

Selection Policy, in particular with regards to development in non-impacted areas. The City already provides deeper incentives for developments in non-impacted areas and encourages developers to create housing outside of impacted areas. However, property values in non-impacted areas are substantially higher than in impacted areas, thereby making it financially unfeasible to develop affordable housing due to high property acquisition costs. Additionally, several criteria in the Site Selection regulations, including access to public transportation and essential services, are already present in nearly all neighborhoods in Jersey City. Therefore, while the City does work to promote development in non-impacted areas, the Site and Neighborhood Selection Policy is not applicable to the geographic and financial conditions in Jersey City.

#### **vii. Appointed Boards and Commissions**

A community's sensitivity to fair housing issues is often determined by people in positions of public leadership. The perception of housing needs and the intensity of a community's commitment to housing related goals and objectives are often measured by board members, directorships, and the extent to which these individuals relate within an organized framework of agencies, groups, and individuals involved in housing matters. The expansion of fair housing choice requires a team effort and public leadership and commitment is a prerequisite to strategic action.

##### **a. Jersey City Housing Authority Board of Commissioners**

JCHA's Board of Commissioners is a seven-member body appointed by the Mayor and City Council. Commissioners determine policies and approve operating budgets, programs, and services consistent with its mission and subject to the mandates and limits imposed by state and federal laws.

Of the seven current Commissioners, four are male and three are female. Five members are Black, one is Asian, and one is Hispanic. One of the members is disabled.

##### **b. Planning Commission**

The Planning Commission is an advisory body composed of 11 citizens appointed by the Mayor and City Council. The Commission is responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the Master Plan for Jersey City.

Of the 11 current commissioners, seven are male and four are female. Nine members are White and three are Hispanic. None of the members reported a disability.

##### **c. Zoning Board of Adjustment**

The Zoning Board of Adjustment consists of nine citizens appointed by the Mayor and City Council. The Board is responsible for hearing and deciding appeals to the interpretation of the zoning ordinances and requests for special exceptions to, or variations from, the regulations of the Zoning Ordinance.

Of the nine current members, four are male and five are female. Six members are White, two members are Black, and one is Hispanic. None of the members reported a disability.

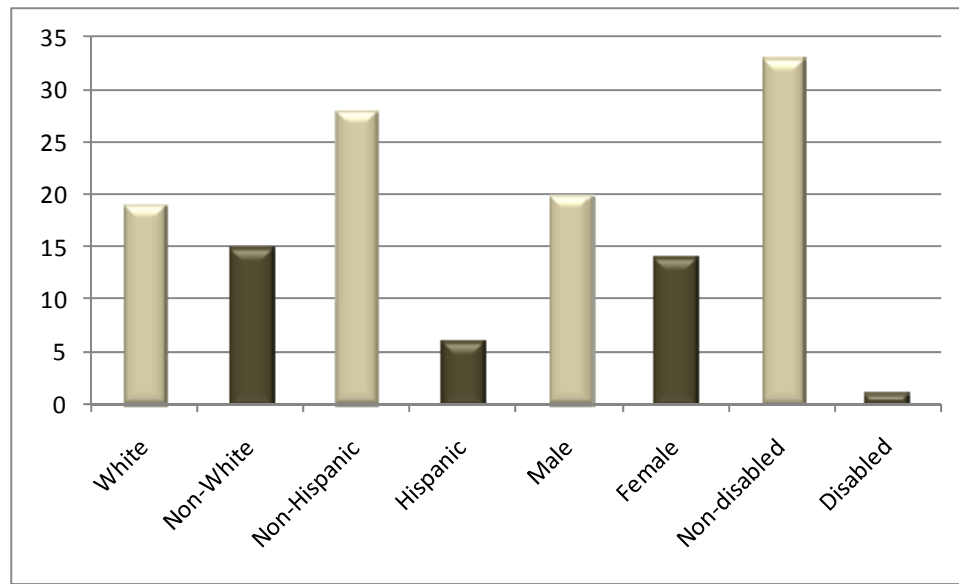
**d. Jersey City Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners**

The Jersey City Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners is made up of seven members, two whom also serve as City Councilpersons. The five remaining members are named to the Board by the Mayor and approved by City Council Resolution.

Of the seven current members, five are male and two are female. Four members are White, two members are Black, one is Asian, and one is Hispanic. None of the members reported a disability.

The following chart illustrates a relative lack of racial minorities, Hispanics, females and people with disabilities on selected appointed boards and commissions when compared to the rates of these groups Citywide. Racial minorities represent 44.1% of the appointees, which is less than the rate of minorities City-wide (62.6%). Hispanic residents, who account for 27.9% of the City's population, represent 18.5% of the appointees. Females, who account for 50.8% of the population, comprise 41.2% of the appointed seats. Only one person with a disability was counted among the 34 appointed members surveyed for the AI.

**Figure 4-9**  
**Composition of Appointed Citizen Boards and Commissions, 2010**



**OBSERVATION:** Select appointed boards and commissions with jurisdiction over housing and housing-related issues in Jersey City do not reflect the diverse population. Racial minorities represent 62.6% of the City's population but only 44.1% of appointees. Hispanics account for 27.9% of the population but only 17.6% of appointees. Also notably absent were persons with disabilities. The experiences and perspectives of members of the protected classes would enhance the decision-making processes in the City and offer the opportunity for advancing fair housing choice in all aspects of City government.

In October 2009, the State of New Jersey enacted the Citizen Service Act. The law requires that municipal governments maintain a directory of local authorities, boards and commissions that includes the number and name of all members along with terms of offices, any vacancies on the City's boards and commissions, frequency of meetings, and description of the entity's responsibilities. Additionally, board and commission applicants are required to fill out a one-page "Citizen Leadership Form" indicating which entity the applicant has an interest in and his or her prior work and volunteer experience. Between October 2009, when the law was enacted, and December 2009, the Mayor's office in Jersey City received nine applications for various boards and commissions. The City will continue to utilize this mechanism as a vehicle to increase participation on appointed boards and commissions by members of the protected classes. It is important that the City attract qualified candidates to serve on various boards.

#### **viii. Accessibility of Residential Dwelling Units**

From a regulatory standpoint, local government measures define the range and density of housing resources that can be introduced in a community. Housing quality standards are enforced through the local building code and inspections procedures.

The Department of Housing, Economic Development and Commerce (HEDC) enforces the City's property maintenance, construction, demolition and permitting standards. The Division of Code Enforcement is responsible for administering the City's property maintenance codes. This division responds to complaints and performs inspections. The Building Division is responsible for administering the building codes adopted by the City and overseeing the construction of buildings within the City. This division administers and enforces the State Uniform Construction Code, property condemnation and permitting street openings for the purpose of connecting residential units to utilities.

The City of Jersey City regulates housing construction through a range of national and international codes. The City's Building Codes and Standards include the Uniformed Construction Code, the Jersey City Property Maintenance Code, the Fire Prevention Code, and the Jersey City Health Code. In particular, the City's standards are based on the following: