9, 2013, http://www.ilpovertyreport.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Chicago_Neighborhood_Indicators_00-11_130109.pdf (accessed Oct 15, 2016).

⁴⁴ Cholke, Sam, “Will Obama's Library Help The South Side? New Group Says That's Their Goal,” *DNAinfo*, Mar 13, 2017, <https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20170313/jackson-highlands/barack-obama-presidential-library-woodlawn-washington-park-south-shore/> (accessed March 15, 2018).

⁴⁵ Jon Whitely, “Hot or Not? Redfin Reviews its Hottest Neighborhood Predictions and Identifies 10 Areas that are Just Heating Up,” *Redfin*, Aug 18, 2017, <https://www.redfin.com/blog/2017/08/hot-or-not-hottest-neighborhood-predictions.html> (accessed Feb 20, 2018)

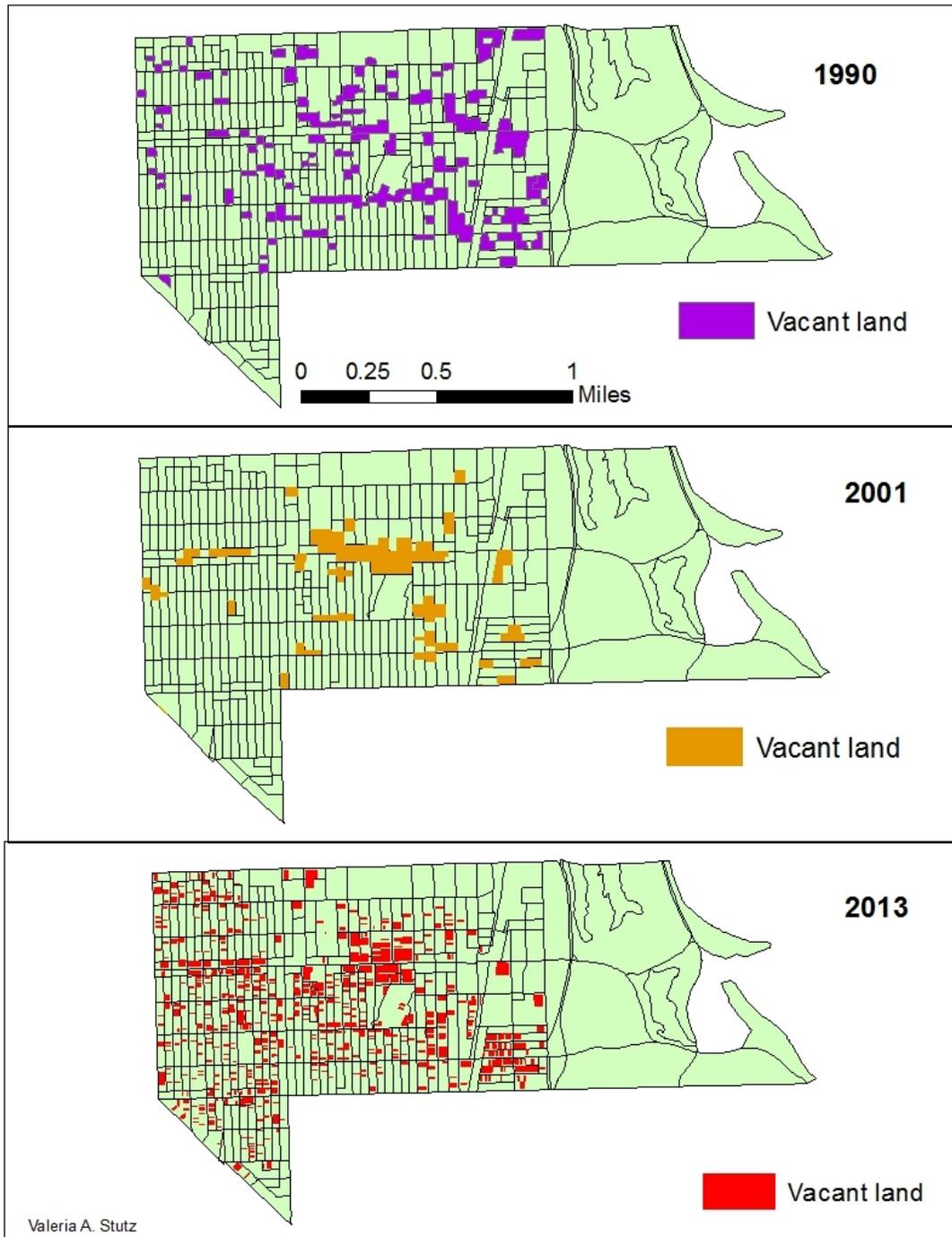


Fig. 9. Vacant Lots in Woodlawn⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Chicago Data Portal, *Geographic Boundaries*. Chicago: *City of Chicago*, January 3, 2017, <https://data.cityofchicago.org/Facilities-Geographic-Boundaries/Boundaries-Community-Areas-current-cauq-8yn6/data> (accessed Feb 15, 2017); Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), *Land Use Inventory for Northeast Illinois, 1990*. Chicago: CMAP, Sept 28, 2016,



Fig. 9. Vacant lot in Woodlawn, Ellis Ave. and 61st St.

April 2017

(courtesy of the author)



Fig. 10. Same lot: developers “Greenline Homes” begin construction

April 2018

(courtesy of the author)

<https://datahub.cmap.illinois.gov/dataset/land-use-inventory-for-northeast-illinois-1990> (accessed Feb 15, 2017); Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), *Land Use Inventory for Northeast Illinois, 2001*. Chicago: CMAP, Jan 6, 2015, <https://datahub.cmap.illinois.gov/dataset/land-use-inventory-for-northeastillinois-2001> (accessed Feb 15, 2017); Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), *Land Use Inventory for Northeast Illinois, 2013*. Chicago: CMAP, Feb 27, 2017, <https://datahub.cmap.illinois.gov/dataset/land-use-inventory-for-northeast-illinois-2013> (accessed Feb 15, 2017); United States Census Bureau, *TIGER/ Line with Selected Demographic and Economic Data: 2010 Census: Population & Housing Unit Counts— Blocks*. 2017, Washington DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017, <https://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/tiger-data.html> (accessed Feb 15, 2017).



Fig. 11. “Newly Rehabbed Apartments”
by Developer “Wolcott Real Property” in Woodlawn
(courtesy of the author)



Fig. 12. Cash offer for homes in Woodlawn
(courtesy of the author)

According to the Redfin study, Woodlawn was the country's "third hottest neighborhood"⁴⁷ in terms of the growth of its off-market home values as compared to its metro area's off-market home values. Off-market homes are those not listed in multiple listing services (MLSs), the databases that real estate agents use to list properties⁴⁸ and are thus only available in exclusive deals between real estate agents and wealthy buyers.⁴⁹ In the first half of 2017, Woodlawn's off-market home values increased by 23 percent, a change much greater than the Chicago area's overall 4.6 percent.⁵⁰ The most recent high-profile real estate development plans are the University of Chicago's new dorm, hotel, and convention center.⁵¹ The new residential hall and dining commons, called Woodlawn Residential Commons, will be located between Woodlawn and University Avenues, just north of 61st Street. Its construction is to begin the summer of 2018 and officially open for the 2020-2021 academic year to house 1,200 students.⁵² The 180-room hotel, called The Study at the University of Chicago, will be built on the corner of 60th Street and Dorchester Avenue. It will include a fitness center, full-service hotel, and meeting rooms. Adjacent to the hotel, at 60th Street and Woodlawn Avenue, will be the conference center, named the Rubenstein Forum. It will host academic conferences, workshops, lectures, meetings, and ceremonies.⁵³

Additionally, the University recently opened its newly-constructed University of Chicago Charter School-Woodlawn, in time for the 2017-18 academic year. It is located

⁴⁷ Jon Whitely, "Hot or Not? Redfin Reviews its Hottest Neighborhood Predictions and Identifies 10 Areas that are Just Heating Up," *Redfin*, Aug 18, 2017, <https://www.redfin.com/blog/2017/08/hot-or-not-hottest-neighborhood-predictions.html> (accessed Feb 20, 2018).

⁴⁸ Redfin, "*Redfin Estimate*," *Redfin*, Feb 2018, <https://www.redfin.com/redfin-estimate> (accessed March 20, 2018).

⁴⁹ Laira Agadoni, "Sell Your House Without Putting It on the Market," *Trulia*, Jan 3, 2018, <https://www.trulia.com/blog/how-to-sell-your-house-pocket-listing/> (accessed March 5, 2018).

⁵⁰ Sam Cholke, "Woodlawn Home Values Soar as Obama Library Draws New Interest To Area," *DNAinfo*, Sept 12, 2017, <https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20170912/woodlawn/home-values-increase-redfin-barack-obama-presidential-library-center-prices-real-estate-markets-hot-jackson-park/> (accessed Feb 15, 2018).

⁵¹ Grace Hauck, "The Maroon Weekly, E3," *Chicago Maroon*, Mar, 2018, <https://soundcloud.com/chicagomaroonpodcast/the-maroon-weekly-e3> (accessed Mar 5, 2018).

⁵² University of Chicago, "University of Chicago to continue expansion of College housing," *UChicago News*, Jan 23, 2018, <https://news.uchicago.edu/article/2018/01/23/university-chicago-continue-expansion-college-housing> (accessed Apr 14, 2018).

⁵³ Calmetta Coleman, "UChicago provides construction and safety updates at Woodlawn Meeting," *UChicago's Office of Civic Engagement*, May 11, 2017, <https://civicengagement.uchicago.edu/features/uchicago-provides-construction-and-safety-updates-at-woodlawn-meeting/> (accessed April 14, 2017).

at 63rd Street and University Avenue.⁵⁴ From 2008 to 2014, the University spent \$18 million to buy 26 properties in the nearby Washington Park neighborhood. Alongside the land purchased in 2016 for the University's new charter school, these purchases are the first made in Hyde Park's surrounding neighborhoods in nearly fifty years. Its last effort in the 60s received pushback from the community-organizing Woodlawn Organization, and as a result, in 1964 the University publicly pledged to keep the campus north of 61st street.⁵⁵

Other recent construction in the area includes MetroSquash, an educational and recreational center, the Woodlawn Resource Center, five new apartment buildings by the non-profit developer POAH (Preservation of Affordable Housing), and proposed plans for a Jewel grocery store on the corner of 61st street and Cottage Grove.⁵⁶

The observations of one Woodlawn resident, called Lorenzo for the purpose of the study, exemplify the kind of change in Woodlawn to which quantitative data points:

Watching the neighborhood change in front of my eyes... And it's changed so much since I've been here. You know, re-development with the tearing down of the projects, the tearing down of the housing projects on Cottage. It's been quite an experience, you know, seeing the demographics change.

I think the property value's going up and I think rent's gonna go up... It's going to be just a matter of time before a lot of us have to move. I mean, that's the only thing that's scary about that... See with me, I'm going to school and soon I'll be worth a few more dollars, so I could probably maintain and manage. But the people that's rent is only \$800 for a two-bedroom, if that goes up to 1,000 or 1,200 then they're not gonna be able to do that. If it goes up an extra \$50...let alone, hundreds.

It's gonna be a total shift, probably the next ten, fifteen years, I can guarantee you... This is going to be Hyde Park Two. When the businesses start coming in and the rent starts going up and you know, people start moving out and the crime goes way down, it's going to look very attractive to anyone.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ University of Chicago, "New Woodlawn Facility Officially Opens," *UChicago Charter*, <https://www.uchicagocharter.org/page.cfm?p=538&newsid=30> (accessed Apr 14, 2018).

⁵⁵ Sam Cholke, "U. of C. Buys 26 Properties on the South Side Ahead of Obama Library Decision," *DNAINfo*, Dec 10, 2014, <https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20141210/hyde-park/u-of-cs-washington-park-land-grab-could-secure-obama-library-for-s-side/> (accessed Mar 5, 2016).

⁵⁶ Mary Wisniewski, "Can a new 'L' construction project turn a dark Woodlawn intersection into a bright spot?," *Chicago Tribune*, Feb 8, 2018, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/columnists/wisniewski/ct-met-cta-cottage-grove-getting-around-20180204-story.html> (accessed Feb 20, 2018).

⁵⁷ Lorenzo (Woodlawn resident), interviewed by Valeria Stutz, Chicago, IL, November 6th, 2016.

It is in the context of these changes that community groups have developed stances concerning the Obama Center and its effect, unintended or intended, on the area.

Since the announcement that the Obama Presidential Center would be built on the South Side (see table 1), several community and non-community groups have mobilized in response to the changes the Center could bring to the South Side. Alderman Willie Cochran summarized Woodlawn residents' reactions by saying, "The residents have mixed feelings [about the Library]. Happy because of the promise of hope, jobs, safety, and a vibrant community with more food choices. Temper that with fear of displacement and strangers they know nothing about."⁵⁸ Besides the CBA Coalition, City of Chicago, University of Chicago administration, and Obama Foundation, the groups that have responded most prominently to the news of the Center include Friends of the Park, the Cultural Landscape Preservation (based in D.C.), a group of University of Chicago faculty, citywide independent media, and the newly-formed Woodlawn, Washington Park, and South Shore Community and Economic Development Organization (WWPPSS) (see table 2). Without surveys, it is not possible to generalize the positions of the wider public or of residents in the surrounding neighborhood.

⁵⁸ Stan West, "South Siders on Obama Library: Listen to Us!" *Chicago Defender*, May 1, 2017, <https://chicagodefender.com/2017/05/01/obamalibrary/> (accessed July 1, 2017).

Table 1. Timeline

December 2014— University of Chicago, one of the four semifinalists for the Obama Library site bids, submits proposal to the Obama Foundation to bring the Library to the South Side, either to Jackson Park or Washington Park.

March 2015—The Chicago City Council unanimously approves (47-0) the use of a portion of Jackson Park or Washington Park’s parkland for the Obama Library.

May 2015—Obama Foundation announces its selection of the University of Chicago’s bid for the Obama Presidential Library

August 2015—Request for Qualifications for architectural designs are announced and 144 architectural firms worldwide respond.

December 2015—Foundation announces seven architectural firms chosen as the semifinalists for the Library’s design and opens the formal Request for Proposals.

March 2016 – Seven architect semifinalists meet one-on-one with President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama to show concepts for both proposed sites, Washington, and Jackson Parks.

June 2016 – New York architects Tod Williams and Billy Tsien are chosen.

Summer 2016—Obama Library South Side CBA Coalition forms & conducts town-hall meetings with South Side residents to design the initial CBA proposal.

September 2016—Coalition officially launches its campaign.

December 2016 – Obama Foundation announces its final location as Jackson Park.

Summer 2017—CBA Coalition conducts series of town-hall meetings to flesh out their seven development principles.

December 2017—By this time, Foundation has changed the name from “Barack Obama Library” to the “Barack Obama Presidential Center”

January 2018— Obama Foundation reveals a revised design plan for the Obama Center, including a sleeker version of the center’s museum tower, which had been critiqued as being too tall.

Summer 2018 – The design team submits the final proposal of the Center's design to the City of Chicago.

End of 2018—Beginning of construction.

2021 – Anticipated ribbon cutting ceremony.

Table 2. Who are the stakeholders? What are their stances?

We welcome the Center with a CBA	We welcome the Center without CBA	Relocate outside public park
Obama Library South Side Community Benefits Agreement Coalition	Obama Foundation	Cultural Landscape Foundation
Anecdotaly: Low-income or working-class South Siders (including West Woodlawn)	Alderdwoman Leslie Hairston, 5 th ward (location of Center)	200 University of Chicago faculty members
	WWPSS (Washington Park, and South Shore Community and Economic Development Organization)	Friends of the Park
	Anecdotaly: Middle and upper-class South Siders (including East Woodlawn)	Mixed reactions
		Citywide independent media (Chicago Tribune, Sun Times, DNAinfo, Chicago Reporter, Chicago Defender, South Side Weekly)

WWPPSS is worth expanding upon because of its relationship with the Obama Foundation and because it provides a direct counterpoint to the CBA Coalition's campaign. WWPPSS has similar stated goals to the Coalition: making sure residents from the surrounding neighborhood benefit from the Center's presence and are not displaced, and encouraging economic activity in the neighborhoods. The main difference, however, is the organization's membership composition and anti-CBA stance. In 2017 the Chicago Community Trust—the downtown-based foundation who funded half of the new nonprofit with \$25,000—recruited the board members of the newly-formed organization. The board includes leaders of the Network of Woodlawn⁵⁹, Washington Park Consortium,⁶⁰ Obama Foundation, University of Chicago, and Chicago Community Trust.

Among those representing community organizations are the area's most influential figures: the reverends Torrey Barrett, Leon Finney, and Dr. Byron Brazier. Torrey Barrett is the executive director of the nonprofit Keep Loving Each Other (KLEO) in Washington Park; Leon Finney is the co-founder of the Woodlawn Organization formed in the 60s; and Dr. Bryon Brazier is the pastor of Apostolic Church of God.⁶¹ Both Finney and Brazier own significant amounts of land in Woodlawn and have been in consistent contact with the University of Chicago.⁶² Residents who have lived in the area recognize them as influential figures; one columnist for the Chicago Defender called both "aristocrats."⁶³ Other powerful members of the board include the Obama Foundation

⁵⁹The nonprofit community-development organization focuses on education, health, safety, and economic development. Network of Woodlawn, "About," Network of Woodlawn Facebook Page, https://www.facebook.com/pg/NetworkofWoodlawn/about/?ref=page_internal (accessed April 24, 2018).

