



New York in the Family of Cities.
Drawing by Stanley Saitowitz. See article pp. 56-63.
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Landschaftspark Duisburg Nord—Duisburg, Germany

Latz + Partners

For two centuries, urban parks have been perceived and understood as public green spaces. Naturalistic or formal in appearance, they provided for recreational activity, and often featured attractive or romantic scenery.

Located in the heart of Germany's densely populated Ruhr District, Landschaftspark Duisburg Nord (North Duisburg Landscape Park) makes a clear break with this history. A milestone in landscape design, it epitomizes an innovative approach to the urban cultural landscape, one characterized by acceptance of its industrial heritage and dramatically altered natural conditions.

On the site of a former industrial blast furnace, Latz +



Partners have created a place of great beauty that will perpetuate the story of these industrial facilities for succeeding generations. At the same time, through a concerted program of bioremediation and on-site materials recycling, the design manages to neutralize or reverse much of the ecological damage done by those facilities. To complete the conversion of the site, the design also introduces a program of public activities which will allow it to develop new relevance in people's lives.

The jury praised the project as exemplary of the emergence of a new era of postindustrial parks, a trend that is currently more in evidence in Europe than in the United States. In the U.S., there have been many studies of devastated landscapes—including Alan Berger's *Reclaiming the American West*, a previous EDRA/*Places* award winner (*Places*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 14-17). But the ability to move from research to planning and design has too often been hampered by a lack of political will and government funding.

IBA Emscherpark

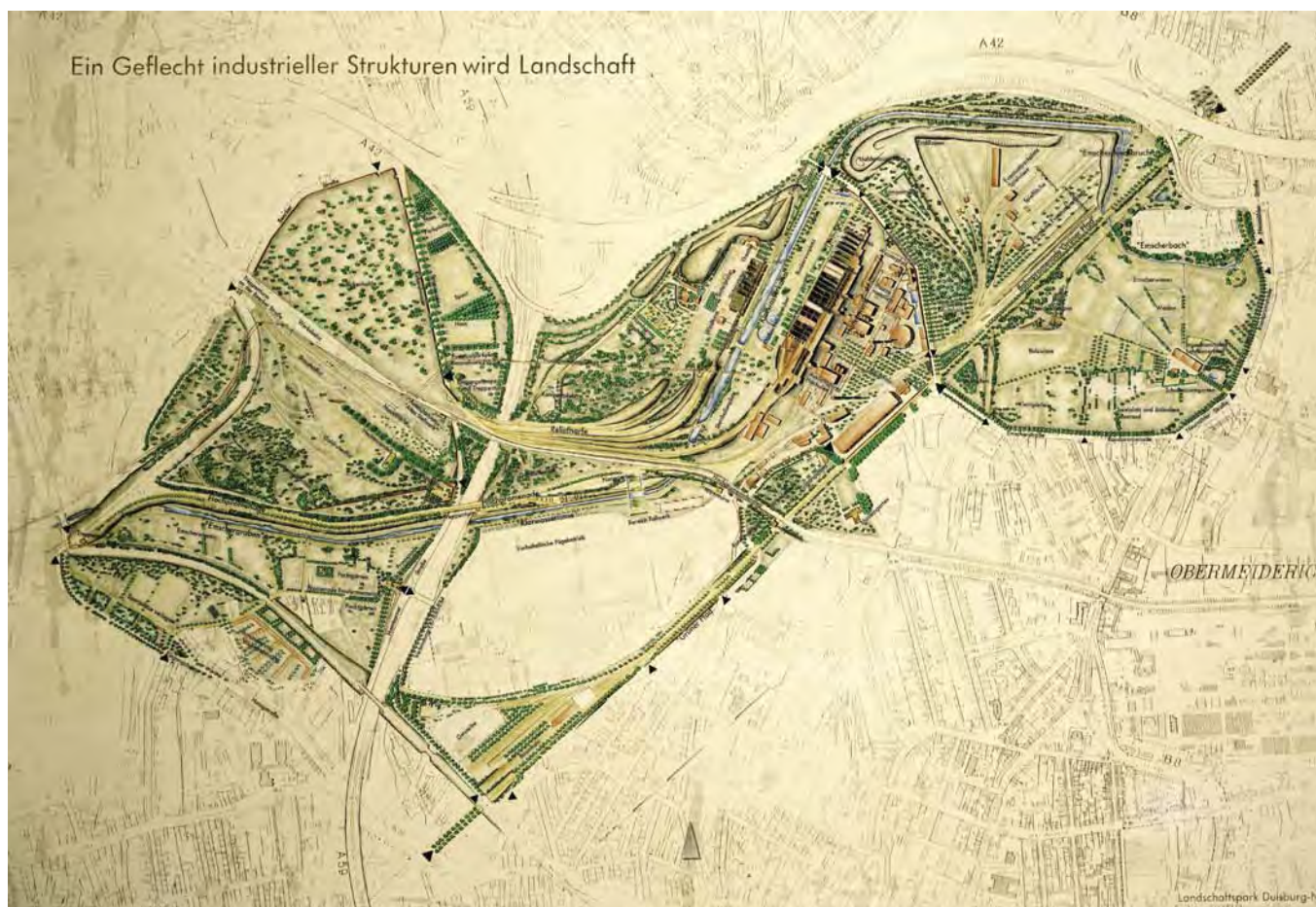
Duisburg Nord park cannot be understood apart from the larger reclamation effort of which it is a part. Until the early 1970s, Germany's Ruhr area, particularly the Emscher District, was one of Europe's largest coal-mining and steel-manufacturing centers. The decline of these heavy industries, however, precipitated an economic and ecological crisis as well as social change and a loss of cultural significance in the region. Left behind was a bizarre landscape of rail beds, smokestacks, slag heaps, polluted soils, industrial ruins, and reengineered waterways.

Inspired by a series of earlier "International Building Exhibitions" (IBA) in other parts of Germany, a partnership between the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, local municipalities, and private companies was formed. This commission proposed the IBA Emscherpark, a ten-year effort from 1989 to 1999 to revitalize the area. The goal was to develop a program of renewal for the densely populated region along the Emscher River, stretching from Duisburg on the Rhine in the west to Dortmund in the east, and including approximately 115 square miles and many important cities in between. The "exposition" proposed to accomplish its goal by catalyzing structural, economic and social reform through a number of exemplary and innovative integrated design projects.

From 1989 on, the IBA Emscherpark authority staged a series of competitions and issued a number of calls for proposals for carefully selected sites within the region. These ranged from cutting-edge residential developments to cultural and educational facilities, art projects, and open-space systems. In one way or another, all have attempted to address the ecological and economic regeneration of former industrial land. Over the course of ten years, the IBA sponsored approximately one hundred projects at various scales.

At Duisburg Nord, the land development authority of North Rhine-Westphalia, supported by a real estate fund, purchased the grounds of the former Thyssen Steelworks manufacturing plant. Subsequently, the City of Duisburg changed its zoning to allow its conversion into a public park. It was in this context that landscape designer Peter Latz developed a plan that reflects many of IBA's overall goals and objectives, and that has become the basis for one of IBA's key projects.

The steel plant as an active industrial site in 1952. Photo courtesy of the Thyssen Krupp Corporate Archives.



Conceptual Considerations

In a 2004 lecture, Latz explained some of the difficulties the site presents. “The park is not a park in the common sense, not easy to survey, not clearly arranged, not recognizable as a whole. According to its situation amidst chaotic agglomerations and infrastructure lines, it appears as a torn figure with numerous different aspects.”¹

Nevertheless, when the idea for a park on the site of the former steel plant was born in 1989, he was struck by the power of its remnant patterns of infrastructure and industrial relics—an aesthetic of gigantic objects that could potentially function as landmarks and nourish the *genius loci* of the site.

The abandoned colossuses of steel production also spoke a language of the sublime. “A blast furnace is not only an old furnace. It is a menacing ‘dragon’ frightening men and rising above its surroundings,” Latz has said.²

In their groundbreaking concept, Latz + Partners

attempted to reveal the unique qualities of this place. Historic layers of use had left their physical marks through industrial imprints, altered conditions, and environmental contamination. However, the goal was to consider these disturbed and complex conditions for their creative potential rather than as a nuisance that should be erased or camouflaged.

Based on thorough site survey and analysis, the designers were ultimately able to keep and reuse most of the existing industrial structures at Duisburg Nord. By transforming them in subtle and sensitive ways into parts of a new design, and by reprogramming their functions, they have successfully converted this former industrial site into a revolutionary new landscape type, one that is attracting more than 500,000 visitors per year.

Overall plan of the new landscape park. Drawing courtesy of Latz + Partners.



Park Systems

The 230-hectare (approximately 570-acre) project was developed in phases over the course of thirteen years, from 1989 to 2002. It consists of several layers of design elements that operate independently as park systems, and help create a sense of orientation that makes an extremely complex site interpretable at a human scale. Among major elements are a railroad park consisting of the raised ribbons of old rail-beds and other structures of a formerly manmade topography; new footbridges and promenades; a water park at its lowest level; and fields of vegetation—woodland-like groupings of trees, pioneer plants, and prairie meadows—situated between more linear elements.

Many memorable places, all unique in character, are interwoven within this spatial framework: the Sinterpark and its large multifunctional plaza used for events; Secret Gardens hidden in former storage bunker structures; and a central Blast Furnace Park with elevated observation plat-

forms, climbing walls, rock gardens, and public spaces. The Piazza Metallica, situated at the symbolic heart of the park serves as its central event and gathering space. Here, a total of 49 recycled iron plates, each weighing seven to eight tons, were carefully arranged in a square, defining a plaza that is completely enclosed by looming industrial forms.

With its unconventional appearance and unique new recreational opportunities, the park has become popular with local residents, making a great contribution to the surrounding lower-middle- and working-class neighborhoods on the north side of Duisburg. New activities range from hiking, biking, and exploring the park's hidden corners, to social gatherings and large-scale cultural events.

Much of the project's charm results from the innovative reuse of individual site structures. For example, the park is home to the Gasometer, a former gas tank that has been filled with water and is now the world's largest indoor diving center. Rugged concrete bunkers provide excellent

training facilities for rock climbers. And landmarks such as smokestacks and old furnaces are illuminated at night with colorful spotlights that attract visitors.

Restoring Ecological Awareness

From the beginning, principles of ecology and sustainability guided the design and implementation of this new landscape. Remnants of demolished structures were reused in planting substrates, recycled concrete, or new paving materials.

Creative ways were also found to treat runoff on site and integrate resulting new physical forms in the overall



design. Most important has been the transformation of the Emscher River, which runs through the park from east to west. Previously, the river had served as an open sewer channel. The new design culverts and diverts wastewater, while converting the Emscher into a collector for pre-treated runoff and rainwater.

Significantly, Latz + Partners decided not to convert this reclaimed industrial channel into a pseudo-naturalistic, romantic, meandering waterway—as proposed by conservationists and other groups. Nevertheless, they managed to reestablish its ecological functioning as habitat for aquatic plants and wildlife. Platforms extending out over the water also make this new environment accessible to park visitors.

In contrast to these highly designed interventions, other large areas of Landschaftspark Duisburg Nord were treated in ways primarily intended to reduce maintenance costs and keep energy inputs low. Disturbed soils on site

often have high concentrations of slag, cinder, and the remains of coal or coke. Such extreme biological conditions have resulted in “natural” vegetation growth that reflects the site’s industrial history. Moreover, over the years, seeds from all over the world were introduced along with industrial shipments, leading to a great present variety and mix of native and exotic species—as many as 450 neophytes. These plants now appear at many early stages of natural succession.

Many publications have already referred to Landschaftspark Duisburg Nord as one of the most intellectually rigorous and successful examples of postindustrial park design. Perhaps most significantly, it was featured in the 2005 exhibition “Groundswell: Constructing the Contemporary Landscape” at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. According to the exhibition catalogue, the project is “one of the most significant new parks of the last decade.”³

Without a doubt, this seminal work has expanded our definition of urban parks, and begun to influence the thinking of a new generation of landscape architects. Among its lessons are to be aware of the importance of thorough site analysis; to give equal weight to social and ecological considerations; to respect the *genius loci*; and, most importantly, to allow the form of a park to evolve from the past use of a site.

— *Judith Stilgenbauer*

Notes

1. Peter Latz, “The Metamorphosis of the 20th Century’s Landscape,” March 1, 2004, at the University of California, Berkeley.
2. Ibid.
3. Peter Reed, *Groundswell: Constructing the Contemporary Landscape* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2005). See also Lisa Diedrich, “No Politics, No Park: The Duisburg-Nord Model,” *TOPOS, European Landscape Magazine* 26 (March 1999); Niall Kirkwood, ed., *Manufactured Sites, Rethinking the Post-Industrial Landscape* (London: Spon, 2001); Arthur Lubow, “The Anti-Olmsted,” *The New York Times Magazine*, May 16, 2004; and Alan Tate, *Great City Parks* (London: Spon, 2001).

Opposite Left: Cowper Place, a multifunctional plaza for events and gatherings. Photo by Christa Panick.

Opposite Right: A big slide deposits children in a play area at the mouth of a former ore bunker. Photo courtesy of Latz + Partners.

Top: The gardens of the Sinterpark occupy an area that once held a mix of fine-grain ore and other supplements used in the smelting process. Photo by Michael Latz.

Voices from the New Orleans Design and Planning Diaspora

Gary Van Zante

Following the tragic impact of hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the U.S. Gulf Coast in August and September, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology hosted a series of symposia in the Fall of 2005 entitled “Big Questions After Big Hurricanes.” Our intent was to investigate these catastrophic events and discuss issues of recovery.¹

The first session, October 3, empanelled five New Orleans architects and academics to discuss the rebuilding of their city. Organized and moderated by Prof. Lawrence Vale, head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, and myself, the session touched on a broad range of urban, architectural, social and political issues, reflecting the complexity of the public response to such disasters.

Panelists were William Barry, Senior Associate, Shepley Bulfinch Richardson & Abbott Architects, Boston; Lawrence Jenkins, Professor of Art History, University of New Orleans; John Klingman, Professor of Architecture, Tulane University, New Orleans; Richard J. Tuttle, Professor of Art History, Tulane University; and Ellen Weiss, Professor of Architecture, Tulane University. The following are some edited highlights of the discussion.

Van Zante: In the spring of 1867 a crevasse, or breach in the Mississippi River levee, caused heavy flooding in the New Orleans vicinity—one of forty inundations since the first levees were raised in 1727. In this catastrophe, victims appealed to authorities for aid. “Not only desolation and destruction of property, but death marches along in the track of the swiftly overwhelming flood,” they wrote to the governor. “Now—today—is the time for measures of relief to be put in operation, for tomorrow will be too late.” The

New Orleans *Crescent* editorialized, sounding very much like today: “It is to be regretted that the request for assistance did not elicit a speedier response, for had immediate measures been taken, much misery might have been relieved and much loss averted.”

A hundred years later, in 1965, Louisiana Governor John McKeithen said, “We have spent hundreds of millions of dollars to protect ourselves from the water. We have cut the Mississippi in many places so the water can get faster to the gulf. We have built levees up and down the Mississippi. We feel now we are almost completely protected.” That same year hurricane Betsy struck New Orleans with winds of 170 miles per hour. The levees were breached, sending floodwaters into the city. It was called the worst natural disaster in American history.

Now, in the wake of Katrina, our response to disaster and our ability to prevent it seem hardly to have improved. What can we say about the future of New Orleans as a safe place to live and work?

Tuttle: It is important to understand the history. Historical understanding is equal to the optimistic future-oriented, technological response. Man has for centuries taken that stance, that something can be done physically to make it better. In general it’s worked, as in the case of the Netherlands or the Po River Valley; however, those places maintained strong public commitments.

Jenkins: In New Orleans this notion of an unsafe city is something people live with. From hurricane season to hurricane season we think about what might happen if the “big one” comes, [but] we’ve squandered the opportunity to protect ourselves.

As Katrina was bearing down, the Corps [of Engineers] was saying the Category 3 levees have settled over time, and maybe they now only protect us against a Category 2 storm. There is this culture of living with danger and being relieved when you dodge the “big one”—but the “big one” is always going to come.

Barry: New Orleanians are tenacious, having fought this difficulty throughout the city’s history. You could say New Orleans is unsustainable, [that] “they should rebuild it somewhere else.” However, one of the big messages here is that the city is not gone. New Orleans today is eighty percent intact and twenty percent devastated. There are structures that have been flooded, perhaps by toxic sludge; but even much of that twenty percent may be salvageable.

Jenkins: I wonder if New Orleans is still a tenacious place. I’ve talked to many who have returned to flood-ravaged neighborhoods, who have said “I can’t start fixing until they tell me I can start fixing, or if FEMA tells me they are going to bulldoze or not.”

Klingman: One of the things that is most disturbing in all this is that the rule system we have been living under in New Orleans is broken. It’s hard to understand if zoning issues or building-code issues are going to apply; or what changes there will be in the transportation or utility infrastructure; or if environmental mediation is going to be in the forefront. We hear that billions of dollars are being sent to the city and the region, and no one knows who is going to shepherd that money. Part of the solution is threading back to something that makes sense before it is possible to proceed.

process. Our concern—those of us at the table—is the quality of the city that we have and are afraid of losing entirely. We’re desperate to get that back. The impulse to bulldoze and start from scratch is a solution closely allied with the political process.

Van Zante: Those bulldozers now roaming New Orleans may be accelerating what has been called one of the worst cultural disasters in American history. What do we know about the impact of this catastrophe on New Orleans’ 37,000 historic structures?

Weiss: There are FEMA assessment teams at work, but I worry about the shotgun neighborhoods. The shotgun is a great house form—it was probably invented in New Orleans as an adaptation to local house lots. Everybody has their own house, they have a door right on the street, the streets make neighborhoods, and people sit out on the street. There are not a lot of street cultures left, but New Orleans has a vibrant one. There is an urge now to shrink the city up to the high ground, put everybody in fourteen-story buildings. This is the worst possible solution. We’ve got to recognize that New Orleans is one of the largest historic districts in the world. It’s really the whole city—it’s a carpet, a fabulous urban texture.

Klingman: I think many people will accept this as a goal. But there are people who [will] want to take down old houses that haven’t been lived in for awhile. There is going to be more pressure to say “that looks bad, let’s get rid of it,” when in fact most of these buildings can be repaired and renewed. This is probably true even for buildings under water for a long period. New Orleans is built of cypress. Much of New Orleans was a

cypress swamp, and when the swamp was drained, enormous trees were cut for building. Old-growth cypress is one of the most rot-resistant woods in existence. It seems reasonable to assume these houses can endure and be renewed.

Audience Question: What role can planners and designers have in reshaping the political and economic situation that led to this catastrophe?

Klingman: There is a document out by the AIA which proposes to make school-building the focus of this reconstruction. One of the tragedies of New Orleans was the public education system. Imagine if all of a sudden there were a hundred new schools in the city. Los Angeles, for example, adopted a bond issue to build thirty branch libraries in the neighborhoods. They hired, I think, thirty different architects—a few are rehabs, a few additions, and a lot of them are new construction. You go to the libraries now in L.A. and they’re full. It’s a huge success story. I think the potential of something like that in New Orleans is brilliant. It’s a way of saying “here’s something we can do.” And it shouldn’t be hard to find sites.

Audience Question: Tourism has been the foremost economic development strategy of the city before Katrina. Will there be a change in that strategy?

Barry: Many, if not all, of the tourist attractions survived rather well. It is the fabric of the city not often seen by tourists that will quickly fall to political expediency. [People will say] “we need an area to wipe clean and start over again to show everybody that we can solve this problem with new building.”

Weiss: These areas are the cultural hearth, this is where the jazz comes from. This is also where the minimum—wage workers who support the tourist industry come from.

Audience Comment: I worry that with so many people having left New Orleans and not being able to come back in a timely way, you lose the [local, rejuvenating] dialogue surrounding the very thing that you want to preserve and modernize.

Vale: Empowering local voices [is] the central challenge. We are working with local community groups and unions to see if there might be a way for faculty and students to assist. One big challenge for planners is to help community leaders reconnect severed social networks. If New Orleans is to recover, it will take more than a return of the city’s planners and designers. But surely such leadership will form a vital part of what needs to happen next.

Note

1. The event was hosted by the Department of Urban Studies and Planning’s City Design and Development Forum. I would like to thank Shilpa Mehta, Leslie Myers, Richard Tuttle, and Larry Vale for their assistance.

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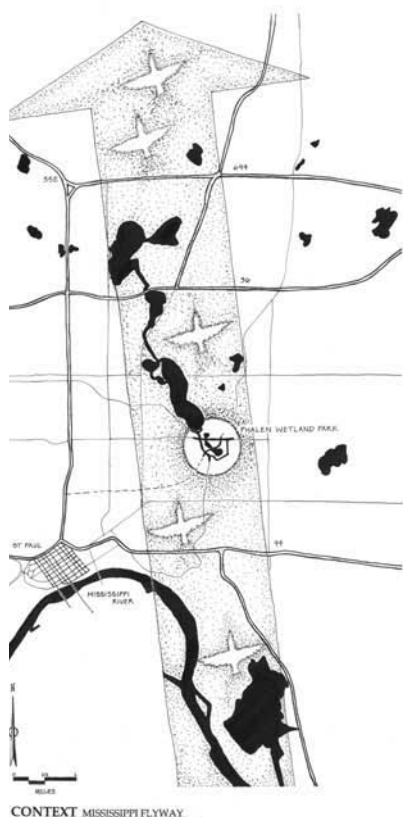
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Gary Van Zante is Curator of Architecture and Design at the MIT Museum. From 1994 to 2002 he was head of the Southeastern Architectural Archive at Tulane University in New Orleans. He is the author of *New Orleans 1867: Photographs by Theodore Lilienthal*, to be published in 2006.

Replacing a Shopping Center with an Ecological Neighborhood

Jennifer Dowdell, Harrison Fraker, and Joan Nassauer



Restoring wetland ecosystems in neighborhoods where they have been engineered into pipes and filled in for development has become a familiar goal within ecological design. However, it may also be a successful economic redevelopment strategy for urban neighborhoods. The right design for a wetland park can provide the necessary public amenity to

Top: The original plan for Phalen Wetland Park in 1995 envisioned how the restored natural area would serve as a neighborhood amenity, wildlife habitat, and means of cleaning stormwater runoff.

Opposite: Current proposals fragment and privatize what was originally intended to serve as a public open space corridor, and introduce suburban street and housing development patterns.

attract new higher-density, mixed-use development. In response to the work presented in the last issue of *Places* on “Retrofitting Suburbia” (Vol. 17, No. 2), the case of the Phalen Village Small Area Plan in St. Paul, Minnesota, offers many important lessons.

Restoring Nature

The idea of replacing one of St. Paul’s oldest shopping centers with a wetland park was first proposed by landscape architect Joan Nassauer, architect Harrison Fraker, and students at the University of Minnesota. Our task, ultimately funded as part of a Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources design research project, had been to assist the City of

St. Paul and Phalen residents explore a range of design alternatives for a deteriorating and financially bankrupt strip shopping center.

After we first proposed the wetland park, Phalen residents embraced the idea. Some of the oldest could still remember childhood fishing excursions to a small lake that had existed there before the site had been filled in. Eventually, the park became the centerpiece of a vision adopted as part of the City-funded Phalen Village Small Area Plan—a transportation-oriented mixed-use development, including a significant amount of affordable housing.

Initially, all went well for this ground-breaking “retrofit.” Shortly



after the plan was approved in 1994, the City began negotiations to purchase the shopping-center site, and by 1998 demolition had begun to create the new Phalen Wetland Park. In addition to creating a signature public amenity, the plan envisioned the park linking to a new wildlife habitat "spine" and helping filter and retain local stormwater. The first phase of the park, on land owned by the City, was constructed in 1997; the second phase was begun in 1998. Development of new businesses, institutions and housing according to the Small Area Plan began in 1998.

