

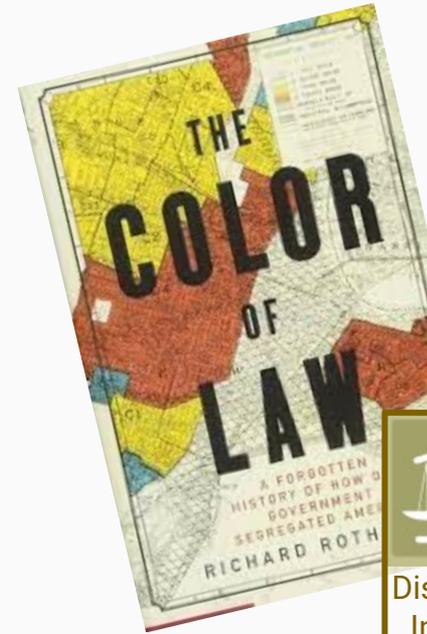
“Character of our Community”

Acknowledging and Addressing Structural Racism by Clarifying & Re-articulating our Language in Fairfax’s General Plan



THE START OF THE JOURNEY

**General Plan Super Committee: Planning Commission
Co-Chairs, Town Council, Town Committee Chairs**



TOWN OF FAIRFAX
2010-2030 GENERAL PLAN

Final Adoption April 4, 2012
Town of Fairfax
Department of Planning & Building Services

Final Draft 2010-2030 General Plan Accepted by Town Council — December 2010
Draft 2010-2030 General Plan CEQA Review — January 2011 through January 2012
Final Adoption 2010-2030 General Plan by Town Council — April 2012



OUR JOURNEY: MANY VOICES



RESJ = Racial Equity and Social Justice Committee

Blue = RESJ; Green = Town Council public meeting, Grey = Planning Commission public meeting

All meetings except the initial RESJ Subcommittee meeting have been open to the public.

HISTORICAL JOURNEY

“Character”

“Community/Neighborhood Character” was intentionally injected into land use planning as a tool to perpetuate segregation after antidiscrimination laws prohibited explicitly racist land use policies.

“Beginning in the early twentieth century, policymakers and individual citizens pursued a number of policies and practices to segregate housing by race and income.”

An Economic Fair Housing Act, Century Foundation

“Race-neutral” ... cannot actually be race-neutral if groups are starting from different places due to a history of race-specific segregation and disinvestment.”

From Awareness to Action, <https://mappingprejudice.umn.edu/>

“The neighborhood associations, HOAs, [and] “slow-growth” groups ... are the same communities that used redlining to shut out families of color decades ago. Hiding behind a concern for maintaining “community character” is a very thin veil.”

Community Character' Concerns Are a Veil – a Thin One, Voices of San Diego

GENERAL PLANS, LAND USE & PLANNING

Land Use & Planning is done by towns to determine how the **physical configuration** of their communities will change, develop and adapt to meet the present and future needs of their residents.

The general plan forms the foundation of local land-use planning... for the community's physical development.

1971 - CA Legislation transformed the general plan into the "constitution," from which all local land use decisions must derive.

Community Character in the General Plan

- From historically exclusionary to inclusive and welcoming
- 60 Instances of “Character”
- Find & replace phrases
- Shift to specific, clear, and concrete land use terms
- Say what we mean directly
- Avoid miscommunication
- Consistent with intent of the section, no material change to policy, program, or meaning

