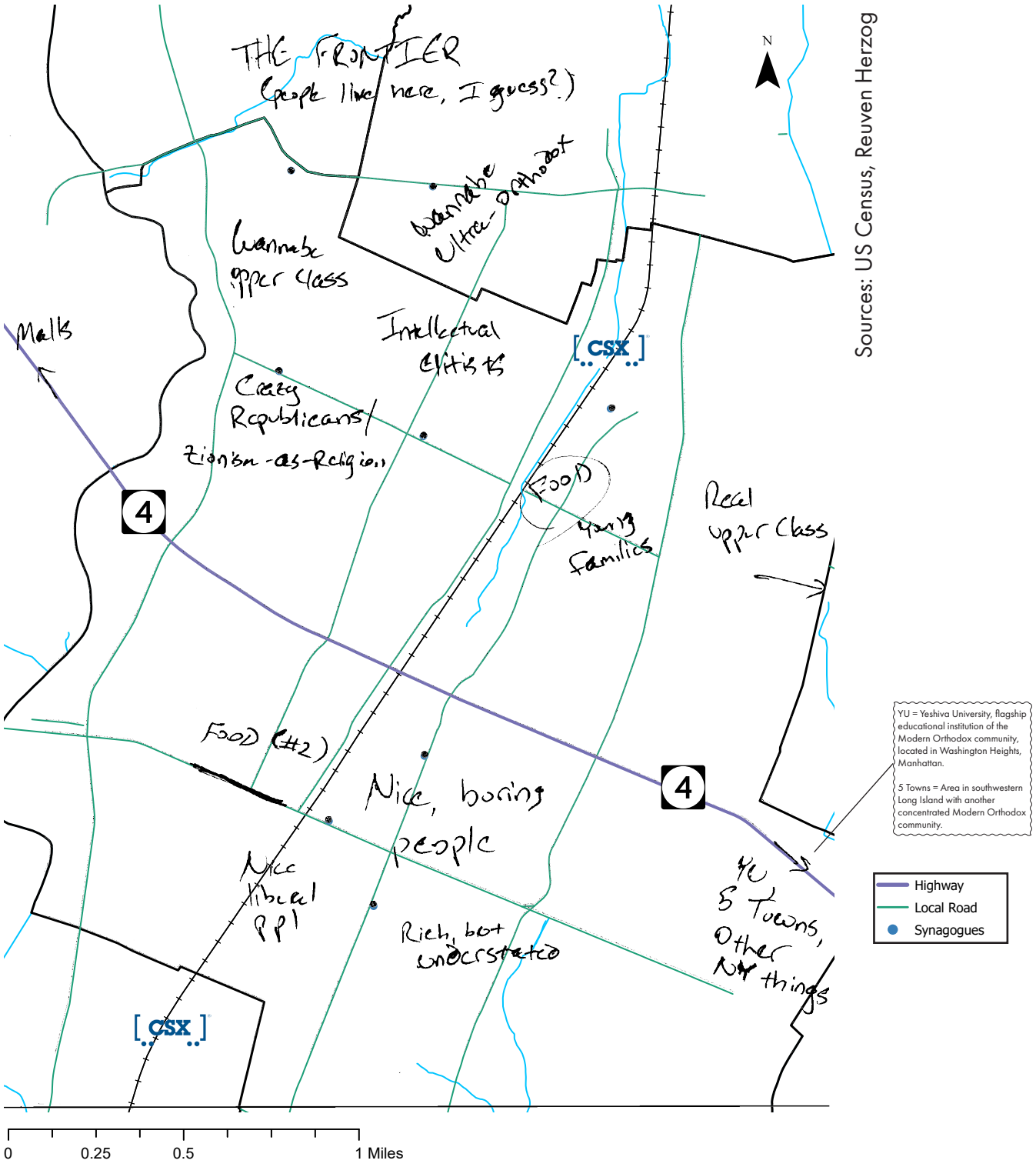
The Orthodox Jewish Community of Teaneck (Stereotyped)



Teaneck, NJ, is one of the major centers of Orthodox Jewish life in the greater New York region. It anchors the many Jewish suburban communities in Bergen County, and draws many people to its restaurants and schools. I myself did not grow up in Teaneck, but I primarily went to school there, and most of my friends live there. Hence I've spent much time in the community.

Due to its great size (in terms of both population and area), the Orthodox community of Teaneck can be divided into different areas as well as stereotypes of the people who live in each neighborhood. This map is my attempt at stereotyping, with an eye towards humor, but without sacrificing too much accuracy.