⁶⁰ Founded by Chicago Alderman Willie Cochran (20th ward), this committee developed the prominent "Quality-of-Life Plan," a large-scale plan with the goal of community and economic development. Its steering committee includes IL State Senator Hon. Mattie Hunter, member of 5th District Office of Illinois State Rep. Ken Dunkin Donna-Hampton-Smith, Sonya Malunda from University of Chicago Community Engagement office, and pastors from local churches, such as Rev. Torrey Barrett. New Communities Program and Washington Park Consortium, "Washington Park Quality of Life Plan," *New Communities Program*, http://www.newcommunities.org/cmadoocs/WashPark_QofLPlan_2009.pdf (accessed April 25, 2018).

⁶¹ Lynn Sweet, "Arne Duncan is co-chair of new nonprofit related to Obama Center," *Chicago Tribune*, August 29, 2017, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/chicago-politics/arne-duncan-co-chair-of-new-non-profit-related-to-obama-center/> (accessed March 12, 2018).

⁶² Andre, Anthony, and Kevin (Woodlawn residents), interviewed by Valeria Stutz, Chicago, IL, November 23rd, 2016.

⁶³ Stan West, "South Siders on Obama Library: Listen to Us!" *Chicago Defender*, May 1, 2017. <https://chicagodefender.com/2017/05/01/obamalibrary/> (accessed July 1, 2017).

Vice President Civic Engagement Chair Michael Strautmanis, Senior Adviser to the University of Chicago Pres. Robert Zimmer, Susan Sher, who is also the former White House Chief of Staff to Michelle Obama, and City Hall members Andrea Zopp—the Deputy Mayor who oversees Obama Center matters for the City—and City Planning Chief David Reifman.⁶⁴

In March of 2017, WWPPSS was unveiled publicly, at that point not yet having an official name, but with the express mission to capture the economic benefits of the Obama Presidential Center for the surrounding neighborhoods.⁶⁵ A CBA is not part of their strategy, and individual members have said publicly that they disagree with a CBA. WWPPSS’s website, as well as the Obama Foundation’s website, does not state who founded the organization, but the Chicago Tribune reports that it was created by the Obama Foundation, the City of Chicago, the University of Chicago and the Chicago Community Trust, with help from the Network of Woodlawn and the Washington Park Consortium.⁶⁶ DNAinfo likewise reported that Rev. Torrey Barrett, the executive director of the Washington Park Consortium, and Dr. Byron Brazier, the chairman of the Network of Woodlawn’s board, were leaders in the planning process.⁶⁷ The Obama Foundation’s leadership in forming the nonprofit is also confirmed by the presence of Michael Strautmanis and Susan Sher, officials in the Foundation and the former White House staff, respectively. Additionally, Obama’s former Education Secretary Arne Duncan is one of the two co-chairs of WWPPSS.⁶⁸ The organization has stated that its board will lead the transition into its becoming an independent organization.⁶⁹ The network of

⁶⁴ Lynn Sweet, “SWEET: Big job for Obama Center nonprofit,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, August 30, 2017, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/sweet-new-non-profit-tied-to-obama-presidential-center-names-board/> (accessed March 12, 2018).

⁶⁵ Lynn Sweet, “Arne Duncan is co-chair of new nonprofit related to Obama Center,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, August 29, 2017, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/chicago-politics/arne-duncan-co-chair-of-new-non-profit-related-to-obama-center/> (accessed March 12, 2018).

⁶⁶ Lynn Sweet, “SWEET: Big job for Obama Center nonprofit,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, August 30, 2017, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/sweet-new-non-profit-tied-to-obama-presidential-center-names-board/> (accessed March 12, 2018).

⁶⁷ Stan West, “South Siders on Obama Library: Listen to Us!” *Chicago Defender*, May 1, 2017, <https://chicagodefender.com/2017/05/01/obamalibrary/> (accessed July 1, 2017).

⁶⁸ Lynn Sweet, “Arne Duncan is co-chair of new nonprofit related to Obama Center,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, August 29, 2017, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/chicago-politics/arne-duncan-co-chair-of-new-non-profit-related-to-obama-center/> (accessed March 12, 2018).

⁶⁹ “Home,” *Woodlawn, Washington Park and South Shore Community and Economic Development Organization*, <https://wwpss.org> (accessed March 12, 2018).

organizations in Woodlawn and the nearby neighborhoods is too complex and intertwined to be able to parse into two “sides.” In broad strokes, however, the WWPPSS represents the “establishment” and the CBA Coalition, the “grassroots.”

Regarding the stance of Chicago independent media on the Obama Center, there are several prominent commentators: *Chicago Tribune* architecture critic Blair Kamin, *Chicago Tribune* columnist Dahleen Glanton, and *Chicago Reporter* contributor Jitu Brown. Kamin argues that the construction of the Obama Center in Jackson Park will not destroy the legacy of Jackson Park’s famous 19th century architect Frederick Law Olmsted. He argues that the criticized aspects of the center’s design, such as the museum building’s large tower, can be improved but should not be outright rejected. He suggests that the construction plans are not automatically antithetical to Olmsted’s vision for the Jackson Park because Olmsted “embraced the need to adapt his parks to changing times and circumstances. Just because he might not have agreed with all aspects of the Obama center proposal doesn’t mean those plans won’t have a major beneficial impact on his landscape and the lives of the people who use it.”⁷⁰

Dahleen Glanton, also from the *Chicago Tribune*, writes negatively about the CBA proposal, characterizing it as ungrateful and counterproductive to improving conditions on the South Side. Explicitly addressing herself to African-American South Siders, she appeals to her readers to fully support the Obama Center, saying that it is absurd for Obama to need to convince residents that the Center will be a positive development. In her eyes, the South Side is so accustomed to disinvestment that its residents cannot recognize a positive investment: “[s]ometimes we can become so accustomed to not having anything that we forget that we deserve everything. We fear that change could rob of us the few crumbs we have been able to scrape together for ourselves.”⁷¹ Conversely, Jitu Brown of the *Chicago Reporter* argues in favor of a CBA, writing that because of the history of racism in Chicago, it is absolutely necessary to have a written legal agreement between the Foundation and interested developers in order to

⁷⁰ Blair Kamin, "Obama center plans won't destroy Olmsted's park—they should be improved, no rejected." *Chicago Tribune*, Jan 22, 2018, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/columnists/kamin/ct-met-obama-center-kamin-0119-story.html> (accessed Jan 22, 2018).

⁷¹ Dahleen Glanton, "It's time for a heart-to-heart with African-Americans who are resisting the Obama center," *Chicago Tribune*, Mar 1, 2018, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/columnists/glanton/ct-obama-library-national-archives-dahleen-glanton-met-20170513-column.html> (accessed Mar 2, 2018).

guarantee that the Foundation's development partners will invest without displacing residents. In his eyes, "While Obama urged residents to "trust" him, we have good reason to want his assurances in writing... We as black Americans are being purged from major American cities, and this disruption of our lives, political power and history is met with a deafening silence from our first black president."⁷²

Canon of Presidential Libraries

Among its antecedent presidential libraries, the Obama Presidential Center stands out as a departure from tradition in its self-presentation, funding structure, and vision for itself. The Presidential Library system as we know it today formally began in 1939 on the initiative of President Franklin Roosevelt.⁷³ Jodi Kanter, author of *Presidential Libraries as Performance: Curating American Character from Herbert Hoover to George W. Bush*, summarizes the birth of the presidential library:

Before this time, presidential materials were disposed of at the discretion of the chief executive... Roosevelt changed this practice by preserving not only his papers but his collections... gifts, and personal memorabilia for public consumption... It was Roosevelt himself who conceived of the administrative plan which would be the blueprint for future libraries: the library building would be privately built and then given to the federal government to run as a public institution.⁷⁴

Presidential libraries have historically functioned as museums—preserving a president's legacy and presenting a particular narrative of his presidency, personal life, and aspirations. The National Archives' mission statement about the presidential library system is, "Presidential Libraries promote understanding of the presidency and the American experience. We preserve and provide access to historical materials, support research, and create interactive programs and exhibits that educate and inspire."⁷⁵ A library's presidential foundation raises the money necessary to build the library and prepares the opening exhibit. The National Archive of Records Administration (NARA)

⁷²Jitu Brown, "Why the Obama library needs a community benefits agreement," *Chicago Reader*, Oct 30, 2017, <http://www.chicagoreporter.com/why-the-obama-library-needs-a-community-benefits-agreement/>, (accessed November 15, 2017).

⁷³"Presidential Library History," National Archives, <https://www.archives.gov/presidential-libraries/about/history.html> (accessed March 13, 2018).

⁷⁴Jodi Kanter, *Presidential Libraries As Performance: Curating American Character From Herber Hoover to George W. Bush* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2016), 2.

⁷⁵"Presidential Library History," National Archives, <https://www.archives.gov/presidential-libraries/about/history.html> (accessed March 13, 2018).

appoints a museum director, administrates the library on an ongoing basis, and legally owns many of the artifacts and paperwork that will make up the library's core exhibits. The idea is for the presidential library to transfer materials from private to public ownership: immediately after the foundation completes its construction, the NARA steps in to administer and maintain the library. Presidential papers become the property of the NARA once the presidential term of service ends. This private-to-public transition is seldom neat, since presidential foundations often continue to administer parts of the institution.⁷⁶

The Obama Center inverts the two principal components of presidential libraries: their purpose and administrative structure. Already, just through its name, the Obama Presidential Center breaks away from the "library" or "museum" categories. The way the Foundation conceives of the Center's mission and purpose is also different. As Kanter points out, American museums—with presidential libraries falling under this category—operate in the tension between educating and inspiring its audiences to action.⁷⁷ Though the Foundation does envision the Obama Center as a space for education and inspiration, its vision goes beyond that of traditional museums or libraries, characterizing the Center's essence as a space for experimentation and collaboration, and as an economic resource for Chicago, especially its South Side:

We're building a campus for active citizenship in the heart of Chicago's South Side... and an economic engine for the city of Chicago... More than a building housing documents from the past, we want this to be a place for visitors to play a real role in building our collective future... Obama Presidential Center will be a living, working campus — an ongoing project where we will shape, together, what it means to be a good citizen in the 21st century.... For the Obamas, selecting the South Side of Chicago as the location for the Obama Presidential Center represents both a return home and an investment in the city's future.⁷⁸

The Foundation explicitly stresses that the Center will go beyond remembering the past and housing historical documents; as will be seen, the Foundation also explicitly minimizes the Center's museum component. In this way, the Foundation implies that it is

⁷⁶ Kanter, *Presidential Libraries as Performance*, 15-16.

⁷⁷ Kanter, 8.

⁷⁸ Obama Foundation. *Obama Foundation*. www.obama.org (accessed 22 Jan. 2018).

different from past presidential libraries. It is a new entity, not claiming a place in the canon, but openly embracing a vision for a new kind of space.

The Obama Center's break away from federal funding and the National Archives' administration of the library, likewise steps out of convention. NARA has administered all the presidential libraries since Hoover's. The libraries not run by NARA—instead by universities and independent foundations—are those constructed before the “Presidential Library System” was established by the National Government. The role of NARA as administrators means that though a library's construction is funded privately by its presidential foundation, the library's administration and long-term management is funded publicly by the portion of the \$65 million in taxpayer money allocated each year to run all of the libraries. The Obama Foundation, however, will administer the Obama Center and has turned down its portion of federal funding.⁷⁹ Unlike all other presidential libraries, the Center will not house Obama's papers, which will instead be digitized,⁸⁰ to be viewed online.⁸¹ As discussed later in the study, the departure from the canon of presidential libraries, in the form of the vision, content, and administration of the Center, will become relevant for the ways the Center justifies and legitimizes its presence in and use of Jackson Park and the South Side.

Foundation's Response to a CBA

The Obama Foundation has dismissed the idea of a CBA, saying that it is not appropriate for its situation, nor inclusive enough of a variety of community interests. The Coalition has met with Michael Strautmanis, Foundation Vice President of Civic Engagement, but has not entered in any negotiations.⁸² Obama himself has said the following during public meetings:

⁷⁹Dahleen Glanton, "Breaking free of federal money, Obama library could better serve Chicago," *Chicago Tribune*, May 15, 2017, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/columnists/glanton/ct-obama-library-national-archives-dahleen-glanton-met-20170513-column.html> (accessed Jul 28, 2017).

⁸⁰Philip H Devoe, "Obama's Presidential Library Is Change Chicagoans Can't Believe In," *National Review*, Dec 20, 2017, <https://www.nationalreview.com/2017/12/barack-obama-library-plans-anger-chicago-residents/> (accessed Mar 13, 2016).

⁸¹Blair Kamin, "Obama center plans won't destroy Olmsted's park—they should be improved, no Rejected," *Chicago Tribune*, Jan 22, 2018, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/columnists/kamin/ct-met-obama-center-kamin-0119-story.html> (accessed Jan 22, 2018).

⁸²Yunhan Wen. "More Say From the South Side." *South Side Weekly*, May 23, 2017. <https://southsideweekly.com/south-siders-push-more-say-obama-center/> (accessed Jul 27, 2017).

The issue I have with a CBA in this situation, it's not inclusive enough because I would then be siding with who? What particular organizations would end up speaking for everybody in that community?....⁸³

The community benefit agreement concept is actually one that can be a really useful tool...if you have a bunch of developers coming in that want to build a high-rise or for-profit enterprise in your neighborhood...But here's the thing: we are a nonprofit and aren't making money. We are just bringing money to the community.⁸⁴

David Simas, Foundation CEO and Obama's former political director in the White House made a similar statement, saying that the Center in itself is "a community benefit: a museum to upgrade a public park... This is not a private project. The model doesn't fit."⁸⁵

Additionally, the Foundation does not conceive of gentrification as a possibility in the near future, arguing, rather, that the lack of economic development is the principal problem. In Obama's words,

A lot of times, people get nervous about gentrification and understandably so. It is not my experience ... that the big problem on the South Side has been too much development, too much economic activity, too many people being displaced because all these folks from Lincoln Park are filling in to the South Side. That's not what's happening. We have such a long way to go before you will start seeing the prospect of gentrification... (My daughter) Malia's kids might have to worry about that. Right now, we've got to worry about broken curbs and trash and boarded-up buildings. That's what we really need to work on.⁸⁶

Consequently, Obama and the Foundation as a whole do not regard the Center's presence on the South Side as a trigger for new development, nor as an accelerator of existing development, whose ultimate consequence is displacement, intentional or not.

⁸³ Grace Hauck, "The Maroon Weekly, E3," *Chicago Maroon*, Mar, 2018, <https://soundcloud.com/chicagomaroonpodcast/the-maroon-weekly-e3> (accessed Mar 5, 2018).

⁸⁴ Lolly Bowean, "Obama personally answers questions at Chicago presidential library forum," *Chicago Tribune*, Sept 15, 2017, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/obamacenter/ct-obama-public-forum-library-20170915-story.html> (accessed Jan 15, 2018).

⁸⁵ Edward McLelland. "Meet the Community Organizers Fighting Against...Barack Obama." *Politico*, February 28, 2018. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/02/28/barack-obama-library-chicago-217093> (accessed Mar 1, 2018).

⁸⁶ Lolly Bowean and Blair Kamin, "Obama makes pitch for his center in Jackson Park: 'Too much development' has not been a problem for the South Side," *Chicago Tribune*, Feb 27, 2018, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/obamacenter/ct-met-obama-presidential-center-20180227-story.html> (accessed Feb 28, 2018).

Chapter 3

Analysis of the Public Discourse of the CBA Coalition

The Obama South Side Community Benefits Agreement Coalition

The CBA Campaign was founded by South Side Together Organizing for Power (STOP), Kenwood Oakland Community Organization (KOCO), Bronzeville Regional Collective (BRC), and the Prayer and Action Collective (whose name recently changed to UChicago for a CBA). They make up the four founding members of the Coalition. STOP is based in Woodlawn, KOCO in Kenwood, BRC in Bronzeville, and UChicago for a CBA in Hyde Park. Some of these organizations had worked together previously in the past for a South Side Trauma Center. A group of churches, local organizations, South Side youth, and University of Chicago student groups organized for five years, mounting pressure on the University of Chicago to open a Level-1 Adult Care Trauma Center on the South Side. They succeeded and the trauma center is currently under construction.

STOP and KOCO in particular have a long history of successful community organizing, led by low-income South Siders. STOP organizes tenants in subsidized housing. For example, a few years ago, STOP worked with the tenants who lived in a subsidized housing development on Cottage Grove and 61st Street called Grove Parc, owned by Rev. Leon Finney. In the words of a STOP member, tenants' "living conditions were almost unbearable": rodent and bedbug infestations, lack of heat in December, holes in the floor, and leaking radiators. STOP helped organize the tenant associations, and together they brought the nonprofit developer POAH (Preservation of Affordable Housing) to restore the building's living conditions for the tenants.⁸⁷ POAH develops, owns, and manages affordable rental apartments in the Chicago area. In 2009, it purchased the dilapidated Grove Park property from its previous owner, Rev. Leon

⁸⁷Andre, Anthony, and Kevin (Woodlawn residents), interviewed by Valeria Stutz, Chicago, IL, November 23rd, 2016.

