Council Report

The First Council of the CNU
Held In Charleston, S.C.
March - April 2001

~MARKET HALL, CHARLESTON SC~

Celebration ✦ Civano ✦ Haile Village ✦ I'On
Karow-Nord ✦ Kentlands ✦ King Farm ✦ Southlake

Case Studies, Commentary and Critiques of Eight New Urbanist Towns
By Members of the Congress for the New Urbanism

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in
Community Building

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Symposia/Charrettes

The program sponsors seminars and conferences and an annual charrette in a Knight city. The "Transect Seminar" took place at Yale University in April 2000. Upcoming conferences include "Community Building and the Media" (December 2001) and "Civic Art 2002" (April 2002). This year's charrette will focus on the revitalization of a neighborhood in Macon, Ga.

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SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

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Key West Rooftops. Drawing by Martha de Quesada, Miami School of Architecture.

COUNCIL REPORT

Contents

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NU Redux: Good, Better, Best

By John Massengale
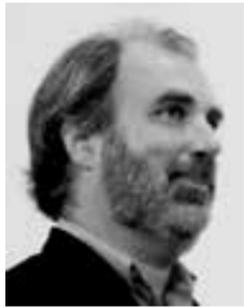
New urbanists want to leave the world better than they found it. That's why they insist on engaging the world. Andrés Duany points out that architects are often satisfied within their ivory towers, flying beautiful banners and refusing to muddy themselves in sprawl and inner-city struggles outside their walls.

But New Urbanists, particularly the founders and staff of the CNU, have fought the good fight instead. So that today, less than 10 years after the founding of the Congress for the New Urbanism, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development tears down what Jane Jacobs called urban removal projects and replaces them with traditional neighborhood developments. The governor who heads the National Governors Association and the mayor who runs the U.S. Conference of Mayors are new urbanists. And the magazine for the National Association of Homebuilders said five years ago, in their "What's Hot And What's Not" section, "Say you're neo-traditional even if you're not."

CNU member Harriett Tregoning founded and funded the smart growth movement at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, which later made Atlanta the Smart Growth capital of America by taking away its highway funding. CNU founder Peter Calthorpe forged alliances with environmental groups like the Sierra Club, which today is one of the most effective advocates of urbanism in the United States. These are successes very few people would have predicted 10 years ago.

Ironically, some of the biggest failures of the CNU come in the area where it is supposed to be the strongest: in the making of beautiful places. The CNU's critics say that's all new urbanists care about, but getting TNDs built is a long and complicated process, with many compromises along the way. Many CNU members are unhappy with the quality of the places that have resulted.

This reaction is both idealistic and pragmatic. New urban designers idealistically strive to make the best places we can (we are designers, after all, because we respond to good design). And we realistically acknowledge that the most important factor in public acceptance of new urbanism has been the successful completion of good models.

Last year, I made a short trip with Rob Steuteville, the editor of the *New Urban News*. In the middle of visiting five New Urban projects in two days, Rob suddenly said, "You know, sometimes visiting these projects really gets depressing. When I started the *New Urban News* five years ago, I thought we'd be a lot farther along by now. But on a scale of one to 10, I can't give this project more than a three."

The next day we saw a town-center project under construction that Rob liked a lot more: "I'd give this a seven," he said.

"If this is a seven, the Campidoglio is a 27," I said.

"You can't compare a new urban commercial development to a Roman piazza!" he said with exasperation.

But new urbanists know how simple some of the most beautiful Italian piazzas (or best New England villages) are and how simple it should be to make something as good.

There are many reasons why we have yet to equal the quality of a good American small town or city street from a hundred years ago, and often the least of those is design. One is our contemporary building culture, which has very low standards and a great deal of confusion about what makes a good place. Another is the mass of building and planning regulations, which apply generic, auto-based suburban standards virtually everywhere in the country, regardless of whether they are being used in an old downtown or the middle of a forest.

Again, we have an ivory tower problem. At the first congress, Michael Dennis advocated that new urbanists build only in the city, leaving the suburbs, *and thereby 90 percent of everything built today*, to others. But we will never reform America if we refuse to leave our noble fortress, thinking that our beautiful banners will be enough to make others forsake developing thousand-acre subdivisions.

How can new urbanists work with Pulte Homes and Toll Brothers without giving up the possibility of the best? To answer that, I would like to look at a concept I learned in a different type of design, furniture design.

The concept is a way of grading things qualitatively, as Good, Better or Best. I first heard of Good, Better, Best when I owned a store called America's Best Traditional Designers and Craftsmen. From my architecture practice, I knew a number of craftsmen who made wonderful traditional furniture, windows and paneling, and other types of cabinetry and woodwork. I also knew how difficult it was to find these woodworkers — who usually worked out in the country somewhere — and how much more exposure greatly inferior craftsmen had. So I started a store to sell their work.

Once I was selling 18th-century-style American furniture, I had to learn more about it, and I learned all sorts of things I heard about in architecture school. That included the secrets of traditional finishes, the qualities of various woods, how traditional joinery differed from contemporary practice, and knowledge of how construction details varied from region to region.

I went to museums and looked at the best American furniture collections, which trained my eye to see subtleties I hadn't noticed before then. And I found lessons that applied to the design of architecture and urbanism.