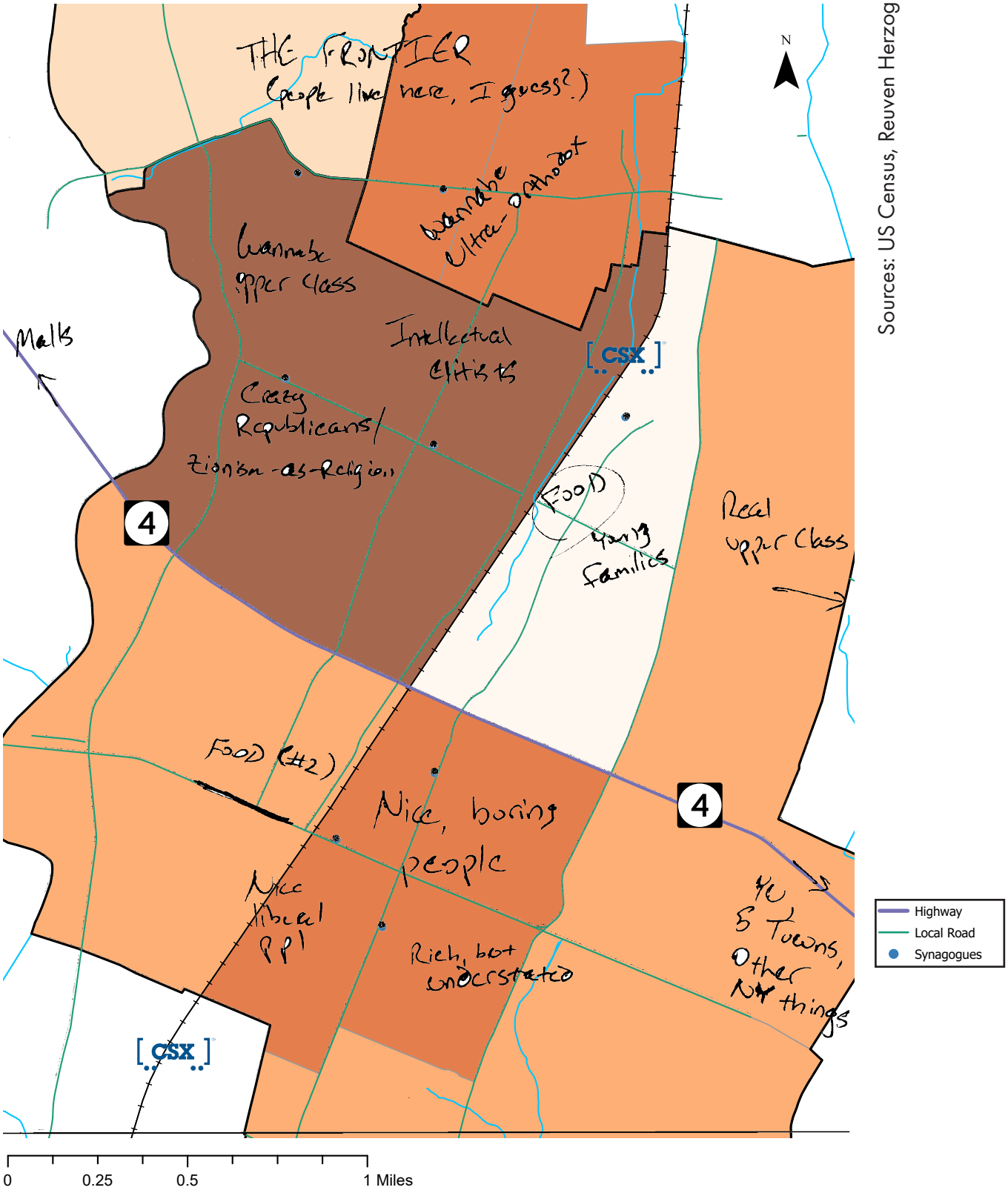
This map is only mapping my perception of the areas, based on my experience. The following maps will include overlays of selected political and income data that I pulled from external sources.

I stereotyped areas primarily on the ideologies of the synagogues nearby, so the exact location of the homes and people may be a bit fuzzy and overlapping. Overall, the two important takeaways of this map should be:

1) Route 4 (a major highway) and the railroad tracks section Teaneck into 4 quadrants. Of these, only 2 have substantial Jewish populations. (Although areas in the SW quadrant that are near the border do have many Jewish residents). There is a clear distinction between the section north of Route 4 and that south of it - also known as "the other side of Teaneck."