Finney, and replaced it with renovated mixed income housing between 61st and 63rd street, now called The Jackson, The Grant, and the Burnham buildings.⁸⁸ The new buildings house the same number of as the former Grove Parc's units—all affordable, at 30% market rate—as well as additional market-rate units.⁸⁹ Subsequently, all of Grove Parc's residents had the opportunity to return and continue to pay subsidized rent. In a similar vein, KOCO has been working on pushing forward legislation on rent control.

The central role of these two organizations in the CBA Coalition means that the Coalition's approach is the Saul Alinsky⁹⁰ model of community organizing (developed in Woodlawn in the 60s), which focuses on building communities' power. Community organizing can be defined as,

the process of building power that includes people with a problem in defining their community, defining the problems that they wish to address, the solutions they wish to pursue, and the methods they will use to accomplish their solutions. The organization will identify the people and structures that need to be part of these solutions, and, by persuasion or confrontation, negotiate with them to accomplish the goals of the community. In the process, organizations will build a democratically controlled community institution - the organization - that can take on further problems and embody the will and power of that community over time⁹¹

Though apt in describing the way organizers leverage power and identify central problems, this definition does not address the heterogeneity of “community.” When members of the Coalition use the word “community,” they refer to a particular group within Woodlawn and nearby neighborhoods, namely, low-to-middle-income residents. The Coalition's organizing strategies and campaign developments are not in the scope of this study, but it is important to keep the “community organizing” model in mind, as it is the framework within which the Coalition works towards a CBA.

⁸⁸ Preservation of Affordable Housing, “Woodlawn- A Neighborhood Renewed,” *POAH*, <http://www.poahchicago.org/woodlawn-a-neighborhood-renewed> (accessed Apr 16, 2018).

⁸⁹ Wendell Huston, “Woodlawn ‘Getting Better’ With Redevelopment of Old Grove Apartments,” *DNAInfo*, Nov 21, 2013, <https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20131121/woodlawn/woodlawn-getting-better-with-redevelopment-of-old-grove-parc-apartments/> (accessed Apr 16, 2018).

⁹⁰ Saul David Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals: A Practical Primer for Realistic Radicals*. (New York: Random House, 1971).

⁹¹ Susan Stall and Randy Stoecker, “Community Organizing or Organizing Community? Gender and the Crafts of Empowerment,” *COMM-ORG: The On-Line Conference on Community Organizing and Development*, Nov 1997, <https://comm-org.wisc.edu/papers96/gender2.html> (accessed Apr 17, 2018).

The Coalition was formed in 2016 and conducted its first round of town-hall meetings in the summer of 2016 to gather the content that would comprise the CBA development principles. In September 2016 it formally launched the campaign. Since then, the Coalition has grown to beyond the founding members (see table 3 for participating organizations). The following summer, in 2017, the Coalition organized a second set of town hall meetings in order to flesh out the details of the general development areas such as “housing,” “economic development,” and “sustainability.” The CBA principles, as currently listed on the Coalition’s website, consist of the following (see the Appendix for the complete ordinance addressed to the City of Chicago).

Table 2. CBA Development Principles

In keeping with the commitment of President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama to strengthen families, the Obama Library South Side Community Benefits Agreement Coalition (the “Coalition”) celebrates the opportunity of the Obama Presidential Center in concert with the University of Chicago and the City of Chicago (collectively, the “Library”) to bring unprecedented redevelopment benefits to households in the neighborhoods surrounding the site of the future Library.

As critical stakeholders, we are committed to participation that reflects our right to self-determination, equitable development, and a legally binding community benefits agreement. To guarantee these rights the Coalition has cultivated a diverse group of perspectives, skills, and goals to coordinate, collaborate, and engage with the Library, including seasoned community development practitioners and the leadership of low-income and working African American tenants, home and business owners, youth, seniors, and long-time-residents.

Collectively the Principles below create the foundation for a comprehensive south side master plan which sustains cultural heritage and prioritizes rewards and incentives to present residents. Achieving these ambitions will require a Community Benefits Agreement which embraces the following Development Principles:

Employment

- A majority of jobs should go to residents from the communities surrounding the library.
- Jobs should be set aside for hard-to-employ populations including: people in low income housing, ex offenders, youth, seniors and long-time unemployed.
- Workforce development programs should be set up to meet local hiring requirements.
- All jobs should pay at least a living wage.
- Community should have input in hiring of security and other jobs that impact quality of life.
- There should be quarterly reports which monitor hiring.

Economic Development

- Development occurs without ultimately displacing present residents.
- Develop a black business corridor and generally support local small business development.
- Establish a revenue-sharing program with the Library and the black business corridor to support local community and economic development activities.
- Set aside a majority of all contracts with the Library for minority-owned businesses.

Education

- The Library should partner with local schools to enhance school programming, including curriculum, tutoring, and other supports.

- The Library should offer its programming free to Chicago Public School students.
- The Library should establish a relationship with Chicago Public Libraries and other area libraries to share resources

Housing

- Support the development of a Federation of Community Land Trusts in the surrounding neighborhoods.
- A significant guaranteed set-aside of new housing for low-income housing in the area surrounding the Library.
- Create an emergency rental assistance program.

Transportation

- Improve Metra Electric with input from community stakeholders.
- Restore #1 Bus to its Official Route.
- Facilitate transit-oriented economic development.

Sustainability

- Sustain, increase, upgrade, and maximize green open space for local uses and local users.
- Replace the 21-acre footprint of The Library with at least 21 acres of quality nearby park land, designed for, with, and by neighboring stakeholders, including state-of-the-art replacement sports facilities.
- Establish a Green Infrastructure Master Plan for neighborhoods surrounding the Library.
- Support and engage Sustainable South Side Community Council in developing resilience features applicable to all new development, upgrades, repairs, and future planning.
- Appoint “Sustainable Chicago” representative from City of Chicago to connect and translate its initiatives to applications in the neighborhoods surrounding the Library.

Thank you for the blessed potential of this monumental project. We appreciate your partnership at this historic time.

Signed on September 29, 2016:
 Bronzeville Regional Collaborative
 Kenwood Oakland Community Organization
 Prayer in Action Collective
 Southside Together Organizing for Power

Awaiting signatures:
 Marty Nesbitt, Obama Presidential Foundation
 Rahm Emanuel, City of Chicago
 Robert Zimmer, University of Chicago

Table 3. Participating Organizations of the Coalition

Alliance of the Southeast (ASE)
Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100)
Brighton Park Neighborhood Council (BPNC)
Chicago Jobs Council (CJC)
Chicago Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights
Chicago Rehab Network (CRN)
Chicago Teachers Union (CTU)
Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT)
Friends of the Parks (FOP)
Metropolitan Tenants Organization (MTO)
Poor People's Campaign, INC
Showing up for Racial Justice (SURJ) - Chicago
Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement at UIC
Westside Health Authority (WHA)
Wolfpack Woodlawn East Community And Neighbors (WECAN)

Self-Presentation

The first words one sees when opening the homepage of the Coalition's website are: "Communities have to be created, fought for, tended like gardens. – Barack Obama." Below this quote begins the body of text that will explain what the Coalition is and what it stands for, introduced by the bold-type heading: "Push back on being pushed back." Immediately, before any explicit statement about its mission or makeup, the Coalition communicates its affinity with Barack Obama's stated values, invokes his history of community organizing on the South Side, and posits displacement as the central and imminent issue of its project. We will see later how these themes are central to its campaign, but it is first important to examine the Coalition's self-presentation on the website—specifically on the homepage, as it is the content which gives visitors to the site their first impressions of the Coalition.

The text that follows is the first formal definition of the Coalition: "We are the Obama Library South Side Community Benefits Agreement Coalition, of organizations from across Chicago. We seek a CBA with the Obama Foundation, City of Chicago, and University of Chicago," which includes a hyperlink to the list of twenty-one member organizations (see table 4).⁹² This statement qualifies the Coalition as a diverse group of organizations with the shared goal of a Community Benefits Agreement. The phrase "across Chicago" establishes that they represent multiple groups, in this way directly addressing the possible perception that a CBA only represents the interests of a single organization or community group. In the words of one of the Coalition members, the CBA "is not just under *one* organization, it's for the whole community," referring to the community of Woodlawn.⁹³ The phrase "across Chicago" can also give the impression of widespread support for a CBA, thereby establishing the Coalition as an entity that is to be taken seriously.

⁹² There are actually closer to 50 organizations, as the Coalition grew rapidly between the fall of 2016 and the fall of 2018.

⁹³ Grace Hauck, "The Maroon Weekly, E3," *Chicago Maroon*, Mar, 2018, <https://soundcloud.com/chicagomaroonpodcast/the-maroon-weekly-e3> (accessed Mar 5, 2018).

After a short summary of the CBA's principal components, the introductory text ends with the following:

“Typically, when something major comes into a community, taxes go up, low-income residents are displaced, there is an influx of new residents who want to be in the area—it's sexy—prices go up. We want to be sure when it floats, we float with it.” Deborah Taylor, Woodlawn resident and organizer with Southside Together Organizing for Power [STOP], on the Obama library to the Chicago Tribune.

Thus, the first individual, rather than organizational, perspective that gives a human voice to the Coalition's project comes from a Woodlawn resident and community organizer for STOP, one of the four organizations that founded the Coalition. Not only is she an activist and a resident of the neighborhood that is next to the site of the Obama Center, but she is also a low-income tenant, given that those who organize with STOP rent apartments in subsidized housing.⁹⁴ In citing Deborah Taylor on the home page—the material that will have the most foot traffic—the Coalition presents her as an incarnation of its interests and mission. The Coalition, and therefore the CBA, is about advocating for low-income, local residents by combating displacement.

Principal Geographical Claims

The Coalition describes its mission, writing, “we are committed to participation that reflects our right to self-determination, equitable development, and a legally binding community benefits agreement.”⁹⁵ This statement expresses the two principal claims made by the Coalition's campaign: specifically in the context of economic, educational, cultural, and real estate development within the Center's proximate neighborhoods, the Coalition asserts the right of low-income residents to remain in those neighborhoods and furthermore asserts the right of low-income residents to actively benefit from and shape these changes. It seeks to guarantee these rights through a community benefits agreement.

Coalition member and Woodlawn resident Kayla Butler asserts her desire to remain in Woodlawn without paying higher rent, because paying higher rent is not even an option (emphasis added):

⁹⁴ Andre, Anthony, and Kevin (Woodlawn residents), interviewed by Valeria Stutz, Chicago, IL, November 23rd, 2016.

⁹⁵ Obama Library South Side Community Benefits Agreement Coalition, *Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) for the Obama Library*, 2018, <http://www.obamacba.org/> (accessed 22 Jan 2018).

You already know that your community is underfunded. Now you have somebody coming in *with a big development that you're not sure if you're going to be able to stay around to even enjoy...* My daughter's going to live here; my daughter's gonna grow up here. I want to know that she's gonna have a sustainable home school that's going to be able to be open and fully functioning, and that *she's going to be able to have all the education she needs* to be able to grow on and go to the next level... *I want to make sure that I'm still able to even be able to make sure I can even afford to live in this neighborhood* because of the fact that I know I make enough money but I don't make a lot of money to afford a thousand-dollar apartment. And it's no way that anybody really that lives in that area right now will be able to afford a 1500 dollar a month studio apartment, one bedroom apartment when they got five kids.⁹⁶

If, and when, rents rise, she will not be able to remain in the neighborhood because she will not be able to afford the new rent. The only way to stay for her and neighbors in similar economic situations, is to halt their rents from increasing. Butler's statements invite the question, for *whom* are the benefits that the Center brings to the area? Another Coalition member and Woodlawn resident, Haroon Garel similarly says (emphasis added):

Yeah I'm excited, I really think it's a good thing for the neighborhood. But we still want to be here *as well*, you know, and that's why we're asking for a Community Benefits Agreement.⁹⁷

The implication in both of these statements is that there is specific group that will benefit from the neighborhood's improvements—a group that does not include them, low-income residents. Knowing this, Butler and Garel nevertheless assert their desire to benefit from the new resources just like higher-income residents. For them and the Coalition as a whole, a CBA is a means by which to break the unfailing pattern of exclusion from improvements in quality of life—by requiring rent control and a certain percentage of subsidized units in new apartment buildings.

The Coalition, however, goes beyond advocating for continued occupancy of neighborhood space: it suggests a new way of development that not only retains low-income residents, but also actively benefits them and includes them in substantive decision-making roles. It invites the Foundation, City, and University to participate in a

⁹⁶ Grace Hauck, "The Maroon Weekly, E3," *Chicago Maroon*, Mar, 2018, <https://soundcloud.com/chicagomaroonpodcast/the-maroon-weekly-e3> (accessed Mar 5, 2018).

⁹⁷ Grace Hauck, "The Maroon Weekly, E3," *Chicago Maroon*.

new vision of development, different from historical and contemporary development (emphasis added):

While we recognize the old ways of redeveloping black communities have not created community wealth, we *see exciting potential to develop differently now*. We aim to catalyze measurable and substantial increases in our community wealth and well-being through sustainable, inter-generational land ownership and transfer; increased revenue streams through neighbor-owned businesses and buildings; and revived resources for vibrant lifelong learning...

The Obama Library South Side Community Benefits Agreement Coalition *celebrates the opportunity* of the Obama Presidential Center in concert with the University of Chicago and the City of Chicago (collectively, the "Library") to bring *unprecedented redevelopment benefits* to households in the neighborhoods surrounding the site of the future Library.⁹⁸

The Coalition's geographical claims are about retaining the space low-income residents already have and furthermore including them in the positive changes of that space.

Deictic Centers & their Relevance: Part I

Who is the "deictic center" in the Coalition's public discourse? Is there only one? In order to answer this, it is necessary to examine the content of the Coalition's CBA proposal, the website's "Background" section, materials for the Coalition's 2016 and 2017 letter-writing campaigns, and newspapers' interviews of Coalition members.

On the Coalition's website, the phrases "communities surrounding the library" and "surrounding neighborhoods" appear repeatedly, subsequently defined as "communities within a five-mile radius of the library" (see figure 13 and table 3). In the list of "Development Principles," all but the transportation benefits center on residents of the Center site's surrounding neighborhoods. The introductory paragraph summarizes the plan as one that "prioritizes rewards and incentives to present residents." The development principles state that the majority of jobs created by the library (keeping in mind the Coalition uses the term "Library" to encompass the Obama Foundation, the City, and U of C) should "go to residents from the communities surrounding the library" and that the trio of institutions should support the formation of "a Federation of Community Land Trusts in the surrounding neighborhoods" and set aside "new housing

⁹⁸Obama Library South Side Community Benefits Agreement Coalition. *Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) for the Obama Library*, 2018. <http://www.obamacba.org/> (accessed Jan 22, 2018).

for low-income housing in the area surrounding the Library." They should "partner with local schools," sustain and increase "green open space for... local users," develop a black business corridor to "support local small business development," and establish a comprehensive plan for green infrastructure in the "neighborhoods surrounding the Library." Coalition member, STOP organizer, and Woodlawn resident Haroon Garel, told the *Chicago Tribune* "I am working on the committee to hopefully bring jobs to the community. We are looking for at least 80 or 90 percent of the jobs to go into the community."⁹⁹ The principles focus on "surrounding neighborhoods," and more specifically, on the most vulnerable populations of those neighborhoods.

⁹⁹ Neighborhood hopes for Obama Presidential Center impact," *Chicago Tribune*, 2018, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/media/95880276-132.html> (accessed Feb 15, 2018).