Today important changes in the original landscape plan for the wetland park have emerged—partly

in response to the great success of the park as a focal amenity for development. The restored wetlands have indeed become an effective part of the area's stormwater retention system. However, habitat connections among wetlands in the area have been restricted by new residential development that has begun to encroach on the park itself.

In particular, rather than maintaining crisp boundaries between the park and adjacent commercial and residential areas, much of the new residential development has been arrayed around the wetland on small cul-de-sacs. This has brought a miniature version of a familiar suburban scene—wetlands in the backyards of new single-family

homes—into the heart of one of the oldest, most urban neighborhoods of St. Paul.

A Retrofit Success

The good news from the point of view of retrofits is that the demolition of the shopping center and the construction there of a new urban ecosystem that mimics the original natural system is an idea that definitely worked. Studies have documented how the wetlands constructed during Phase One, on land owned by the City, dramatically increased local biodiversity.¹ In addition, the Phase One park site has already been recognized as hallowed ground in the cultural life of the city. It was even recently named the Vento

Memorial Grove, after the early death of the beloved environmental champion and U.S. Congressman Bruce Vento.

Meanwhile, the larger part of the wetland park, which occupies the former shopping center site, has become the focal point of a fast-developing part of East St. Paul. This area also lies within the larger Phalen Corridor Initiative, the aim of which is to revitalize and connect the larger neighborhood to downtown St. Paul by extending Phalen Boulevard. Indeed, when the redevelopment of the Phalen Village area is complete in the next five years, it will mark something of a culmination of this long-term project.

There is no doubt the wetland park has contributed to the present success of the Phalen Corridor Initiative. St. Paul Planner Curt Milburn today says the wetland has become “the jewel of the corridor.” Investment in its immediate area has also reached \$200 million, which is almost half what has been invested in the entire corridor. Among other things, since the late 1990s the neighborhood around the park has seen the addition of a \$4 million Wells Fargo Branch Bank, a Walgreen’s drug store, and the Phalen Village Clinic. Milburn also points out that construction of the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension has also brought “the CSI of Minnesota” to Phalen Village.

Housing, of course, has been the densest addition to the area. Much of it is in the form of the affordable units, as envisioned in the plan. So far, built projects include affordable senior housing facilities such as the Native American Elders Lodge and the Realife Cooperative Senior Housing. The complete renovation and rehabilitation of low-income housing in the Roosevelt Homes neighborhood, as well as the Ames Lake and Rose

Hill public housing complexes just east of the wetland, has also begun, and is slated for completion in 2006. Near that site, the construction of new Habitat for Humanity housing was also approved in 2004.

However, the newest housing development is within the planned boundaries of the wetland park itself. Called Phalen Crossing, it was begun in the summer of 2004 by River Run Properties, and its construction is expected to last four years. This complex involves at least five major sites, surrounding the wetland with a mixture of townhouses, condos, and single-family houses.

As Sheri Pemberton-Hoiby of the City of St. Paul explains, “the housing that is currently being developed is mostly market rate.” Distinct in style and options, it is equivalent to the current median-priced home in the region, averaging \$207,000.

From Public to Private Amenity

While all this housing is surely a welcome addition to the neighborhood, there is no doubt its location has severely compromised the original purpose of the wetland park as a public amenity that embodied urban ecological function. In the original plan, the wetland park’s boundary was sharply defined by public streets, making it both visible and accessible as the centerpiece of development. Now, with the intrusion of housing into it, the park is no longer experienced as “open” and available to the public. It is now defined by private property.

If there is a lesson to be learned from Phalen it is that urban ecological restoration can succeed as a retrofit strategy, but its public boundaries and access must be carefully defined, and “ownership” by adjacent residential and commercial uses must be established from the outset, so that the park has

empowered beneficiaries and defenders.

As Milburn explains, the local problem was that commercial activity was relocated from the old shopping center to arterial streets and not to the streets beside the park, where it could have activated its boundaries. Creating “a natural amenity with the only active spaces being a farmers’ market and an amphitheater,” left the open space too vulnerable to residential development pressures, particularly as the park was recognized as a desirable amenity.

This story thus involves a good news/bad news scenario with important lessons for other towns. As the community saw the opportunities being created by the design of the site, interest burgeoned among commercial entities, neighborhood groups, the federal government, and the City of St. Paul to go even further than previously imagined in reinvigorating the community. With so much pressure on building, the underlying value of the public ecological vision was subordinated to other values.

But there is another deeper story here. Why this happened? Why couldn’t the entirety of the public wetland park be embraced as part of a successful redevelopment effort?

Here one sees the power of private suburban development models overwhelming the identity and definition of public space. One can also see the opportunism of developers who recognized the amenity value of the public wetland park and incorporated it to increase the value of their own private projects.

Note

1. J.I. Nassauer, “Monitoring the Success of Metropolitan Wetland Restorations: Cultural Sustainability and Ecological Function,” *Wetlands*, Vol.24, No.4 (2004), pp. 756-65.

Drawings courtesy of Joan Nassauer.

Caring for Places: In Complexity

New Orleans set before us, front and center, all the elements of place: the forces of nature and topography within which places exist; varying patterns of buildings and streets that structure the settlement of places; building types that adapt (or not) to the conditions at hand, and disparities in the resources available to their builders. The physical and cultural landscape that grows up within these patterns requires nourishment and care—care that must extend to the fundamental structures on which all else depends. In New Orleans, a disturbed coastal ecology, the channels of the river, and levees and pumps that kept surrounding waters at bay formed the nexus of a structure that was imperiled.

We've been confronted, now, with the unforeseen or unattended-to consequences of the technological transformation of ground and resources. We've also seen that cultures, in all their complexity, are entwined within the fabric of a place in a way that develops fierce attachments and loyalties and draws people to it. Histories of all sorts, from the idiosyncratic and personal to the epic, become embedded in the structures themselves and archives they shelter.

We see, most essentially, that we must care for the justice of how resources are distributed within our environments and ensure that alert and equitable hands guide the continuing improvement and adjustment of places. This will be hard; there is always great opportunity for exploitation within the arrangements needed to stabilize a place—especially when responsibility is allocated to corporate owners who may be remote and care little for cherished nuance.

The impossibility of reconstructing exactly what was lost is obvious, and no doubt some of it does not bear repeating. Yet, without careful attention—even given the urgencies of the moment—there is great likelihood that patterns of construction will soon loom into place, in the name of expediency and profit, that will carry with them processes that disallow exactly the interim, ad hoc, marginal adjustments which have given so much spirit and charm to the places of New Orleans, forming the character that vibrates in our memories.

Even if there were a remote chance that large corporations would be interested in such fine-grain accommodations, there is no way they could reproduce what developed over time. But what could be devised are processes that engage community interest... that allow things to continue to transform and accrete, with new additions and modifications that bear marks of individual attention. What could now be built are places that accept the complexities of life, with patterns and groupings that enfold both existing structures that can be saved and new configurations that better suit the conditions of place and its evolving social structure. Such attention might offer hope as well as reminiscence, opportunities for complex initiative and expression as well as simple health and security.

New Orleans faces a challenge that has seldom been met well, especially through massive efforts at reconstruction conducted under duress. But it is a challenge worthy of a city that has won wide fame as a place of uncommon creativity... now masked by a face of disorder and plight.

Struck down by forces beyond control, set into harm's way by development hubris and social injustice, left unguarded through official neglect, the city yet seems ready to rise. With care, it will deck itself again in a bounty of initiatives.

—Donlyn Lyndon, Editor

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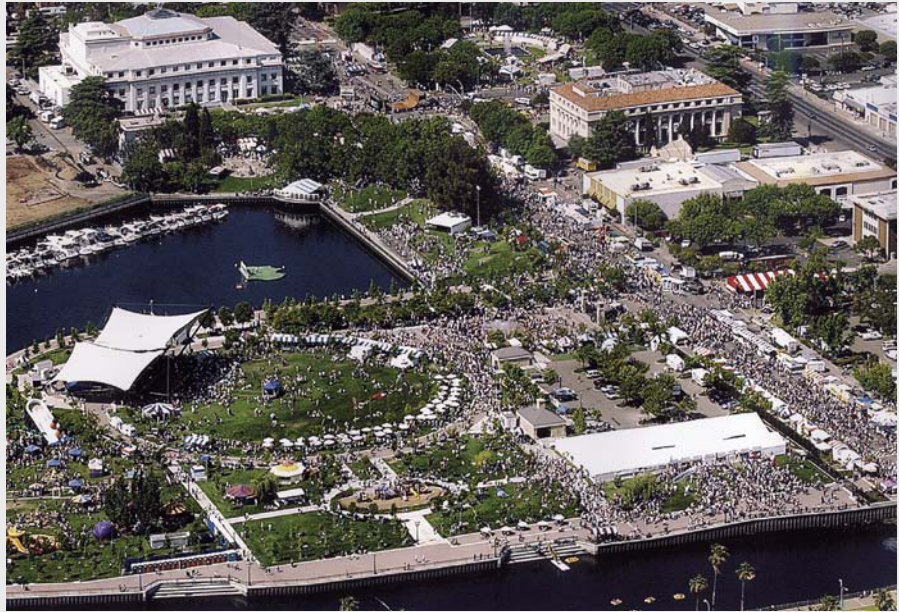
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**Cover Image: Weber Point**

When the City of Stockton first came to the Mayors Institute of City Design on October 1994 Weber Point was “vacant and unlandscaped, with abandoned parking lots, an occasional tree, and a pervasive sense of neglect.” As previously reported in *Places* (Vol. 10, No. 1, Winter 1996, pp. 32-37), the point had once been the heart of the city’s Gold Rush-era port. Yet the only indicator it had been an important destination for steamers plying the delta channels 65 miles inland from San Francisco was the landmark Hotel Stockton that faced onto it.

According to the case-study material developed for the Institute, a series of failed redevelopment plans had left the city with a dead zone at its heart. And the most recent redevelopment scheme—to locate a convention center, office building, and parking structure there—had failed to inspire the community. At the Institute, held that year in San Antonio, Texas, the resource panel counseled the City, represented by Mayor Joan Darrah, to forgo that scheme. They argued that a community panel should be formed to build public consensus for a more distinctive use of the precious waterfront site.

Darrah returned to Stockton and did just that. Working with the Stockton City Council, which was also eager for a change, she appointed a 28-person task force and hired a consultant team of urban designers,

landscape architects, and economic-development experts. Their eventual recommendation was for a “water square” that would provide a focus for public consciousness and a site for animated family-oriented recreation events.

Darrah is no longer Mayor of Stockton, but she believes the Weber Park Events Center that now occupies the point has turned out to be everything her city could have hoped for.

As she writes, “It is a park to stroll in and look out at the water. Children run in the interactive fountain on warm days, swing or slide on the play structure, or walk on the footprint of the house of our founder, Captain Charles Weber. It has served as the catalyst for major waterfront revitalization that includes a sixteen-screen Cineplex, an arena, a ballpark, and a Sheraton Hotel.

“It is also the location of our city’s largest events, like the Asparagus Festival [pictured here] and the Cinco de Mayo celebration. On the Fourth of July every year thousands of Stocktonians come together to celebrate. The Stockton Symphony plays on an elevated stage under an expansive canopy; they conclude with the Star Spangled Banner, and a fireworks extravaganza begins. “The place of our city’s founder [is now] a place for all Stocktonians.”

Photo courtesy of *The Stockton Record*.

2005 EDRA/*Places* Awards

Each year the EDRA/*Places* awards program, initiated in 1998, recognizes exemplary projects in the place design, place planning, and place research. In recent years, juries have been instructed to award up to six prizes, of which one must come from each of the above categories. The 2005 jury chose to award two prizes in each design, planning, and research. The awards were presented April 29 at the EDRA annual conference in Vancouver, B.C.

The jury for the 2005 EDRA/*Places* awards was held February 25-26 at the University of California, Berkeley. EDRA and *Places* would like to thank the College of Environmental Design, and its Dean, Harrison Fraker, for serving as host, and for continuing to support the awards program. The 2005 jury was composed of:

Gail Brager, Professor of Architecture, University of California, Berkeley.

Galen Cranz, Professor of Architecture, University of California, Berkeley.

Hugh Hardy, Principal, H³ Hardy Collaboration Architecture, New York.

Robert Harris, Professor and former Dean, School of Architecture, University of Southern California.

Larry Vale, Professor and Head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, MIT.

EDRA and *Places* would like to thank all who entered their work in the 2005 awards cycle. For more information on the 2006 awards, please turn to the call for entries on page 43 of this issue.



Award for Design

Landschaftspark Duisburg Nord—Duisburg, Germany

Latz + Partners, Kranzberg/Duisburg, Prof. Peter Latz, Lead Designer



Award for Design

Los Altos School District Master Plan Update—Los Altos, California

Gelfand Partners Architects, San Francisco, Lisa Gelfand, Principal



Award for Planning

Lloyd Crossing Sustainable Urban Design Plan & Catalyst Project—Portland, Oregon

Mithūn Architects+Designers+Planners and the Portland Development Commission, with KPFF-Portland, GreenWorks, SolArc, Heartland, Urbsworks, Interface, ID, and Walsh Construction



Award for Planning

Iqaluit Core Area and Capital District Redevelopment Plan—Nunavut, Canada

The City of Iqaluit, FoTenn Urban Planners and Designers, Office for Urbanism, Laird & Associates



Award for Research

The Dignity of Resistance: Women Residents' Activism in Chicago Public Housing—Chicago, Illinois

Roberta M. Feldman and Susan Stall

Published in 2004 by Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, U.K.



Award for Research

People and Places on the Outer Cape: A Landscape Character Study

Jack Ahern, Ethan Carr, Elisabeth Hamin (Dept. of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning), and David Glassberg (Department of History), University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Robert Page and Margaret Coffin Brown, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, U.S. National Park Service

Cape Cod National Seashore, Superintendent Maria Burks and staff

Lloyd Crossing Sustainable Urban Design Plan and Catalyst Project—Portland, Oregon

Mithūn Architects+Designers+Planners and
the Portland Development Commission



On January 8, 1973, maverick Oregon Governor Tom McCall famously warned state legislators of the threat posed by those he called the “grasping wastrels of the land.” “Oregon,” he proclaimed, “is an inspiration,” and land was its “most valuable finite natural resource.”¹ Oregonians listened. Today the state is a leader in forward-thinking land-use planning and innovative environmental policy. Portland, the state’s most populous city, has also been touted as the “American headquarters of the ‘New Urbanism’,” the place to live “the green American dream,” and even “the largest European city in America.”²

The Lloyd Crossing Sustainable Design Plan & Catalyst Project, commissioned by the Portland Development Commission, is proof that these are not empty accolades. Produced by Mithūn Architects+Designers+Planners of Seattle and a broad team of affiliated consultants, it seeks to almost triple the developed square footage of a 35-block area of the city, while simultaneously reducing its environmental signature to that of a pristine forest.

This winner of a 2005 EDRA/*Places* Planning Award

contains two equally ambitious components. Its Sustainable Design Plan endeavors to create a framework of implementation strategies, quantifiable measures, and region-wide connections to support the emergence of a central-city district offering the best of both urban living and ecological sensitivity. The associated Catalyst Project attempts to demonstrate that this vision will not only be technically feasible, but also aesthetically desirable and financially profitable.

The Background: Lloyd Crossing

The plan covers a 35-block area within the Lloyd District, located northeast (across the Willamette River) from downtown Portland. While the area is officially part of the “Central City,” many feel it lacks the vibrancy that distinguishes the Rose City’s other famous neighborhoods. Indeed, according to Sloan Schang of the Portland Development Commission (PDC), it can feel more like a “middle-American downtown” than the heart of a lively West Coast metropolis.

Lloyd Crossing Sustainable Urban Design Plan and Catalyst Project—Jury Comments

Brager: This seemed to really have a nice organization of goals, analyses, and performance measures.

They went beyond just saying we’re going to do it.

You might argue with the methods, but they *had* methods—it wasn’t just on a philosophical struggle.

The way they presented it was also very educational.

It’s a really nice model for others to follow.

Vale: So often we have the buzzwords of sustainability.

But this one really says, here is a 35-block urban

ecosystem, let’s set some standards for how

you can have growth and densification without

raising ecological impacts. To actually talk about

reforestation—“a small mixed-conifer forest woven into the urban infrastructure”—as they put it. It’s a lovely concept.

Brager: I think it fit a lot of criteria of what we were looking for in terms of the connection of research to planning, and going from planning back to clear



But the potential is there. The neighborhood covered by the plan contains 2.8 million square feet of developed building space housing a wide variety of uses, including the Rose Garden Arena and the Oregon Convention Center. It has been dubbed “Lloyd Crossing,” because of its designation as a future meeting point of the present light-rail system and a planned new streetcar line.

The Lloyd District Development Strategy—formulated in 2001 for the larger area that includes Lloyd Crossing—had already called for the creation of an active, dense urban neighborhood in the area. Additionally, market studies indicated that over the next 45 years, an additional 8.1 million square feet (70 percent of what present zoning allows) could be absorbed by the district, bringing with it 8,000 potential new residents.

All 35 blocks of Lloyd Crossing lie within an urban renewal area. In 2004, when the PDC drew together a project-specific advisory committee composed of twelve area stakeholders, from property owners to neighborhood advocates, to help guide its redevelopment, sustainability

soon emerged as a central objective. As Schang notes, there is “a lot of movement in the city to push the envelope with sustainability.” Indeed, when the request for proposals for Lloyd Crossing emerged from the advisory committee, it not only expressed a desire to maintain the development potential of the land and create a district with a defined sense of place, but to establish a vision that would both reflect “financial reality” and exceed LEED platinum-level standards.

The winning team assembled by Mithūn shared this bold vision. According to Bert Gregory of Mithūn, when it comes to sustainability, what is most needed today is to “move beyond green buildings... to jump to the next level, to look to neighborhoods as systems,” and to recognize it is possible to create vibrant urban places with extremely low impact on the environment. Of equal importance, though, is that one of the largest property owners in the neighborhood, Ashforth Pacific, also expressed an interest in doing something truly innovative.

The Proposal: Urban/Forest

As a first step, the team attempted to give teeth to the concept of “sustainability.” This was no small feat. By 2000 it seemed that “sustainable” was a required word in virtually all planning documents, and that “sustainable development” was the avowed goal of everyone. Yet, as J.G. Frazier has noted, the concept was so poorly defined as to be largely meaningless. In fact, during the 1990s the editorial staff of *Issues in Science and Technology*, a publication of the National Academy Sciences, had proclaimed the phrase to have “no useful meaning.”³

The Sustainable Design Plan, in contrast, rests on a functional concept of “Pre-development Metrics” developed by the team. These measures embody a theoretical

The towers and parking lots of the Lloyd District, across the Willamette River from Downtown Portland. It is here that the Lloyd Crossing project is planned to take shape.

recommendations. These predevelopment measures define clear metrics to use as a benchmark. They were really looking at different critical dimensions of the project and establishing how they would be met.

Hardy: I was impressed that it is the Portland Development Commission that sponsored the thing.

Their statement—which is very ambitious—I think is true. They say the study is to examine the benefits of an integration of urban design strategies, green infrastructure opportunities (they certainly went into that), shared building systems, innovative financial models (which are often left in the dust), and to serve

as a catalytic sustainable urban design model. And all of that, which is enormously ambitious for a city agency to even think about, was there. Quite extraordinary.

Brager: Exactly. And too often you see these ambitions and you get excited about the project, and you look through it and say, “Well, where is it?” It’s

baseline representing the ecological profile of the site before there was a human presence on it. This framework was then used to create a plan that would be even more ambitious than the “beyond-platinum” goals specified in the RFP. In effect, the remarkable notion at the heart of the plan is that intense urban redevelopment can be used to reverse existing environmental impacts, and return many of the ecological qualities of the site to those of a 54-acre, mature, mixed-conifer forest.

Wildlife habitat, water and usage quality, and energy consumption are three areas where the plan establishes specific performance goals. In terms of habitat, the predevelopment metric was 90 percent tree cover, supporting a diverse range of species. In comparison, the plan attempts to reestablish 25–30 percent tree cover—an “abstraction” of a mixed-conifer forest, involving native “forest patches,” green streets, rooftop gardens, and habitat corridors. Meanwhile, provisions are also proposed for off-site habitat restoration.

In terms of water, the plan estimates the study area receives 64 million gallons of rainwater a year, and it proposes treating much of this runoff on-site. It also proposes reducing potable water consumption by 62 percent, and providing on-site sources for 100 percent of nonpotable water demand through rainwater harvesting and wastewater reuse.

Energy metrics involve a number of concerns. According to the plan, the neighborhood receives 161 million kilowatt hours per year of solar energy. The plan aims to exceed the level of utilization of this energy that would be typical of a mature forest.

Among the plan’s other goals are to reduce on-site carbon dioxide emissions to predevelopment levels and create an overall carbon-neutral strategy. Since the construction industry consumes 40 percent of the global economy’s raw materials, the latter would involve giving preference to materials that employ renewable resources, that are from within 300 to 500 miles of the site, have low embodied energy, and that receive a positive Life Cycle Assessment.



Placemaking

The placemaking strategy of the plan builds on the successful qualities of Portland’s older core neighborhoods.

In terms of district character, the plan not only recognizes that developing intensely near existing infrastructure will “reduce the pressure on development in other outlying areas,” but it argues that many of the environmentally friendly architectural and planning features it encourages will create a unique identity for the district. Residential units would be mixed with business uses; a hierarchy of green streets would be established; towers would be set back to allow adequate sun at street level; pedestrian and bicycle access would be encouraged; and new open spaces would be created.

The Catalyst

To provide a real-world structure for these bold environmental goals, the plan proposes hard numbers for financing planned changes to the urban fabric. Specifically, the Catalyst Project seeks to demonstrate financial feasibility by outlining two alternate building scenarios. One involves a midrise, mixed-use project containing 150 new residential units; the other is a highrise project containing

one thing to analyze a building and look at actual performance, rather than have green-washing statements. But to do it at the planning stage is even harder. All too often you have these grandiose statements of intent without any kind of metric to back it up.

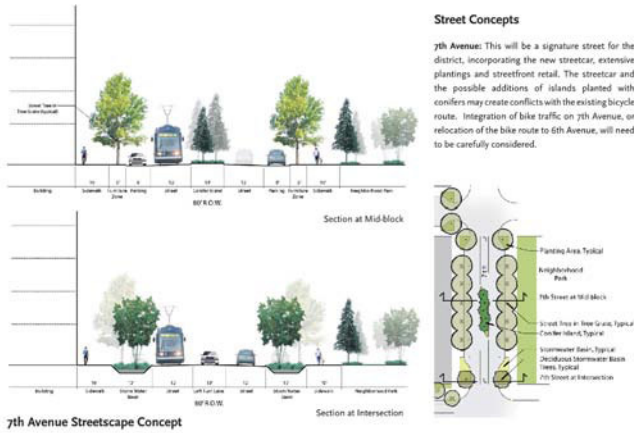
Hardy: And the inference was that there are ways to do this, rather than this is what it will be. This, from my

point of view, is the nature of what planning should be.

Harris: In Portland anyone who wants to get reelected has to be in favor of this, and there is likely to be a good amount of political support. But this is also really well suited to where it is in Portland. It’s a huge area—a little bigger than the densest part of the central district. It’s a tough location, but it could be

quite wonderful over time. They even identified some catalytic projects they thought might get it started.

Vale: I was really delighted to see an urban- or district-scale approach to sustainability that had some measurable outcomes. It seems the right kind of multiprong strategy, at the right place, at the right city, at the right time.



between 240 and 300 residential units.

Based on a public/private partnership, these model projects are estimated to provide a potential developer return of 16 to 21 percent, while exceeding LEED platinum-level standards. They would also allow the construction of a new one-acre public park, green infrastructure, and buildings demonstrating the latest in sustainable technology.

