



Mapping Racially Restrictive Housing Covenants in Prince George's County

Justin Mohammadi-Fall 2021



Background

- The term “redlining” has been used to describe all forms of housing discrimination based on race
 - This oversimplifies the multiple ways in which segregation was/is implemented
 - Redlining does not refer to the outright restriction of ownership, inheritance, or residence of black Americans in a neighborhood or district.
- The 1917 *Buchanan v. Warley* Supreme Court case outlawed municipally mandated race based housing, but it did not in any way deal with private agreements (Ely, 1998).
 - The lack of a decision on private agreements created a loophole which led to the rise of racially restrictive housing covenants
 - “by 1940, 80% of property in Chicago and Los Angeles carried restrictive covenants barring black families” (The Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston, 2021).
 - It was not until Congress passed the Fair Housing Act in 1968 that racially restrictive covenants were made illegal



Introduction

- Significant work had already been done on the project
 - 16 different racial covenants were already located by a 2019 team
 - However, no inclusion of deed liber and folio
 - Creation of a story map which was used as a reference
- Initially, we attempted to recover the lost data
 - Was a very slow process with little result

Methods, pt 2

- Only examined entries labeled as “deeds”
- Read through primary documents and located racial restrictions
- Identified plat books in which the property belongs

GRANTORS				GRANTEES	KIND OF INSTRUMENT	Date of Record		Last Record		Relation, Assignment, Etc.		
SURNAME	GIVEN NAMES ABCDEFGHIJK	GIVEN NAMES LMNOPQRS	GIVEN NAMES TUVWXYZ			Month	Day	Year	Book	Page	Book	Page
Abell	Benjamin C	Inez I		Alfred B Baker et Trs	D T	Jun	21	1927	207	481	761	87 Release
do	Clara B		W G	Coney Owen	Deed	Jan	27	1928	314	1		
do	Dorothy B	John E		Hyattsville Bldg Assn	Mtg	Oct	4	1935	442	21	322	458 Release
do	Darwin L by County Commissioners			Garrett C Van Meter	Deed	Dec	16	1938	519	148		
Abel	Annie Darwin			M J Wright et Trs	D T	Dec	22	1927	304	496	339	806 Release
do	Annie R Darwin			M J Wright et Trs	D T	Dec	9	1928	322	478	362	8 Release

Lots numbered fourteen (14) and fifteen (15) in Block numbered forty-two (42) of Otway B. Zantlinger's subdivision known as Capital Heights, containing four thousand (4000) square feet more or less, according to the plat thereof recorded in Liber J. W. B. No. 5, Folios 676 and 677, one of the Land Records of said Prince George's County.

TOGETHER, with the building and improvements thereupon, erected, made, or being; and all and every, the rights, alleys, ways, water, privileges, appurtenances, and advantages, to the same belonging or in anywise appertaining.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, the said piece or parcel of ground and premises above described or mentioned, and hereby intended to be conveyed, together with the rights, privileges, appurtenances, and advantages thereto belonging or appertaining unto and to the only proper use, benefit and behoof forever of the said Coney Owen, his heirs or assigns, in fee simple, subject nevertheless, to the following covenants, to wit: that the said parties hereto, each for himself or herself, hereby covenant to and with each other, for himself, herself, and themselves, and for his, her and their respective heirs and assigns.