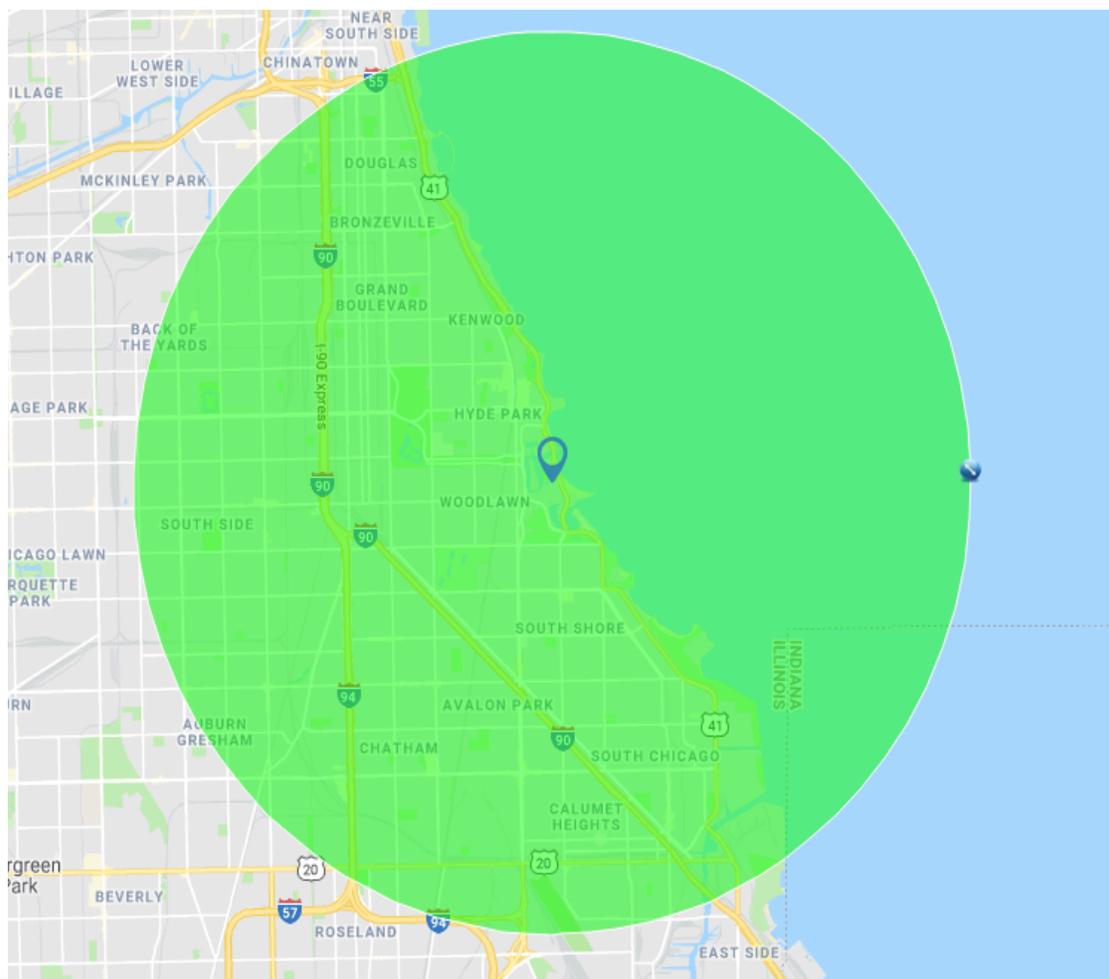


Fig. 13. Radius of 5 mi. from midpoint of Jackson Park
(courtesy of author)

Table 3. Neighborhoods included in radius

Entirety of:	Woodlawn	Hyde Park	South Shore
	Avalon Park	Kenwood	Bronzeville
	Grand Boulevard		
Parts of:	South Side (neighborhood) Auburn Gresham		
	Calumet Heights	Back of the Yards	

In its discourse, the Coalition prioritizes those in precarious economic situations, who by extension, are most at risk of displacement. Its development principles ask that the Foundation, City, and University reserve employment for "hard-to-employ populations including: people in low income housing, ex offenders, youth, seniors and long-time unemployed," all demographics with inconsistent, low, or nonexistent income. The "housing" section of its proposal for a CBA ordinance likewise suggests steps that protect residents likely to lose their homes in the immediate future:

For all newly-constructed and redeveloped/rehabilitated housing of three or more units, except for owner-occupied buildings, 30% of on-site housing units, or at least one unit, whichever is greater, shall be set aside for households earning between 0-50% of the AMI [Average Medium Income].... Coordinate with Cook County to create a property tax freeze or exemption for existing dwellings within a two-mile radius of the Obama Presidential Center for residents who can verify ten years of residency within a five-mile radius.

Funds from the Community Trust Fund created shall support

- i. the creation of a Rental Assistance Program for residents who have lived in the designated area for at least 5 years to pay incremental increases in rent for the next 25 years
- ii. the creation of a Community Land Trust to hold properties and keep them affordable for not less than 99 years¹⁰⁰

The discourse of individual Coalition members likewise emphasizes this group. For example, Jeanette Taylor, education director of KOCO (one of the four founding organizations of the Coalition, located in the Kenwood neighborhood) addressed then-President Obama, present via video conference from Washington, during one of the Foundation's public meetings (emphasis added):

The library is a great idea, but what about a community benefits agreement? The first time investment comes to black communities, *the first to get kicked out is low-income and working-class people*. Why wouldn't you sign a CBA to protect us?

¹⁰⁰ A Community Land Trust is a model used by urban neighborhoods to collectively own land, thereby maintaining the rent of the housing on the land below a market-rate and building intergenerational wealth by home-owning options for low-income families. Usually each unit is rented by the same family for 99 years. *The Community Land Trust Reader*, ed. by John Emmaus Davis (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 2010).

Kyla Butler, another Coalition member, STOP organizer, and Woodlawn resident pointed out the economic straits of some residents, including her own:

We don't want low-income housing to be moved out of the neighborhood
 Right now I'm paying \$535 for my one-bedroom and I got that one by luck. But if you look at the rest of the one-bedroom apartments within this area, they're \$800. \$800... Some people is not even making \$500 a week at their job. It's just going to be a continuous cycle. That's how I see it.¹⁰¹

The focus on those at risk of displacement is crystallized in a statement made by Haroon Garel, a third Coalition member as well as STOP organizer and Woodlawn resident: in explaining the CBA campaign to a *Chicago Tribune* reporter he said, “Many residents who live in the subsidized housing are trying to hold on to a place to stay over here at the community.”¹⁰² Thus residents living in neighborhoods around the Center who are at risk of displacement are the “deictic center” of the Coalition’s discourse.

The Coalition’s discourse, however, does not contain only one “deictic center:” the Coalition itself is the second “deictic center.” The use of active verbs communicates that Coalition has both agency and credibility. The homepages of their website and Twitter page feature the declarations, "Join us in demanding a community benefits agreement" and "push back on being pushed out." To "push" and to "demand" are verbs of force, communicating self-determination and vitality. The choice of verbs also communicates that the Coalition has the credibility to negotiate with the Foundation, City, and University (all together the “Library”). The development principles assert that the Coalition consists of “critical stakeholders” with diverse “perspectives, skills, and goals to *coordinate, collaborate, and engage* [emphasis added] with the Library." These verbs imply that the Coalition and the “Library” have comparable statuses, at least sufficiently enough for them to be interlocutors. The Coalition does not claim to have the same institutional resources available to the “Library”—such as political sway, donors, and an endowment—but it does stress that its own geographical assertions are as valid or credible as those of the Center. The discourse presents the Coalition as a conversation partner of the three institutions, as seen as the definition of a CBA on its website: "A

¹⁰¹ Hauck, Grace. “The Maroon Weekly, E3,” *Chicago Maroon*. Mar, 2018.

¹⁰² Neighborhood hopes for Obama Presidential Center impact,” *Chicago Tribune*, 2018, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/media/95880276-132.html> (accessed Feb 15, 2018).

community benefits agreement (CBA) is a legally binding contract *negotiated* [emphasis added] between a developer and community members/ organizations who will be impacted by a development.” In order for two parties to negotiate, they must be, to a certain extent, on the same plane. The idea present in the Coalition’s discourse is that it, as an entity, is as valuable or serious as the “Library.” In other words, their ontological statuses are comparable. The Coalition presents itself as an entity and project not to be dismissed by the Foundation, City, and University, but rather as a group to be taken seriously.

Though the Coalition does not have the material and political resources comparable to those of the “Library” by any stretch of the imagination, its discourse frames its position in the Woodlawn neighborhood as a powerful and competing resource that the “Library” does not possess. The “Library” is on the margins of the discourse while the Coalition remains at the center, because it is composed by residents of Woodlawn and neighboring communities. On its website, the discourse emphasizes this status when it defines the Coalition. Its members are "critical stakeholders" who are “seasoned community development practitioners and the leadership of low-income and working African American tenants, home and business owners, youth, seniors, and long-time-residents." What is more, the discourse highlights that the Coalition is composed of a subgroup under the umbrella category of “residents:” *long-term* residents. For example, Coalition member Haroon Garel said the following to the *Chicago Tribune* (emphasis added):

*I grew up at the 6200 block of Kimbark. My grandmother, she was the block club president, Geraldine Moorse, since 1985... I'm one of the organizers with the Community Benefits Agreement... We don't want the property taxes to go up sky high in the neighborhood, when the Obama Presidential Center comes, 'cus some people may be prized out of the neighborhood, if they grew up here, like me. I've been over here for thirty years...*¹⁰³

Garel highlights the fact that he was formed as a person in Woodlawn, living in the neighborhood three fourths of his life. His grandmother, Geraldine Moorse, and one of her best friends, Ma’ Fuller, are some of the neighborhood’s known elder figures who led

¹⁰³ “Neighborhood hopes for Obama Presidential Center impact,” *Chicago Tribune*, 2018, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/media/95880276-132.html> (accessed Feb 15, 2018).

projects for social improvements earlier in their lives.¹⁰⁴ It is especially significant that Garel defines himself as a long-term resident with roots in Woodlawn because he is one of the principal public-facing figures of the CBA Coalition. By presenting his identity as a long-term resident and his identity as a CBA organizer together, he links the idea of long-term community membership to the Coalition's identity and project. The position of the Coalition as a "deictic center" within its discourse is *justified* by its identity as an organization made up of "community members." The discourse frames this identity as a strength, a part of the criteria giving it the legitimacy necessary to make geographic claims through a CBA.

This framework asserts that occupying a space ("resident"), having a connection to its history ("long-term resident"), and participating in its community fabric ("community member") are the requisites necessary to make the following geographical claim: I have the right to stay in this space and make decisions about its future. In summary, occupancy and its implied history and membership in the community of that space, not ownership, guarantees the right to remain and shape a space. The logic of this claim is not that of free-market economics, which says that only the possession of private property—ownership of a particular space— gives a person or entity the right to determine what happens on or to that particular space.¹⁰⁵ Because U.S. society is organized by free-market economics, this is the most widely-accepted kind of reasoning. It is considered "common sense"¹⁰⁶ and "natural." In other words, it is the "hegemony:" even though this logic comes from a constructed paradigm—free-market economics—its logic is considered given and timeless. What is more, it is the logic that favors or is acceptable to those in power¹⁰⁷—in the case of questions about real estate development,

¹⁰⁴ Andre, Anthony, and Kevin (Woodlawn residents), interviewed by Valeria Stutz, Chicago, IL, November 23rd, 2016.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Don Mitchell, *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*, (New York: Guilford Press, 2003), 132. Mitchell argues that "In the context of an evolving capitalist American state, citizenship is defined through a process whereby owners of private property freely join together to create a public, which forms the critical functional element of the public realm." Mitchell quotes from, S. Marston, "Who Are 'The People'? Gender, Citizenship, and the Making of the American Nation," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 8, (1990): 445.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Tim Cresswell, *In Place/out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 3-4.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Tim Cresswell, *In Place/out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 14. "The analytical power of the concept [ideology] comes from the way it connects ideas of what exists, what is good, and what is possible to various forms of power relations.

this reasoning favors the people or groups who own land or who have vested economic interests in particular developments. Those who cannot pay rising rents or property taxes are discarded by this “common sense.”

Paradigm of Claims: Culture and History

What is the origin of the Coalition’s counter-hegemonic geographical claims? What is the basis of the criteria it uses to justify them? The scope of the study does not fully address the paradigm or worldview on which these criteria are based, instead focusing on *how* the Coalition makes its claims. The study can, however, offer an interpretation of this paradigm. The idea that claims over a space are justified by occupancy of that space, rather than only by ownership of it as a homeowner or developer, comes in the first place from the Coalition’s conception of identity, and in the second place from historical and contemporary barriers to ownership.

The Coalition’s status as a primarily black organization, the cultural context of the South Side, and the goal of protecting primarily black low-income residents reflects a particular world view. In U.S. society, there is a cultural difference between the way people of color and white people tend to conceive of identity, seen in the way they prioritize aspects of their lives, such as the formation of and continued participation in a community. Here, the term “community” does not refer to a loosely-related circle of people, familiar with each other as acquaintances, but rather encompasses group of people who have personal relationships with each other, make personal decisions conscious of the effect on the group, and support each other emotionally, financially, and spiritually. In African-American culture, for example, an individual’s community is integral to the construction of his or her identity and subjectivity. In other words, people’s participation in a community affects how they define themselves, conceive of their personal purpose, make decisions¹⁰⁸, and interact with the world. Dependence on others is a strength, a necessity for survival, not a sign of weakness or immaturity, as it might be

Ideology... is ‘meaning in the service of power.’” Cresswell quotes from G. Therborn, *The Ideology of Power and the Power of Ideology*, (London: Routledge, 1980), 19.

¹⁰⁸ J.S. Phinney, J. Dennis, and S. Osorio, “Reasons to attend college among ethnically diverse college students,” *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, vol. 12 (2006): 347-366. This article refers specifically to decision-making on the part of students of color regarding college and graduate enrollment. Students of color have the desire to help their families as one of their principal motivations for furthering their education, as compared to white-Anglos students.

perceived in a more individualistic framework. Scholars have noted that, “[i]n comparison to White Americans, African Americans tend to have a more collectivist worldview.”¹⁰⁹ Collectivism can be defined “a cultural orientation that drives an individual to put the needs of others in their group over the needs of themselves,” opposite on the spectrum to individualism, which “is the tendency to put the needs of self over others’ needs.”¹¹⁰ Therefore the principle of the phrase “‘I am because we are, and therefore, we are because I am’ reminds African Americans to rely on one another for protection, support, safety, and guidance.”¹¹¹ How does this relate to the basis of the Coalition’s geographic claims?

The community-focused construction of identity makes it so that the threat of displacement is not only a threat of eviction from a physical space, but of expulsion from the community developed in that space. For many residents of Woodlawn and nearby neighborhoods, the space of their neighborhood does not merely provide physical housing; it provides a home in the form of a collective identity and deep relationships formed over time. Displacement means a destruction of the community fabric, destabilizing and fracturing the displaced individual’s identity, especially for those who have grown up and remained in the community, such as Kayla Butler and Haroon Gareel. What is more, displacement separates residents from the social network that helps them survive economic and personal hardships.

The second aspect that forms the base for the Coalition’s justification criteria is the historic exclusion of South Side, majority-black neighborhoods from the resources necessary to own land. The legacy of slavery and Jim Crow, such as historical redlining, contemporary predatory loan practices, scarcity of employment and educational opportunities conducive to wealth accumulation, the mass-incarceration of black people, and police violence, are all factors that have blocked black families from buying property and creating intergenerational wealth. It is thus only a minority of residents in predominantly-black neighborhoods who have the capital or property necessary to remain

¹⁰⁹ Carmen McCallum, “Giving Back to the Community: How African Americans Envision Utilizing Their PhD,” in: *The Journal of Negro Education* 86: Spring 2017, 140.

¹¹⁰ Carmen McCallum, “Giving Back to the Community: How African Americans Envision Utilizing Their PhD,” 140.

¹¹¹ Carmen McCallum, 141.

in their homes and neighborhoods once real estate development accelerates. Lacking the criteria required by the free-market, the Coalition has no choice but to use occupancy of a space—and the participation in community fabric this implies—as part of the justification for remaining and having some control over that space.

Deictic Centers and their Relevance: Part II

The power disparity between the Coalition and the “Library,” however, undercuts the possibility of there being only one locus of “deictic centers”; in other words, the Coalition and residents at risk of displacement cannot be the only “deictic centers” in the Coalition’s discourse. When the Coalition talks about the political and economic authority to use and shape neighborhood spaces, and by extension to effect social and political changes, the “deictic center” is comprised of the “Library,” the combination of the Obama Foundation, City of Chicago, and the University of Chicago. The central position of the “Library” appears in official texts such as the Coalition’s website or in individual member’s statements.

The Coalition and its members use verbs of force to describe the actions of the "Library." The website homepage characterizes residents as "being *pushed out* (emphasis added)." The previously-mentioned Coalition member Haroon Garel says (emphasis added),

Yes, I do agree that some voices are being heard more than others. You know, we live in a community where it's about 100 units of government-subsidized housing. These are the majority of the people who are asking for the Community Benefits Agreement. We've been *pushed to the side*.¹¹²

In these phrases, the neighborhood residents are portrayed as passive, experiencing a force from the outside. Here, it is through displacement and exclusion of subsidized housing residents’ perspectives that the "Library" literally pushes them to the margins, "to the side." Additionally, the language for the actions of the "Library" on the Coalition’s website have connotations of theft, greed, and again, force (emphasis added):

What will the Obama library *take*? Obama’s library will *consume* 22 acres of one of our public parks... With this construction we’ll *face the loss* of free public

¹¹² “Neighborhood hopes for Obama Presidential Center impact,” *Chicago Tribune*, 2018, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/media/95880276-132.html> (accessed Feb 15, 2018).

space, and *we'll lose* that space to a development that won't contribute to the neighborhood's tax base. (As a 501(c)(3), the library won't pay many taxes.)

In the discourse, the loss of space is certain, as communicated by the future tense, and unavoidable. The verb "consume" communicates the quality of voraciousness. What is more, there is a sense of unfairness: the "Library" will use space, but not pay taxes on it.

The Coalition's language also emphasizes the Center's participation in the tradition of presidential libraries, further cementing the Center as the "deictic center" in the Coalition's discourse about power. The example letter for the Coalition's 2016 "Dear President Obama" letter-writing campaign reads (emphasis added), "...we prepare for the arrival of a *\$500 million dollar Presidential Library* in Jackson Park. Write a letter to President Obama explaining why your community needs a CBA for *his Presidential Library*." At this moment in time, the Obama Presidential Center was still officially called the "Obama Presidential Library," but it is nevertheless significant that the Coalition chose to highlight, twice, the project's participation in the canon of presidential libraries. The letter frames the Library as belonging to Obama—"his Presidential Library"—hinting at Obama's political sway in this situation. It likewise draws attention to the Center's institutional power by including the sum of money that will fund the Center's construction, thereby implying that financial resources—from or outside the Foundation—are abundant and could therefore theoretically support the kind of proposals listed in the CBA.

