Chapter 14

Discussion Questions.

1. Even though home prices have plummeted during the recent recession, the American dream of home ownership is still impossible for many poor and working class Americans. Renters are limited by more than just the increasing cost of housing, there is also a shortage of rental properties. The gap between the demand and the supply of affordable housing continues to grow. Higher land prices have made it less profitable to build new low and moderate-priced housing. The National Low Income Housing Coalition (2007) reports that the nation is 2.8 million apartments short of meeting the need among people with the lowest incomes. For every new affordable housing unit constructed, two are demolished, abandoned, or converted into condominiums. What do you suggest could be done about this problem?
2. Though most people first think of an unclean and unshaven man (51% of the homeless population) as “the face of the homeless,” other groups including families with children (30%), single women (17%), and unaccompanied minors (2%) also suffer from homelessness. Why do you feel that these other groups do not get as much attention as homeless men?
3. Discuss the effects of urban sprawl on your community if any exists.
4. Discuss the value of creating sustainable communities.
5. Where do you live? Discuss the size and type of community you live in using the concepts and terms from the text. What considerations to you have when it comes to moving from one location to another? Do you have defined ideas about the best community assets for you? Discuss these and other issues about your own living situation.
6. Discuss with the class how they feel about giving to a homeless person. Have they given money or other items to a homeless person? Would they give something if they were approached? Why or why not?
7. If you were in charge of urban planning for your community what new businesses do you think would succeed in your area? What kind of businesses would fail? Why?