A Model

The jury was broadly impressed with many aspects of this ambitious proposal. But, most importantly, they noted that its clear metrics gave substance to the usual buzzwords of sustainability. Because of this, they praised the PDC and Mithūn for creating something that could move the entire urban planning field forward—not just in Portland, but around the nation and the world.

With luck, some form of a catalyst project may be built in a few years. But, until then, Schang says, “We’ve gotten a lot of people talking.” In addition to winning a 2005 EDRA/*Places* award, the work has been lauded in a recent issue of *Planning*, and it has won an American Society of Landscape Architects Honor Award and an American Institute of Architects Top Ten award.⁴

This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the publication of Ernest Callenbach's *Ecotopia*, a work of fiction that both provided a vision of ecological possibility and

Opposite: The plan analyzes issues related to habitat, water, energy, and place-making. It aims to encourage urban growth that will result in drastically reduced ecological impacts for the area by the year 2050.

Left: Street sections detail specific ways to integrate new patterns of site ecology with existing and planned new circulation patterns.

Right: The Catalyst Project presents highrise and midrise alternatives for the design of actual new buildings and open spaces.

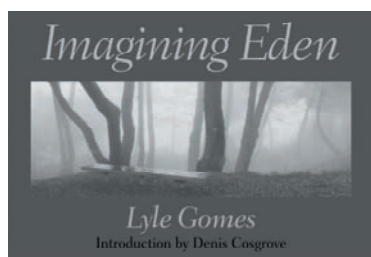
portrayed the region from San Francisco to Seattle as the preeminent bastion for such views in the U.S.⁵ Yet while San Francisco may be home to innumerable environmental organizations, and while Seattle may be a self-described “Pugetopia,” it is Portland that has so far come closest to turning fiction into fact by realizing an ideal of environmental urbanity.⁶ It is providing the kind of inspiration that would make Tom McCall proud.

— Jason Alexander Hayter

Notes

1. From the McCall Gallery at the 1000 Friends of Oregon website: www.friends.org/resources/mccall.html. Also see Brent Walth, *Fire at Eden's Gate: Tom McCall & The Oregon Story* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1994).
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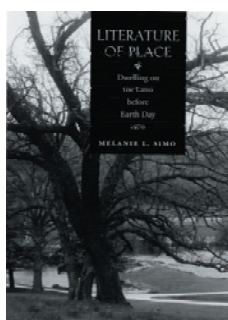
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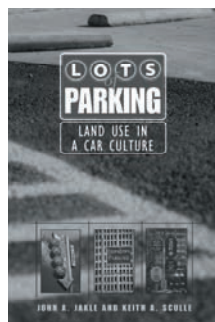
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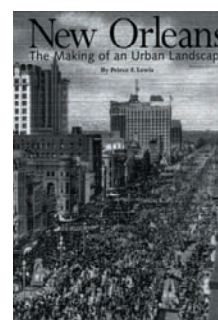
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People and Places on the Outer Cape: A Landscape Character Study

Jack Ahern, Ethan Carr, Elisabeth Hamin, and David Glassberg

What is it about a landscape that allows it to become a repository for memories and cultural values? How do you protect this for future generations? Indeed, how do you even know what it is before it is gone?

These are the types of questions that dominate “People and Places on the Outer Cape,” a study of the six easternmost townships of Cape Cod, produced by an interdisciplinary research team from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. The premise of this 2005 EDRA/*Places* Research Award winner is that the character of even the most well-loved American places may decline severely, or be lost altogether, without active public stewardship.

Since the establishment of the Cape Cod National Seashore in 1961 major changes have occurred in the landscape there as a result of the continuing decline in traditional maritime activities, a rise of tourism, population growth, and associated commercial development. Sponsored by the National Park Service and its Boston-based Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, the report tried to document and assess these changes in a way that would be useful to NPS staff, town officials, residents, and property owners. Among its goals were to help citizens recognize the full scope of their landscape heritage and understand current threats to it; empower local communities in their planning, zoning and site reviews; and encourage the establishment of new partnerships and ideas to preserve its character.

The jury found the approach to a complex topic in “People and Places” both practical and poetic. They praised its ability to articulate the foundations of cultural landscapes, the link between place character and the dynamics of memory, and the need to preserve ways of life as well as physical environments.

Managing a Cultural Landscape

Since Europeans arrived in Massachusetts, Cape Cod’s landscape has been transformed many times over. After displacing local Native Americans, Europeans cleared most of the forest cover and began systematically to exploit the

agricultural potential of Cape lands and the fisheries of nearby tidal flats, bays, and ocean.

Until the twentieth century, however, the large areas of windswept bluff and beach that faced out to the open Atlantic on the Outer Cape were considered a forbidding wilderness. Development there—in the townships of Provincetown, Truro, Wellfleet, Eastham, Orleans, and Chatham—mostly occurred along the shores of more sheltered bays and in the *pamets* (hollows) between the dunes. In the mid-nineteenth century, the report notes, Henry David Thoreau even called the Outer Cape’s Great Beach “rough and desolate.” A place of storm and wreck, it was “where things came to die.”

Tourism first arrived on Cape Cod with the railroad in the nineteenth century, and in the decades that followed generations of summer visitors came to view the Outer Cape’s landscape differently. Many fell in love with its dunes and *pamets*, oak-pine forests and fresh-water kettleponds, salt marshes and cranberry bogs, historic whitewashed town centers and small but sturdy working waterfronts. The report notes how “a large and diverse literature” developed “describing the perhaps indescribable aspects” of life there. An entire school of landscape painting and photography also emerged out of the summer workshops and galleries of Provincetown.

It was amid this conflict of old and new that the National Seashore was designated in the 1960s. By then, the mass automobile tourism that had developed after World War II was coming to be seen as a threat to the restorative qualities of a summer sojourn on the Outer Cape. Signed into being by a native son, John Kennedy, its mission was to preserve the “authentic” quality of the area. In cooperation with local townships, it sought to preserve the landscape from crass commercialism, as well as manage the delicate balance between man and nature for generations to come.

According to Jack Ahern, the principal investigator for “People and Places,” the National Seashore has done a

People and Places on the Outer Cape—Jury Comments

Brager: The question is whether we consider this in the planning category, even though it has a really strong research component, or as research, even though it has really strong implications for planning. I agree we should probably keep it in research, commending it for a really strong component about implications.

Vale: Although the interesting thing is it’s clearly the case of a federal agency commissioning a university to make a product for them that is in much more of a planning mode.

Hardy: If it stays in research, you could somehow encourage a planning stage. They can be encouraged to

make a great plan.

Vale: What’s unusual is that a lot of the research that seems to have won awards has not been research for a client. So here you have a client and a constituency that is presumably funding the work, as opposed to an agenda that’s emerging entirely from people doing the research.



remarkably good job taking care of the physical and biological resources in the forty years since. “Where they were not as good was in managing the cultural landscape.”

The result in some cases has been simmering conflict between longtime residents and the authorities. Cultural landscapes embody both an underlying ecology and the way it has been shaped by human activities into a series of perceptible places. When different groups view the landscape differently, conflicts may play themselves out as management disputes—on the Outer Cape, for example, pitting traditional lifeways such as off-road vehicle use and sport surfcasting against the habitat needs of nesting shorebirds.

What the report seeks to accomplish is to bring such a dialogue into the open so a public appraisal of risks and effects may be made. What ultimately sustains a sense of landscape authenticity, the report concludes, is its ability to serve as a continually evolving repository for personal and cultural memory. A “sense of place” emerges when a location “has a role in the creation of [people’s] memories, and therefore of their identity as individuals, and as a group.”

“Headings”

The research involved the work of landscape architects, public historians, and cultural geographers. It included archival and published literature reviews, GIS analysis, interviews with residents and local officials, field observations and analysis, and a series of public workshops. Much of the work was done in two parallel graduate-student studios in the Landscape Architecture Department at U. Mass., Amherst. One was taught by Ahern, Head of the Department, and the other by Assistant Professor Ethan Carr, who had formerly worked with the Park Service in cultural-landscape issues.

Its initial section is devoted to “Character, Current Trends, and History.” After that, its second section collects

Left: The long sweep of Cape Cod’s Great Beach stretches out toward Provincetown. Aerial photo by PANDION.

Right: Traditional activities have long included clam digging. Photo courtesy of CCNS/NPS.

Brager: It’s a really good model for that kind of funding for research. You are more likely to produce something that is going to be useful, because the clients have a vested interest in its usefulness—as opposed to a research report that sits on the shelf and you hope somebody finds it.

Harris: I’m not sure how we started on whether it is in one category or the other. It is so sensitive to place and

subtle in its understandings of place I wouldn’t care which category it is in.

Brager: One of my questions was about fit. I always liked the project. What I wondered was, is this just about preservation of the natural environment, or is it something about the design landscape? Is it something about development? Is it something about policy? When

I looked at it with a specific eye for that, I was delighted to find that the fit was perhaps more narrow than some of the other projects, but absolutely there. It’s very much about how land is managed, zoned, protected. There are other aspects about coastal management and even housing development.

Vale: It was remarkably centered on questions of place and



the bulk of the research under a number of “headings.” In an innovative way, these refer both to topical sections of the document as well as to directions, “in the nautical sense,” for inquiry and concern. The headings, in order of appearance, are “The Great Beach,” “Waterways,” “Town Centers and Harbors,” “Farms and Forests,” “Getting Around,” and “Homes on the Outer Cape.”

The third section of the report emerged following a series of “Cape Cod Conversations,” held at multiple locations on the Outer Cape. At these public events attendees were shown slides of typical Cape Cod activities or places and asked to discuss what they saw. They were largely organized by David Glassberg, Chairman of the U. Mass, Amherst Department of History, who had previously collaborated with Carr on studies to help the Park Service

better understand, integrate and manage cultural-landscape issues.

Comments received at these events appear as pull-quotes throughout the document, and cover a range of issues. For example, when shown traditional fishing boats, many respondents reflected on how these activities are fast diminishing, but retain great meaning for tourists and residents alike. The image that sparked the greatest response was of a big new house in Wellfleet, which touched a nerve relating to the social and environmental impacts of present forces of change.

According to one resident: “It’s a pity. When people come here, and they want to stay and they build the big houses and they put in these fancy lawns and they water them daily, you can no longer conserve what was here. And

place-making, and in some very subtle ways. There were some very well-written pieces to it. Take the observation about the Cape Cod Conversations method—that deeply held landscape values and perceptions are often articulated only in groups, through local residents conversations with one another. And this process, while certainly not unique, of using photography to elicit commentary in a group setting, seemed to have worked very well.

Harris: When I first picked it up I saw some notion about trying to define the fundamental character of the landscape—because if you are going to try to hang onto it then you ought to know what it was. They came to the notion that it had to do with how people remembered it and experienced it, rather than an object-minded definition. Immediately, it was the engagement of people that mattered. They got off to a

good start, and they kept it up.

Vale: There was one sentence that jumped out at me: that “Cape Cod National Seashore can help keep the piping plovers from becoming extinct but not the resource-based industries responsible for the look and feel of the traditional Cape landscape.” They were interested in a different kind of cultural extinction, and really asking about the socioeconomics and the intricacies of daily life

the people who were here can no longer afford to live here because it doesn't make any sense to keep your property when you're making fifteen thousand dollars a year and then you can sell the property for a million."

New Pressures

If there is a villain that emerges from this piece it is what Ahern calls "incremental development." The growth of the Boston metro area, new technologies, and the increased affluence of baby-boomer retirees now means that the Outer Cape is no longer seen just as a place for hardscrabble locals and fair-weather tourists. Increasingly it is becoming a place of year-round residence. And as the limited land area for development shrinks and it approaches "buildout," new pressures mount that are resulting in a lack of affordable housing, year-round traffic congestion, and pollution of its sole-source aquifer.

Pressures on the perceivable landscape mount as well. According to Ahern, there are some 600 or so "inholdings" within the existing National Seashore. "It complicates life considerably to realize that these could be redeveloped extensively. A cute little cottage that once fit into the landscape could all of a sudden rise up to triple its size."

The problem extends into the centers of existing towns as well. One-by-one redevelopment of residential lots and the conversion of small-scale commercial uses into giant retail outlets might someday mean the Outer Cape will lose its distinct place identity and come to resemble every other landscape on the outskirts of a major city.

When the National Seashore was first being proposed, local communities feared the federal agency would assume a dominant role in their affairs. To assuage these concerns, agreement was reached on a "Cape Cod model" according to which the Seashore would suspend purchase and selective condemnation of lands if the towns would agree to zoning restrictions that "supported the preservation of the Cape landscape."

"If we were to honor that model it should mean you

could go to the towns and say that these new monster homes are out of character, and that they should write and enforce zoning regulations to prohibit them," Ahern says. But legal, political and economic issues make this difficult. And, Ahern notes, the relationship between the federal agency and the towns has been, euphemistically speaking, "up and down."

Research to Action

A certain frustration will always attend the writing of reports like "People and Places of the Outer Cape." No matter how skilled the researchers in documenting issues and identifying threats, others must become sufficiently motivated by their work for it to have practical effect.

To begin this process of turning research into action, the report's last section lays out three alternate scenarios for the future of the Outer Cape. These were based on prioritizing conservation, containing new growth within existing town centers, and creating "new villages. A follow-up three-day conference was also held in October 2004 in Provincetown to promote discussion of the report's findings. Called "Endless Summer: Preserving Landscape Character in Coastal Communities," it focused on four themes: community character, affordable housing, working waterfronts, and smart growth and redevelopment.

As "People and Places" points out, "authenticity does not exist by happenstance; paradoxically or not, it is often cultivated and nurtured by local businesses and residents alike. The delicate balance between promoting character and preserving it is hard to achieve." There are lessons here for sensitive cultural landscapes nationwide.

Opposite: Restored dune shacks are a remnant of older housing patterns on the Outer Cape. Photo courtesy of U. Mass.

in a complex tension of longtime local residents and the summer tourist crowd. What can planning do, what can the National Park Service do, what can anybody do about the long-term sustainability of certain ways of life? What can you do to help support local fishing industries? Or what can you do to support affordable housing for the people who live and work here and can't afford to remain in the next generation?

And it managed to be evocative about the qualities of the place through its prose and images without wholly romanticizing something that it isn't. It acknowledged the very serious challenges that are there that will ultimately work against anyone's enjoyment of the place—the sense of the cumulative effect of incremental changes. We don't see it with each little transaction, as when somebody doubles the size of a house on a particularly prominent

dune or slope. What would it mean to have a system that didn't allow you to do large things that are visible from certain kinds of places? If you multiply that times a few hundred, you may well save a much broader set of vistas without being wholly retrograde in your approach. So I thought it was really quite an exemplary piece of work that managed to be both practical and poetic at the same time. **Cranz:** Well said—practical and poetic—it was moving.

The Dignity of Resistance: Women Residents' Activism in Chicago Public Housing—Chicago, Illinois

Roberta M. Feldman and Susan Stall



The first time Hallie Amey learned that her home, and almost half of the housing project where it was located, was to be demolished to provide space for a new baseball stadium parking lot was when she read about it in the *Chicago Tribune*. Not surprisingly, she and many of her fellow residents were devastated. Less expected was their willingness to fight back.

This winner of a 2005 EDRA/*Places* Research Award

tells the story of a successful struggle by a seemingly disenfranchised group of public-housing residents to resist the combined forces of government and business. In doing so, it covers almost four decades of the history of public housing and one decade of the direct involvement by the authors, Roberta Feldman and Susan Stall.

The women residents of the 422-unit Wentworth Gardens on Chicago's South Side never expected to

Dignity of Resistance—Jury Comments

Brager: This seemed like a very strong project on a lot of different levels. It was a really impressive longitudinal study. They looked at people's experiences. They looked at people's proactive response. It was about physical space. It was about policy. I was quite impressed with it.

Vale: Fifteen years of work. This is, as far as I'm

concerned, as good as the work anybody is doing on public housing communities.

Harris: In my top-ten list of why it was good to come here, this is one of them. I didn't know about this book.

Cranz: The title is interesting—*The Dignity of Resistance*. In the end, they don't defend resistance as the way to

solve the public housing problem. They acknowledge that it isn't. But there is dignity for these people, these women, who have pulled it off in this context.

Brager: How do we think people can learn from this? How can the lessons either inform people's design of spaces or the management of the spaces, the way people

become activists in a decades-long struggle for adequate housing and civil rights. What initially motivated them was concern for the place they called home and for the impact of a new stadium on their neighborhood. Nevertheless, their transformation in the face of the concerted effort to remove them coincided with large and visible changes in the politics of the city and the country.

In tracing this story, the awards jury noted, the work provides a truly impressive longitudinal study that dispels many of the stereotypes of public housing residents. They noted how the personal involvement of Feldman and Stall also serves as a model for the engagement of university researchers in assisting disadvantaged communities.

A Place of Hope and Struggle

When it was built in 1947, low-rise Wentworth Gardens was one of the Chicago Housing Authority's (CHA) first projects. During the early 1900s, the area in which it was built had been populated by European immigrants. But by mid-century it had come to be dominated by African Americans, who had migrated north as cotton production waned, seeking work in Chicago's factories.

In a deeply segregated city, Wentworth's original purpose was to address a serious affordable-housing shortage among low- and middle-income African-American families, particularly ones headed by single parents. However, under the entrenched administration of Mayor Richard M. Daley such public projects declined dramatically in the years that followed as a result of fiscal mismanagement, poor maintenance, and social problems that were largely ignored by local and state agencies.

Faced with the effects of this decline and final notice that their homes would be razed for no fault of their own, Amey and other residents turned to community activist Sheila Radford Hill for assistance. It was Hill who then sought to involve university researchers Roberta Feldman and Susan Stall.

Initially, Stall served as an organizer, while Feldman, an

architect, conducted an evaluation of the grounds and buildings. Everyone involved knew that if they were successful and the buildings were not to be demolished, they would have to be better managed and maintained to be livable.

Ironically, it wasn't until the two had been part of this effort for almost three years that they decided to write about it. It was then they realized their roles were shifting, and that there was much to be gained from telling an important story they were watching unfold.

According to Stall, to understand women's struggle for resources and the rights to space (and place), it was important to convey a full sense of the tension they lived under—"that it wasn't just a nice sweet story." And yet, in the face of significant barriers, "they were able to sustain it, as they have their relationship with each other."

Everyday Lives

The book begins by seeking to understand the context within which Wentworth Gardens emerged. It then moves to an examination of the troubled history of the project and U.S. public housing programs in general, an investigation of the private sphere and resistance, a follow-up on resistance in the public realm, and a conclusion in which the personal histories collide with layers of theory and research.

Within this overall framework, much of the story emerges from the oral histories of Wentworth Gardens residents. Throughout, the subjects are allowed to speak for themselves. Feldman and Stall were ready allies in this project. Once a week for almost ten years, they collected information about individual residents as well as the working groups and associations they formed.

Feldman and Stall felt it would be impossible to understand why the women were engaged in the kinds of activities they were by looking only at the conditions in which

Opposite: Unlike later public housing projects, Wentworth Gardens was originally composed of townhouses (foreground) and three-story walkup apartments (rear left). Photo courtesy of Susan Stall.

use and occupy and try to take control of their spaces?

Cranz: I think it holds up an example for other groups, possibly, around the country. "Look, they did it, and someone wrote a book about it. And somebody thinks it's important." It gives people courage.

Brager: So, it's really for people, and maybe policy-

makers, rather than for designers?

Cranz: You need to listen to users—that is its message. Don't ignore these people. Don't have whitewash committees where you say you have user support and you don't. So there's a message for designers too.

Vale: This represents of a small trend in the literature

on public housing that is about trying to explain the workings of communities of very low-income people in a way that provides enough detail and nuance for policy-makers to really think through what is being replaced when you replace public housing. And to not assume that all that is there is pathology, but to

they lived. It was necessary to appreciate their backgrounds to understand the strengths each brought to their struggle. Thus tales of daily life—of work, school, church, raising children, marriages and divorces—are situated within the residents' larger, collective struggle against powerful outside authorities.

As scholars, however, Feldman and Stall also felt it important to contextualize such personal stories within an analysis of public housing, land use politics, urban development, and public policy in the U.S.—as well as attendant theories of race, gender, and spatial form.

To understand the many dimensions of the struggle, for example, they use bell hooks's notion of "homeplace," as the intersection of public and private spheres, to formalize observation of how the lives of African-American women are often tied together through their domestic struggles. They also reference works by French social philosopher Michel Foucault to support their understanding of responses by the community organizers to established power structures. The study thus transcends its historical moment to lend theoretical insight into the lives of seemingly ordinary women shaped by adversity.

In the conclusion, however, the authors resist any tendency to romanticize the findings. Though they do call the women of Wentworth Gardens "heroes," it is in the sense of everyday heroes who might have preferred less contentious and challenging lives. Being a hero is also not the answer.

Throughout this book, we have sought to recognize and explain the significant resistance for transforming the material conditions of their daily lives and, in the process, empowering themselves for future actions. Although they are impressive, Wentworth activists' efforts cannot provide a model for ensuring viable housing. Wentworth women activists are well aware of the limitations of their resistance efforts as they confront them daily. Their accomplishments alone cannot stem the ongoing increasing dilapida-

tion of their buildings and grounds; cuts in social, educational, and health services; the ever-present drug and gang activity; and increasing unemployment and poverty.

The Struggle Continues

Clearly, an ongoing lack of investment in public housing by federal agencies, as well as declining interest by local political administrations, continues to take a toll on communities such as Wentworth Gardens. Yet, if the deterioration at Wentworth Gardens is endemic to public housing throughout the country, this story of dignity and resistance has much to teach. In this sense, the book emphasizes how larger policy decisions have real impacts on individual lives.

"We shouldn't say the answers are in the women's struggles," Feldman believes. "Actually, the women's struggles articulate what the real problems are."

For this reason, Stall and Feldman hope politicians and housing bureaucrats will read their book and get a better idea of the needs of those whose lives they control. The common view is that public housing residents are helpless victims. Yet despite continued challenges, the book tells how the women took responsibility for change, never allowing themselves to be cast as victims.

For example, when the Chicago Housing Authority decided to close Wentworth Gardens' laundry room because of the demands of managing the facility, the women residents took on the running of an on-site laundromat themselves. Rather than see this vital service removed, they founded a board to manage it, and eventually recycled their profits into the community in a variety of ways—as program funds, scholarships, and a capital fund for new equipment for the teen center.

Today Wentworth Gardens is undergoing a major rehabilitation to its buildings and grounds. But this is not indicative of present trends in Chicago or across the U.S. "Less than 2% of the Americans live in government subsidized housing developments, while rates of these other (industrial-

recognize the extent of strength of relationships and networks that have sustained the functioning part of these communities that have been under assault from so many other sources.

Hardy: It is interesting that they start from the premise that the place is valuable. Many people regard the whole idea of that type of housing as a failure.

Here the people are saying, "No, this has value, this is ours. We want it to be what it was intended to be."

They reinvented it, but on its original terms—which is startling. By and large, these places were thought of as the stepping-stones to something else—not inherently valuable on their own terms.

Brager: They were also comparing it to what their

options were. Given their demographics, given their economic status, it had value.

Vale: It really is also a very interesting example of where researchers have been engaged on multiple levels for multiple years as only what we have come to call action research can permit. They have emerged with both the stories intact and a set of theoretical



ized) nations are at least 10 times higher,” the authors note.

Locally, after the failure of many of its highrise developments, including the infamous Robert Taylor Homes and Cabrini Green, the Chicago Housing Authority has largely given up building new units. As existing projects are torn down, their solution has been to hand displaced residents Section 8 vouchers.

The CHA does not track the residents who leave their projects. Where others in need will find adequate housing is a story that remains to be told. Without new investment in public housing, the options may be street corners and freeway overpasses.

frameworks that don't seem forced onto the material. You have terms that would appear as theory, but also would not be offensive or distant to the residents themselves. To talk about “homeplace” or “resistance” or “dignity” is to talk in a language that is theorized but also respects the people they're working with.