In the eyes of the Coalition, the City of Chicago and the University of Chicago are the Center's partners in composing the deictic center; they are the other two members of the "Library". The CBA development principles read,

- Support and engage Sustainable South Side Community Council in developing resilience features applicable to all new development, upgrades, repairs, and future planning.
- Appoint "Sustainable Chicago" representative from City of Chicago to connect and translate its initiatives to applications in the neighborhoods surrounding the Library.¹¹³

¹¹³ Obama Library South Side Community Benefits Agreement Coalition, *Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) for the Obama Library*, 2018, <http://www.obamacba.org/> Accessed 22 Jan. 2018.

These demands imply that currently, the Sustainable South Side Community Council does not have say over development projects, nor do the surrounding neighborhoods receive services that the "Sustainable Chicago" initiative extends to other parts of the city. These statements point to a present-day exclusion from municipal decision-making.

In its discourse, the Coalition—and residents of relevant neighborhoods—are also marginal relative to the activities of the University of Chicago in Woodlawn. In his interview with the *Chicago Tribune*, Garel referred to a gaping power differential, saying, “This is a community that has been gentrified because of the University of Chicago is growing and expanded... We stay over here in Woodlawn where the University is constantly building.” The flyer circulated in February by the Coalition about the CBA and the Center expresses a similar sentiment: “The Obama Center is coming to Jackson Park and now the University of Chicago is planning to build a Luxury Hotel and Restaurant, a new Dorm, and a Conference Center all in Woodlawn. Real estate interests are planning luxury condos and housing we can’t afford.”¹¹⁴ Again, the question is, what is the relevance of “deictic centers” in the Coalition’s discourse?

In this case, it is important to identify the “deictic centers” because they affect the ideas that the Coalition uses to justify its geographical claims. Its discourse legitimizes its demand for a CBA with reasons that have to do with the three institutions’ power—clearly established in the realm of political and economic decision-making. The Coalition’s discourse justifies its claim by means of the history of the City government and University of Chicago on the South Side, the personal and political history of Barack Obama on the South Side, and the moral obligations that stem from their power.

Justification and Legitimization of Claims

History of Development on the South Side

A recurring theme in the Coalition’s written material and its individual members’ spoken statements is the history of development on the South Side by the City of Chicago. In both the website and materials for the 2017 “Dear President Obama” letter-writing campaign, the Coalition outlines a pattern of broken promises to black neighborhoods by developers, arguing that this history necessitates a written, legally-

¹¹⁴ CBA Coalition. “STOP DISPLACEMENT” flyer. CBA Campaign, 2018.

binding agreement in the form of a CBA. For example, the website includes a paragraph under the heading “Why do we want a CBA” which reads as follow (emphasis added):

Keep in mind is Chicago’s long history of displacing poor people of color. *It repeatedly seems that when our city and our government make “improvements,” Black families are displaced and disenfranchised.* Construction of the Dan Ryan expressway displaced Blacks along State Street in the 1950s and 60s. In 2013, Chicago Public Schools closed 50 of our neighborhood schools. People’s homes have been demolished. Between 2000 and 2010, 180,000 Black people moved out of Chicago after the City’s “Plan for Transformation” to improve the Chicago Housing Authority’s public housing. And now *President Barack Obama, in collaboration with the City of Chicago, the University of Chicago, and the Obama foundation are planning to “improve” communities with a \$500 million dollar library.*¹¹⁵

This motivation for the CBA is the established pattern of development displacing poor black residents. The scare quotes around “improvements” communicate the absurdity or dishonesty of this term in the eyes of the Coalition. The implied question is “for whom was the improvement?” Here, “improvement” is synonymous to the displacement of low-income, black residents of the South Side. The scare quotes apply a laser focus to the power dynamics at play. The displaced residents do not count in the City’s equation, as their interests cannot exist in a moral compass in which the practical definition of “improvement” is their eviction or forced migration.

Memory of the “Plan for Transformation,” in which the City demolished public housing high rises such as Stateway Gardens and Cabrini Green, is quite fresh among Woodlawn residents, as it transpired during the early 2000s. The City “called for the demolition of 18,000 units of neglected public housing and the construction or renovation for 25,000 units...” but only constructed 8,000 new units.¹¹⁶ Former public housing residents who stayed in Chicago moved to the South and West side, and the South Shore, Englewood, and Woodlawn neighborhoods received some former Cabrini Green

¹¹⁵ Obama Library South Side Community Benefits Agreement Coalition, *Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) for the Obama Library*, 2018, <http://www.obamacba.org/> (accessed Jan 22, 2018).

¹¹⁶ The City tore down public housing high-rises such as Ida B. Wells, Robert Taylor, Stateway Gardens, and Cabrini Green. Jake Bittle, Srishti Kapur, and Jasmine Mithani, “Redeveloping the State Street Corridor,” *The South Side Weekly*, Jan 31, 2017, <https://southsideweekly.com/chicago-unfulfilled-promise-rebuild-public-housing/> (accessed April 5, 2018).

residents.¹¹⁷ Kayla Butler, the Coalition member and STOP organizer cited earlier, speaks about her relationship to the public housing demolitions (emphasis added):

I used to live in what was once Stateway Gardens with my grandmother. And then I used to live in what was once LaClaire Courts¹¹⁸, which is on the west side of Chicago... Stateway Gardens is actually on 49th, was on 47th, 49th and State on down. *They moved a lot of those people out of that area, out of those buildings, promised them they were gonna be able to come back. Only so many of them was able to come back. Only a small percentage of them was able to come back...* I'm also a product of what happens when you push everybody of a low-income residency into one area.¹¹⁹

The experience of broken promises and displacement by the City of Chicago is not only in elders' memories; it is the lived experience of Chicago residents in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. Butler is in her early twenties and has experienced the City's displacement of black, low-income residents from an area and development of it for a population that is clearly not made up of former residents. She says, "And now when you go to 49th and State you see it's a Starbucks and you see it's a bunch of things there that are not for people that, you know, would typically live in that community, or live in that area at a different time frame..." In other words, the new development was for middle-to-high income people, and given the demographics of Chicago, white people.

Another Woodlawn resident, cited earlier and called Lorenzo here, grew up in Cabrini Green and talked about the displacement of its residents (emphasis added):

I come from the Near North Side, so I've seen that neighborhood get destroyed and get re-gentrified [Cabrini Green]... It's got shopping centers and police stations and easy transportation. Its buses go every which way through there... There's a Target over there. The people that have stayed, they enjoy the new environment and the opportunity to be able to be a part of it. *All lot of people weren't even allowed to [stay],* and I think that's how it's going to be over here. A lot of people aren't going to be allowed to stay, but the people that do stay are really going to be able to benefit from the improvements that go into the neighborhoods... [They aren't allowed to stay because of] rent, pricing being more

¹¹⁷ Joel Hammernick (Woodlawn resident and Executive Director of Sunshine Gospel Ministries and Sunshine Enterprises), interviewed by Valeria Stutz, Chicago, IL, November, 2016.

¹¹⁸ Another public housing project that was demolished by the city. "Chicago Housing Authority LeClaire Courts Transportation Access Study," *Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning*, 2013. <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/programs/ta/cha-leclaire-courts> (accessed April 10, 2018). Lucia Anaya, "Former LeClaire Courts residents are still fighting to go home," *Chicago Reader*, Aug 4, 2016, <https://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/leclaire-courts-redevelopment-controversy-cha/Content?oid=23039100> (accessed April 10, 2018).

¹¹⁹ Grace Hauck, "The Maroon Weekly, E3," *Chicago Maroon*, Mar, 2018, <https://soundcloud.com/chicagomaroonpodcast/the-maroon-weekly-e3>, Accessed Mar 5, 2018.

expensive. I mean, nobody's really forcing them out, but they're pricing them out.¹²⁰

Lorenzo draws out the similarities between the story of Cabrini Green and the events beginning to unfold in Woodlawn. In both cases, residents leave unwillingly, as a result of physical force or economic force. These are the living memories of the history of the City of Chicago's behavior which the Coalition articulates as justification for a CBA.

The Coalition also invokes the history of the University of Chicago's developments in Hyde Park and its surrounding neighborhoods. In a podcast made by the student publication *The Maroon*, one of the student leaders in the Coalition summarizes it as follows (emphasis added):

There is such a long history of *broken promises* on the South Side of Chicago... They [the University] have a long, long history of supporting urban renewal policies in the Hyde Park area that were *specifically intentioned to keep Black people out of the neighborhood*. There were a lot of demolitions that went on to *get rid of low-income housing* and replace it with less dense, higher income housing so that you wouldn't have more African-Americans moving into the neighborhood. And the *percentages of African-Americans residents that were displaced by that were far greater than White residents* during that period... This was in the 1950s to early 1960s.¹²¹

The Coalition implicates the University in specifically anti-black behavior and presents racism as one of the component parts of its development. As in the letter-writing campaign and website, Hayes links the history of development with today's developments in Woodlawn.

When you have these big development projects, you're going to get a lot of development that comes in with it. We're seeing that already in Woodlawn. I mean the number of new market rate housing developments that are going up are astonishing. And we know it's going to keep driving up rent prices in the neighborhood and that's what's going to displace people.¹²²

In addition to calling to mind the University's recent history, the Coalition addresses the history of the University's nascent years.

¹²⁰ Lorenzo (Woodlawn resident), interviewed by Valeria Stutz, Chicago, IL, November 6th, 2016.

¹²¹ Grace Hauck, "The Maroon Weekly, E3," *Chicago Maroon*, Mar, 2018, <https://soundcloud.com/chicagomaroonpodcast/the-maroon-weekly-e3>, Accessed Mar 5, 2018.

¹²² Grace Hauck, "The Maroon Weekly, E3," *Chicago Maroon*.

Arguments about the possible historical ties between the University and slavery are another piece of the Coalition’s justification for a CBA—specifically when addressing itself to university students it is trying to mobilize. One of the Coalition’s founding members, UChicago for a CBA (a University-recognized student organization previously known as the Prayer and Action Collective) leads the student support-focused activities, and in February, it partnered with Reparations at UChicago, a research working group of PhD students investigating possible ties of University to slavery, with the demand that the University address these through formal reparations. The ties are traced back to Stephen A. Douglas, who donated the land which served as the campus of the first iteration of the University of Chicago (1857-1886).¹²³ Douglas, an Illinois Democratic senator, had views favorable to slavery and was known for his race-baiting and opposition to Abraham Lincoln. He believed that the United States, in his own words, “was made by white men, for the benefit of white men and their posterity forever.”¹²⁴ However, the first iteration of the University linked to the Douglas land grant eventually foundered and lost the property, which was foreclosed upon by an insurance company. The second iteration of the University, founded in 1890, was constructed in the present-day location of the Hyde Park neighborhood. Financially and legally speaking, the second University is separate from the first. Nonetheless, it can be argued that an intellectual trajectory began with the founding of the first university that lived on in its second iteration. This can be seen for example in the fact that there were faculty involved in both phases of the university.¹²⁵ The material connection to the land donated by Douglas, and thus to slave labor, is tenuous and indirect, but the symbolic force of the founding of the first university on land donated by a man opposed to black citizenship is undeniable.

Together, UChicago for a CBA and Reparations at UChicago hosted a “teach-in” event to “discuss the intersection of reparations at UChicago and the Obama Library CBA,” with speakers from the history and anthropology departments, and a

¹²³ John W. Boyer, *The University of Chicago: A History*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015).

¹²⁴ Ibram X. Kendi, *Stamped From the Beginning. The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* (New York: Nation Books, 2016), 205-206.

¹²⁵ Cf. John W. Boyer, *The University of Chicago: A History*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 8, regarding the continuity of some teaching posts.

Coalition representative.¹²⁶ By framing a CBA as a reparation for the University of Chicago's possible participation in a slavery-endorsing economy, the Coalition places the University in a position of indebtedness to the South Side because of its past support of a racist system, as well as its own "urban renewal" projects in Woodlawn and Hyde Park. In the Coalition's framework, the University is morally obligated to sign a CBA because of its anti-black actions in the far and recent past. The Coalition's historical justifications undergird its call for the University to take responsibility for the consequences of its contemporary development plans in Woodlawn, in the form of a new dorm, hotel, and convention center.

Morality

In addition to justifying and legitimizing a CBA through the invocation of history, the Coalition also makes use of moral categories. Its discourse frames Obama, the City, and the University's choice of whether or not to negotiate and sign a CBA, as a moral one. The homepages of the Coalition's website and Twitter page read, "This can help build the kind of communities that Obama fought for, OR it could displace longtime residents." Its discourse highlights two actions, one moral, the other immoral. The discourse also makes an appeal to the "Library's" consciousness by highlighting the human suffering unfolding without a CBA to guarantee anti-displacement measures. For example, the Coalition organized a prayer vigil to precede the Obama Foundation's second public meeting on February 27th at McCormick Place.¹²⁷ Charles Perry, one of the members, led a prayer outside of the building before the meeting began (emphasis added):

Father God, we thank you for your loving kindness, your grace and your mercy, Father God. We we're asking you to *change their hearts*, that they would not come in and do *destruction in the community* by *displacing folks in the community* and *running folks out*, Father God. Father God, we pray for all those folks connected to this project: the pastors, the community leaders, the business folks, everyone *who's looking to make a buck* Father God.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Federica Ferrari (student organizer), Email to listhost of UChicago for a CBA. Feb 3, 2018.

¹²⁷ Lolly Bowean and Blair Kamin, "Obama makes pitch for his center in Jackson Park: 'Too much development' has not been a problem for the South Side," *Chicago Tribune*, Feb 27, 2018, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/obamacenter/ct-met-obama-presidential-center-20180227-story.html>, Accessed Feb 28, 2018.

¹²⁸ Lolly Bowean and Blair Kamin, "Obama makes pitch for his center in Jackson Park: 'Too much development' has not been a problem for the South Side," *Chicago Tribune*.

By highlighting the tearing of communities' fabrics, it implicates the three institutions in immoral behavior. The discourse intensifies the extent of the institutions' immorality by arguing that the three institutions have the power and moral obligation to legally guarantee benefits to the relevant neighborhoods, but do not do so: "We universally agree that the Obama Presidential Center has the power and duty to help restore suffering south side communities in innovative ways, and to begin leveling the playing field historically pitched against African Americans."¹²⁹

Barack Obama's Political Career

The Coalition's campaign materials also draw on the values, slogans, and images of Obama's 2008 and 2012 presidential campaigns, arguing that Obama's own principles should lead him to support a CBA. In the 2017 "Dear President Obama" letter-writing campaign, the example letter reads (emphasis added),

A Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) holds the promise of helping our community to help ourselves. The CBA promises to *affirm the hope, change, and progress that your Presidency and legacy represents to us. You have said that "communities [have] to be created, fought for, tended like gardens", in that spirit we are doing just that by organizing for a CBA. We hope you will support us. Thank you.*¹³⁰

The Coalition's discourse transforms the emblematic campaign slogan "yes we can" into one of its principal hashtags on Twitter, using "#yeswecan" in reference to negotiating a CBA. It also uses Obama's principal campaign images (see figure 14) for its own campaign material (see figure 15), using the same image and colors, but changing the word "HOPE" to "CBA," connecting the CBA into in this way further communicating the idea that the CBA is a symbol of hope.

The Coalition also invokes Obama's years as a community organizer as a way to legitimize its request of a CBA from the "Library." It draws a parallel between Obama's community organizing on the South Side and its own community organizing strategies. As mentioned above, the following quote appears repeatedly on its website, anti-displacement and pro-CBA flyers, and letter-writing campaign materials: "Communities

¹²⁹ Obama Library South Side Community Benefits Agreement Coalition. *Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) for the Obama Library*, 2018. <http://www.obamacba.org/> (accessed Jan 22, 2018).

¹³⁰ CBA Coalition, "Dear President Obama" Letter Template, *CBA Campaign*, 2017.

[have] to be created, fought for, tended like gardens.’ - Barack Obama.” The quote alludes to Obama’s organizing history because it comes from Obama’s memoir, *Dreams from my Father*— specifically from the chapter in which Obama writes about the motivations and ideals that led to him becoming a community organizer and the experiences he had in the Roseland neighborhood, where he organized public housing residents. The context of the quote is given in this excerpt from the book (emphasis added):

...at night, lying in bed, I would let the slogans drift away, to be replaced with a series of images, romantic images, of a past I had never known.

They were of the civil rights movement, mostly, the grainy black-and-white footage that appears every February during Black History Month, the same images that my mother had offered me as a child. A pair of college students, hair short, backs straight, placing their orders at a lunch counter teetering on the edge of riot. SNCC workers standing on a porch in some Mississippi backwater trying to convince a family for sharecroppers to register to vote. A county jail bursting with children, their hands clasped together, singing freedom songs.