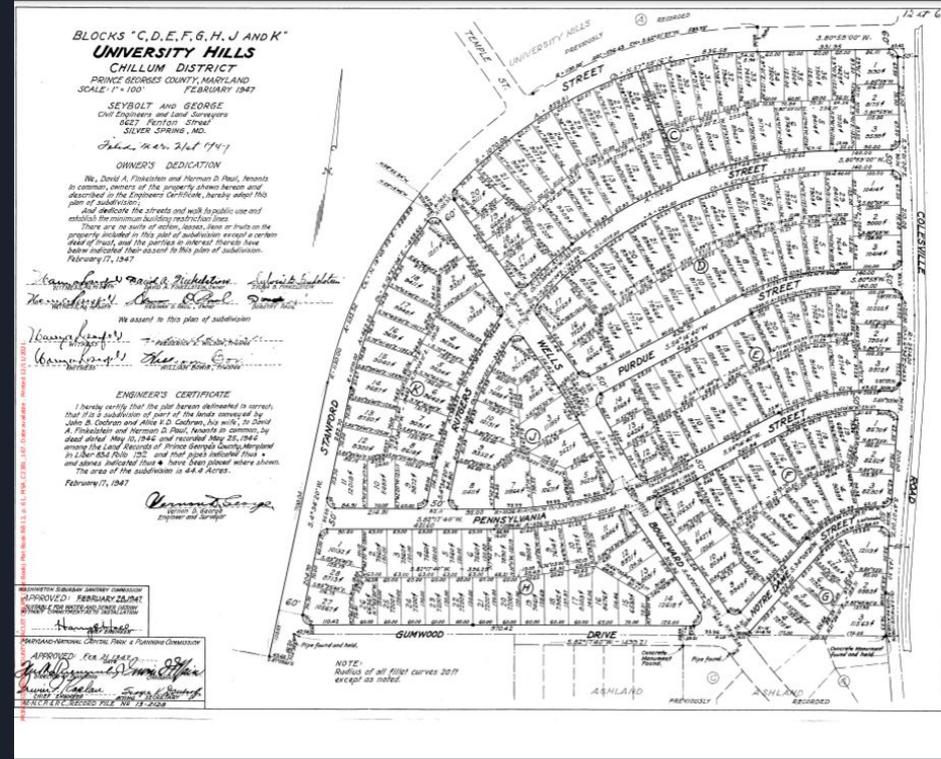
FIRST, that the herein described piece or parcel of land, or any part thereof, or any improvements thereon shall never be sold or conveyed to, or used, or in any manner occupied by any Negro or by any person of the Negro race or having Negro blood.

SECOND, that no spirituous or malt liquors shall be made, sold, or kept for sale on the said land and premises; no nuisance, or offensive, noisy, or illegal trade, calling or transaction shall be done, suffered or permitted on the same; no building whatever shall be erected within ten feet of the street line of the same.

These covenants are to be taken as running with the land and bind all parties, hereto,