Cranz: It's a close, chronological, detailed account

of what happened. It's theorized. There's relevant literature cited. It works at a populist level and at a theoretical level.

Vale: And the racial issues are front and center here. This is fundamentally about race and gender in a way that is much less apparent in earlier neighborhood studies—and I think less romanticized. It also comes

out at a time, particularly in Chicago, when people are suing to stop the city from tearing down these horrible places out of a well-grounded fear of displacement. The role of women of color in leadership positions in Chicago is really a kind of national model in some of these cases. And these are very actively contested sorts of places coast to coast right now during the Hope VI program.

From the Streets to the Theatre

As an epilogue, it is interesting to note that some of what was captured by this study is now being transformed for the stage by Chicago playwright David Barr. The play will chronicle the injustices inflicted on the women residents, and their relationship to each other and to those who were drawn to their struggle.

In Barr's play, Feldman and Stall appear as characters in an opening scene. The playwright believes that in addition to being drawn to the larger story of the residents, theatergoers will be intrigued by why these two researchers chose to invest so much of their time in the effort, particularly when it never received funding—which, he notes, seems unconventional for university-sponsored work.

Barr feels that the tale of Wentworth Gardens will resonate with a wide spectrum of theatre audiences, that they will see similarities all around the country where people have been displaced from their basic needs. He wants to express how in the U.S. people have endured, and still endure, the loss of their communities.

When asked about the play, Amey—who is thrilled, if not a bit amazed, at all the attention Wentworth continues to receive—said, “When you are working at this, you really don't see all of it. You are always trying to find a way to get it done. But God has been good and has opened many doors for us. And I tell you with His help, we have been able to overcome many things. We are very proud.”

— Lisa S. Sullivan

Note

The Dignity of Resistance: Women Residents' Activism in Chicago Public Housing was published in 2004 by Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, U.K.

Announcement board showing resident-organized youth activities. Photo courtesy of Susan Stall.

Los Altos School District Master Plan Update—Los Altos, California

Gelfand Partners Architects



On a typical summer morning in Los Altos the coastal fog burns off late. Along a covered walkway at the Georgina Blach Intermediate School, the sun is just beginning to beam through a series of circular cut-outs, playfully dotting the pavement with natural light. A few more steps and we enter a large L-shaped courtyard punctuated by a clock tower. The hands on the clock point to 10:30—but this information already seems superfluous. Everywhere we have seen signs of the sun's presence—a shadow, a streak, a glow. The school itself is a teller of time, its architecture a register of the day's progress.

Blach typifies Gelfand Partners' integrated approach to the retrofit of schools in this woodsy Silicon Valley suburb. In their work to complete Phase One of the district's mod-

ernization plan, they have tried to adapt the more technical aspects of "sustainable design" to the art of place-making. This has involved reinforcing existing daylighting schemes, modeling energy usage to optimize HVAC systems, and attempting to reclaim previously wasted outdoor areas as instructional settings. It has meant infilling between existing buildings (instead of tearing them down), creating new spaces that reinforce the social landscape. And in some cases it has included designing building elements that deliberately double as teaching tools. At Blach, for example, a triangular steel entry canopy casts a precise shadow on lines scored in the sidewalk below, doubling as a gnomon in an architectural sundial, and reinforcing a lesson familiar to all middle-schoolers.

According to Lisa Gelfand, Principal of the San Francisco-based firm, architecture can be used to augment the "creative enterprise" of education. "Inside a school there's more productivity than consumption going on. The buildings need to express that difference."

The oak tree in the Blach Middle School courtyard. Before modernization work began, when the architects asked students what they liked most about the school, many of them emphatically replied, "The tree! The tree!" The design now surrounds it with a circular, wheelchair-accessible platform.

From Dreary to Demonstrable

The story of Blach Intermediate School and the ongoing relationship between Gelfand Partners and the Los Altos School District began with the passage of a \$94.7 million bond issue in 1998. At the time, most Los Altos' public schools dated to the post-World War II California suburban construction boom. During the 1980s and 1990s, when the district first became crunched for space, it had managed only to augment these facilities with dreary portables.

The original intent of the bond issue was to modernize all these facilities and replace the portables with permanent buildings. But Los Altos administrators also saw the chance to create a unique identity for each school, and in 1999 they chose five separate architects to modernize a total of nine schools—seven elementary and two intermediate. As part of this drive for design diversity, Gelfand Partners was hired to redesign Blach in accordance with an existing master plan.

Throughout 1999 Gelfand's design work went smoothly, and at the end of the year bids were received indicating the reconstruction would come in on budget, and on schedule. But this was not the case with other projects in the district. Most importantly, bids for Covington Elementary School and for a new two-story building and modernization at Egan Junior High School, Los Altos' second intermediate school, failed to meet projected budget and schedule constraints. It was then that Gelfand's design for Blach caught the eye of district administrators.

For the firm, the idea of "modernization" does not necessarily mean the construction of new buildings. Rather, they have tried to renovate existing buildings in keeping with a philosophy of sustainability and energy efficiency, while adding new structures to activate the spaces between.

At Blach this has meant that some of the most important program elements are now housed by infill buildings. The library, a new double-height space, joins the previously existing administration and art "wings"—while the student store (with clock tower on top) connects a set of classrooms with the school's covered walkway. Meanwhile, a new row of classrooms has also been built along the western edge of the site, and two longer buildings have been set perpendicular to the eastern edge to create an L-shaped courtyard that has become the social heart of the school.

Recognizing how well these strategies fit its goals, in 2000, while managing the construction of Blach, Gelfand Partners was asked to rewrite the district's master plan to project credible budgets and schedules for sustainable modernizations at all the remaining schools while determining whether there was enough remaining bond money to replace more of the portables. This effort was so success-



ful that by 2001 the district had decided to entrust Gelfand with the entire modernization campaign and the task of overseeing the redesign of the six remaining schools.

The first phase of work at Blach was completed in 2002, and Phase One of Los Altos' modernization effort was completed in 2003. Today the district is waiting to pass a new bond to fund Phase Two.

The energy-saving measures at Blach have also now proved so successful—and the systems so high performing—that the school has been adopted by the local utility, PG&E, as the first "demonstration project" in its Collaboration for High Performance Schools (CHPS). As Gelfand was working on the schematic design for Blach, PG&E had also been seeking a project in the Bay Area that could demonstrate energy-saving measures for schools throughout the region. Eventually, PG&E offered a large grant to upgrade lighting controls and other sustainable systems at Blach. It now uses the school as an example for other districts and designers interested in using similar strategies.

The Finger Plan, Revamped

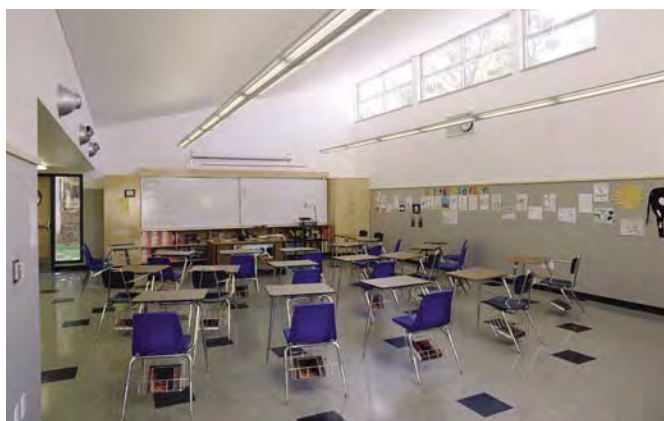
The jury chose to give a design award to Gelfand both for the general Los Altos Master Plan Update as well as its realization in Blach and several other district projects. In comments, jurors were particularly impressed with how

The design severs the old covered walkway at Blach and adds a row of classrooms along the western edge of the site to frame a large new L-shaped courtyard. Clerestories were added to brighten existing classrooms, while new structures, including a double-height library, fill in between older buildings.

the approach might be extended to the hundreds of similar “finger-plan” schools throughout California and other areas of the western United States.

The finger plan was introduced in the 1950s as an economical way to construct schools in warmer climates, where outdoor spaces could be used for activities and circulation throughout the school year. In reality, the name says more about the strategy of *siting* buildings than it does about the buildings themselves. This was typified by a highly rational arrangement of barracks-style structures connected to one another by covered walkways.

Lisa Gelfand’s research on the Los Altos version of such schools ultimately led her to co-author a report with Sandra Vivanco titled “School Design and Ideology.”



The report credits Ernest J. Kump Jr., a Berkeley- and Harvard-trained architect, as the first designer of finger schools in California. The height of Kump’s career also came as the underlying program for public education—and for public school buildings—was finding a new base in the “universalistic values” of Chief Justice Earl Warren’s decision in the 1954 Supreme Court case *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*.

While *Brown vs. Board* inspired a new commitment to equality in public schools, Gelfand and Vivanco believe it also inspired an over-regularization of school facilities, “The normative function of the school,” they wrote, “is realized through the design of one-size-fits-all classrooms

Left: Dreary no more: new north-facing clerestories allow diffused daylight into each classroom. Other design strategies increase the possibilities for natural ventilation, heating and cooling.

Right: The new Blach gymnasium shows how energy-efficient design need not preclude subtler aesthetic qualities.

and the provision of outdoor spaces laid out for team sports, or games organized by rules and lines on pavement. Very little space is devoted to individual study or recreation, or to the casual social encounters fostered by the provision of courtyards or circulation paths that intersect.”

In its technical aspects, however, the finger plan was not without merits. Kump made the crucial decision to site buildings so their long walls of windows faced north. In one sense this was an aid to education, allowing north-facing walls to look out on an “inactive buffer.” But Lisa Gelfand also points out that it would have been difficult to reshape Blach’s campus and achieve increased levels of energy performance within individual buildings if they had been oriented any other way.



Efficiency by Example

Gelfand’s recognition of the positive qualities of the finger plan ultimately allowed the firm to recycle about 25 percent of all building components district-wide, which left room in the budget for the latest innovations in daylighting controls, efficient lighting design, and heating and cooling systems. At Blach, for instance, each classroom is equipped with a sensor that automatically shuts on and off when a window or door is opened or closed. Slim HVAC units are also light enough to affix to rooftops, saving space around buildings and increasing the aesthetic appeal of outdoor areas.

As with most sustainable projects, the district’s initial cost for these energy-saving features was substantial—at Blach alone, the cost was over \$75,000. But according to a study by PG&E, this investment will pay itself back in cumulative energy savings in just over five years. The most “sustainable” element of Blach, however, may be the remarkable improvement in faculty and student morale.



There are no published reports quantifying just how much teachers and students love their “new” school—but in any case, this is not a value that fits neatly into a column in a spreadsheet.

Lisa Gelfand believes much of this quality has to do with the new day-lit interiors that both improve energy efficiency and the educational experience. Typical of these is the multipurpose gymnasium her firm designed for Blach. There is little pretense (or mystery) to what the building is—it’s not much larger than the basketball court inside. However, the room is noticeably bright and airy, and in a departure from the dark, stuffy feel of a typical gymnasium, the polished wooden floor scatters beams of natural light everywhere.

“It’s not enough that we lowered the bill—we want the schools to be beautiful,” Lisa Gelfand says. “We use light to wake kids up [and help them] be aware of what’s out there in the world. More importantly, [when] kids see the light, they start to understand efficiency—they see us all acting the way that we said we would.”

At Blach, the benefits of reorganizing the outdoor spaces are also clearly in evidence. As we end our visit, students spill out of their classrooms. Some rush with wild abandon to get a turn at pin bowling in the courtyard, while others form up as spectators alongside the “lane.” Others settle into the cluster of lunch tables to chat face-to-face, or meet at the large oak tree to organize a game of tag. Several siphon themselves off for a round of Chinese jump rope. Three students sit on the steps with their backpacks still on, seemingly eager to get back to class.

Pin bowling, however, is where the bulk of the action is. “SPARE! SPARE!” one student cheers, after—under heavily relaxed rules—a bowler rolls three consecutive misfires.

“It’s not about strength,” the teacher reminds the bowler. “It’s about location!” The same could be said about Gelfand’s approach to design.

—Julie Kim

All images courtesy of Gelfand Partners Architects.

Securing Public Space

Lawrence J. Vale

Self-conscious efforts to design for urban security go back at least to Jericho, but have had a new kind of salience in the last several decades. The situation is particularly problematic today because the perennial questions—Secure from what? and Secure from whom?—keep yielding shifting answers. Those who care about the planning and design of desirable places are being asked to attend to such questions with increased urgency, but the goals associated with security are frequently poorly framed, incomplete, and often contradictory. The response of designers to the challenges of securing public environments demands more attention from the community of researchers who are concerned not only with matters of security, but also with broader social, cultural and political questions about how matters of security are transforming or delimiting public life.¹ This important area of work would seem particularly suited to the EDRA/*Places* awards. Yet—except for one entry, which provoked lengthy debate among the jurors—questions of security were all but completely absent from this year’s awards cycle.

Those who design, plan, and conduct research about places must face up to new kinds of risk and uncertainty. Whether the threat is a potential terrorist strike or a catastrophic hurricane, the forms of public space become altered by the struggle to grapple with external threats. Faculty and students at MIT have launched a colloquium examining such challenges, and this essay sets out some of the directions such an inquiry might take.

The Temptations of the Securescape

Designers and planners respond quite differently if they are charged with protecting against bomb-laden vehicles than if they are also asked to consider the potential for bombs carried by pedestrians, air attack, or terrorism with chemical or biological weapons. Thirty years ago, in what retrospectively seems a less explosive time, Oscar Newman launched his calls for “defensible space,” rooted in notions of territoriality. This coincided with the birth of an entire movement called Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).² Both viewed the central task of urban design as deterrence of criminal behavior at the interface of the public and private realms. The focus was less on creating positive and desirable designed places than on the necessity to design secure space as a prerequisite to any such higher aims. This nurturing of informal surveillance in dangerous places has indeed frequently been credited with improving the quality of life. Yet designing for

security now entails matters that go well beyond the fears of assault, robbery, and drug dealing that prompted the earlier calls for defensible space.

Today’s new set of threats from within the public realm initially led to public outrage at landscapes littered by crude profusions of hardened planters, concrete barriers, and seemingly random acts of bollarding. This too has led in many places to more considered and considerate efforts to produce a public realm that is both secure and attractive.

The recent transformation of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, now reopened to pedestrians, stands as perhaps the most successful resolution of a difficult set of problems. The new design is closed to vehicles, thereby rendering the casual notion of a “1600 Pennsylvania Avenue” address little more than a quaint vestige of a more open era—not unlike the locked-gate fate of London’s 10 Downing Street. Nonetheless, restoring public access to the perimeter of the White House grounds is surely a welcome development, and has been designed to accommodate a future transit Circulator, as well.

More generally, the National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan, developed by the National Capital Planning Commission in 2002, is an exemplary effort to marry increased security and improved design. But it is also a reminder about the great expense of such planning, and it so far stands out as an exception.³ Elsewhere, unfortunately, planners and designers have all too often been defeated by the temptation to construct what may be called the securescape—the uneasy confluence of security, landscape, and escape from public contact.

At a time when urban designers across the globe are seeking ways to retrofit massive modernist superblocks, often by reintroducing the finer-grained networks of premodern streets, the tenets of the securescape work in precisely the opposite direction. Urban designers extol mixed-use developments with street-level retail and enhanced pedestrian connectivity; but the pressures of the securescape push toward street closures, enhanced setbacks, and strict design guidelines for types of buildings that are considered most vulnerable.

Both the public and the design community cheered when the plan for redeveloping the World Trade Center site called for opening up the broad boulevard of West Street. But somehow the glaring disconnect revealed by the close connection between this road and the gleaming glass target of the Freedom Tower on its eastern flank was lost on those who moved forward with the design. Only in April 2005—a year and a half after the plans were unveiled—did such “security concerns” surface publicly, calling many

Conflicting values in the twenty-first-century city. Photo by author.





aspects of the chosen design into question. Soon afterwards, yet another building proposal emerged—an impenetrable tower base that signaled fortress far more than freedom.

New Urbanists and old urbanists alike call for eliminating wasteful and unsightly surface parking lots, and advocate hiding cars in lots beneath buildings or in the center of blocks; yet the impulses of the securescape work exactly against this too. A parked van submerged beneath a building is an unacceptable risk.

Similarly, the “rediscovery of the street” has often entailed a new appreciation of the value of a line of parallel-parked cars as a means to buffer and protect pedestrians from the rush of ongoing traffic, and “traffic-calming” measures have narrowed streets to accommodate a combination of such parking spaces and widened sidewalks and tree-graced allées. Yet, here too securescape advocates view cars as incendiary devices, and 50-foot setbacks are anathema to efforts to create, revive, or retain vital retail strips.

Closed Circuit TV monitoring is a common feature of public space in London.
Photo by author.

Perhaps the most far-reaching effects of security-conscious design on public space are those attempts to impose new urbanistic standards that apply to whole classes of buildings rather than to particular single sites. If the major threat is considered to be a car bomb, the response may be to increase “stand-off” distance between buildings and vehicles. If the 50-foot setback becomes ubiquitous, however, this risks undoing decades of efforts to retrofit the alienating streetlessness of the modernist superblock.

It is not surprising that the U.S. Department of Defense would issue guidelines specifying setbacks of at least 82 feet for all facilities that it owns or leases, but it is less obvious why other, less risk-prone facilities should have to recede (or secede) from the public realm. What happens as other public and private institutions, fearing either attack or seeking to limit financial liability for what such an attack could wreak, also choose to seek comfort in the securescape?

Will security considerations delimit basic architectural devices such as the roadside cantilever? Rem Koolhaas’s celebrated Seattle Public Library and Boston’s planned Institute for Contemporary Art (designed by Diller and Scofidio) both feature dramatic overhangs that maximize both visual drama and vulnerability to concentrated blast waves. Similarly, C-shaped open courtyards, such as at the Louvre and other less majestic creations, also are vulnerable to explosives. And, for those who really want to do the calculations, the physics of bombs and bodies suggest that a detonated box truck with 5,000 pounds of TNT generates sufficient atmospheric overpressure to cause certain death at 100 feet, not just 50.⁴

As the dictates of the securescape become established in residential housing markets, private developers may feel at a disadvantage if they do not provide the same outward trappings of secured perimeters as their competitors. And as sealed residential developments congeal into a network of secured pods, the spaces between walls (formerly called streets) increasingly must fight for life and livelihood. Gated housing estates for the rising middle class in China mimic not just the walls, gates, and private security forces of their Western counterparts, but sometimes take the military metaphor quite literally, with small battalions of security officers marching in formation through landscaped tot lots.

Security and Democratic Space

In the United States, the epicenter of the securescape remains Washington, D.C. Fortunately, given the symbolic importance and touristic centrality of so many treasured monuments, Washington is also the place where the



most sustained and serious thought (and the most sustained and serious spending) has been dedicated to finding ways to combine protection of buildings with efforts to introduce quality design. In the best instances—such as the proposal for subtle interlocking oval plinths to replace the ring of Jersey barriers around the Washington Monument—designers have acted both unobtrusively and sensitively, providing not just a coping mechanism but an improvement to the landscape.

In other instances the demonstrable need to achieve greater levels of security yields more mixed results. At the U.S. Capitol, for instance, visitors can no longer ascend steps and pass through the east portal to reach the grand rotunda. Instead, with the enormous new visitor's center that has been excavated into the Olmsted landscape opposite the east Capitol front, they will descend underground at considerable distance from the Neoclassical portal that welcomed entry in the past. Now, safely detached, they can be more securely processed, organized into groups, and given a systematic education about the importance of the U.S. Congress and its imposing home. There is much to be gained by this, but what is lost is the experience of entering a building in the normal manner, using an entrance once carefully designed to convey that this monument to democracy was indeed open and accessible to all (or at least all who did not need a wheelchair). Now, instead of entering a building, visitors will be subjected to an orchestrated experience—perhaps a much more enriched one—but inevitably a different one.

A security-driven urban aesthetic of “stand-off” setbacks changes the boundary between public and private space,

and it alters the relationships among streets, sidewalks and facades. It changes the way that buildings are seen and the way that they are entered. It can even change the sequence with which they are experienced. Thus the setback may affect the sense of welcome that the institution conveys, and it may result in subtle changes of attitude on the part of the visitor. For example, a building with multiple entrances conveys a different hierarchy than a complex that must be accessed through a single secure portal, let alone one that is first entered below ground. On the positive side, buildings designed to have a single securable entrance will need also make such an entrance accessible to visitors with disabilities, thereby eliminating the two-class system of access that currently remains prevalent.

Other concerns remain, however, as more and more buildings—and building types—come to be seen as potential targets for attack. Eventually, the daily experiences of urban life may become attenuated by the pauses at building perimeters, and more and more places may become places of secured sanctuary, detached and edited from the flows of open accessibility.

Furthermore, all too often, “securing public space” means securing space from the public, rather than for it. And it may mean that both public and private realms now face the prospect of ubiquitous new forms of surveillance. Intended to protect and reassure, such monitoring may also threaten the role of the city as an active and unpredictable social space of encounter.

Random acts of bollarding in London and Washington, D.C., Photos by author.

Sensors and Censors: Surveillance and Freedom in the Wired City

The gradual incursion of technology into the monitoring of public places has been accompanied by dramatic increases in privatized security.

Increasingly, cities have been secured by private police forces supported by corporations or private owners rather than by regular police. To some, this is an invidious “privatization of public space.” The rapid proliferation and global spread of corporate plazas and shopping malls over the last four decades are but the most visible dimensions of these trends.

At the same time, public spaces (such as traffic intersections and sidewalks) have increasingly taken on the sorts of camera-based surveillance arrays long present in privately owned places. Vast networks of CCTV cameras now scan public life in cities and towns throughout the United Kingdom, and are a growing presence in many other places as well. Such surveillance systems are deliberately visible, since the cameras themselves are meant to deter misbehavior, criminal or otherwise. Having noted the presence of a camera, the calculus of risk of capture and prosecution is altered. But such deterrence is scaled to the purse snatcher—not the suicide bomber, who is immune to such concerns. When terrorists struck London’s transit system in the summer of 2005, the camera network greatly facilitated efforts to track the perpetrators—but only after the fact.

Decisions about how to secure cities inevitably are implicit or explicit responses to particular perceived threats. Often, the design response comes in delayed reaction to whatever major security lapse has occurred in some other place. An attack on an embassy, a truck bomb in Oklahoma City, an explosion outside a Balinese nightclub, a terrorist act in Manchester, a teen gunman in an isolated high school—each generates an urbanistic response, often in highly distant locales.

Some cities are certainly much more vulnerable than others, especially if they hold headquarters of controversial organizations, subject to impassioned protest or simmering contempt. But making sense of a landscape of risks generally entails an ethics of urban intervention, according to which designers and planners must reflect on their practice and the value systems that drive it. Every decision about bollard intervals, hardened benches, strategic plinths, stand-off dimensions, community gates, CCTV cameras, rerouted traffic, private police forces, racial profiling, privacy policy, and prison construction is taken in relation to judgments about terrorist risk, impact on the global capitalist economy, media coverage, and political will.

Those who care about quality places and sustained civic participation in public life must recognize the imperative to address the urban fear that comes from perceived threats to security. But boundaries also new to be set on the technologies of control and regulation. Ultimately, the challenge for designers, planners, and those who commission them is to strike a balance between the risks of insecurity and the risks of a diminished public life.

