ML - Morris County   2/23/84

Memorandum addressing specific
issues relating to Provisional Housing
Allocation Study prepared for Montville
Twp as part of Morris County Fair Housing
Suit

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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Lawrence K. Eismeier, Esq.
FROM   Robert J. O'Grady
SUBJECT: Supplemental Statements
           Housing Allocation Study
           Township of Montville

The statements which follow address three specific
issues relating to the Provisional Housing Allocation Study
prepared for Montville Township as part of its involvement in
the Morris County Fair Housing Suit. The purpose of these
statements is to provide further justification and
documentation in support of the proposed housing region
established for the Township and the methods used in
determining projection of housing needs and the Township's
fair share allocation.

1. Determination of Housing Region

The housing region established for Montville Township is
a "Trip to Work" or "Commutershed" region as opposed to the
practice others have followed in establishing housing regions
consisting of groups of counties. The Abeles report proposes
a housing region consisting of an 8-county area including
Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Morris, Passaic, Somerset
and Union as opposed to a communtershed region consisting of
portion of 8 counties, not all the same as the Abeles
counties.

The Abeles report points to five criteria for the
establishment of a housing region. While recognizing that
accessibility to employment opportunities is the single most

important determinant of residential location, the report appears to give major emphasis to two other criteria, namely, sharing of housing needs (balancing developed areas with areas having substantial vacant land) and relationship to existing planning regions, such as those of Tri-State and RPA. These planning regions were not established for purposes of fair share housing allocation.

From the standpoint of management by the courts, there is some justification for following county boundaries. If county boundaries are used, desirably they should follow as closely as possible the limits of a commutershed region. Evaluating the Abeles region in terms of the commutershed region established for Montville Township suggests that, as a minimum, Middlesex County not be included in a county boundary region. Not a single Middlesex municipality is included in Montville's commutershed. Moreover, according to 1980 Census data, less than one percent of Morris County's work force travels to work in Middlesex County.

Although part of Sussex County is located in the Township's commutershed region, that part consists of only one small municipality, namely, Stanhope. Therefore, Sussex County should be excluded. This is consistent with the Abeles region.

The foregoing modifications result in a housing region consisting of a maximum of seven counties, namely, Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Somerset and Union. Arguments could be made for an even smaller region based on commuter patterns. For example, only 2.4 percent of the Morris County labor force travels to work in Somerset County which established some justification for its exclusion. Only three Somerset municipalities fall within Montville's 30 minute commutershed. Similar arguments might be made in regards to Bergen County since only 3.1 percent of the Morris County labor force travels to work in that county.

Another alternative would be the regions established by the recent Rutgers Study which places Morris in a region with Essex, Sussex and Union. Certainly, this is a more manageable region in terms of size as compared to Abeles. In fact, the counties in Abeles' region are placed in three separate regions in The Rutgers Study.

These conditions only serve to demonstrate that no

perfect housing region can be established. Moreover, the precise region may not be significant, the important consideration being the municipality's ability to realistically make possible the production of low and moderate income housing.

2.   Method of Employment Projection

The Housing Allocation Study developed for Montville utilizes a straight line method of projecting future employment based upon the actual arithmetic growth in unemployment covered jobs in the private sector in the previous 10-year period (1971-1981). The source for employment data is the N.J. Department of Labor and Industry. In terms of statistical accuracy, D.L.& I. is accepted as a highly reliable source.

Hazard of potential error is involved in any projection. Although it can be argued that a straight-line method fails to recognize possible changes in the rate of change, it is no less objective or reliable than other methods especially over a short projection period. In this instance, the projection period is only 7 years. Moreover, the allocation report emphasizes the importance of periodic updating of the projection as new employment data becomes available.

It should also be noted that the projection of employment is for the total housing region rather than for any single municipality or other subdivision of the region. The broader the planning area, the less chance there is of error.
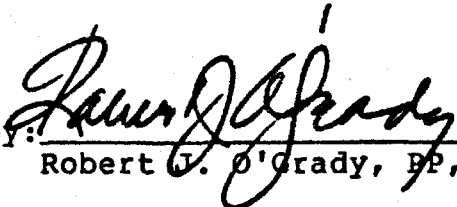
Allocation studies by others, such as Abeles, do not utilize employment projections as a means of determining future housing needs. The study performed for the Public Advocate by Abeles uses population projections for various counties performed by the office of Demographic and Economic Analysis, Division of Planning and Research of D.L. & I.   The population projection for the housing region is then converted to housing units based upon projected household size for the region.

Both the Montville method and the Abeles method have the same ultimate objective, however, Ables uses a State agency projection on a county-wide basis vs. actual data for each municipality in the Montville region. Moreover, the primary

factor influencing population growth in an area is employment opportunity. This establishes justification for projecting jobs rather than population.

3. Ratio of Housing Units to Jobs

Projected future housing units were determined by establishing the relationship between jobs and households. The allocation report indicates that 0.43 housing units were created for each new job between 1970 and 1980. This resulted from a decline in the average number of housing units per job from 0.95 to 0.90 in that 10-year period. If this trend were projected to 1990, the number of housing units for each job in that year would be 0.85 and the number of housing units created for each new job would have been 0.26 as opposed to the 0.43 actually used. Therefore, it is concluded that the 0.43 used is very conservative.

by: _____
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