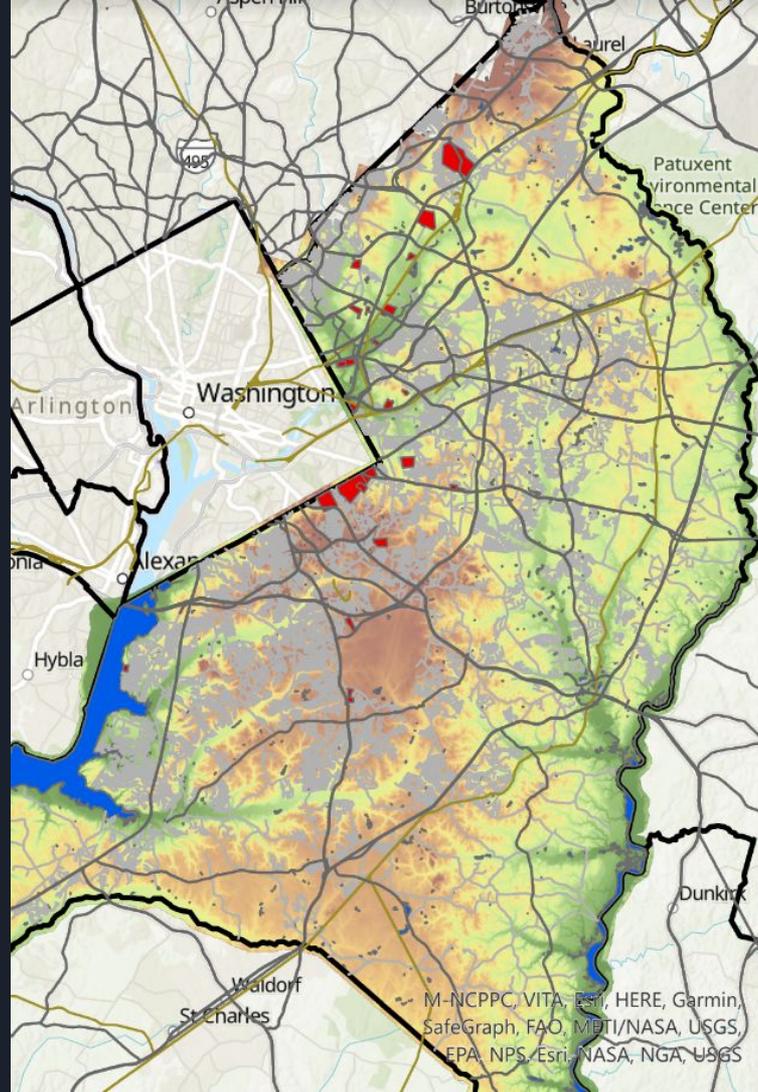
Methods, pt 3

- Located the plats referenced in the original deeds
- Recorded information for plat and deed
 - Subdivision name, plat book number and page, date of creation, surveyor, deed liber, folio and date, and exact quote
- Mapped the plat in an ArcGIS story map



Deliverables

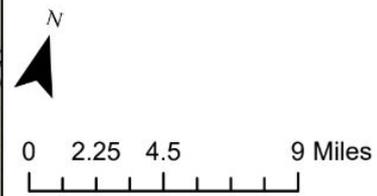
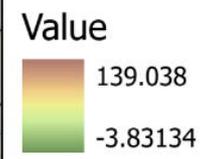
- Visualization of data via ArcGIS
 - Restrictive covenants represented as polygons not points
- Creation of an ESRI Story Map web page



Mapping Racially Restrictive Housing Covenants in Prince George's County

- Racially Restrictive Covenants
- ▭ County Lines
- Bodies of Water
- Major Roads
- Rail Roads
- County Roads

Elevation (m)

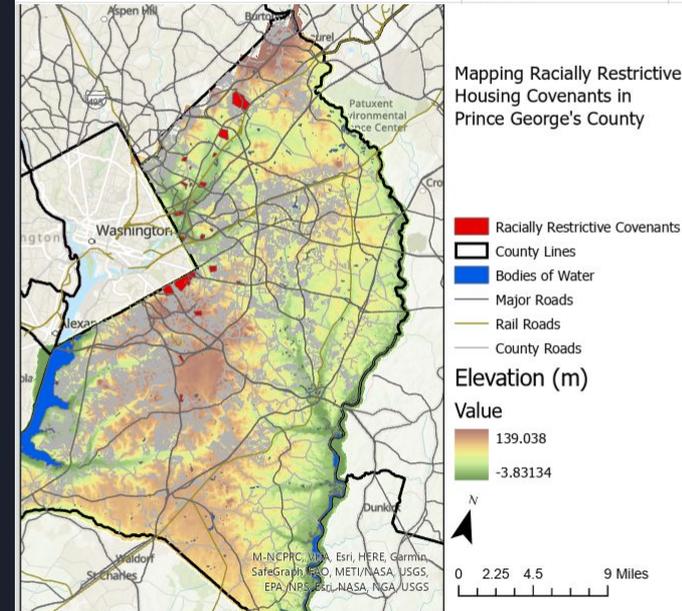


M-NCPPC, VITA, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, MBTI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS

Analysis

- Language of deeds specifically targeted African Americans
- The creation of deeds was common practice for developers
- Most covenants were close to DC

Surveyor	Count
David A. Finkelstein, Herman D. Paul	1
WM. J. Latimer	1
Edward L. Latimer	4
J. W. Holloway	1
J. Spence Howard	5
James P. Gallagher	1
Francis S Cammody?	1
O.B Zantzing	1
Albert E. Steward	1
George N. Bowen	1
Otway B. Zantzing	2
Robert F. Bradbury	1
A.H. Seidenspinner	1
Alphonse C. Hammer, Katherine Hammer	1
Norair Corporation	1
Katharine L. Spalding, Edwin W. Spalding	1
N/A	1
Charles G. Schultz	1
Ida M. Moyers	1
The Treasure Cove Development Company	1
August Burgdorf, Henry C. Burden	1
Sutton Britcher Co.	1





Moving Forward

- Possible expansion of data
 - Inclusion of oral history
- Biggest takeaway is the methodology and identification of relevant data
- Biggest remaining challenge is the slow rate of research
 - Possible to speed up through automation
 - Could analyze deeds via an OCR to search for keywords