Notes

1. Two edited books provide an excellent start on the analysis of security-obsessed designed environments, and begin to provide guidance to designers and planners: Nan Ellin, ed., *Architecture of Fear* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997); and Stephen Graham, ed., *Cities, War, and Terrorism: Towards an Urban Geopolitics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004). Various professional societies and government agencies have also issued recent manuals dealing with security issues in the built environment. See, for example, Joseph A Demkin, ed., *Security Planning and Design: A Guide for Architects and Building Design Professionals* (New York: Wiley, 2004); and Federal Emergency Management Agency, *Reference Manual to Mitigate Potential Terrorist Attacks Against Buildings* (2003) (www.fema.gov). In 2004 the American Society of Landscape Architects organized a symposium on “Safe Spaces: Designing for Security and Civic Values.” The American Planning Association’s *Planning* magazine entitled its June 2005 issue “Safe Growth America.”
2. See, for example, Timothy D. Crowe, *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* (Stoneham, MA: National Crime Prevention Institute/Butterworth-Heinemann, 1991); Oscar Newman, *Defensible Space: Crime Prevention Through Urban Design* (New York: Macmillan, 1972); Oscar Newman, *Design Guidelines for Creating Defensible Space* (Washington, D.C.: Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, April 1976); Gerda Wekerle and Carolyn Whitzman, *Safe Cities: Guidelines for Planning, Design, and Management* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1995); Al Zelinka and Dean Brennan, *SafeScape: Creating Safer, More Liveable Communities Through Planning and Design* (American Planning Association, Planners Press, 2001); and Leonard J. Hopper and Martha J. Droge, *Security and Site Design: a Landscape Architectural Approach to analysis, Assessment, and Design Implementation* (New York: Wiley, 2005).
3. National Capital Planning Commission, *National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan* (Washington, D.C., October 2002).
4. Demkin, ed., *Security Planning and Design*, p. 29.

Call for Submissions: Ninth Annual EDRA/*Places* Awards

Places and the Environmental Design Research Association announce the ninth annual EDRA/*Places* Awards for Place Design, Planning and Research. We seek entries of exemplary work from practitioners and researchers in any environmental design or related discipline.

The deadline for entries for the 2006 EDRA/*Places* Awards is February 7, 2006. The awards jury will be held February 25/26 at Washington State University, Spokane, with winners announced the week following. Official presentations will be made at the EDRA annual conference in Atlanta, GA, May 3-7. Winning projects and commentary will be published in the Summer 2006 issue of *Places*.

The Program

The EDRA/*Places* Awards are unique among the programs that recognize professional and scholarly excellence in environmental design. The program is distinguished by its interdisciplinary focus, its concern for human factors in the design of the built environment, and its commitment to promoting links between design research and practice.

We invite participation from the full breadth of environmental design and related social science activity, including architecture, landscape architecture, planning, urban design, interior design, lighting design, graphic design, environmental psychology, sociology, anthropology and geography.

Each year *Places* and EDRA assemble a jury with diverse backgrounds in design, research, teaching and practice. The jury evaluates how each project, no matter what the discipline, addresses the human experience of well-designed places. Special attention is paid to the transferability of research about human experience of place into design and planning practice. The jury selects six winners from three categories: place design, place planning, and place research.

In addition to the 2005 winners appearing in this issue, past winners have appeared in *Places* 12.1, 13.1, 14.1, 15.1, 16.1, and 16.3. For more information about the awards program, or to obtain additional entry forms or brochures, prospective entrants are encouraged to visit www.places-journal.org and/or <http://edra.org>.

Submissions are accepted in the following categories:

Place Research. All types of research about the design and use of places can be entered, including (but not limited to) projects that document the form or perception of places or landscapes; evaluate the use or management of recent projects or established settings; or provide background for specific designs or plans.

Place Planning. Any plan that makes proposals for the future use, management or design of a place can be entered—including master plans, specific plans or elements, management plans, vision documents, or charrette proposals. Plans must have been sponsored by an organized entity (such as a public agency, community group, or private business or institution), though they need not have received official approval.

Place Design. Any design project completed within the last five years (but long enough to assess how well it functions for its users) can be entered. Projects can consist of individual structures, spaces or elements, or groups that work together as a unit. They can involve the design of something new or the reuse of existing resources. The scale may be large or small.

2006 Jury

Sherry Ahrentzen, Arizona State University
Robert Hull, Miller/Hull Partnership
Ilze Jones, Jones and Jones
Douglas Kelbaugh, University of Michigan
Marcia McNally, Community Development by Design

Please send entries to:

2006 EDRA/*Places* Awards
c/o Kristie Wardrop
Interdisciplinary Design Institute
Washington State University—Spokane
412 E. Spokane Falls Boulevard
Spokane, WA, 99202
509.358.7920
design@wsu.edu

**The postmark deadline for submissions
is February 7, 2006.**

Iqaluit Core Area and Capital District Redevelopment Plan—Nunavut, Canada

Office for Urbanism, FoTenn, Laird & Associates, and the City of Iqaluit



There is a certain degree of fashion today associated with harsh, hard-to-get-to landscapes. With scenic, easily accessible locations filling rapidly with retirees, lifestyle transplants, and Richard Florida’s “creative class,” it can seem as if the gentle and reposeful landscapes romanticized in centuries past are now as passé as the strip mall.¹ This may be why in locations such as the Mountain West, inacces-

The stark, often beautiful Arctic landscape provides the setting for the City of Iqaluit, capital of Canada’s Nunavut Province.

sibility has become a selling point to the very rich, and why a full-page article in the “House & Home” section of *The New York Times* even celebrated life amid the still-forming lava fields of Hawaii.²

Yet as activists, writers and researchers from Edward Abbey to Marc Reisner have pointed out, choosing to live in a harsh climate requires more than rhetoric and fashion sense.³ At some point, sumptuous travel literature and modish design photography must be set aside, and the difficult business begins of figuring out how, exactly, twenty-

Iqaluit Core Area and Capital District Plan—Jury Comments

Harris: I thought this was really kind of astounding. It’s the commission you ought to turn down because it’s so challenging. When you first go to the site you would be in such despair I don’t know how you would continue. And it involves the toughest kind of questions about how a community that doesn’t have

any kind of town background is now forced to be in a town. It’s very serious and tough work.

Vale: I thought this was a fascinating commission. It’s because Nunavut was named a province that you need to have a provincial capital, which means you have to deal with things like ceremonial visits of the queen,

and you need to think through what it means to have a kind of formal and hierarchical built environment.

My sense was that the consultants were engaging with those kinds of social and cultural issues in a pretty sensitive way. And they realized that the alternative was to just have the buildings sprawl randomly out into



first-century human beings can occupy such unforgiving, isolated landscapes.

It is at this edge of experience that the Iqaluit Core Area and Capital District Redevelopment Plan attempts to mesh not fashion with rhetoric, but noble societal hopes with the most challenging of physical realities. Its authors take what have become standard planning goals—sustainability, walkability, mixed-use, cultural awareness, sense of place—and find ways to make them work in the tundra-wrapped Arctic capital of Canada’s newest territory, Nunavut.

Nunavut

On April 1, 1999, the Territory of Nunavut officially came into being. Located in the vast portion of Canada referred to by many as simply “the North,” it covers two million square kilometers (approximately 772,200 square miles) and spans three time zones. Approaching three times the size of Texas, Nunavut encompasses one-fifth the geographic area of a nation that is itself the second largest on earth. This expanse is home to only one person per 70 square kilometers (27 square miles), and none of its 26

communities are accessible by road or rail.

By most any standard, Nunavut’s climate qualifies as harsh. With some 60 percent of its land above the Arctic Circle, temperatures routinely drop well below those in southern Canada, and the sun disappears nearly completely for a month or more in winter. More surprisingly, Nunavut rivals the American Southwest for lack of precipitation.⁴

It is not just its climate and scale that make Nunavut unique, however. For centuries this part of North America has been home to the Inuit peoples, who provide “the foundation of the Territory’s culture.”⁵ As a result, Nunavut’s particular blend of modern and traditional is evident in a “Consensus Government,” which combines the values of Canadian parliamentary democracy with “Aboriginal values of maximum cooperation, effective use of leadership resources, and common accountability.”⁶

Left: Walkability is a key design concept intended to preserve indigenous values and protect the fragile landscape.

Right: Circulation patterns take into account the importance of snowmobile usage during the winter months.

the tundra, and that would cause people to lose the pedestrian-oriented lifestyle they have. So, if you are going to have a city at all, it made more sense to have one where people continue to walk. I only wish they had engaged some of the issues of what it means to be a capital city.

Brager: The more I looked at it, the more impressed

I was with what they did. I’m wondering how reproducible it is though, and whether it has impact beyond their community. It didn’t seem to have much research.

Harris: I’d say there are two kinds research—one about the traditions and culture of the people and that extraordinary transition which is occurring for them;

also about the fundamental ecological conditions. The plan appears to be responsive to both of those—trying to figure out how to maintain, within a town, some of the opportunities that have been enjoyed in a more nomadic way of life, and also how to contain the growth so it doesn’t sprawl out into the tundra. There are other things that people have done forever that are



Iqaluit

Nunavut's capital city, Iqaluit, was originally founded in 1955 as the settlement of Frobisher Bay. Located on the southern end of Baffin Island at the mouth of the Sylvia Grinnell River, it has been an administrative center for the Eastern Arctic since the early 1960s. Today, as the location of the Territorial Assembly, it is home to more than 6,000 residents.

As the Core Area and Capital District Redevelopment Plan makes clear, Iqaluit is a community with both great potential and formidable challenges. A seat of government, the city is expected to embody a certain symbolism. It is also an increasingly popular gateway to recreational use of the Arctic. Yet, because of its history and isolation, it has had difficulty fulfilling either its symbolic or recreational functions.

Despite having no overland connections to other communities Iqaluit now has a 20 percent growth rate. This has brought the beginnings of traffic congestion, sprawl, and that ill-defined, but still disquieting, problem of "placelessness." As Michèle Bertol, Iqaluit's Director of Planning and Lands, sums up the situation, "Iqaluit is at a crossroads."

It was under these conditions that Iqaluit sought the services of a consultant team composed of the Office for Urbanism, the planning firm FoTenn, and landscape architects Laird & Associates to create a new vision for its Core Area—its functional heart—and that portion of it that serves as its Capital District.

Panoramic view of the City of Iqaluit. The setting of Iqaluit is so challenging one juror commented that working there might be an example of "the commission you ought to turn down."

Blending Traditions

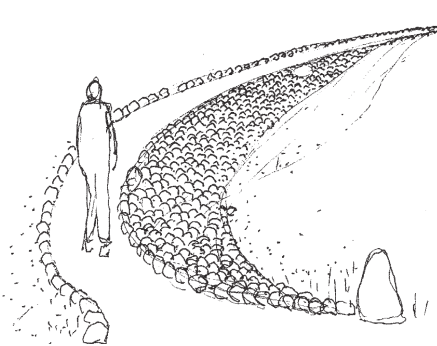
According to Bertol, it is difficult to find a single planning model that meets the challenges of a location that can to outsiders seem like "another world." Bertol, who arrived there from Montreal in 1994, has developed a close knowledge of a landscape that most Americans, and even many Canadians, only know through television and film.

Pamela Sweet, Vice President at FoTenn, believes that a key to the success of her firm's Iqaluit work has been the ability to blend the best practices and ideals of the south of Canada with those of the North. This process began with an very successful stage of citizen involvement. In Iqaluit, Sweet says, the people showed up in greater numbers than could have been hoped for in similar-sized communities in the rest of the country. But the team also sought to establish more traditional cultural channels by consulting with town Elders. A key part of the political process in any Inuit community, such interactions soon shed light not only on community history, but on the needs of those for whom issues of physical access are key.

Simultaneously, elected officials and stakeholders were also drawn into a process emblematic of "consensus government," with the result being six guiding principles:

- A city designed for its people, and designed to inspire.
- Redevelopment focused on the core.
- More housing in the Core Area + Capital District.
- Public places that respect the Arctic environment and the Inuit heritage.
- A walkable Arctic city.
- A Capital District that represents all of Nunavut.

Pedestrian walkways, pathways and trails can be defined with the use of materials that are natural to Iqaluit. Rocks are customarily employed to define the edges of walking trails, allowing the tundra to regenerate in the protected side.



One can see a number of contemporary planning themes within these guiding principles: sustainability, walkability, mixed-use, cultural awareness, and sense of place. This is not that different from what one might find in planning documents in southern Canada or the United States. Iqaluit, however, is a long way from Toronto or Seaside, Florida. For example, how does one respect the landscape in a location where, as the plan notes, even basic services must be provided in ways that are often “expensive, intensive, and damaging in their own right?” How does one achieve the goal of greater density and mixed-use when the community is surrounded by vast expanses of open land?

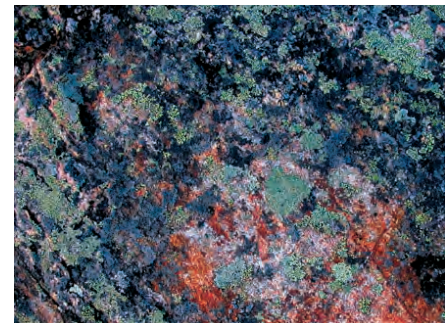
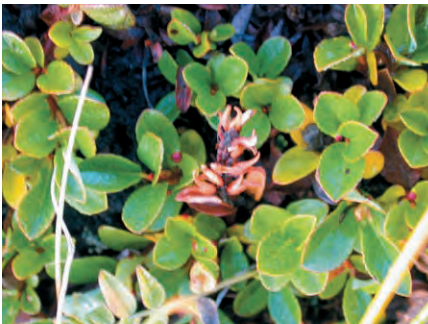
A New Kind of City

To achieve its purposes, the plan calls for many of the same design features one might expect in a capital city, north or south: public spaces for gatherings of territorial significance, a square for people of the city itself, and new roadways that can one day be transformed into grand boulevards. Other elements emerged from a blending of more typical planning ideals with local environmental demands and cultural needs.

One such aspect is the way walkability is addressed. In the Arctic, darkness and drifting snow frequently obscure where a road ends and a sidewalk begins. As a solution, the plan proposes a series of vertical elements, such as lights, signs, and (along paths) rock borders, to assist pedestrians. It also makes provision not just for automobiles, but for



The tundra is a rich, diversified environment that is extremely sensitive. It must be protected in the Core Area to regenerate. A healthy tundra will help hold dust down, and be a more pleasing environment.



snowmobiles and ATVs—essential forms of transportation in the North.

To residents of New York or California, walkability and a harsh Arctic environment may seem to be strange

bedfellows. But the larger, underlying goal of creating a distinctly Inuit city is in many ways even more paradoxical. The Inuit have traditionally been a nomadic people. According to Bertol, one of the key questions that had to

in there. They talk about the capital. I didn't see what it could be or what it was. But it was remarkable to even begin thinking about how to make a memorable place and a place of culture against that landscape.

Vale: The question is whether this is a preliminary planning study that would be followed by having a new

urban design consultant or even a competition for a precinct or something like that. We would probably be even less happy if they had proposed some designs. I take the argument that it's not what you would immediately jump to as replicable, because it's such an extreme site in every sense of that term. On the

other hand, precisely because it's so extreme it seems to demand a sensitivity to the character of its place that makes it compelling.

Harris: There's a kind of professional responsibility of performance that I thought was really remarkable. It reminds me of an experience I've had, and I'm sure

According to Bertol, one of the key questions that had to be answered in the plan was how to create an urban fabric that would express the an historically non-urban people. such a people—and how to do this in such an environmentally sensitive landscape.

One solution involves maintaining links to outdoor life, such as a public waterfront, natural areas, and trails. Sweet says many residents also asked that the town environment reflect the nature of the surrounding landscape. They wanted “wide open spaces,” an absence of fences, housing units with their own private entries, and unobstructed views of the shoreline. The communal nature of property ownership was also taken into account, as were existing paths across undeveloped parcels of land.

The final framework for the Core Area of Iqaluit also provides design standards and park allocations that balance the new goal of mixed-use density with older cultural traditions of the Inuit. It also makes proposals for new sites and programs of public art and ways to encourage preservation of the fragile surrounding environment.

From Iqaluit to the World

Today the plan is already being implemented. As Bertol notes, “We weren’t just looking for a feather to put in our cap.” Many of its proposed new crosswalks and walking paths are being built this year, and a new square is already being laid out. Moreover, a large version of the illustrated plan map now hangs in the Iqaluit City Council chamber for reference whenever a development issue arises in a public meeting. Bertol says the plan is also already serving as a “springboard” for things to come.

Even more importantly, however, Bertol believes the plan is “truly a benchmark in Arctic planning.” Sweet, and her firm FoTenn, are already applying what they have learned in Iqaluit to other communities in the North.

The expansive Arctic may one day be described in the pages of *The New York Times* with the same words of familiar, knowable romance used to describe the Arizona desert

and the lava fields of Hawaii. But perhaps it is good that this has not happened yet. For now, it is the love of the Inuit themselves for their Northern landscape, and the desire to build a functioning, noble capital there, that allows real solutions, real planning, to take place. From this process comes a document that holds lessons, not just for Arctic communities, but for any built environment in transition, and any location where the goals of great place-making must meet needs of great landscapes and great peoples.

—Jason Alexander Hayter

Notes

1. Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class and How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).
2. In *True West: Authentic Development Patterns for Small Towns and Rural Areas* (Chicago, IL: Planners Press, 2003), Christopher J. Duerksen and James van Hemert noted that “some land in the mountains is being marketed for sale as getaways for the ultra-rich who can arrive by helicopter or snowmobiles.” In “With Vulcan as My Landscaper,” *The New York Times*, June 30, 2005, p.D1, Patricia Leigh Brown observed that today “intrepid pioneers are romancing lava, the more rugged and foreboding the better.”
3. See, for example, Edward Abbey, *Desert Solitaire: A Season in the Wilderness* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1968); and Marc Reisner, *Cadillac Desert: The American West and Its Disappearing Water* (USA: Penguin Books, 1993). Reisner famously claimed that to “really experience the desert you have to march right into its white bowl of sky and shape-contorting heat with your mind on your canteen as if it were your last gallon of gas and you were being chased by a carload of escaped murderers.”
4. Further information can be found at the City of Iqaluit website, www.city.iqaluit.nu.ca; the website for the Territory of Nunavut, www.gov.nu.ca; and the Nunavut Tourism website, www.NunavutTourism.com.
5. Government of Nunavut, “Our Land,” from www.gov.nu.ca.
6. Government of Nunavut, “Consensus Government,” from www.gov.nu.ca.

All images courtesy of the City of Iqaluit.

you have too, working in a neighborhood and asking people what they really prize, and they're suddenly telling you about a taco stand which turns out to be the community meeting place where important things happen. There's no way to know that except through them. And I think these guys did that in that town.

These don't seem like landmarks. That doesn't matter, does it? It does to them.

Hardy: It really is getting to the essentials, what determines the identity of a place. Could its inclusion force people to think about what we've been discussing, and if so, wouldn't that be valid? In other

words, it would be somewhat startling. It's an award that would create what we are after. Whereas if you ignore it, it's ignored.

Harris: Yes, how could they have chosen a place like that? There are no trees, no coffee tables out on the sidewalk.

Afghanistan Over Time

Photographs by Edward Grazda

A “place” can be a structure on a site; alternatively, it can be a region, even a nation. Glimpses of people on the move can form part of our sense of a place, as can evidence of change over time. The proportions of these ingredients can vary widely with circumstances.

The photographer Ed Grazda has visited Afghanistan and described it with his camera periodically during the last twenty-five years. During the Soviet occupation in the 1980s, on foot and over mountainous terrain, he accompanied Afghan *mujabideen* whose purpose was to “ambush tank and truck convoys. They also [blew] up the electric power transmission towers to Kabul.” His pictures then were mostly of the men he was with in the landscapes they were crossing.

After the departure of the Russians, Ed made repeated visits to cities. Eventually the Taliban, coming to power, banned the photography of people, and a Grazda picture of a disapproving Taliban in 1997 was featured on the cover of Ed’s *Afghanistan Diary: 1992–2000*. The banning and the fact that he was less constantly on the move are presumably the reasons he turned more of his attention to structures.

The first two pictures reproduced here show a Kabul building in 1992 and in 2004—mostly there in the first picture, much destroyed in the second but with some signs of modest reconstruction.

The subsequent pictures are of a wall in the same city. Ed writes, “I first photographed the wall near the Ministry of the Interior with the map of Afghanistan and the soldier painted on it in 1992 just as the civil war was starting in Kabul. By December 2001 the wall had deteriorated—the map and the soldier were almost gone. By January 2004 the wall was painted over and the ‘new’ Kabul—SUVs, cell phones and suits—was starting to emerge. In September 2004 the wall had become part of the entrance to a ‘Non-Governmental Organization’ (NGO), the Institute for War and Peace Reporting.”

— *Cervin Robinson*

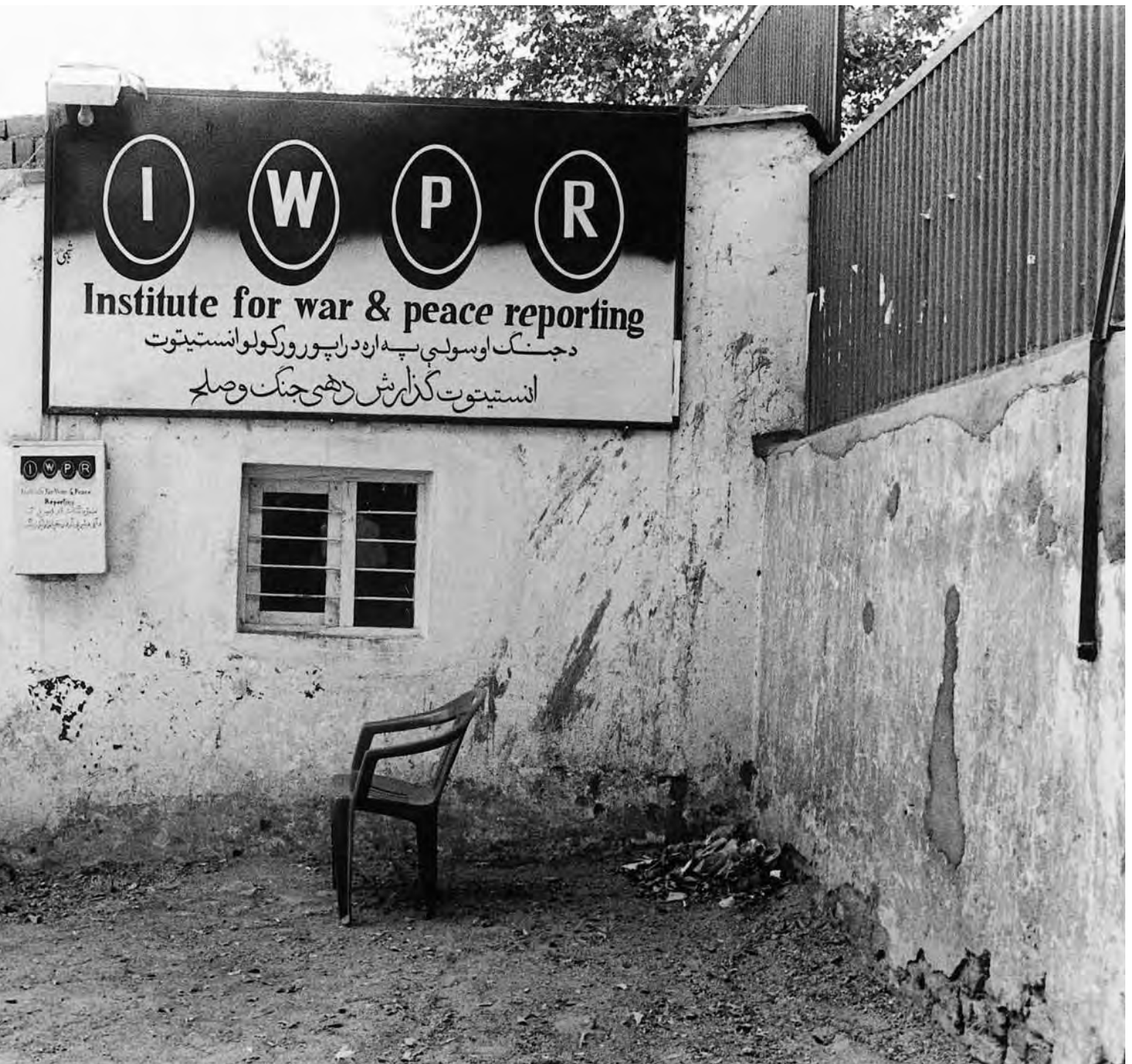












Building in San Francisco

Stanley Saitowitz

Editors Note: In Volume 1, Number 1, of Places, published in the fall of 1983, we included a text and four drawings by Stanley Saitowitz entitled "A Vision of Four Cities." Saitowitz was then newly appointed to the faculty of UC Berkeley's Department of Architecture. Recently, we invited him to reflect on how his work in San Francisco since (which has been widely published and esteemed) is related to those drawings and their insights.