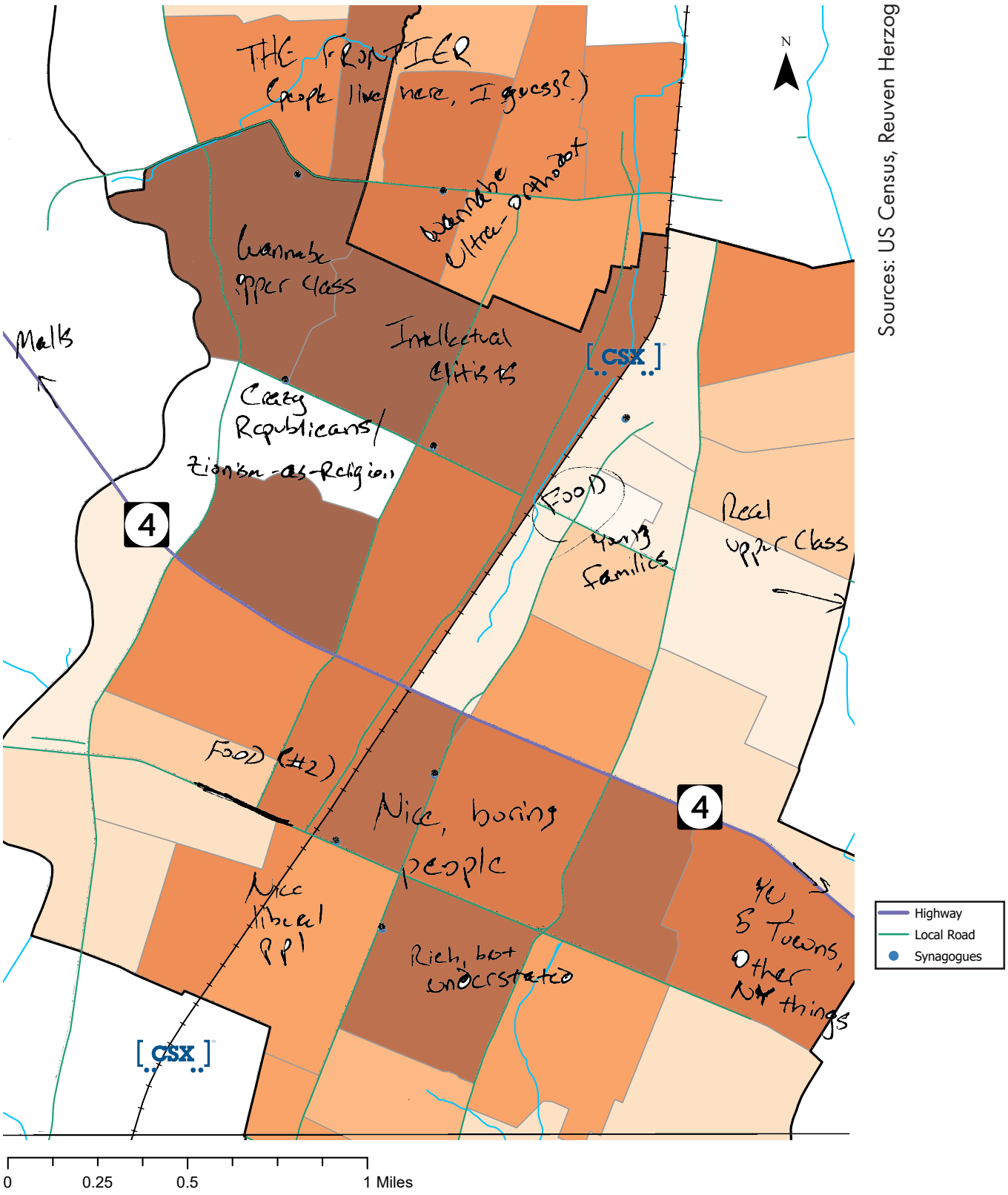
2) In my experience, residents of The Other Side are generally more down to earth, less show-offy (both materialistically and religiously).

The Orthodox Jewish Community of Teaneck (Stereotyped) - Median Income Overlay by Tract



