Reviewer’s report

Title: The associations of perceived neighborhood disorder and physical activity with body mass among African American adolescents

Version: 5 Date: 13 February 2013

Reviewer: Joellen Wilbur

Reviewer’s report:

The authors have clearly answered many of the items raised in the critique. A few problems still remain

Major compulsory revisions

1. Page 3 bottom: The authors state that “some studies find an association between the built environment and obesity and others do not. Also some studies indicate that low-SES neighborhoods are associated with obesity whereas others do not”. Then they state, “However, in general findings from the literature on neighborhoods and health underscore that neighborhood contexts are associate with participation in physical activity and obesity.” This seems in conflict with the earlier statement.

2. Page 5: Methods: The age of the adolescents belongs in eligibility criteria. Also, recruitment area belongs under recruitment.

3. Page 6: A distinction was not made between the active and passive strategies and how they differ.

4. Results: Table 1. It doesn’t seem appropriate to put the neighborhood disorder scale in table 1 in both the row and column. It is being compared with itself. The authors might just describe it before they look at it against age, sex and other variables in table 1.

5. Results: Table 1. Providing the mean minutes for sedentary, light etc. of PA does more seem very meaningful. I expected to see the percentage of children in each of these categories similar to how obesity was handled.

6. Results table 1: Consider collapsing incomes into smaller groups. The same with high school. There are very few people in some of the categories.

7. Page 14: There is mention of using both percentile BMI and obesity status. Also, the second paragraph is introducing results in the discussion section (findings related to sedentary behavior, types of activity the children participated in and the use of physical activity logs. If this is done introduce the log in the methods section and note how it was used.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being
published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.