It was not easy for me to transplant myself to the diversity and dispersion of the American melting pot from a culture as rich and unique as South Africa. In South Africa, pressing social issues gave work focus, and the geography and landscape had become deeply embedded in my being. It was especially difficult to find a new sense of place in America, where there was only a marginal tradition of Modern architecture, a tradition in which I had been intensely schooled. My education had coincided with the rejection of the abstract universality of the early Modern Movement. Our heroes were the members of Team X, who had shifted architectural ideology from "space" to "place," from "time" to "occasion."

In South Africa, Bernard Rudofsky's *Architecture without Architects* had shown me a path to the vernacular homesteads of the N'debelle tribe of the Highveld, and they had become my model for new building designs in the Transvaal. But when I set out to follow this method of vernacular investigation as a graduate student in California, I struggled at first to find a footing. I had no way to appreciate the local obsession with Victorian architecture, which seemed such a misfit with the radical social values that had attracted me to the Bay Area. Such buildings also seemed uncomfortable for someone who had grown up in a modern house

I also didn't understand timber-frame buildings, having come from a culture where wood was used for furniture and fires. And I had no interest in brown shingles.

However, the dense urbanism of San Francisco was thrilling for a suburbanite, and the city's modern downtown buildings were inspiring. But mostly I was swept away by the geography, and from the first moment I saw the dry summer grasses of California, I felt I could find a home in this rolling version of veld.

The Drawings

While I was doing my Masters degree at UC Berkeley, I did not have any buildings to work on, so I began making a series of drawings to locate myself in this new environment. My first drawings of the "human geography" of my new home were about the landscape and people of Berkeley. Next, these moved across the bay to San Francisco.

Later, I did a series of portraits of what I thought of as the Family of American Cities, which described their physical and mental landscapes. Each tried to depict city form and culture to be as natural and particular as the site, the geological foundations. The subject of these drawings was the building of cities as collective intention and action in response to situation.

New York was portrayed as an assertive masculine city of towers, where the sun rises, and where every skyscraper which sticks up into the air is a microcosm of the phallic boat of land that sticks into the water—an echo of its shape. (As seen on inside front cover.)

San Francisco was portrayed as the receptive feminine city, where the sun sets, hugging the ground surrounding its hollow navel of bay, whose streets run like waterfalls over its hills, lined with shores of waving walls.

Washington was portrayed as the paternal city of authority, imported from Europe by its immigrant settlers.

Chicago was portrayed as the pioneer city of the prairie, whose grid of reason reflects in all its dimensions.

Finally, *Los Angeles* was portrayed as the playful child-city born at the end of the continent... a truly American city.

In some ways these drawings helped me define an agenda and recovery. And in particular the drawings of San Francisco, including the portrait of San Francisco as a member of the Family of Cities, became a text and prediction of work that followed.

Understanding the Place

At about the same time, I wrote an essay entitled "Bayscape: Notes on the Topographic City" about the geography and culture of San Francisco. Some extracts follow.

Topography and use are intimately connected in cities. While this quality is obvious in settlements of the ancients, it may appear neutralized in cities today, yet the siting and landscape of San Francisco is essential to its form and culture. The geological evolution provides the foundation of human habitation. Landform induces the setting for the structure and organization of the city.

The site was carved in a millennial drama of erosion and rising of water and land. Human activities today still follow the logic of water, flowing down from the hills, collecting by gravity in basins. The bay is the great navel, the stage around which the city gathers, the datum. Flat and low places are the sites of most intense human activity. Downtown, the main confluence of gathering, is on the level bayshore, mostly landfill. The flat shoreline is a circular route of least resistance, of freeway and boulevard.

Market Street, main street, is a river-



bed which ran from Twin Peaks to the flat Bayside. Polk Gulch, the valley between Nob Hill and Pacific Heights, riverbed, watering hole, now Polk Street, shopping strip, night street, hunting ground. Columbus Avenue, the valley between Telegraph and Russian Hills, the center of North Beach, is a continuous shopping and eating street which intersects with Grant Ave. and Chinatown.

The hilltops are the lookouts, castles—the higher, the richer. The contours of cars on the street are a clear graph. From VWs to BMWs, from Pontiacs to Mercedes. Rent indexes rise with height. This concurrence of geography and use gives form to building: the bay window, which looks down the river of street to the bay.

The original material for constructing the city is redwood, cut from native trees. The redwoods of Northern California grow from a core of red heartwood, by the development of concentric annular rings, as the cities ring the heart of the bay. The coastal redwoods near the ocean, and the Sierra redwoods are alike in many ways. The coastal redwoods are taller and more slender. Sierra redwoods are twice the diameter; with large limbs. The bark of the coastal redwood is less than a foot thick. The bark of the mountain redwood can be over two feet thick.

Trees are naturally a compaction of the nature of place. At the intersection of the genetic direction contained in the seed and the specific natural context, is a unique manifestation. In this way cities are like trees.

The Projects

Twenty-five years later, I have had the opportunity to realize some of these ideas about the Bay Area in buildings. These projects show the continuing search for a modern and indigenous San Francisco, a city which clings like

San Francisco as seen in the original Family of Cities map.



a net to its landscape, and which hugs the void of bay, the empty reflective center; a city which Ambrose Bierce called “a point upon a map of fog.”

First are the New Victorians, the 25-foot-wide infill buildings, mostly in the South of Market area, in a landscape of mixed building fabric, which ranges from industrial sheds to Victorian flats. These buildings aim to be continuous and build the city, to synthesize the texture of the urban fabric in a contemporary and authentic way, and to mark their own

time and place. The powerful images of San Francisco streetscape, which I drew as a shoreline of waving walls in the portrait—the repetition and variation, the rhythmic measure—these are the conditions I have tried to express as the street fronts of the buildings.

These buildings are added to the city of buildings, mostly built in the last one hundred years, often to look older than they actually are. I have used modern materials and construction as the tool to achieve a textural continuity with the found fabric,

without faking history. I have been interested in reflection, in translucency and transparency. I think about the qualities of the shiny light, the bay and fog, as the basic materials. The qualities of the portrait of San Francisco, the reflective blue, the quiet beat, the lightness, predominate in a series of buildings where glass equates with water and sky, and ground is concrete or steel.

The interior worlds aim for contemporary habitable space, with maximum openness and flexibility,



and are in every way a counterpoint to the Victorian flats of confined rooms. Their internal organization and space is closer to the industrial sheds than the Victorian houses, with compressed service cores and optimal indeterminate open floor areas, minimizing predetermined program and constraint. They aim to create the smooth open space of the bay. They always have bay windows.

1022 Natoma Street, my own building, was the first opportunity to build in San Francisco. I wanted to continue

the textural quality of the typical San Francisco Street with the projecting bay facade, but to make it with a watery palette of glass and aluminum, and to achieve the richness of ornament through construction and making visible the process of assembly, rather than applied decoration.

Fourteen years later, next door, *1028 Natoma Street* is a more modern and mute version of a San Francisco facade, expressing the need for tranquility and serenity that life in the city in this new millennium implies.



1029 Natoma Street is across the street. Here the horizontal shading fins of the south-facing bays of 1022 and 1028 are turned vertical, shading it from the hot end-of-day sun, and making the building seem upright and Victorian.

Around the corner is *9 Lafayette Street* with its opposing bays—one all clear glass for the stairs, the other etched glass for the bays.

1164 Pacific Avenue is built on a south-facing lot, and features a grating of sunshades, which hide the interior from the noise and traffic of this hilly street, yet open it to views of water in the west.

1110 Green Street is a remodel of a 1960s house which is all bay window from the outside, with a watery stairwell that brings light down, and delivers the view of the bay at the top.

Recently, it has been possible to build bigger pieces of streetscape. In

Opposite: 1028 & 1022 Natoma Street

Left: 9 Lafayette Street

Right: Project for 1164 Pacific Avenue



a transitional industrial strip at 2002 *Third Street*, a long building is articulated vertically as a series of balconies and bays, clad in alternating transparent, translucent and reflective bands.

At 855 *Folsom Street*, the ubiquitous grid that structures the city is turned vertically to construct an egg crate for

lofts, which are considered more as individual plots in the air. Each “lot” in the grid is enclosed in an entirely glass wall as it meets the city, using channel glass for the bay window, which is articulated by carving an outdoor terrace with clear glass. The bays and balconies are dispersed randomly within the vertical grid, making a texture reminiscent of the typical bay-windowed streets in older residential parts of the city, here at a new and contemporary scale in the flat



South of Market area.

When I drew the portrait of San Francisco, I was living in North Beach, and those streets of rolling bay-windowed walls climbing the hills remain an indelible image. At 855 *Folsom*, using systematic structuring and numerical construction, a rich texture, remembering the essential waving walls of San Francisco, is presented as a rational and economical modern building.

1601 *Larkin Street* is a new building in the original city fabric, and here the challenge is to bring the rational methods of contemporary building production and larger scale to this neighborhood of individual wooden Victorians. Some day, when the frail wooden buildings are gone, could this building continue the spirit of San Francisco?

Cities also have buildings which are exceptional, and whose context is defined by the family of exceptional buildings. Religious structures belong to this type. Their role is to be fabric

Left: 1110 Green Street

Right: 1110 Green Street (interior)

Opposite: Project for 1601 Larkin Street



Design Principles

As a conclusion, I offer a summary of five interests which drive my projects today—projects which in many cases emanated from drawings done many years ago to capture the spirit of San Francisco. Perhaps, some years in the future, the editors of *Places* will again ask me to revisit these pages to reexamine these five interests. Again I may be able to show how buildings always emerge from ideas, however fragile and tentative.

Time and Place. Each building begins with the site and the particular desires to transform it. Buildings are earth, made of matter, and a continuation of the geological processes that produced their sites—a part of natural evolution. A building marks and amplifies its unique spot on the globe. Like a lens, it brings to focus its particular time and place.

Space. The essential medium of architecture is space—air, rather than substance, matter which contains the emptiness. Architecture is

the construction of charged voids, frames of opportunity, fields of possibility. I am interested in space, more than meaning; in the architecture of movement and flux, of time and event, rather than object and monument. I am interested in the emptiness that material constructs. I am interested in the invisible.

Material. In the search for the authentic over the image, the actual materials and systems of assembly, the process of construction, become the aesthetic. I want to make objects that expose their cause, buildings that are perceptual process. I like to think of construction as growth—not an idealized form, but the actual performing of the work made precious. I think less about architecture as an art of the visual, than architecture as cooking, or as haptic experience. I make buildings by the gathering and assembly of ingredients. The plan is the recipe.

System. The generative ideas of Modern architecture emerge from a consideration of buildings as systems, related to machines, or

natural organisms, or the phenomena of the city. I am interested in similarity and dissimilarity, in relations of relations, in theme and variation, order and accommodation. I search for the highest common denominator to establish the field of operation as a framework of unity and a panorama of resistance.

Number is the means to construct system. Number is the essence by which things perceived by the senses are dematerialized and liberated from contradictions. Number makes a unity of multiplicity.

Instrument. I am interested in buildings as apparatus rather than object, as instrument rather than monument. I think of architecture as support for human events, more like a camera than a photograph, more like a telephone than a conversation. I am interested in generosity and opportunity rather than program and stasis. I have always resisted the idea of programming as authoritarian, and aim instead for constructed freedom.





and monument simultaneously, to be both continuous and iconic. *Beth Sholom Synagogue* is such a project. It is a space for gathering and worship, and the vessel, which holds the community, is a piece of topography like the hills of San Francisco. At the lowest

point, the valley, the service is conducted from the bimah in the center.

Years ago, I drew the section from Russian Hill through Columbus Avenue, the gathering street in the valley, to Telegraph Hill. Beth Sholom has the same section.

All images courtesy of Saitowitz/Natoma Architects, Inc.

Top: Project for Beth Sholom Synagogue
Bottom: Beth Sholom Synagogue (interior)
Opposite: 855 Folsom Street
Opposite (inset): 855 Folsom Street

Gateways Work Both Ways

Nicholas Howe



David Dixon’s “Campus Partners and The Ohio State University: Transforming a Failing Commercial District” (*Places*, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 46-49) raises some pressing questions about site use and symbolic intent without, I think, addressing them adequately. Having taught at OSU from 1991-2003, I read his article with great interest and looked forward to

visiting the project for myself when I returned to Columbus. I spent a quiet Sunday morning in May wandering around the site while it was still very much under construction. What follows are my impressions of a not-yet-completed project, and should be read as such.

To understand the “Gateway Center” it helps to know that the

main campus of the Ohio State University is built on the western edge of High Street, the spine that runs north-south through Columbus and provides a sense of orientation

Buildings on the west side of High Street between 10th and 11th Streets, since demolished (2003). Photo by the author.



for the city. The northern edge of the campus blends into a residential neighborhood of early-twentieth-century houses with little demarcation other than a simple sign for the university. The scale of commercial buildings on the east side of High Street across from the campus is modest and makes for a subtle transition from city neighborhood to tree-lined campus.

The new Gateway Center on the southern edge of the campus, by contrast, sharply demarcates the line between the university and the surrounding neighborhood of one- and two-family homes as well as small apartment buildings occupied chiefly by students and the economically marginal. In the years before the Gateway Center was proposed, this area had become far less attractive than the north side of campus. Many build-

ings were in disrepair, the crime rate was higher (or at least the crimes that occurred there got far more attention), and the population was more transient and less affluent. The annual readers' poll of *Columbus Monthly* regularly voted a Middle Eastern eatery in this area as winner in the category "Best Restaurant, Worst Neighborhood." The area had numerous bars popular with students—places that stank of stale beer even from the outside, and that inside had tables bolted to the floor to prevent their use as weapons during fights. On weekends, the Columbus police would be out in force, and a wire cable would be stretched chest-high across the utility poles on the sidewalk to keep drunken patrons from rushing into the busy traffic on High Street. Many of the buildings there were undistinguished, though some had a forthright dignity that merited reuse rather than the demolition they suffered in 2002.

The need for renovation acknowledged, one can still observe that the Gateway Center looks like nothing

so much as an office development of the sort found along highways ringing the far suburbs of American cities. Its design and scale suggest buildings set down in what were until yesterday agricultural fields rather than a project that acknowledges its own potentially intrusive presence in an urban area with a complex history and population. The most obvious feature of the Gateway Center is that it announces itself as a barrier: it is built right up to the sidewalk with few setbacks or nooks and crannies for human use of a sort that the OSU campus has in abundance. Unlike the campus, the Gateway Center does not seem meant to encourage strolling, sitting, or those chance encounters that characterize a flourishing university. In the current vernacular, it looks far more "corporate" than "academic."

The images in Dixon's article do not reveal how awkwardly the new project fits into the neighborhood that it abuts, or even overwhelms. This is one of modest rowhouses and the like along the side streets off High Street, and fast-food restaurants along it. Perhaps the flow or transition between the Gateway Center and these residential areas will be improved over time, with plantings and other amenities to encourage neighborhood use, but right now it is hard to imagine where they will appear because the new buildings fill all of the available site. Moreover, the project is billed as a Gateway Center, when architecturally it bears little relation to what anyone passing through it will find on its far side: a Midwestern campus with (mainly) stone buildings of conservative design built around a large, central green space known as "The Oval." At one end of this space the postmodern accent of Peter Eisenman's Wexner Center shows that the campus has

Looking west along Chittenden Avenue toward High Street with Gateway Center to the south and rowhouses to the north (2005). Photo by author.

Another Echo of History

John McKean

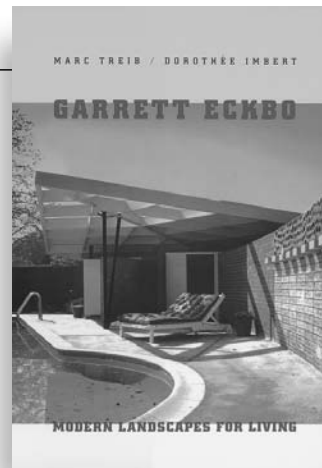
registered newer “deconstructive” architectural trends, but for the most part its central buildings are three or four stories high with broad, welcoming stairways at their fronts.

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Another Echo of History

John McKean

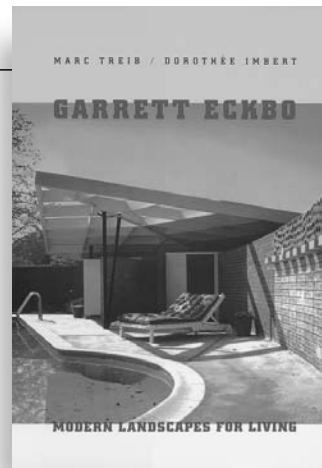
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The Romance of Abandonment: Industrial Parks

Hugh Hardy

Built largely during the Industrial Era in Europe and America, from 1850 to 1950, plants, mines, mills and factories—the now-defunct behemoths of heavy industry—processed steel, built ships, made munitions, extracted coal, generated electricity, and fashioned textiles. Dependent on reliable transportation, these small cities, their towers silhouetted along the horizon, rose on large tracts of land at seaports and along railways and rivers.

The aesthetics of these abandoned sites may seem unusual today because their building shapes were dictated by function, not conventional architectural forms. It was the machines and processes they housed that determined their configurations, molded to purposes known only to those who used them.

Often, their gigantic size and startling juxtapositions also give them a sinister beauty that speaks of prodigious human effort and material transformation wrought by great physical forces. Even silent, they resound with power. The hypnotic attraction of places like Bethlehem Steel in Pennsylvania, or the former Thyssen Steelworks in Duisburg, Germany, stems from the romance of their abandonment—the saga of what was once so mighty brought low.

The Legacy

Today the phantasmagoria of heavy industry's complex shapes and slowly decomposing profiles demands our attention. Reconstruction holds the prospect of reversing the environmental degradation with which they were often synonymous, and encouraging urban rejuvenation. There are three general determinants to success in these efforts: the nature of the reuse (what activities to include); the availability of funding; and the aesthetic approach taken. Yet each site must also be considered on its own merits. Since no two communities view conversion the same way, no two projects can achieve the same result. And because of their variety, there is no uniform method for reconstruction.

Redevelopment of such sites takes place between two extremes. One is clearing the land, using it for completely new development without reference to its industrial past; the other is preserving the total facility as a museum. In between lie a variety of approaches, incorporating many possible new uses, including housing, retail stores, offices, and entertainment venues. By appealing to multiple funding sources, redevelopers can more easily turn these places into lively environments that generate a variety of activities, yet retain much of their original character. In America such redevelopment is likely to be pursued as a profit-making venture emphasizing new private uses and

funding sources. European examples are more likely to be dependent on government funding and notions of the public good.

The Nature of Reuse

As the Duisburg project that so impressed the 2005 EDRA/*Places* jurors indicates, the idea that an old industrial site can be used as a park—a place where nature holds sway—at first seems a startling contradiction. Blast-furnace infernos have little to do with the soft enticements of a green landscape; indeed, the validity of one seems to deny the other. But municipalities are reclaiming these leftover spaces as parks all over the world, motivated sometimes by fascination with the aesthetic juxtaposition of nature and built artifacts, other times by concern about the environment.

Reclamation of industrial sites potentially holds other rewards, too. Their restoration can help fight urban sprawl. Properly conceived—as mixed-use complexes, sports centers, conference centers, museums and educational organizations, theaters, and modern business parks—they may bring healthy returns for private developers. They also may be vital to the burgeoning heritage tourism market, which captivates visitors with dramatic evidence of a work ethic that led to unimaginable wealth and power.

In other cases, however, such sites must remain as open space, future public land “waiting” until remediation processes can cleanse their soils of contaminants. Here and abroad, many former industrial sites adjacent to the communities they once created are so polluted they present a serious health hazard.

Known as “brownfields” in America, such lands are subject to federally mandated cleanup. Federal funding for such work comes with the usual bureaucratic complexities, but the economic benefits of creating new developable land can be a powerful incentive. Furthermore, all levels of government are now coming to recognize the urgency of intelligent stewardship of land. More than 40,000 brownfields in this country alone have been remediated and are now actively reused.

Funding

However fervent the motivations for development might be, numerous obstacles must be overcome before these sites can be brought back to life. In America the transformation of an industrial site often requires consensus among varied constituencies and a complex mix of funding sources. With no single source of money large enough to power such efforts, we must rely on a mix of public and private resources. As a result, the virtues of



each site—its geography, built configuration, and historic legacy—must be discovered and explained to many supporting entities, an exercise that requires a concerted effort by the surrounding community.

Securing funding also requires careful work to address issues of environmental contamination, land use, accessibility, transportation, circulation, structural maintenance, and public safety. Even if the intent is simply to clear the land to construct new mixed-use facilities or encourage new forms of manufacturing, the vast size of these places often defeats conversion efforts. For instance, the conversion of the Bethlehem Steel plant in Pennsylvania has never advanced beyond planning reports, despite attempts by government agencies, local politicians, arts administrators, philanthropists, and two large community groups.

A Diversity of Development

Sloss Furnaces, in Birmingham, Alabama, is the only twentieth-century blast furnace in the U.S. being preserved and interpreted as an historic industrial site. Established as a pig-iron factory in 1881 by James Sloss, the plant is located within a thirty-mile radius of all the ingredients needed to make iron. The population of the City of Birmingham grew rapidly in the late nineteenth century in response to the plant's expansion. But by the 1970s it had become obsolete, and was closed. In 1980, Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates completed a master plan for the redevelopment of Sloss Furnaces entitled "A Museum of Modern Times." It described the potential of the site as a home for educational, cultural and recreational programs.

Supported by public and private funding, this "museum of industry's" two four-hundred-ton blast furnaces and forty other buildings now offer a community celebration of the arts, providing insight to the city's industrial heritage. Some of Sloss's old machines and mechanical installations are now used to make metal sculptures. Its Metal Arts

Sloss Furnaces in Birmingham, Alabama. Historic photo courtesy of Sloss Furnaces.

program offers workshops, open studios, exhibitions and conferences on metal sculpture, providing residencies for mature and emerging artists. Visitors can also participate in walking tours that include the apron of the furnace, the stock trestle, and the underground railroad line. Sloss also hosts concerts and festivals.

Bethlehem Steel, in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, began as small rail-making operation in 1857 to serve the expanding railroad industry. By 1904, it had grown into one of America's largest corporations. During World War II Bethlehem Steel was the world's second largest steelmaker and employed thirty thousand people. Machine Shop #2 was



once the largest industrial building in the world. However, steady decline caused the plant to cease operations in 1995, leaving some 124 acres of buildings and brownfields. Like Birmingham, the City of Bethlehem has tried to retain its structures and equipment intact. But in redevelopment terms, that's where the resemblance ends.

Although the Smithsonian Institution originally expressed interest in creating the National Museum of Industrial History at the plant, that effort never received funding. Today, two coalitions of public and private organizations—Save our Steel and the Friends of Steel—are attempting to revive the site for a variety of activities. But it is the construction of a casino that is currently imagined as a linchpin for this effort. If that project were approved, local homeowners would see their property taxes reduced by an average of \$330 each, and the plant site would become “an eight-hundred-million-dollar retail and entertainment complex with a slots parlor, a hotel, and a renovated museum.”