Such images became a form of prayer for me, bolstering my spirit, channeling my emotions in a way that words never could. They told me...that I wasn’t alone in my particular struggles, and that communities had never been a given in our country, at least not for blacks. Communities had to be created, fought for, tended like gardens. They expanded with the dreams of men—and in the civil rights movement those dreams had been large. In the sit-ins, the marches, the jailhouse songs, I saw the African-American community becoming more than just the place where you’d been born or the house where you’d been raised. *Through organizing, through shared sacrifice, membership had been earned.* And because membership was earned—because this community I imagined was still in the making, built on the promise that the larger American community, black, white, and brown, could somehow redefine itself—I believed that it might, over time, admit the uniqueness of my own life.

*This was my idea of organizing. It was the promise of redemption.*¹³¹

In citing just one line from this chapter, the Coalition calls forth an entire set of values and worldview, in which community organizing is a way to develop and grow black communities and a way to fight for the rights not granted to black people as second-class citizens in the U.S. racial hierarchy. What is more, these passages express how personal community organizing was as a calling and ideal to Obama in his youth—it was high-stakes and intimately tied to his identity and sense of belonging. The Coalition makes an

¹³¹ Barack Obama, *Dreams from my Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*, (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1994, 2004), 134-145.

emotional appeal to Obama, and by connecting its goals and strategy to Obama's personal development, thereby legitimizing its geographical claims.

"Home"

Lastly, the Coalition highlights the South Side's status as Obama's "home" as a way to establish reciprocity between the South Side and Obama. Obama spent his youth in Hawaii and Indonesia and his college years in New York City, only later moving to Chicago after graduating from college and living there until his presidency.¹³² The Coalition firmly underlines the South Side's status as his "home," even though other places might have that status as well. In the 2017 "Dear President Obama" letter-writing campaign, the example letter written by the Coalition reads (emphasis added),

I write to urge you to speak up in support of a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) for the Obama Presidential Center – your library and legacy. *Your library is coming home* to the South Side, where I live. With a Community Benefits Agreement, *your legacy too has a chance to come home, to its roots in communities organizing for the greater good.*

By establishing that Obama returns to his roots and to his "home," where he belongs, the Coalition positions itself as a legitimate petitioner. The line of thinking in the Coalition's discourse here is that since the South Side shaped Obama as a person and made him who he is—given that home and roots are understood as integral to identity—now it is appropriate for the South Side to make a request of him. The South Side gave, and now it is its time to receive.

¹³² Barack Obama, *Dreams from my Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*, (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1994, 2004).



Fig. 14. Poster for Obama's 2008 presidential campaign
(courtesy of *Medium* magazine; designed by Shepard Fairey)



Fig. 15. Adapted poster for CBA Campaign
(courtesy of *Obama Library South Side Community Benefits Agreement Coalition*)

Chapter 4

Analysis of the Public Discourse of the Obama Foundation

The Obama Foundation

The Obama Foundation is the entity that will develop and eventually implement the programming in the Obama Presidential Center. The Foundation describes its mission on its website as the following:

Our mission is to inspire and empower people to change their world. From leaders who are already making an impact, to people who are interested in becoming more involved, but don't know where to start, our goal is to make our programs accessible to anyone, anywhere. We'll equip civic innovators, young leaders, and everyday citizens with the skills and tools they need to create change in their communities. It's a big job, and we're just getting started. Learn about our first set of projects and join us in this experiment in citizenship for the 21st century.

The Obama Presidential Center falls fits within this mission. The Foundation's website describes the design of the Center is composed of five elements: the forum building, museum, library, plaza, and athletic facility (see table 4 and figures 16-17).¹³³ How does the Obama Foundation characterize and present itself and the Center to the wider public?

¹³³ Obama Foundation, www.obama.org (accessed Jan 22, 2018).

Table 4. Design Components of Center

The Forum Building

The Forum façades two-story public meeting space, with one story above grade and one below ground, where people of all backgrounds can come together for programming. Visitors might take in a performance in the auditorium, create something in the broadcast studio, visit the public winter garden, or even grab a bite to eat in the restaurant. Like much of the Campus, the majority of this space will be free and open to the public.

The Museum Building

The Museum building is a tower — representing ascension, hope, and what ordinary people have the power to do together. Its design was inspired by a photo of four hands coming together. Like these hands, each façade of the four-sided tower will be a little different from the next — enhanced with texture and detail, and offering a beautiful and unique experience from all angles.

The Museum will serve as a landmark for the Campus, welcoming visitors to the Center, Jackson Park, and the South Side — but will have a relatively small footprint within the Campus. Its lower floors will house exhibitions that tell the Obamas' story, as situated within the context of history: civil rights history, African-American history, the history of Chicago, and United States history. The rest of the building will be filled with other public spaces, including the top floor which will feature a reflective observation space that will be free and open to the public, with spectacular views of Lake Michigan and Jackson Park.

The Library Building

The Library Building is the third main building of the campus — a portal for visitors to engage with the world beyond the Obama Presidential Center. More than a building housing documents from the past, we want this to be a place for visitors to play a real role in building our collective future. With that in mind, to tap into the existing learning network within the city, the Foundation is currently exploring the possibility of a partnership with the Chicago Public Library.

The Plaza

The Museum, Forum, and Library Buildings will wrap around a community-facing public plaza that will act as another gateway into the park. We're envisioning the plaza as a sort of town square for the local community — a place for informal and planned gatherings alike. It will host performances of all types — from celebrations honoring local figures to markets and fairs. There will be play areas, an indoor athletic facility, walking paths, and even a sledding hill. It will be a space for all seasons — for folks from all walks of life.

The Athletic Center

The Athletic Center will invite the community to take part in physical activity year round, highlighting the importance of teamwork and exercise through sports. It will provide opportunities for programming partnerships with local institutions, including Hyde Park Academy, the South Side YMCA, and the Chicago Park District Field House.



Fig. 16. Design of museum tower
(courtesy of *Chicago Tribune*)



Fig. 17. Design of Center's campus
(courtesy of Arch20 company)

Self- Presentation

In its public statements and official materials, the Obama Foundation presents the site of the future Obama Presidential Center as the “heart” of the South Side, in terms of its productive activity. One of the descriptions of the Center on its website follows (emphasis added):

We’re building a campus for *active citizenship in the heart of Chicago’s South Side*... and an *economic engine* for the city of Chicago... *creating thousands of new jobs* on the South Side — and will help to continue the *revitalization* of historic Jackson Park... a *living, working campus*.¹³⁴

Given the biological and “generative” language it uses to describe the Center, the Foundation’s discourse positions the Center *itself*—not just its location— as the future “heart” of the South Side. Furthermore, the choice of the word “active” to describe the kind of “citizenship” the Center seeks to foster, as well as its organic description of the campus as a “living” space, communicate ideas of life and movement. As a heart recharges an organism’s oxygen-depleted blood with new oxygen in order to sustain activity and life, so does the Center for the South Side, according to the Foundation’s discourse.

The Foundation’s use of language also frames the Center as a means by which the South Side can make itself known to a wider audience. In a public meeting on February 27th held by the Foundation, attendees had the opportunity to write on an eight-by-eight-foot poster their answers to the question, “What do you want to showcase to the world?”¹³⁵ The language renders the Center as a kind of “platform” (emphasis added): “drawing hundreds of thousands of *visitors* every year... allowing the Foundation to encourage and affect change locally, and *showcase the South Side to the rest of the world*.”¹³⁶ In the Foundation’s descriptions of future programming and architectural designs, the term “visitor” appears repeatedly, bringing to mind a tourist from out of town or from another part of Chicago. Through its language choice, the Foundation tells its

¹³⁴ Obama Foundation, www.obama.org (accessed Jan 22, 2018).

¹³⁵ Obama Foundation, "The Obama Presidential Center: Public Meeting," *YouTube*, uploaded by Obama Foundation, Mar 1, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdMIB2c8keM> (accessed Mar 1, 2018).

¹³⁶ Obama Foundation, www.obama.org (accessed Jan 22, 2018).

audience that it will strive to make known the value of the South Side to those unfamiliar with it.

The Foundation's statements argue that not only is it cognizant of this value, but that the Center itself will be representative of the South Side. In the Foundation's words, it will be a "new landmark for the South Side."¹³⁷ By describing the Center as a "landmark," the Foundation aligns itself with the interests of the South Side, suggesting it might be an icon or symbol-in-the-making for it.

What kind of power map does this self-portrait convey? How can identifying the "deictic centers" of the Foundation's discourse help clarify the power distribution its public discourse sketches?

Deictic Centers and their Relevance

The Foundation's presentation of the future Center as located in the "heart" of the South Side—in a geographical and metaphorically generative sense—and as a "platform" for the reputation of the South Side to expand, positions the Center as a protagonist. This active role makes it one of the "deictic centers" of the Foundation's discourse. The Center is in the middle of action, like a magnet to which objects are pulled: in the words of the Foundation (emphasis added), "*drawing* hundreds of thousands of visitors every year." Relative to the possession of resources, the South Side and the general public is on the margins of the discourse, while the Center is at the core.

The Center, however, is not at the "deictic center" of the Foundation's discourse in terms of inherent value or importance; it is not ontologically superior. The Center's status as a "heart" confers the role of empowering the South Side with resources, while its status as a "platform" means it facilitates outsiders' knowledge of the South Side's already existing value. Here the South Side is the "deictic center," because the Center's role is one of support. Its role, though essential, revolves around the South Side.

The presence of two "deictic centers"—in one case relative to resources, and in the other, to importance—communicates an idea of equality or comparability between the Center and the South Side. This power map is further conveyed by the way Foundation describes the public's role in the Center on its website and in public speakers'

¹³⁷ Obama Foundation. *Obama Foundation*. www.obama.org. Accessed 22 Jan. 2018.

statements. The terms “partnership” and “collaboration” appear repeatedly throughout the Foundation’s statements (emphasis added):

The Center is a work in progress, built in *direct partnership* with thousands of people who have offered their *feedback* in-person and online... The Obama Presidential Center is, *first and foremost*, a *collaboration* with our neighbors... And as Chicago-area residents, you’re *our neighbors* and *partners* in *building this campus* for active citizenship.

.. we want this to be a place for *visitors to play a real role* in building our *collective future*... [a] project where we *will shape, together*, what it means to be a good citizen in the 21st century.¹³⁸

These statements follow under headings such as, “ROOTED IN CHICAGO AND DESIGNED WITH YOU” and “The Obama Presidential Center: A Collaboration with Our Neighbors.” Collaboration implies a measure of equality, meaning that the voices and weight of the Foundation and the public are equal in shaping the Center.

The Foundation describes its project as continuous and malleable, further underlining that it is democratic. Its board chair Martin Nesbitt stated, "We came to this with open minds and a plan to have an iterative process, and that’s reflected in where we're going."¹³⁹ Along the same lines, Obama told attendees of the Foundation’s February 27th public meeting, “We’ll have the opportunity to continually upgrade and update the programs that we’re doing and the community will have continuing input in how that evolves.”¹⁴⁰ His word choice greatly emphasizes the collective nature of the decision-making: “continually,” “upgrade,” “update,” “continuing,” “evolves.” Leading up to the February meeting, the Foundation posted an online invitation and RSVP, writing, “we will host a public meeting to continue gathering input from our neighbors across Chicago on the design and development of the Obama Presidential Center as well as future programming... share your thoughts, questions, and ideas.” For the public’s input to last beyond the initial stages means that the Center is to be inherently collaborative.

¹³⁸ Obama Foundation. *Obama Foundation*. www.obama.org. Accessed 22 Jan. 2018.

¹³⁹ Lisa Bertagnoli, "Obama Foundation puts a price tag on Presidential Center," *Crain's: Chicago Business*, Jan 10, 2018. <http://www.chicagobusiness.com/article/20180110/NEWS07/180119995/obama-foundation-puts-a-price-tag-on-presidential-center> (accessed Feb 2, 2018).

¹⁴⁰ Obama Foundation, "The Obama Presidential Center: Public Meeting," *YouTube*, uploaded by Obama Foundation, Mar 1, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdMIB2c8keM> (accessed Mar 1, 2018).

The Foundation's discourse expresses that collaboration is not only an ideal, but a fact that has already occurred. For example, in the "Chicago" tab of the Foundation's website there is a section with the heading, "You spoke — and we listened." Under it are two columns, titled "What you told us" and "What we did about it," followed by twelve examples of the public's input and the Foundation's response. For example, under the first column is the expressed desire, "You wanted to see more landscaping," followed by the response to "What we did about it":

We added a berm to the East Side of the campus. Landscape berms now surround the garage and the sides of the garage were opened for ventilation. Vehicle entrance at the parking facility now covered by landscape. Parking facility was lowered a half floor below grade. Size of the above-grade volume of the Forum building was reduced.

Throughout the site there are invitations to participate, as well as affirmations of already-incorporated input such as, "Learn more about our plans for the Center — and how you've helped shape them."

The groups who are the principal contributors in the Foundation's discourse are the "community," "neighbors across Chicago," "visitors," and "you" when it is directed at a public, non-Foundation audience. In throwing the net wide of who is included in the "partnership" the Foundation furthers the idea of equality in power between itself and those interested in the Center—leaving no one out—and makes it more difficult for retractors to argue that the Center's planning is exclusive or that its interests are selfish and not community-centered. Obama encapsulates this ethos of equality, saying "Michelle and I are absolutely grateful to all of you for being a part of all this remarkable process."¹⁴¹ Given, however, the Foundation's resources, its ability to build a \$50 million project, and political power as a beloved, former president's organization, this idea of equality is strained. The Foundation has held large-scale meetings open to the public,

¹⁴¹ Leah Hope, "Obama Foundation submits presidential center plans amid opposition," *ABC 7*, Jan 10, 2018. <http://abc7chicago.com/community-events/obama-foundation-submits-presidential-center-plans-amid-opposition/2925916/> (accessed Jan 15).

such as those hosted in January of 2017,¹⁴² September of 2017¹⁴³ and February of 2018 in McCormick Place (a prominent convention center in Chicago),¹⁴⁴ but there was an invitation-only meeting regarding updates about the Center's design. In May of 2017, the Foundation hosted a meeting at the South Shore Cultural Center in which Michelle and Barack Obama unveiled the concept designs for the Center¹⁴⁵ and led a roundtable discussion with Rahm Emanuel and community leaders.¹⁴⁶

Why does the Foundation place such a large emphasis on “collaboration,” sometimes to the extent that its portrayal of the situation can be perceived as an evident distortion, or at least strategic rendering, of the actual power distribution between the Foundation and its public?

Principal Geographical Claims

The Foundation's geographical claims are not explicit or easily identifiable, but the Foundation's portrayal of its relationship with the public—suggested by its discourse's “deictic centers”—makes the implicit geographic claims more evident. The Foundation does not need to justify its use of Jackson Park for the Presidential Center because the space is guaranteed by the City and University's political support and by the Foundation's political sway and financial resources; there is no doubt it will be the site of the Center. The Foundation does, however, need to socially legitimize its use of space; in other words, it needs the support of the “community”—the segment of its general public comprised by residents of the South Side or of the neighborhoods around the Center. Its claim is that its use of space will be genuinely aligned with the well-being of the South Side, not with private interests focused on profit, and that the Foundation is allied with the public.

¹⁴²Eve L. Ewing, “Obama says he believes in community organizing. He should listen to Chicago's South Side,” *The Washington Post*, Jan 19, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2017/01/19/one-way-for-obama-to-secure-his-legacy-make-sure-his-library-helps-the-south-side/?utm_term=.a3e3642da979 (accessed April 23, 18).

¹⁴³ “Obama Foundation officials host meeting Sept. 14 for public input,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, Sept 7, 2017, <https://www.dailyherald.com/news/20170907/obama-foundation-officials-host-meeting-sept-14-for-public-input> (accessed April 20, 2018).

¹⁴⁴ Obama Foundation. *Obama Foundation*. www.obama.org. Accessed 22 Jan. 2018.

¹⁴⁵ Tonia Hill, “Timeline: Obama Presidential Center Meetings,” *Hyde Park Herald*, Feb 21, 2018, <https://hpherald.com/2018/02/21/timeline-obama-presidential-center-meetings/> (accessed April 15, 2018).

¹⁴⁶ Stan West, “South Siders on Obama Library: Listen to Us!” *Chicago Defender*, May 1, 2017, <https://chicagodefender.com/2017/05/01/obamalibrary/> (accessed July 1, 2017).

Justification and Legitimization

“Home”

In the Foundation’s use of language, the status of the South Side as the “home” of Barack and Michelle Obama is one of the factors that justifies its choice and use of Jackson Park. During the Obama Foundation Summit in November of 2017, Michelle Obama addressed an audience gathered for the Summit’s closing concert:

It is so good to be home! Home... But this night was very important, because for Barack and I, we wanted to make sure that this city knew that bringing the foundation here was important to us because we love this city. It was a special place. This is the city that raised me. It is the city that connected me to the love of my life... The question is not why would we be here in Chicago on the South Side, but why not? In Chicago, we have great organizations, faith-based leaders, strong culture, music, talent, history, beauty, organizing¹⁴⁷

Drawing on Chicago’s role in the milestones of her life, she makes an emotional appeal to the audience by aligning herself with its members. Her statements celebrating the valuable attributes of Chicago ally her specifically with South Siders. Though the characteristics she praises are explicitly about Chicago as a whole, she implicitly refers to the South Side in a way that a portion of her audience can decipher.