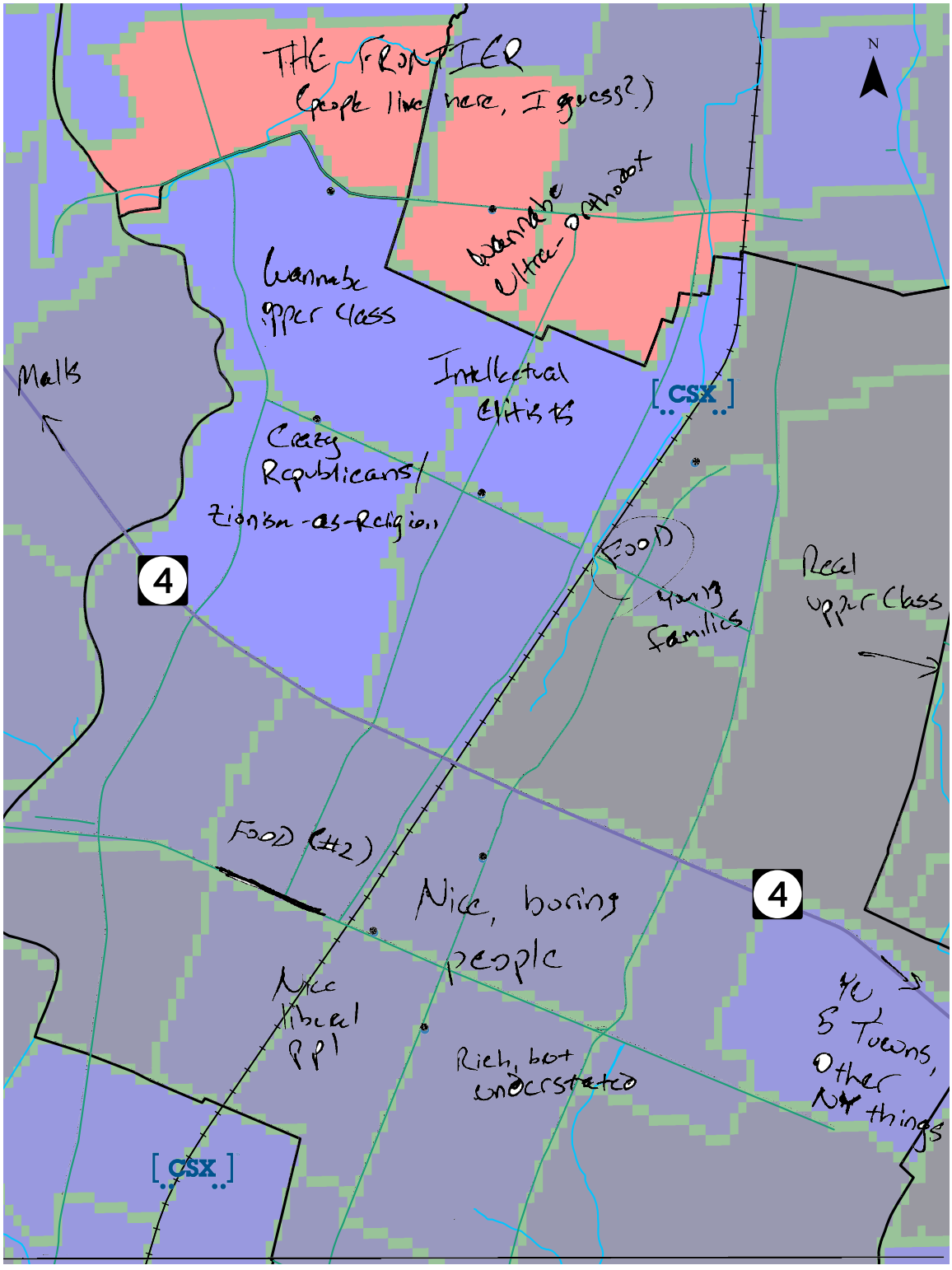
This map and the following one illustrate income data. Unsurprisingly, the Jewish neighborhoods are wealthier than their non-Jewish counterparts. This leads into a longer discussion of the Modern Orthodox community's ideals and structures. The simplest explanation is that a community that sends its children almost exclusively to private, parochial schools with a dual curriculum bears a much greater financial burden; in order to meet this burden, an upper-middle-class salary is almost expected; this begets other upper-middle-class lifestyle expectations, and the cycle feeds into a greater demand for wealth. (It's not a good story, and many communal leaders are both lamenting the situation, trying to alleviate both the root cause and many of its effects.)

The Orthodox Jewish Community of Teaneck (Stereotyped) - Income Overlay by Block Group



Another observation here is that greater income correlates with greater support for the Republican candidate. The exact nature of the Modern Orthodox community's support for Republicans is complicated, and at least includes wealth and financial policies, in addition to religion and Israel-related policies.

The Orthodox Jewish Community of Teaneck (Stereotyped) - Political Overlay



Sources: US Census, Reuven Herzog, RHyne Rola

This map overlays my subjective analysis with precinct-level voting data from the 2016 presidential election. Darker areas voted more heavily for Clinton. What stands out is that the Jewish areas voted less for Clinton than the non-Jewish, mainly African-American neighborhoods around them. Unsurprisingly, the Other Side voted more for Clinton than the "main side": I suspect this is both because of the internal demographics of the Jewish community as well as their lesser demographic share in that neighborhood. I am not sure what to make of the two red precincts on this map, why specifically those two areas voted for Trump when nowhere else in the Jewish areas did.

(Unfortunately, I couldn't find raw data this detailed, so I had to use an large-scale but low-resultion image. Therefore the colors are very poor.)