Such a combination of preservation and gambling represents a new approach to industrial redevelopment, offering a financial base few other activities could guarantee. However, this proposal is stalled in the state legislature. Such an important site, with its cavernous structures and enormous potential awaits inventive solutions for mixed-use activities that can integrate new public participation with what now remains derelict.

Landschaftspark Duisburg Nord, Germany, winner of a 2005 EDRA/*Places* Design Award, is the magnificent hybrid designed by landscape architect Peter Latz, founder of Latz + Partners.



The same forces behind the thriving Sloss Furnaces conversion (and that have so far struggled to produce results at Bethlehem Steel) have led to the reuse of many of the coal-mining and steel-manufacturing sites in a 200-square-mile area of Germany bordered by the Lippe, Ruhr and Rhine rivers. Reviving these places in their entirety is a project conceived and implemented by a public-private coalition called the International Building Exhibition Emscherpark. The project is a self-described “Route of Industrial Culture,” unusual because of its regional, rather than site-specific, basis.

The most spectacular of the reclamation efforts so far has been that at Duisburg. Defying the traditional serene notion of “park,” Latz’s design juxtaposes nature with industry by transforming massive industrial objects into places of culture and recreation. It reconstitutes the original fabric in ways sympathetic to its configuration by using water to make slides, ponds, swimming pools, a diving



center, and fountains, and by using existing structures as promenades and footbridges. A hulking wall has become a rock-climbing center, and one of three gigantic blast furnaces is a concert venue. The park's vast acreage accommodates fairgrounds, children's play areas, and extensive gardens.

This is almost the ideal reuse of an industrial site, one instance when huge size (568 acres) is an advantage, and where the area's history is preserved. Also, because the land is being reclaimed slowly, the project can be funded incrementally, and its design can evolve along with the landscape. The park is free to its six hundred thousand annual visitors.

The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, better known as Mass MoCA, comprises 26 red-brick buildings and courtyards connected by bridges, viaducts, and elevated walkways. The buildings contained a variety of manufacturing processes until 1942, when Sprague Electric bought the complex to convert it into a site to design

and manufacture high-tech weapons systems, including components of the atomic bomb. By 1966, Sprague employed 4,137 people, living in a community of 18,000. But the plant closed in 1985 because of competition from lower-priced components from abroad.

Transformation of the site to an arts center began with a proposal in 1986 by Tom Krens (then Director of the Williams College of Art and currently Director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York) and has involved a \$22 million construction grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and nearly \$9.5 million in private funds for construction support. A master plan by Simeon Bruner, of Bruner Cott & Associates, was completed in 1995, and after its opening in 1999 Mass MoCA became the country's largest center for contemporary visual and performing arts. Its summer programs have brought visitors from all over the world that have revitalized the once-dormant town of North Adams.

The Chelsea High Line, in New York City, is an artifact of the railroad era, an elevated steel viaduct that threads its way down one and a half miles of lower Manhattan's far West Side. This spur line once joined freight service from New Jersey to warehouses along the east side of the Hudson River, passing over city streets and through buildings. But after the structure fell into disuse in the 1950s, nature reclaimed it as a grassy corridor, leading to current plans to redevelop it as a park.

Through a combination of public and private funding sources (chief among them the City of New York at \$15,750,000), the first section of this redevelopment is now underway, combining a striated planking system that joins planting beds and water features with seating areas, event spaces, and found objects (*Places*, Vol. 16, No. 3, pp. 4-5).

The federal government has supported the project for the past three years, and in July 2005, it granted the High Line \$18 million as part of the transportation bill approved by Congress. When complete, it will provide a linear platform from which to view the river and the surrounding city. The project's design, by James Corner's Field Operations and Diller Scofidio + Renfro, was deemed of sufficient artistic merit to be on exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in the spring of 2005.

A European precursor, almost a twin, to the High Line

Top: Climbers in the old ore bunkers at Duisburg Nord. Photo by Michael Latz.

Opposite: Views of abandoned facilities at Bethlehem Steel. Photos by Darius Aldala, courtesy of City of Bethlehem. Additional images are available at <http://www.bethlehem-pa.gov/about/imageGallery/historicalBethlehemSteel.htm>.



is the three-mile *Promenade Plantée in Paris*. It, too, was once an elevated freight railroad. But today, as redesigned by Philippe Mathieu and Jacques Vergely and rebuilt in the early 1990s, it is a planted pedestrian walkway set atop a series of masonry arches called the Viaduc des Arts. Meanwhile, empty lots alongside the promenade, which runs along a major commercial street with bus and bike lanes, have been filled in with new housing and multilevel pocket parks.

Where the Chelsea High Line will be anchored at its southern end by the new Dia Museum, the Viaduc's arches contain 45 artist studios and nine cafés. Both of these projects combine old and new, built and bucolic, commercial and cultural; both are in deeply urban environments.

A former industrial complex in North Adams now serves as the home of the Massachusetts Institute of Contemporary Art. Photo courtesy of Mass MoCA.

Aesthetics

Originally known for their fire-breathing buildings, their startling profiles, or the extent of their underground networks, industrial sites are best redeveloped when some aspect of their original character and organization is preserved to recall the forces and people that brought them into being. Beyond this, however, each of these relics was a response to specific utilitarian requirements. And since no two buildings were conceived with the same needs and each supported a different set of activities, it is impossible to adopt a single aesthetic approach to their reconstruction.

One extreme is to remove everything except the basic building structure. Demolition, however, is blunt tool, and should be employed advisedly. For instance, the Tate Modern, London, and the Dia Beacon, New York, offer visitors no clue to their original uses—a power station and a Nabisco factory, respectively. The interiors of these buildings have been stripped to provide a neutral back-

ground for the display of art. Except for moving gantries at the Tate or floor stains at the Dia, there are no visual traces of what brought these buildings into being. Their minimalist design produces large, simple volumes, but they lack identity with the industrial past, making big, but bland, places.

The other extreme is to keep everything just as it was. At Sloss Furnaces, visitors encounter the active artifacts of steel-making. Short of wearing costumes recalling the late 1800s, its organizers have left the site and its buildings intact. The complex required some editing, however, to satisfy building code and safety concerns, so that a balance could be struck between what the structures were built to do

inheritors, these developments may preserve the environment, recycle buildings, make positive contributions to urban life, strengthen community, support the arts, and retain local heritage. Depending upon their organization as profit or nonprofit ventures, they can also become a source of income for their communities. However, no single result can be identified as best.

Innovation in the reconstruction of industrial sites is sure to continue as this phenomenon is refined and better understood. The alternative, urban sprawl, creates featureless places, devoid of heritage, whose pasted-on character consists of architectural motifs found in catalogues. Like



and the education programs they now present. In fostering discovery by visitors, public circulation becomes a crucial element in their design. This literal interpretation, costumes and all, is also a popular approach in the United Kingdom.

Measuring Success

Why does reconstruction have value, and what are its long-term results? There are several ways to judge. Using correct environmental standards, returning such lands to productive use is enormously beneficial to surrounding communities. The sites' adaptation for municipal and cultural endeavors brings new life to former wastelands. Educational programs provided by museums offer insight about what these places represent and how they changed their respective societies. Turning them into parks revolutionizes urban neighborhoods, offering residents and visitors alike access to active and passive recreation.

When well-conceived by their twenty-first-century

the preservation movement before it, industrial redevelopment becomes easier to implement when its merits are understood by the public.

Although it may be paradoxical to think that explaining the past leads to innovation, numerous success stories suggest that politically broad-based solutions best serve community needs. The intelligent reuse of industrial sites can provide a genuine sense of place, one that celebrates both a rich history and an off-beat aesthetic.

In Paris, the reclamation of an abandoned rail viaduct as the Promenade Plantée served as an important precursor to New York's planned High Line. Right photo by Peter Mullan, courtesy of Friends of the High Line.

Barton Phelps, FAIA

**The American
Institute of Architects
Committee on Design**

**Design Where Place
Takes the Lead**



These Forum pages were produced under an agreement between *Places/Design History* Foundation and the American Institute of Architects. They report on the AIA Committee on Design's May 2005 Conference and Visit to Northern California. Ronnette Riley, FAIA, served as overall AIA CoD Chair in 2005. Dale Linden Turner and Donlyn Lyndon were 2005 CoD Conference Co-Chairs.

The 2006 AIA Committee on Design Conference, "The Architecture of Sustainability," will be held May 4-7, 2006, at the National Conservation Training Center, Shepherdstown, WV. It will explore the impact of sustainability on both the art of architecture and the science of building. Is sustainable design an oxymoron? What has been the impact of sustainable design on the world? What is the relationship between sustainability and form-making? What lies ahead for our profession, and what are our responsibilities as influencers of the built environment? We will examine the process of integrated design and how it makes better buildings.

For more information about membership and upcoming programs, call (800) 242-3837, or visit www.aia.org/cod.

Serial Colonizations, Succession Landscapes, and the California Problem



With its allusion to ballroom dancing, or perhaps to sporting competition, the title of our conference, "Design Where Place Takes the Lead," grew more meaningful on our weekend ramble through the varied terrain of Napa and Sonoma—even as its basic proposition became less obvious. Billed in advance as a design-oriented survey of "buildings that take their cue from the natural landscape," our actual explorations could more instructively have been seen as grounded in three distinctly

non-natural landscapes, all of which display signs of ongoing and often radical redefinition.

It gradually became clear that "design" and "place" were only a part of the story, and that the concept of a "natural landscape" needed clarification. As we careened happily from town to vineyard to seacoast and back, the nuanced interactions of time and place—the *dynamics* of landscape change—made for at least as compelling an object of contemplation as the subject matter first advertised.



The New Eden

Several initial speakers helped expand our sense of the dimensions of architectural activity in California. One of Donlyn Lyndon's elegant definitions—"Place: a space that can be remembered"—slipped the important issue of time into the mix. His characterization of the California winery as a Europhilic cultural reference also reminded us of the narrative potential of borrowed landscapes.

Stanford Anderson pursued the idea of reference into architectural design. In particular, he found the authority of Hermann Muthesius in MLTW's "unpretentious" condominium building at the Sea Ranch, which offered "a sure foundation for a new aesthetic culture," in a way he found absent in Michael Graves's

"overtly" Neoclassicizing winery for Clos Pegase).¹ Anderson's images of cataclysmic alterations in the layout and look of Shanghai also suggested a new speed record for landscape change.

Finally, Mitchell Schwartz's dazzling romp through the serial "colonizations" of California sketched the powerful impact of each new, imported order as an outpost of one already established somewhere else.

In Schwartz's view, efforts like the superimposition of a street grid on the hills of San Francisco, which resulted in its altogether novel landscape, can be seen to display the colonizers' distaste for a scene as first encountered. He also noted the emergence of conservation and environmental concerns in the late nineteenth century, and how they paralleled the rise of Arts and Crafts design and the Modern Movement in architecture.

The convergence of new expectations with new streams of thought was to set for architects and landscape architects in the New Eden of California

the intellectual and artistic problem of producing a new architecture—one with sufficient regional environmental and tectonic resonance to stake a claim of vernacular legitimacy.

Schwartz's examples of this investigation ranged broadly from a heightened naturalism in nineteenth-century architecture, like Joseph Worcester's mystical design for the Swedenborgian church in San Francisco; to mid-century ideas like Lawrence Halprin's description of the high-speed roadway as landscape viewfinder; to Charles Moore's 1960s analyses of the evocative power and civic role of theme parks like Disneyland and the importance of roadside building as epitomized by the Brobdingnagian stonework of the Madonna Inn.

Changes of Nature

Schwartz's formulation of change so complete that it erases memory would echo through the weekend as we viewed three transformations for which ancient precedents must surely exist: ranchland (*rus*) into vineyard; cattle town (*urbs*) into chic weekend destination; and delicately designed cottages carefully scattered along open meadow landscapes (*urbs rustica*) but now being overpowered by clusters of closely yarded, ur-suburban hulks.

With these shifts in mind, it was interesting to imagine how things used to look and operate, and to try to discern whether some landscapes respond better than others to our contemporary engines of economics and taste. One wonders whether an index for comparing relative capacities of different landscapes to accommodate such change could be usefully established.

At the Sea Ranch, where forests were replaced by grazing land well before the current development began, the ecology of natural succession

Previous: Sea Ranch Condominium One. A new/old way of seeing. Photo by Donlyn Lyndon.

Top: Agricultural colonization. The Quintessa Winery. Photo by Les Wallach.

regimes has again surfaced, helpfully offering its sequence of disturbance, invasion, withdrawal, equilibrium, disturbance... new equilibrium, etc., as a kind of environmental analogy. Nature, oblivious to the duration of time passing and spared perceptions of good and bad, seems to accept entropy nonjudgmentally. But for many observers of a sequence of differing built environments, messy transitional periods seem directionless, uncomfortable, and generally unappealing.

The architect's eye finds particular value in formal clarity and the allotment of sufficient mass to support it. In this view, at least two of the three landscapes we visited seemed improved by recent colonizations. The beautifully patterned massing of row after row of Russian River grapevines can flow across our vision with a purposeful elegance that no scrubby grassland will ever have. And the fully commercialized, consistently formed fronts of gentrified shopping streets around the central square of Healdsburg work their small-scale urbanizing miracle better than the vacant fronts that line the main streets of many American towns that remain farming towns. In both cases the colonizers' intent is to simplify and concentrate imagery, limit vernacular exceptions, and redirect production.

At the Sea Ranch, as Donlyn Lyndon's and Jim Alinder's beautiful new book makes clear, the formal ecology is different.² While linear formalisms and other patterns can be cited in support of original communal intentions, the increasing of building mass, density, and volumetric consistency that work so well in vineyards and towns runs counter, in this most thoughtfully planned of colonizations, to original intentions. Then there are the remarkably different buildings.

The Sea Ranch Condominium

rises up in a singular way, like a fortress against the sea, compact and spacious at the same time, muscular as ever and gentle, still transmitting its powerful (unfulfilled) signal of a new/old way of seeing and of getting along with people and the earth. It is the intellectual anchor of the place, and all the houses still take power from its presence. Working within a clearly defined vocabulary of construction, the thoroughly conforming houses at the Sea Ranch seem to have been encouraged to be exceptional.

But in its further reaches, the Sea Ranch has begun to show signs of the long, slow value shift that is reshaping much of America. At the 1996 Committee on Design meeting in New Orleans, landscape historian Delores Hayden noted succinctly that in much of America the dream of the ideal community has been replaced by the dream of the ideal house.³

Despite all the thinking that went into producing the truly experimental landscape of the Sea Ranch, we now observe that ordinary real estate expectations and the apparently irresistible allure of the clearly defined private domain are combining to thwart its brilliant attempt at cracking the old California problem.

An Appraisal

If it can be said that even in the New Eden the communal dream has been interrupted, our weekend conference also gave ample evidence that progressive, broadly thoughtful design energies continue at work there. These are on display in new houses at the Sea Ranch like the anomalous rectilinear composition of the Yudell-Beebe House, and in the sensibly cool elegance of the Healdsburg Hotel—a kind of urban villa where we were so very happy to stay. At the Stryker and Dominus wineries the industrial

mechanics of winemaking are deftly accommodated in different ways—one regionally inspired, the other minimalist—that heighten our sense of the vineyard as mythical garden.

The California tradition of design inquiry goes on, observant of the changing landscape. The old dream of a California architecture—and perhaps of a “new aesthetic culture,” as Dr. Muthesius might have it—continues to be dreamed.

Notes

1. See, for example, Hermann Muthesius, *Style—Architecture and Building—Art: Transformations of Architecture in the Nineteenth Century and Its Present Condition*, Stanford Anderson, intro. and trans. (Santa Monica, CA: J. Paul Getty Trust Publications, 1994).
2. Donlyn Lyndon and Jim Alinder, *The Sea Ranch* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004).
3. Paraphrasing from “Urban Landscape History: The Sense of Place and the Politics of Space,” Delores Hayden's talk at the 1996 COD meeting in New Orleans.

Barton Phelps, FAIA, is principal of Barton Phelps & Associates, Architects and Planners, in Los Angeles, and is a former Chair of the AIA Committee on Design. His 1996 CoD symposium series, *Changing American Landscapes: The View from the River*, explored the valley of the Mississippi River.

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Place as the first consideration in architecture was the theme of the AIA Committee on Design in its Spring 2005 Conference. The conference took place in Northern California venues where the topic could be examined in three different ways: in the design for a building bordering an historic square; in the Napa Valley, where winemakers are eager to establish their place in a region of note; and at The Sea Ranch, where forty years of development have drawn on a specific conception of place.

Archetypal Urbanity

The starting point for the event was the town of Healdsburg, where conferees stayed in the Healdsburg Hotel, recently designed by David Baker and Partners. This structure neatly completes the fourth side of a beautifully scaled and thickly landscaped central square, the principal

feature of a town laid out in the 1860s. With its lobbies and courtyards accessed principally from a side street, the building manages both to establish a place of its own and contribute handsomely to the life of this important public space.

The Healdsburg square is memorable in part because its close room-like dimensions, coherent scale, and intensity of use make it seem completely defined and inhabited. People likely to be encountered there also range across economic strata, from the patrons of high-end restaurants and shops, to itinerant workers seeking a day's employment, to families or clusters of singles enjoying its lush shade. Such urbanity becomes even more poignant as you walk the few blocks to its neighboring (and neighborly) residential streets. Small plots here hold a variety of wooden houses (mostly from the nineteenth and early twentieth century), carefully embellished with craftsman details and

landscape interventions by generations of homeowners.

This whole appealingly tight arrangement extends only a short distance in either direction, though, as more wide-spreading, road-tracking, placeless patterns stretch out into the surrounding landscape.

Of Artifice and Vineyards

On the second day, conference participants ventured forth to a series of wineries, each of which has attempted to forge a place of its own with regard to the defining agricultural product of the region. The approaches were different, to be sure, but all were oriented toward making a connection with their respective landscapes and with the vineyards around them.

The Clos Pegase winery by Michael Graves played its cards most vigorously, transforming the confluence of vineyards, surmountable hill, caves, and cavernous stuccoed processing areas into a complex of

Stryker Sonoma Winery; photo by Gisela C. Hollis.



axes, courtyards and stately vegetation. Clos Pegase provides a dignified setting for art patronage, social gatherings, wine tastings, and other events. Its imposing cubic gate is washed in Tuscan red, embellished with a great symbolic column, and set on axis with a totemic oak tree. Such overt artifice, however, struck a note participants found, most... well... “artificial.”

Rigorous artifice of another sort characterized the Dominus Winery by Herzog and de Meuron. From the road, it appears a simple gray mass of stone penetrated by two great openings. As one approaches, vivid green rows of vine border an access road that continues through one opening toward a vanishing point in the foothills beyond. There are no courts or comforting enclosures, as its heat-modifying gabion walls envelop only a long rectangular structure which houses wine production, storage and administration space. These steel-caged baskets of basaltic rock are

packed to varying degrees of density: the more compact absorb heat and hold it away from the wine-making and -storing processes below; the more loosely packed upper tiers allow dappled light into the administration floor, with its elegantly spare glass-walled offices.

Of artifice, of course, there is plenty here; but it has been placed in the service of reductive essentialism, well rooted in purpose, and settled in place according to the geometry of the valley and its parallel strands of vine.

At the Quintessa Winery by Walker Warner Architects, the embodiment of place was different still. Conferees initially surveyed it from a ring of bales on the top of its characterizing hill. Here the talk was of establishing a *domaine*, with diverse soils and nurturing conditions, and with farm buildings and guest quarters dispersed around the site according to favorable locations.

This estate is loosely focused by

a great stone wall arcing around a hollow in the land and supporting the shallow climb of a road used to deliver grapes to a concrete plaza/platform at its apex. The platform is used intensely during harvesting, when it serves as a central place from which to feed grapes down into the processing, fermenting and storage equipment below. A steel and glass tasting, sales and administration building is centered along the back of the curve. It tucks against the hill above deep caves, and opens out over the platform, with its grape-chute caps that serve as quiet reminders of harvest-time frenzy.

More modestly, but with engagingly elegant simplicity, the Stryker Sonoma Winery has stretched out its intersecting barn forms adjacent to a terraced passage overlooking the vineyards of the Alexander Valley. The passage is artfully engulfed in light steel trellises and wood slats. At one end, the winery's austere protective walls dissolve in a glassy pavilion which faces north up the valley. Meanwhile, inside, stairs and openings look back into the darkness of the vat and storage areas.

This winery's steel, wood, concrete and stone—all shapely—nevertheless quietly defer to the orderly, fertile vineyards as the essence of the place.

The wine culture segment of the program also included stops at the Napa Museum, by Fernau and Hartman, a sprightly building made with manufactured materials and designed to overlook an instructive layout of landscape and cultivation types (unfortunately been curtailed by

Top Left: Clos Pegase Winery; photo by Kit Leeger.

Bottom Left: Hedgerow House, Joseph Esherick Associates; photo by Steven K. Alspaugh.

Top Right: Dominus Winery; photo by Les Wallach.

Bottom Right: Brugler House, Obie Bowman; photo by Kit Reeder.

lack of funding), and at Coppia, the ambitiously named American Center for Wine Food and the Arts, designed by the Polshek Partnership.

Sea Ranch: Founding Vision

To reach The Sea Ranch, site for the third day's tours, involved crossing to the coast alongside vineyards, hillside grazing lands studded with oaks, shaggy redwood and conifer forests sprinkled with cabins, and small-scale vacation settlements along the course of the Russian River.

The Sea Ranch occupies ten miles of dramatic coastal land developed by Oceanic Properties. It is now nearing build-out, with 1,800 dwelling units complete and 600 yet to go. The planning, begun by Lawrence Halprin in 1963, has been widely praised as an early and telling example of an ecological approach. The plan was based on multiple factors, including soil, climate and vegetation studies, and was conceived in three dimensions—fitting roads, development sites, and architectural forms closely to the structure of the land itself.

For many architects the words “Sea Ranch” call to mind Condominium One by MLTW (Moore Lyndon Turnbull Whitaker) and the Hedgerow Houses by Joseph Esherick. These were the first buildings constructed, in 1965, and were widely published thereafter.¹ They, and The Sea Ranch Store, also designed by Esherick & Associates, were intended to establish an architectural vocabulary attuned to the conditions of the site—using landscape and building form to mitigate the winds sweeping off the ocean and capture welcome warmth from the sun, while settling into the contours of the coastal shelf, with its existing weathered houses and heavy-timbered barns.

Condominium One, which was

to have been the first of four such structures clustered around four outcroppings on an exposed bluff, was famously described by an early admirer as a “wooden rock.” It rises almost like another outcropping, and its roof includes an unbroken plane, nearly paralleling the slope of the land, that sweeps up from a low edge fronting the Pacific to a pair of towers at the crest. The plan consists of ten units and two large parking sheds, disposed around two courts—one for cars, and one enfolding the slope and providing shelter from the wind.

The building's walls are of timber planks, surfaced with redwood boards that have weathered naturally (and severely) in the sun and wind. Windows are relatively spare, with dark aluminum frames set in the walls without visible trim; skylights are frequent. The whole is big in conception, with long wall surfaces cragged with bays and projections that echo nearby ocean bluffs, even as they signal intimate human presence.

Each Condominium unit is specific in plan and volume, adapting to its position in the complex, under the roof and touching the land. Inside each unit, light filters down from skylights through sculpted room elements and heavy-timber framing. At significant points bays project beyond the main volume to allow inhabitants to perch on the edge of the outdoors or garner special views.

Unlike the Condominium, which vigorously claimed its hold on a barren point of land, the Hedgerow Houses were sited to merge with the first of a regiment of existing “hedgerows” that marched across the open coastal meadows. These rows of tall cypress trees had been planted 75 years ago to break the insistent winds from the north. The master plan developed by Halprin ranged house



sites along them, to create cove-like commonly held meadows and leave the oceanfront open for all to share.