The South Side, and the Woodlawn neighborhood in particular, is known for its faith leaders and congregations heavily involved in community activities and activism. It is one of the birthplaces of community organizing as we know it today—developed by Saul Alinsky in the Woodlawn Organization during organizing against the University of Chicago’s “urban renewal” policies of the 50s and 60s.¹⁴⁸ Michelle Obama’s identification of “strong culture, music, talents, history, beauty” refers tacitly to black culture on the South Side. She makes these statements on a stage next to Chance the Rapper, a nationally known Hip Hop artist who grew up in the South Side neighborhood of West Chatham.¹⁴⁹ The site of the Presidential Center is blocks away from sections of

¹⁴⁷ Obama Foundation, "We Love This City: First Lady Michelle Obama Speaks to Chicagoans," *YouTube*, uploaded by Obama Foundation, Mar 7, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3RBt198C5VE> (accessed Jan 10, 2018).

¹⁴⁸ Edward McLelland. "Meet the Community Organizers Fighting Against...Barack Obama." *Politico*, February 28, 2018. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/02/28/barack-obama-library-chicago-217093>, Accessed Mar 1, 2018.

¹⁴⁹ David Drake, “Who Is Chance the Rapper?” *Complex*, Mar 23, 2013, <https://www.complex.com/music/2013/03/who-is-chance-the-rapper/> (accessed April 26, 2018).

63rd street that were once the hub of the jazz and blues scene in the 50s and 60s, in clubs and bands led by black artists and business owners.¹⁵⁰ All of the characteristics she names are attached to a specific imaginary, history, and mythology surrounding the South Side, of which its residents are aware. Michelle Obama thus articulates her membership to a South Side identity by calling it her “home” and shows her belonging by invoking characteristics of black South Side culture, by extension establishing the credibility of the Center.

Barack Obama’s Personal and Professional History

Barack Obama similarly establishes Chicago as the space of pivotal points of his life when he explains the reasoning behind the Center’s location. In a video titled “Obama Foundation Announces South Side as Home for Library,” posted on the Foundation’s YouTube channel, he says,

All the strands of my life came together and I really became a man when I moved to Chicago. That’s where I was able to apply that early idealism to try to work in communities in public service. That’s where I met my wife. That’s where my children were born.¹⁵¹

Chicago is the axis for his transformation into manhood, the development of his values, the growth of his career, and the formation of his family. He goes on to say, “and the people there, the community, the lessons I learned, they’re all based right in these few square miles where we’ll be able to now give something back and bring the world back home after this incredible journey.” He explicitly connects the formative moments in his life as spatially based in the square miles surrounding Jackson Park, recognizing that he owes a kind of debt to the communities and the people there. They supported him as a Senator and Presidential Candidate, and now it is his turn to support them. He presents the Center as an opportunity for him to “now give something back” to his home, also cementing the idea of the Center as inherently community-focused and concerned with public good.

¹⁵⁰ Waquant, *Urban Outcasts*, 53.

¹⁵¹Obama Foundation, "We Love This City: First Lady Michelle Obama Speaks to Chicagoans," *YouTube*, uploaded by Obama Foundation, Mar 7, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3RBt198C5VE> (accessed Jan 10, 2018).

Both Michelle and Barack Obama express that they are who they are because of their experiences and the people in the South Side, who formed them and led them to success. On its website, the Foundation further emphasizes the South Side as the key setting for their landmarks as a couple, showcasing a timeline that includes pictures and information about Michelle's childhood, the Obamas' first date, and their wedding (see figure 18). The Foundation legitimizes its presence in Jackson Park by showing that its leaders are people who *belong* on the South Side and thus have the moral, historical, and cultural authority to change the space of the South Side.

The Foundation's public discourse also communicates the idea of an established relationship between the Obamas and the South Side that gives the Foundation the credibility to build the Center and to negate a CBA. Its website includes a page tracing Barack Obama's professional history in Chicago in a section called "Chicago: where it began," sketching a timeline with Obama's community organizing in Roseland (see figure 19), his position as a professor of constitutional law at the University of Chicago, his leadership in Illinois Project Vote! (an initiative to increase turn out of voters of color in Illinois), and his terms as a U.S Senator.¹⁵² In the public forum the Foundation held in 2017, Obama responded to a Woodlawn resident and community organizer's question of "why wouldn't you sign a CBA to protect us?"¹⁵³ by saying,

I was a community organizer. I *know* the neighborhood. I know that the minute you start saying well, we're thinking about signing something that will determine who's getting jobs... next thing I know I've got 20 organizations that are coming out of the woodwork, some of them I've never heard before.¹⁵⁴

Obama uses his history on the South Side as a community organizer in Roseland in his early 20s¹⁵⁵ as authority to back his position against a CBA. He argues that his past experience as a community organizer gives him the insight and legitimacy to predict the behavior and motivations of community organizations and community organizers, as well

¹⁵² Obama Foundation. *Obama Foundation*. www.obama.org. Accessed 22 Jan. 2018.

¹⁵³ Edward McLelland. "Meet the Community Organizers Fighting Against...Barack Obama." *Politico*, February 28, 2018. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/02/28/barack-obama-library-chicago-217093>, Accessed Mar 1, 2018.

¹⁵⁴ Grace Hauck, "The Maroon Weekly, E3," *Chicago Maroon*, Mar, 2018, <https://soundcloud.com/chicagomaroonpodcast/the-maroon-weekly-e3>, Accessed Mar 5, 2018.

¹⁵⁵ Barack Obama, *Dreams from my Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*, (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1994, 2004).

as the knowledge to know what is best for the neighborhood in this situation. Another CBA-supporter and member of KOCO, one of the CBA Coalition's founding organizations, Jitu Brown, asked Obama the same question and reported that Obama told the audience to "trust" him.¹⁵⁶ The insider knowledge of the neighborhood legitimizes his response against a CBA, just as his former role as a community organizer gives him the moral authority to speak to a current community organizer.

The evocation of presidential campaigns are another facet of the Foundation's justification for the Obama Center. The section of the Foundation's website focusing on public input quotes Obama, in all-caps: "YOUR VOICE MATTERS. YOUR VOICE MAKES A DIFFERENCE.- President Obama, 2012."¹⁵⁷ Recalling Obama's 2008 and 2012 campaign slogans and messaging, the quote bolsters the image of the Center as a community-based project in which the public has a voice. Obama's "Yes we can" campaign logo is also one of the Foundation's recurring images (see figures 20-23). In the February 2017 public meeting, for example, the podium from which Foundation Public officials spoke sported the campaign logo, which has been converted for the Foundation's logo (see figures 20). By using language and images associated with Obama's campaign, the Foundation connects the Center to Obama's values and credibility.

¹⁵⁶Jitu Brown, "Why the Obama library needs a community benefits agreement," *Chicago Reader*, Oct 30, 2017, <http://www.chicagoreporter.com/why-the-obama-library-needs-a-community-benefits-agreement/>, (accessed November 15, 2017).

¹⁵⁷ Obama Foundation. *Obama Foundation*. www.obama.org. Accessed 22 Jan. 2018.



Fig. 18. Wedding day
(Courtesy of *Obama Foundation*)



Fig. 19. Obama in Roseland Neighborhood
(Courtesy of *Obama Foundation*)



Fig. 20. Obama speaks at Feb 27th public meeting held by Foundation
(Courtesy of *Obama Foundation*)



Fig. 21. Obama Foundation logo
(Courtesy of *Obama Foundation*)



Fig. 22. Presidential campaign logo
(Courtesy of *Obama Foundation*)



Fig. 23. Obama Foundation Summit logo
(Courtesy of *Obama Foundation*)

Departure from Tradition

Lastly, the Foundation uses the Center's relationship to the canon of presidential libraries and its "public" character as justification for its presence in Woodlawn. The website reads (emphasis added),

The Obama Presidential Center *is more than a building or a museum*. It's a space for all of us to come together, collaborate, and leave ready to go change our worlds... The Library Building is the third main building of the campus — a portal for visitors to engage with the *world beyond the Obama Presidential Center*. *More than a building housing documents from the past*, we want this to be a place for visitors to play a real role in *building* our collective future... *The Museum...* will have a relatively *small footprint within the Campus...*¹⁵⁸.

The Foundation sets the Center apart from the past presidential libraries that have focused on enshrining the legacy of a particular president. It explicitly diminishes the role of the museum component: "The Museum will serve as a landmark... but will have a relatively small footprint within the Campus." Already the use of the word "campus" communicates a sense of activity and learning, in which participants have agency and exchange knowledge. The language clearly establishes the Center as a space for the future and a place for transformation: "it's a space for all us to come together, collaborate, and leave ready to go change our worlds." The Foundation's clearly sends the message, "we are not like other presidential libraries" with only self-interested goals, thereby establishing the Center as a place for the future and for communities.

¹⁵⁸Obama Foundation. *Obama Foundation*. www.obama.org (accessed 22 Jan. 2018).

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The Coalition is keenly aware of the power differential between itself—whose core interests are those of low-income residents—and the institutions making decisions about the Center—the Obama Foundation, City of Chicago, and University of Chicago (“the Library” in the Coalition’s terms). The presence of multiple “deictic centers” in the Coalition’s discourse shows how cognizant it is of the prevailing power dynamics. As established earlier, when the Coalition talks about the legitimacy and credibility needed to make claims over the space of Woodlawn, the “deictic center” is composed of long-term Woodlawn residents. They are the active agents, while other players remain at the margins of the discourse in mere “experiencer role”. However, when the Coalition talks about the power to turn decisions into material consequences, the “deictic center” is the “Library.” In terms of political and economic clout, the “Library” is at the active agent, while Coalition members and long-term residents are marginal, passive figures who experience the consequences of the three institutions’ actions. Although the Coalition articulates the dire consequences of such a power differential—displacement—its public discourse does not solely present the power difference as a “lack” on the part of the Coalition. It recognizes the kind of power—belonging and history in the neighborhood—that long-term residents have and channels it to legitimize and justify its demand for a CBA.

Given the history of development in black communities by the City of Chicago and University of Chicago on the South Side, to some South Siders the Coalition’s propositions might seem laughable. The Coalition’s entire campaign might look like a futile effort and a waste of time. Lorenzo, the Woodlawn resident quoted earlier,

responded to the question, “Do you feel like there is a way to resist these changes in rent and demographics?” by saying,

I doubt it. I've seen a lot. I mean, you can resist all you want but you know, once your rent goes up, it goes up. There ain't nothing you can do about it. You're either going to have to pay it or leave. A lot of people have been moving on their own, out to the suburbs...more affordable way of living.¹⁵⁹

What possible tools does a group representing the interest of low-income residents, led by low-income tenants and some middle-class residents, have to pressure the Obama Foundation, the City of Chicago, and University of Chicago to sign a CBA, given that the Coalition asks the “Library” not merely to refrain from harming low-income residents, but to actively improve their living conditions? In doing so, it goes beyond asking the three institutions to halt displacement: it asks them to completely reimagine how development is conducted in urban communities. The Coalition’s members not only claim the neighborhood space as their own—asserting their desire to *stay*, knowing that major developments will cause low-income residents’ displacement—but furthermore state the desire to benefit from the positive changes and opportunities the Center’s presence will bring, stressing that they are the ones who should be given priority as the geographically closest residents.

From the perspective of CBA organizers, two factors make the possibility of a CBA both possible and also extremely unlikely: the departure of the Obama Center from the canon of presidential libraries and the figure of Barack Obama. The very mission and vision of the Center make it the type of enterprise that would be amicable, open to negotiation, or even willingly supportive of a CBA. The Foundation’s public discourse explicitly states that the Center is meant to be a space of change, a partnership between the Foundation and visitors and South Side residents— even principally guided by the public’s input, an economic engine for the City, a source of economic development and resources for the South Side, a “gift” to the South Side. Its mission is expressly for the public good. What is more, Barack Obama’s history and relationship to the South Side makes a CBA seem like a viable option. South Siders loyally supported Obama during

¹⁵⁹ Lorenzo (Woodlawn resident), interviewed by Valeria Stutz, Chicago, IL, November 6th, 2016.

his campaigns; the South Side is Obama's "home;" it is the place where Obama was a community organizer.

For many, Obama is a beloved figure of hope and pride, even taking into account the disappointments of his presidency. As a former organizer, he could understand the conditions and experiences that necessitate a CBA, and his personal commitment to the South Side would make him open to negotiating a CBA. Lastly, though the requests of the CBA, such as rent control and CTA improvements, are not in the Foundation's formal sphere of influence and resources, Obama has the political status and influence necessary to bring in institutions like the City of Chicago and University of Chicago, necessary to guarantee CBA measures.

These characteristics, however, are also the very factors that make a CBA unlikely. *Politico* journalist Edward McClelland puts it well: Obama is not a rich outsider developing real estate. He is one of the most beloved, if not the most beloved, politicians in Chicago. Obama does not need to sign a CBA in order to gain the City's goodwill, obtain land, or quicken the construction process. He is Mayor Emanuel's former supervisor and has received 20 acres from the city to build his presidential library. In Emanuel's words, the Center is a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the city." Thus it is extremely unlikely that the Coalition will convince local politicians to "throw their weight against the wishes of both Obama and Emanuel."¹⁶⁰

Additionally, the Foundation's explicit mission of public good and its self-envisioned role as a community resource makes it an unlikely CBA candidate: if its intentions are to bring resources into the South Side, rather than to make a private profit, why does it need to sign a CBA? In the Foundation's argument, the Center's essence is precisely what a CBA asks for. Obama's history on the South Side allows him to say, "trust me," without a CBA. His track record and relationship with the South Side establishes his promises of community betterment as trustworthy.

The assertions Coalition members make are elemental: they claim basic housing (the right to stay where they currently are) and resources such as education and transport.

¹⁶⁰Edward McClelland. "Meet the Community Organizers Fighting Against...Barack Obama." *Politico*, February 28, 2018. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/02/28/barack-obama-library-chicago-217093>, Accessed Mar 1, 2018.

They see housing, education, and adequate transportation as human rights. For those who care about human quality of life in general, and specifically within the city, the Coalition's demands, especially those that pertain to the ability to stay in the neighborhood, express the "right to the city." The free-market organization of our society, however, frames these demands as unrealistic and incompatible with its version of "common sense." In free market capitalism, to be a citizen with rights, you must own private property.¹⁶¹ Consequently, gentrification is a "natural" process because it results from changes in the market and the flow of capital. Displacement is inevitable; it is part of the natural shifts in the urban fabric, even if it means entire swaths of population being displaced from cities entirely, as more and more neighborhoods become unaffordable. When a neighborhood's quality of life increases, of course it will attract newcomers. For whom is neighborhood development and improvement? For those who can afford it. The increase in rent and property taxes is inevitable, so people who cannot afford it will have to move to areas within their "buying power." In this paradigm, if the Coalition's claim that displacement must stop, and that those who cannot afford to pay the new rents must stay in their homes regardless, is illogical and unrealistic, then a call for this population to be the priority in the Center, City, and University's allocation of resources, is irrational and absurd. What is more, not only are the interests of the Coalition about poor people, but about black poor people. In a society where white supremacy, implicit or explicit, and its power structures and logic are the "natural state," the call for a CBA becomes even more unattainable. The experience, culture, and perspective of white people remain the norm; universal experience is equated to white experience. Black people remain second class citizens, so the claims of poor black people are easily dismissed.

Given the strength of the free market and the context of this country's inception on the backs of genocide, displacement, the slavery of people of color, the ramifications of this history, and the endurance of white supremacy, the demands of the Coalition are fruit of a kind of radical hope. Its members assert their spatial demands, and by extension call for the opportunity to have a good quality of life. They assert their right to self-determination. To recognize, as outsiders, the radical hope within their demands,

¹⁶¹ Cf. Don Mitchell, *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*, (New York: Guilford Press, 2003), 132.

however, does not mean romanticizing the power that low-income people have or operating under the false illusion that people power always wins. Nor is the hope represented by the Coalition's vision a superficial, self-deceptive, or placating kind of hope. The Coalition imagines a more equitable future, but it knows the material limits of its power. Its members know that a CBA is unlikely, but they persist all the same.

Having examined the Foundation and Coalition's use of language in their public discourse, the study's opening and central question returns: How do residents and a major developer make geographic assertions? Specifically, how does this process unfold in Woodlawn in the context of the Obama Presidential Center's arrival? In this study, a focus on a group of residents advocating for the interests of low-income people was chosen. The Obama Foundation is the major developer in the situation. The following conclusions seem warranted by the findings of this study.

The Foundation and Coalition's discourse overlap in several ways. Both use almost identical material for justification and legitimization of their claims to space: Obama's history on the South Side, the status of the South Side as his home, his history of community organizing, the mission of the Foundation, and the Center's status as a presidential library with a new spin. The Coalition likewise evokes the history of development on the South Side. They both make geographical assertions about the same area, but the spatial scale of the Foundation is the South Side and that of the Coalition is the area of neighborhoods proximate to the site of the Center: district versus neighborhood scale.