The Hedgerow demonstration houses were set down low into the wind with single-slope shingle or sod roofs rising persistently toward the south to throw the wind over pockets of sunny calm. Fences and planting extended their forms, harboring places of shelter for outside seating and gardens. The recurrent low, sloping roofs of these houses, and their staggered siting, created a vivid sense of the dominant forces of the landscape and of a shared response to place.

Ironically, these two sets of buildings, widely heralded as exemplars, are now seldom in public view. The Hedgerow Houses have now merged so successfully with the vegetation that they are mostly noted by the cognoscenti. The Condominium is shielded by an additional hedgerow planted to its north, and pines that have grown up behind it.



Sea Ranch: Successive Development

The rest of the day at The Sea Ranch was spent visiting various houses and common facilities that have been developed in the forty years since its inception. These included the original, startlingly innovative, yet tiny, Moonraker Recreation Center, by Moore, Turnbull and Halprin—the first of the Association’s facilities (1966). Its swimming pool and tennis court are snuggled down into the land behind earth berms and a chambered wall. The narrow interior spaces, containing two sets of locker rooms, showers and saunas on multiple levels, are expanded by an array of full-wall optical graphics designed by Barbara Stauffacher and deemed, often, to be the birthplace of “Supergraphics.”

After lunch seminars, the tour was broken into groups, with each visiting five selected houses, walking through a section of meadows or along the coast, and driving through a larger segment of the development. Houses

visited ranged in date from 1967 to 2005 and included later designs by the original Sea Ranch architects and Dmitri Vedensky, Obie Bowman, Turnbull Griffin Haesloop, and Buzz Yudell. These houses embodied differing interpretations of the original intention, some working closely with the original vocabulary, some incorporating new forms and relationships to their sites. All take their place in an extended landscape that includes many houses that quietly play their supporting role in the natural environment, a number that nervously seek a “Sea Ranch Style,” and some that appear to take their cues only from suburban market imagery.

The sessions ended in a meeting with members of The Sea Ranch Design Committee, including Richard Whitaker and George Homsey.² They recounted the challenges of retaining a sense for the place in the face of a demand for ever-larger houses, the diminishing availability of good-quality wood products, evolving requirements of effective landscape management, genuine threats of wild-fire and wind damage, and quarrelsome litigation over design process.

While the strengths of the original planning remain evident, The Sea Ranch, in many of its parts, has lost its sense of adventure, and the landscape of succession threatens to become one of diminished expectations, short on fresh understandings of the place. Nevertheless, the large area of land (50 percent) dedicated to commons, a network of trails, and the facilities and access roads held in Association ownership, coupled with the Design Review process and the still-resident ambition to “live lightly with the land,” offer enduring prospects for the essence of its character.

Where Place Takes the Lead

Whereas the clarity of form in Healdsburg has paired with a prosperity that revivifies its hold on the place, the artful crafting of distinct identities in the wine-making region has been more elusive—individual places become submerged in a landscape of authentic production that is frequently fronted by marketing pretensions. The Sea Ranch, whatever its disappointments, has formed ten miles of the California coast into a place that refers both to the power of the natural landscape and to the patterns of stewardship that have given distinct character to its development.

Notes

1. The Sea Ranch Condominium One was subsequently selected for the AIA’s Twenty-Five Year Award, and has recently been added to the National Register of Historic Places.
2. An important aspect of The Sea Ranch over the years is that those who initiated it have continued to be involved in various ways. Al Boeke, the architect-vice president who conceived and managed the early process, has returned as a respected elder; Lawrence Halprin has a house and studio there and has conducted workshops for the Association membership on a ten-year cycle; and others have served on the Design Committee and/or continued to design houses, including places of their own, that re-examine the mandates of the place.

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Opposite: Courtyard at Sea Ranch Condominium One, MLTW; photo by Kit Reeder.

Top: House cluster, Donlyn Lyndon; photo by Arlene Tunney.

Bottom: Yudell Beebe House, Buzz Yudell; photo by Kit Reeder.

Place-Making as an Expression of Teaching and Learning: The Hilltop, Washington, D.C.

Roy Strickland and Jean Riesman

The infrastructure of cities is frozen policy: the undeniable physical trace of political decisions about investment and disinvestment. Nowhere is this more obvious in America than in the physical and pedagogical condition of public schools in poor, urban neighborhoods—particularly in communities of color. Whether measured by physical disrepair (antiquated buildings, unsafe playgrounds, shortages of equipment and technology), or educational disappointments (low test scores, high dropout rates, poor preparation for a postindustrial economy), these schools often fall far short of democratic ideals for learning and community life, and are consequently condemned as “failed” institutions.

Current efforts at urban school reform focus relentlessly on standardized testing and the struggle to build new facilities. However, money is lacking for both efforts: the former is mandated by the underfunded federal 2002 “No Child Left Behind” legislation¹; the latter must rely on cash-strapped local and state governments.² Both strategies are also missing a crucial dimension: the potential to build working relationships among schools and the concentric rings of resources around them—not only within their immediate communities, but within a broader surrounding infrastructure of museums, parks, libraries, cultural centers, schools of higher education, and mentoring and employment opportunities.

Architects, urban designers, and urban planners have a critical role to play in the reconstruction of urban public education. However, they must reframe the task to reach beyond the individual “failed” school building. An evolving proposal for school design, educational reform, and community development in a low-income African-American neighborhood in

Washington, D.C., may serve as a promising model.

Asked in 2003 by the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) to revisit both the design and program for an historic, but closed, vocational high school in a section of Northeast Washington, the University of Michigan’s New American School Design Project developed an expansive concept for a comprehensive pre-K through postsecondary educational campus fully integrated with its community and firmly anchored to the District’s rich institutional resources.³ In this model, public schools become crossing points in a web of community and institutional connections, strengthening the larger context for learning, and allowing the schools to serve as catalysts for urban revitalization and place-making.

A Project’s Evolution

The original target of NASDP’s inquiry was the Phelps Vocational High School, a once-venerable institution whose status had receded as its shops, equipment and training had become increasingly obsolescent.⁴ For the last decade, NASDP has worked with schools and school systems across the country developing a number of programs and design concepts that reflect “small school,” “career academy,” and “neighborhood for learning” initiatives—as well as constructivist pedagogy derived from ongoing cognitive research and learning theory. Out of this synthesis has emerged its “City of Learning” strategy.

The City of Learning looks *within* the school for curricular and physical change, but also *beyond* the school to the larger contexts of the cities in which they are located. Educators from John Dewey to Howard Gardner have identified such an approach as critical to educational success.⁵

City of Learning stretches the effective boundaries of the schoolyard to include active engagement with the immediate neighborhood and important institutions citywide, with significant implications for the programming and physical form of both schools and their surroundings.

DCPS was initially very hospitable to the City of Learning conversation about both site and pedagogy at Phelps. Although a set of educational specifications and space needs had already been developed by an architecture firm as a basis for rebuilding its traditional vocational programs, the facilities director at DCPS saw an opportunity for a new mode of thinking that went beyond the building’s footprint. The director of the district’s Office of Career and Technical Education and School-to-Career program also saw the potential to demonstrate a new educational prototype—one that might break down hidebound distinctions between “manual” and “intellectual” tracks, incorporate effective hands-on learning for all students, and initiate “career pathways” from the earliest grades. Rechristened the “Hilltop” as the City of Learning analysis unfolded, Phelps’ larger site and its boundaries were eventually renegotiated, as the potential for coordinating capital projects, comprehensive curriculum development, and institutional and cross-agency relationships became apparent.

NASDP found the physical outlines of such an ambitious project already inscribed in the landscape. Phelps is one of an ensemble of four public schools built between 1930 and 1950 at the intersection of Benning Road (one of Washington’s major east-west connectors) and 26th Street (a cross-street connecting blocks of row houses and garden apartments to the site’s north and south). From

26th Street, the neo-Georgian school buildings form a dramatic colonnaded cluster across the hillside that suggests a unified campus—even if Phelps and the elementary, junior high, and senior academic high schools are all currently administered separately.

Unfortunately, the condition of all the buildings was typical of long-term disinvestment. They were badly ventilated, unevenly lit, and susceptible to falling plaster. Their equipment was obsolete; computer access was rationed; and their sparse outdoor play space was empty after school. Moreover, all the schools turn their backs to nearby residential areas. Neighbors are instead greeted by a steam-plant smokestack, an abandoned greenhouse with a tree growing through its shattered roof, and corrugated-iron truck-bay doors riddled with bullet holes. Lastly, each individual school is fenced off from the others, creating disconnected zones of un- or underutilized space punctuated by parking lots.

Seen in another light, however, the schools and their grounds constitute a spectacular, but otherwise unoccupied, 45-acre site on a major commercial corridor, overlooking a rolling public golf course and D.C.'s "other" river, the Anacostia. Furthermore, the NASDP team discovered in the course of interviewing teachers, administrators, students and neighbors that ideas for academic and programmatic coordination among the four schools were not new—although little progress had ever been made toward implementation. Nor was the idea of a physically defined campus new, even if its primary design aim had so far largely been cast as a matter of defensible space. Indeed, the first suggestion from a local District of Columbia Board of Education member was to ring the site with a wrought-iron

fence to help carve a safe zone out of the area's problematic streets.

Considering such views, it soon became clear that NASDP's biggest challenge would not be to expand the bounds of the site beyond Phelps, but to enlarge what could be imagined there by all the Hilltop's constituencies, and then give form to that vision.

Community and Institutional Contexts

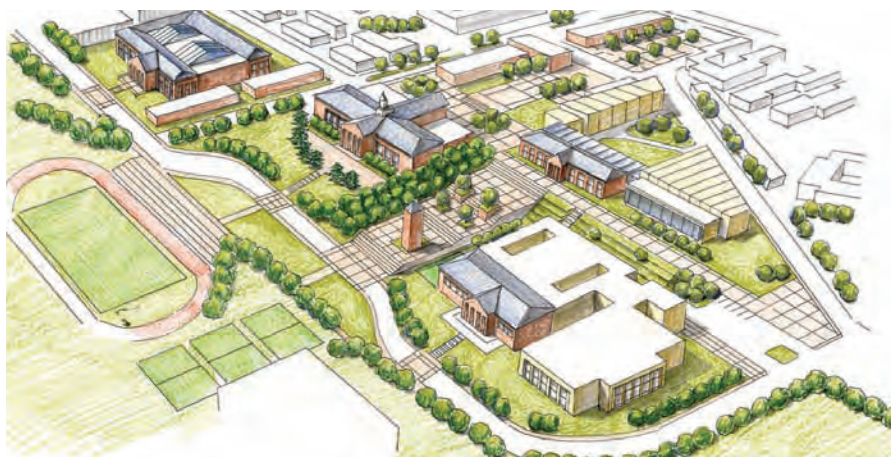
As research continued, it became increasingly evident just how strategic a position the Hilltop occupies. In addition to its access to Benning Road, it is surrounded by such destinations as Robert F. Kennedy Stadium, current home for the city's baseball and soccer teams; the National Arboretum, a federal research facility with lush grounds open to the public (but whose nearby entrance is blocked by concrete barriers); and the Langston Golf Course, a National Park Service property whose clubhouse serves as a formal and informal community meeting space.⁶ Hilltop also sits in a marginal space between two zones of social and economic transition. It lies east of the rapidly gentrifying Capitol Hill neighborhood, and west (across

the river) from the Anacostia community. The latter has long been considered D.C.'s most "hard-core" ghetto neighborhood, but it has recently begun to show glimmers of rediscovery by the broader real estate market.

In addition, a ring of prospective developments encircles Hilltop. The Anacostia Waterfront Initiative aims to revive both the river and adjacent public spaces. The renovation of Langston Dwellings, an historic WPA-era public housing project, is being planned. Improvements are already underway at the golf course. And the H Street Corridor initiative is now promoting commercial and institutional development along an important thoroughfare connecting Northeast Washington to Capitol Hill. The virtual "hole" in a development "doughnut," Hilltop could be an active crossroads for converging public and private investments. Yet Hilltop schools remained formally isolated from the planning for these ongoing or contemplated nearby projects.⁷

As part of the planning process, children were asked to envision the outcome of a rebuilding campaign for the Hilltop's schools.





Bureaucratic barricades usually separate urban public school design and planning from other conversations about neighborhood revitalization. But this isolation has been exacerbated at Hilltop by a tangle of institutional control involving the federal government, the District of Columbia, and DCPS.⁸ This contentious political and fiscal environment has made a long-term comprehensive project for Hilltop both more difficult and more necessary. Among other things, the discrepancy between needs, plans, and funding available through the District or DCPS capital budgets also intensified NASDP's search for synergistic partnerships and pooled resources. But this would require new relationships between public agencies and other entities. And these entities might have limited prior experience of collaboration and be more accustomed to competition or unilateral action.

The Hilltop Concept

NASDP's concept for Hilltop attempts to capitalize on the site's local and citywide potential, revitalize and integrate its educational programs, and reflect the concerns of project stakeholders.

Early in the planning process conversations across Hilltop constituencies revealed a rich, complex, and sometimes competing set of ambitions and concerns, whose mediation became one of NASDP's primary goals. The constituencies included students who wanted to be educationally challenged in a resource-rich environment; teachers and administrators who wanted to create a new full-service network of opportunity for students and their families within an academically integrated campus; and neighbors conscious of the history of urban renewal as "Negro removal" (in D.C., as in other American cities) and

wary of how changes at Hilltop might bring displacement and gentrification.

In response, NASDP was careful to link educational and design visions for Hilltop and to clarify several key points: 1) that teaching, learning, and community services were drivers for Hilltop's development; and 2) that learning opportunities and services would be accessible to all community members, from children to elders, from "the bruthas in the street" to "the folks around the way."

The educational model that NASDP proposed for Hilltop represented a synthesis of recent trends and practices as well as site-specific innovations—discrete elements that would work together to produce an ensemble effect. To begin, Phelps and its neighboring academic high school would be merged, allowing cognitive distinctions between vocational and academic learning to be broken down. The new objective would be to graduate all students as "dual completers"—that is, with both employment-ready skills and the fundamental academic proficiencies needed to continue to postsecondary education.⁹ Next, a community college or other satellite postsecondary program would be established on the site. This would provide students with more specialized certifications, and also serve the community at large by offering high-quality adult-education and job-training "bridge" programs.

A design-centered pedagogy would also put the entire campus under a "design umbrella," as a common intellectual and practice-based pursuit at age-appropriate levels. And strong "adoptive" institutional linkages would tie all of Hilltop's schools and programs to specific local and District resources.

These institutional relationships would become more specialized at the

high school level, when an array of academies (for tenth through twelfth grades) would offer a range of topics and “majors” directly related to the urban lifecycle, while engaging students in real planning and design projects in Northeast Washington. For example, students at the Construction & Development Academy might work with the District of Columbia Housing Authority as well as the building trade unions on a prospective redesign and renovation of Langston Homes. Others studying horticulture and landscaping might collaborate with the Langston Golf Course, the National Arboretum, or the Anacostia Waterfront Development Corporation.

Having been exposed to urban field research and smaller-scale neighborhood projects as younger Hilltop students, all high school freshmen would also enroll in an introductory studio class. Here they would not only learn the techniques and vocabulary of design, but also exercise their skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, institutional analysis, presentation, and conflict management—all needed in the contemporary workplace, where multidisciplinary groups must confront complex tasks. Equally important would be students’ preparation for being effective participants and change agents in the urban environment and in their own immediate communities.

In terms of physical planning and design, NASDP proposed that Hilltop’s grounds become a platform, or stage, for constructivist learning by filling the gaps between the site’s schools with a grid of indoor and outdoor learning spaces, and by making Hilltop’s educational functions visible through architecturally transparent building renovations and additions. Here young people engaged in learning and related



activities would be accommodated and displayed—mounting their work in galleries along the street, operating neighborhood shops and services reflecting their entrepreneurial interests, cultivating and maintaining community gardens and street landscapes, and performing in theater spaces they help manage.

In other words, Hilltop’s curricular and extracurricular functions would be used to create points of interest, diversion, and social activity in an overall plan to create a “neighborhood for learning.”¹⁰ This neighborhood would also include new parks, public spaces, housing, and community-oriented commercial facilities similar to ones Hilltop students imagined in their sketch exercises with NASDP. (These generally recall attractive, lively and safe neighborhoods they associate with more affluent areas of the Washington metro area—where

they know the best public schools to be.) Finally, the Hilltop neighborhood would welcome a broad cross-section of Northeast Washington residents by including childcare, housing and services for elders, and postsecondary educational facilities for adults.

To support this kind of development, NASDP proposed a set of Hilltop program and design guidelines addressing such issues as coordinating curriculum across the site’s schools; providing “wrap-around” social services for students, families

NASDP’s planning work for the Hilltop schools produced four alternative campus design concepts. In concept two (**opposite**), a compact core of academic buildings is demarcated by streets featuring community services. In concept three (**above**), “lower” and “upper” schools were located on either side of a community park.



and neighbors; mixing educational, recreational, residential, community and commercial uses across the site; and tying Hilltop to the rest of Washington with improved transit links.

Urban design guidelines further sought to capture and reveal the site's beauty by opening access and views into it as well as to the Anacostia; mitigating its isolation and making it safer by breaking its super block into smaller, easier to traverse blocks; integrating it with adjacent resources such as the Langston Golf Course, National Arboretum, and Anacostia Waterfront Initiative through strate-

The Hilltop schools are located on a major commercial corridor, adjacent to the Langston Golf Course, and overlooking the Anacostia River in Northeast Washington, D.C.

gically located site gateways; and distributing age-appropriate outdoor and indoor recreation and social spaces across the site to encourage informal intergenerational relationships and the casual monitoring of public space.

With these principles, NASDP generated four Hilltop site concepts for discussion and review by stakeholders. Their variety helped illustrate the elasticity of NASDP's program and design principles. They also clarified how the community design and building process was open-ended—an important concern to area residents anxious to be part of the decision-making.

In one concept, a cluster of pre-K to postsecondary schools in a park is traversed by winding roads and edged by low-density housing. In another, a compact core of academic buildings is

demarcated by streets featuring community services. In a third scheme, academic campuses of “lower” and “upper” schools are located to either side of a park open to students and neighbors. The fourth option introduces a relatively dense urban grid where learning spaces are dispersed into various building types, including residential and commercial.

All the scenarios featured renovation and/or expansion of Hilltop's existing schools; redeployment of school programs to capture site advantages (e.g., moving the elementary school program closer to the residential blocks where younger children live); public spaces edged by mixed-use activities to help promote safety through informal monitoring; employment and commercial spaces at a variety of scales to help support local economic development; and implementation strategies that include training students and neighborhood residents to help plan and build the project as part of a community capacity-building effort.

Ongoing Efforts

Currently, the Hilltop project is under review by a new DCPS superintendent as he develops an educational master plan for the entire system. As important as any specific build-out of the NASDP concept, however, are the project's implications for linking school planning and design with the surrounding community and a wider network of institutions in the District. Hilltop may be a unique site with extraordinary features, but concentric rings of opportunity exist around all public schools in Washington, making the project a potential District-wide model.

Then, too, there are the project's wider implications for “failed” public schools in other American cities,

tions. All these can be programmatically and physically linked to schools as part of educational reform and community rebuilding efforts.

The Hilltop project suggests that if design and planning professionals engaged in school reconstruction look both deeply within, and well beyond, the school facility, they can build in new symbiotic institutional relationships with benefits for students, communities, and cities—where learning is central to place-making, and place-making is central to learning.

Notes

1. Opponents argue that, with its mandatory annual high-stakes testing, the NCLB law authorizes a punitive and inflexible approach to education improvement. This demands higher performance (with the threat of serious sanctions) without offering sufficient additional funds. Particularly in poor, urban communities of color, this will only reinforce the tendency “to correlate poverty, not the quality of resources, with poor achievement.” See American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF), “The Supports Students Need to Meet High Academic Standards: A Town Hall Meeting,” cosponsored with a local Washington, D.C., citizen’s education-reform collaborative, DC VOICE, Jan. 24, 2001. Forum brief posted on AYPF website, <http://64.226.111.21/forumbriefs/2001/fb012401.htm>.

2. In the case of local and state governments, even when promised or mandated, physical improvements are often illusory. Recently, in New Jersey a \$9 billion court-ordered program to rebuild urban public schools was stalled by a recalcitrant legislature and then eviscerated by incompetent planning and graft. See David W. Chen, “Trenton Agency Says It Has Enough Money for Only 59 of 400 School Building Projects,” *New York Times*, July 28, 2005, p. B4.

3. NASDP is a university-based design and research project that works with public schools and public school systems in integrating curriculum, school facility, and community planning and design. It is housed at the A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Planning at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. The NASDP team for Hilltop consisted of Roy Strickland, Project Director; Jean

Riesman and LaTonya Green, Research Investigators; and graduate architecture and planning students Bolkar Accikkol, Jae Hyung Bae, Lauren Bostic, Eun Ee Chung, Mindala Marie Commins, Barry Fisher, Sarah Lillian Gorwalweski, Garrett Harabedian, Clavin Huang, Katherine Kozarek, Nicole Lashbrook, Ana-Li Lee, Hyeyun Lee, Sung Hyuan Lee, Libra Lindke, Priya Mehendale, Yung Sup Park, Derek John Roberts, Maria Gracia Rodriguez Romor, Michael B. Siporin, Hillary R. Taylor, Shih-Wen Wang, Hoi-Fung Paul J. Wong, and Heebum Yang.

4. Phelps’ more recent graduates have lacked core competencies, relegating them to the low-wage workforce or driving them from the employment pool altogether. Many students in the school’s automotive, cosmetology, carpentry, and shoe-repair programs were one step from dropping out of the system entirely, and graduates often did not have the hours or the certifications they needed to be licensed or otherwise credentialed in their fields—a district-wide problem. Few active institutional networks connected students to real-world exposure while in school or real-world opportunities when they graduated.

5. See, for example, Martin S. Dworkin, ed., *Dewey on Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1959); and Howard Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory and Practice* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

6. It is more than a historical note that Phelps was built as part of a cluster of public structures dating from the early 1930s, when the federal government embarked on assembling a working-class neighborhood for black families along Benning Road in Northeast Washington. While founded on a mandate of racial exclusion, this New Deal-era enterprise included Langston Dwellings as the District’s first public housing development (designed by the Washington-born and Bauhaus-trained African-American architect Hilyard Robinson), as well as the municipal Langston Golf Course—an ensemble conceived as a progressive statement about the “New Negro” who was striving for a better future. Reconstituting the context of education, housing, and recreation at and around the Hilltop, in fact, returns the site to its origins as part of an intentional community-development strategy, without the confines of segregationist and reductionist public-sector assumptions.

7. For example, the project-area map for the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative literally stops at the DCPS property line west of the Langston Golf Course, and its

five exhortative themes for riverfront redevelopment (“restore, connect, play, celebrate, live”) do not include “learn”—even though the river, reconnected to existing institutions and flanked by new facilities, is potentially a key educational resource, not only for the Hilltop, but District-wide (Anacostia Waterfront Initiative Framework Plan, November 2003).

8. School and broader governance issues have plagued the District persistently; for example, DCPS is now on its fourth superintendent since NASDP’s work there began. A constellation of political and fiscal conditions has also conspired to make the District an “orphaned capital”: abandoned by both commercial and residential out-migration, not enough child support from its federal guardian, and no state-level extended family to turn to while it struggles to finance a K-12 system as well as the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) (O’Cleireacain: 1997).

9. Postsecondary training and certification has become a standard requirement for career advancement, especially in those fields reliant on computer technology. Students unprepared to continue their professional development after high school risk being stuck at the low-wage end of the employment pool.

10. In *Ready to Learn: A Mandate for the Nation* (Princeton: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Learning, 1991), Ernest Boyer described a “neighborhood for learning” as containing resources such as community facilities, preschools, and parks proximate to schools and other institutions such as museums, libraries and zoos.

All images courtesy of the New American School Design Project.