The scales correspond to their respective organizational missions: the Foundation focuses on bringing resources to the South Side and increasing its status as a "destination," while the Coalition advocates for Jackson Park's surrounding neighborhoods, whose residents fall inside the radius of the area's most vulnerable to displacement. While both parties are concerned with the historical lack of investment in the South Side and agree about the need for resources, they differ in their conception of the principal "problem" to address. For the Foundation, the problem is lack of economic activity on the South Side as a whole and its lack of reputation or recognition as a place of value in the eyes of the rest of Chicago, the country, and the world. For the Coalition, the main challenge is displacement of low-income residents, as well as the goal of

prioritizing surrounding neighborhoods as the beneficiaries of the Center's—and the collective "Library's"—resources. Thus, their interpretation of the consequences of the Center's presence in Jackson Park is vastly different. While the Foundation sees the Center's arrival as an economic engine and inevitable source of resources, and the Coalition also celebrates it as an unprecedented source of resources, the Coalition sees that it will not benefit the neighborhood's low-income residents unless something is done differently. It will cause displacement because of the increased development it will trigger, unless a CBA is established.

When a major development project led by a beloved figure arrives in an under-resourced neighborhood—with the express mission of public service—a situation arises where residents and the developer make geographical assertions through similar justifications and legitimizations, interpreting similar material in dissimilar ways for disparate purposes, both still claiming the use of a space. These dynamics highlight how the themes of history, cultural icons, and personal identity are double-edged swords in conflicting geographic assertions made by both parties. The situation represents a geographical convergence of related interests working on slightly yet critically different scales—neighborhood and district—and it clarifies how relevant worldviews, power distribution, and history play out in a particular space. The outcome for the Woodlawn neighborhood and for the South Side more generally may not be unexpected, but the spatial consequences at both scales are as yet too fluid to predict.

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Appendix

CBA Ordinance Proposed by Coalition

Here follows the ordinance for a Community Benefits Agreement proposed to the City of Chicago by the CBA Coalition, as listed on the Coalition's website.

OBAMA PRESIDENTIAL CENTER AREA COMMUNITY BENEFITS ORDINANCE

WHEREAS the Obama Presidential Center has been granted full access by the City of Chicago to develop more than twenty acres of public park land;

WHEREAS millions of local and state taxpayer dollars will be used to pay for initial infrastructure and road changes in the area surrounding the Obama Presidential Center and the University of Chicago;

WHEREAS millions of additional local and state taxpayer dollars will be used to pay for ongoing maintenance to infrastructure and roads in the area surrounding the Obama Presidential Center and the University of Chicago for years to come; now, therefore

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:

SECTION 1. Economic Development

SUPPORT LOCAL HIRING INITIATIVES, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING EFFORTS THROUGH THE CREATION OF A COMMUNITY TRUST FUND.

A) The City of Chicago, University of Chicago, and Barack Obama Foundation shall partner to

leverage private/corporate support to provide broader long-term investment opportunities for the communities within a five-mile radius of the Barack H. Obama Presidential Center:

1. Seven percent of development costs (of the Obama Presidential Center, the University of Chicago Hotel, Dorm, and Conference Center, and City of Chicago Infrastructure Projects related to the Presidential Center) be placed in a community trust fund to support the first source employment center, business development center, affordable housing and related initiatives;
2. Five percent of revenue generated from downstream enterprises be placed in a community trust fund to support community development initiatives;

B) The City of Chicago, University of Chicago, and Barack Obama Foundation shall partner to leverage private/corporate support to develop a “Black Business Corridor” at strategic locations near the Barack H. Obama Presidential Center:

1. The business development center will target South Side residents to assist them with a menu of options (e.g. business plan development, low-interest loans, free leases, business coaching) to aid in the development of small businesses on designated corridors along 61st and 63rd Streets, and Stony Island Avenue.

SECTION 2. Education

INVEST RESOURCES IN QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE.

A) The City of Chicago and Chicago Public Schools will make the following investments in public schools within a five-mile radius of the Barack H. Obama Presidential Center in the following manner:

1. Maintain a school library with a full-time librarian every day school is in session;
2. Provide adequate heating and cooling systems to maintain a comfortable learning environment every day school is in session;
3. Offer bus service to and from school for special needs students, and students who live 1 mile or more from the school they attend;
4. Enhance the curricula to provide STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) programming;

5. Upgrade textbooks with the most recent editions, and ensure each student has access to their own upgraded textbooks;
 6. Provide full-day, fully-funded pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms with no more than 24 students in each classroom;
 7. Ensure Hyde Park Academy remains an open enrollment neighborhood high school with a maximum class size of 24 students, and the closed school buildings re-opened and utilized per a community engagement process;
 8. Provide comprehensive health services including a health center, full-time nurse, and/or health classes that address physical and mental health;
 9. Provide teacher aides for each elementary-level classroom; and
 10. Embrace sustainable neighborhood community schools as the standard school model and support meaningful parent and community involvement through direct engagement.
- B) The Barack Obama Foundation shall partner with public schools within a five-mile radius to offer the following amenities through the Barack H. Obama Presidential Center:
1. Offer performing/fine arts space that is accessible to public schools and community organizations at a discount rate;
 2. Partner with public schools within a 5-mile radius of the Barack H. Obama Presidential Center to offer civics/political education and leadership development to the students;
 3. Offer monthly public seminars/workshops that address topics related to health and safety, housing, business development, etc.;
 4. Offer an exhibit that shares the political legacy of Chicago's Southside as a continuum that includes Barack Obama's political legacy;
 5. Offer an internship/docent program for students and volunteers of any age;
 6. Partner with public schools and community organizations to offer tutoring and mentorship programming, as well as afterschool and summer programming, and specialized programming for teens and young adults;
 7. Partner with public schools and community organizations to provide financial assistance for graduating seniors attending post-secondary institutions (e.g. matching gifts);
 8. Support book acquisition efforts of public school libraries;
 9. Offer free admission family days, discount admission rates for students and seniors, and special access for public schools at the Obama Presidential Center;
 10. Provide private individual and small group study spaces; and
 11. Link with the college and university library system to provide increased access to source material.

C) The City of Chicago, University of Chicago, and Barack Obama Foundation shall partner to leverage private/corporate support to provide:

1. Increased financial and volunteer support of public schools within a five-mile radius of the Barack H. Obama Presidential Center;
2. Support to public schools without libraries and/or librarians to bring that resource into those buildings;
3. Support to re-open closed schools to be utilized according to a community engagement plan to allows community residents to determine the best use for the building;
4. Support to engage youth in the development of the CIWP at the public schools within a five-mile radius of the Barack H. Obama Presidential Center; and
5. Support to recruit membership-based organizations (e.g. sororities/fraternities, labor unions) to adopt public schools within a 5-mile radius to add additional resources.

SECTION 3. Employment

PRIORITIZE TRAINING, HIRING AND ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS.

A) The City of Chicago, University of Chicago, and Barack Obama Foundation shall partner to establish a first-source employment hiring center, to include the following:

1. Recruit South Side job-seekers and maintain a database of South Side residents who meet the qualifications for positions in order to facilitate hiring;
2. Refer local residents to workforce development programs;
3. Partner with workforce development programs to fill gaps in the training system, aimed at all positions entry-level through management; and,
4. Provide career ladder counseling for all new employees.

B) The City of Chicago, University of Chicago, and Barack Obama Foundation shall partner to ensure 80% of the construction jobs for the Obama Presidential Center, University of Chicago Dorm, Hotel, and Conference Center, and city infrastructure developed for the Obama Presidential Center are filled by southside residents and that their demographics are consistent with southside demographics:

1. 35% of the apprenticeships and 20% of journey workers, across all trades, hired by the contractors must come from the southside and their demographics must reflect southside communities;
2. General and sub-contractors and trade unions will partner with local technical training institutes to fill apprenticeship positions;
3. Wages should not go below Chicago's living wage and/or the federal government standard per the respective field, including, but not limited to Davis & Bacon prevailing wages.

C) The City of Chicago, University of Chicago, and Barack Obama Foundation shall partner to ensure 80% of permanent jobs at the Obama Presidential Center, University of Chicago Dorm, Hotel, and Conference Center, and related city services are filled by southside residents and that their demographics are consistent with southside demographics:

1. Prioritize and monitor hiring of hard-to-employ demographics (e.g. long term unemployed, low-income, ex-offenders, public housing residents, youth, senior citizens);
2. 10% of the jobs should be designated for young adults between 16 and 30 years of age;
3. 35% of sub-contracts should go to southside residents and reflect the demographics of the southside.
4. Employers must agree to not block unionization of employees; and
5. Create summer employment opportunities for youth.

D) The Community Trust Fund created pursuant to Section 1A of this Ordinance shall support an independent monitoring organization, to include representatives from the Obama Library Community Benefits Agreement Coalition, that will monitor and track employment and retention figures (including but not limited to race, income, gender, ethnicity, justice system involvement, address, unemployment history, residence in public housing, and age) on a weekly and quarterly basis;

E) The City of Chicago shall empower the City Colleges of Chicago to create a pipeline of residents for construction and permanent jobs related to the Obama Presidential Center and University of Chicago Hotel, Dorm, and Conference center and other downstream projects.

1. The pipeline program for southside residents will increase enrollment in vocational and technical training programs by addressing gaps in the training system, which may include but

are not limited to a tuition reimbursement program and a deferred, subsidized below-market student loan program.

SECTION 4. Housing

PREVENT DISPLACEMENT OF LONG-TIME RESIDENTS BY PRESERVING EXISTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS AND CREATING ADDITIONAL UNITS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

A) The City of Chicago, University of Chicago, and Barack Obama Foundation shall partner to leverage private/corporate support to preserve existing affordable housing, provide additional affordable housing options and prevent displacement of long-term residents from within a five-mile radius of the Obama Presidential Center through the following initiatives:

1. For all newly-constructed and redeveloped/rehabilitated housing of three or more units, except for owner-occupied buildings, 30% of on-site housing units, or at least one unit, whichever is greater, shall be set aside for households earning between 0-50% of the AMI.
 - i. The option to pay a fee in lieu of the establishment of affordable units is not permitted. However, for up to 25% of the required affordable units, an existing unit in another building owned by the same developer within a one-mile radius may be donated to the Community Land Trust in lieu of building a new unit on-site.
 - ii. Create a density bonus for developers who commit to building family-sized units of at least three bedrooms, with all bedrooms sized to Chicago building code standards for individuals 12 years of age or older.
 - iii. Create a density bonus for developers who commit to setting aside units for families at 0-30% of the AMI.
2. Coordinate with Cook County to create a property tax freeze or exemption for existing dwellings within a two-mile radius of the Obama Presidential Center for residents who can verify ten years of residency within a five-mile radius.
3. Funds from the Community Trust Fund created pursuant to Section 1A of this Ordinance shall support
 - i. the creation of a Rental Assistance Program for residents who have lived in the designated area for at least 5 years to pay incremental increases in rent for the next 25 years;
 - ii. the creation of a Community Land Trust to hold properties and keep them affordable for not less than 99 years;

4. Create a right-of-first-refusal for tenants in private-market multi-family buildings to purchase the properties they live in when owners sell their buildings.
5. Create a special counseling program for Housing Choice Voucher-holders who must move and wish to continue renting within the designated area
 - i. Encourage home purchase opportunities within the designated area through programs such as the Chicago Housing Authority's Choose-to-Own program for families with incomes at 50% or higher AMI
6. Require landlords to cover moving costs of residents who must move due to rents being raised higher than area median rental rate increase.
7. Encourage HUD to increase the availability of assisted living facilities in this designated area for families and individuals of all ages.

SECTION 5. Sustainability

PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE PLANNING PROCESS AND ONGOING OPERATIONS OF THE OBAMA PRESIDENTIAL CENTER, AND REPLACE ALL LAND USED FOR THE OBAMA PRESIDENTIAL CENTER.

A) The City of Chicago, University of Chicago, Barack Obama Foundation, and other developers within the Obama Presidential District shall partner to provide leveraged public/private resources to comprehensive and neighbor-driven sustainability measures for all development related to or downstream to the Obama Presidential Center:

2. Provide one-to-one replacement of open parkland and other activity space nearby for all South Parks acres to be occupied by Obama Presidential Center facilities. Replacement spaces to include a state-of-the-art athletic facility; replacement of track, football field and softball fields; Jackson Bark; trees, other plants and ecological elements removed replaced in equivalent size/maturity.
3. Commit to principles of community-controlled development and schedule ample time for participatory democracy before legislative applications and votes, such as submissions to the Chicago Plan Commission.
4. Maintain a community-controlled process for authorizing the sale of all city-owned land in a five-mile radius of the Obama Presidential Center.
5. Provide timely written answers to open questions about shoreline modifications and restoration, tree cutting, natural habitat relocation, water retention ponds, chemical fertilizers,

public access points/acreage and open space, built structures such as fieldhouse and commercial concessions, replacement of sports fields.

SECTION 6. Transportation

INVEST IN ROBUST PUBLIC TRANSIT OPTIONS AND PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY ROADS, AND MINIMIZE TRAFFIC DISRUPTIONS.

A) The City of Chicago, University of Chicago, and Barack Obama Foundation shall partner to leverage private/corporate support to provide enhanced public, vehicular, and pedestrian transportation options for access to and from the communities immediately surrounding the Obama Presidential Center:

1. Restore the extended, original route of the #1 Indiana/Hyde Park bus route between 64th Street and Union Station.
2. Support and consult new Community Transportation Advisory Council using participatory democracy guidelines, with community-selected delegates who vote before any road changes are submitted to the Chicago Plan Commission or City Council.
3. Convene the community for debate and input on transportation plans, including plans to close or expand roads.
4. Structure parking amenities to ensure ample free parking to neighbors and opportunities for local companies to participate in profits.
5. Outline proposed changes for all public transit, including bus, subway, Metra, and bike lanes, in a one-stop reference location. Improve safety, service and commercial opportunities related to transit and transportation with input from community stakeholders and subject to the recommendations of the Community Transportation Advisory Council.
6. Provide opportunities for local vendors to establish contracts for services associated with all transit portals.
7. Establish and fund employment training programs and local hiring targets for all transportation-related projects, including Department of Transportation and Chicago Park District projects. Establish and regulate standards and opportunities for African American business participation
8. Add a commemorative marker at the 63rd Street Metra Station as the departure location for Emmett Till before traveling to his death in Mississippi.

Valeria Alejandra Stutz
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Education

The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL
Bachelor of Arts, expected June 2018

Pursuing major in Geographical Studies and minor in Romance Languages and Literature; GPA: 3.862/ 4.00

Honors: University Scholar; Arborjet "Taking Root" Scholarship Recipient; Dean's List; acceptance into Summer Links Program; Jeff Metcalf Grant Recipient; National Hispanic Recognition Program Scholar

Job Experience

Programs Intern at Re:Vision

Re:Vision, Denver, CO

July 2016- September 2016

- Translated and formatted a bilingual cookbook, 2 newsletters, and taught computer skills to program participants
- Organized and facilitated 2 Spanish-language focus groups with 18 women about displacement, rent, and neighborhood changes
- Wrote for a grant in order obtain emergency funds for an anti-displacement campaign
- Wrote a 50 page report on focus group findings, resources, and recommendations for anti-displacement campaign
- Attended 2 day "Undoing Racism" workshop by the People's Institute

Issue Organizing Intern at Food and Water Watch

Food and Water Watch, Chicago, IL

July 2015- September 2015

- Gained Representative Danny Davis' co-sponsorship of the bill H.R. 1902 by building an 11-member business and organization IL coalition, leading 6 volunteers to speak to him at a town hall meeting, and collecting 548 petitions
- Recruited 5 heavily involved volunteers and increased the volunteer database by 27 people
- Organized a movie screening of *Fresh* in the City of Evanston, with attendance of 30 people, to educate attendees about the bill H.R. 933, food system, and fundraising for Food and Water Watch
- Led chants, registered attendees, and directed participants in a rally about the bill H.R. 933 outside of the office of Dick Durbin

Camp Counselor in City of Evanston Ecology Camp

EcoQuest Camp, Evanston, IL

June 2014- August 2014

- Led group of 10 children aged 5 to 7 in daily activities; mediated conflicts
- Collaborated with 7 to 11 other counselors for 9 weeks, including set up of over-night camp out
- Taught ecology related activities bi-weekly, such as nest-building, hiking in woods, and water cycle games
- Arranged educational skits enacted by campers every 2 weeks

Leadership/ Community Service

Community Coordinator on Editorial Board of MURAL (Latin American literary magazine)

University of Chicago, Chicago IL

October 2016- current

- Published, edited, made visual art, and wrote for four magazine issues, themed: women in Latin America (LA), queerness in LA, revolutions in LA, and Self Care & Natural Remedies in LA
- Organized and facilitated two Latinx-themed poetry open mics, located on campus and in Hyde Park Art Center, with attendance between 10 and 30 people
- In collaboration with a student advocacy group, organized an art auction and poetry open mic which raised \$325

Member of Sustainable Food Practicum Consulting Team

University of Chicago, Chicago, IL

January 2016- March 2016

- Advised urban agriculture non-profit The Plant in opening neighborhood food store
- Facilitated and coordinated 3 Spanish-language focus groups in 2 elementary schools and 1 charity organization within the Back of the Yards neighborhood in order to conduct market research
- Along with 4 students put together a 30-page report of research methods, data, and recommendations

Interests

- Art, dance, cooking, Spanish & English native fluency, French fluency, intermediate Italian, begin. Portuguese