The dimensions of the 18th-century chair embodied hundreds of years of experimentation. By 1700, chair makers had discovered the proper angle for the back, the perfect height for the seat, and the ideal depth for a cushion that would support the leg without cutting off the flow of blood behind the knee.

Chair makers perfected the form for the comfort of the human body and then used that form to make supremely beautiful art from functional objects. Sheraton chairs, Chippendale chairs and Hepplewhite chairs all had the same basic dimensions, and yet they looked very different because both their forms and their elaboration *were* very different.

The chair makers knew where to put their energies in making those elaborations. All the best chairs had several carvers working on them: The best carver would work on the top rail, the next best would work on the carving around the seat, and the apprentices would carve the feet. Not because the feet were less important than the top rails, but because they were farther away from the eyes of the beholders.

In 1951, the leading dealer of 18-century American furniture wrote an interesting article for *Antiques* magazine in which he ranked many pieces of antique American furniture as Good, Better or Best, and showed how to make those judgments. He later turned that into a book of the same name, which became one of the most influential books in the world of antiques.

The criteria for the judgments were simple: 1) design and proportion, 2) construction and detail, and 3) materials and finishes.

From left: Hoyt Cousins, Bill Dennis, Paul Murrain and Ellen Dunham-Jones.
Photo: Rick Hall

From left: Laura Heery, Stef Polyzoides and Jeff Speck.
Photo: Rick Hall

John Massengale.
Photo: Rick Hall

The First Council

By Andrés Duany

The Charleston Council was an experiment and a successful one. It was the first of what will become a new type of forum for the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU).

A Council is very different from the primary event of the CNU, the annual Congress. Since the initial Congress held nine years ago in Alexandria, Va., these Congresses have evolved from a couple of hundred designers gathering in one room to large groups meeting in multiple venues. The latest Congress held in New York City attracted over a thousand participants — from Charter members to the newly interested, from developers to representatives of all the urban planning specialties, not the least the citizen activist. This expansion was inevitable, and it is a sound one for an organization committed to the wholesale reform of urbanism. However, something has been lost. The discussion is diffuse, and it is maintained at a level comfortable to the range of those attending.

The intent of the semi-annual Council is otherwise. Each Council will be a small group of invited experts. Each will be regional in focus and inexpensive to attend. They are to restore the spirit of Alexandria, not just of expertise, but also of design as the core, the unifying language of the members of the CNU.

The Councils will surely decant the "lessons learned" to future Congresses. The intent is to gather the know-how of its most expert members from which to inform the presentation of the Congresses, rather than to pursue the current importation of speakers from outside organizations.

Since the Councils are to be organized by individual groups of members (rather than by the board or by the headquarters) it is an example of that bottom-up system that is so fervently promoted as a principle by our Charter.

There were very few problems with implementation at the First Council. There was a group willing to organize the event — Julie Cofer and Vince Graham, both in Charleston, S.C., and John Massengale, a hard-working and tactful leader. And the San Francisco headquarters was extraordinarily helpful.

Certainly the most delicate problem was deciding whom to invite. For the first Council, the list was generated organically from a core who invited others, who in turn invited others, until the list was closed at about 150, of which about 100 chose attended. An aspect of this organic method includes the principle that those who *really* wished to attend could "fight their way in" without undue resistance.

What did we learn at this first Council?

• To have a theme: In this case, it was the first generation of new urbanist greenfield communities. These are now substantially complete, so it was possible to focus on lessons learned.

• That the designers establish a climate of frank discussion by bringing up the problems and flaws of their project themselves.

• That a group of no more than eight be in the front line for a focused discussion, with the general audience listening and then participating for a final half hour.

• That the presentation and discus-

sions to be thorough, so each was allocated about two hours.

• That it is essential to party heavily and late each evening.

• That there be a single room for presentations, and that all those attending be few enough to see the drawings.

• That the council take place in a superb, intensely walkable city so that everyone has available a range of hotels, their own transportation, and the ability to gather for meals as they wish. Such a setting keeps the administrative effort down and the standards of discussion at a high level.

What failed, perhaps, was the tenor of the critique. The Council made clear that the CNU is lagging badly in methods of assessment.

While the Charter continues to be a respected standard, its application in practice is spotty. Reviews were, in most cases, too easy. The positive experience of judging for the Charter Awards could perhaps be emulated for the Councils: that the checklist derived from the Charter by Ray Gindroz (see page 6) be used as a guide to the presentation and the discussion.

Beyond that, there was a great deal of confusion caused by a misunderstanding of the range and the timeline, which is integral to an assessment of urbanism.

One should circumscribe the assessment of the project to its operational range: Nature; Infrastructure and the Region; Neighborhood, District and Corridor; and Street, Block and Building. It is no more reasonable to address the matter of transit in a neighborhood plan than to control building frontages in a regional plan. While there are projects that span the full range, and ideally every project must be a building block of the entire range, one cannot "fault" a project for those elements over which it has no control.

The element of time is even more important. One cannot fault a project for not having a town center or civic buildings, when the situation is that it doesn't YET have a town center, or any one of the other elements that it is planned to have. Time is a crucial ingredient in urbanism. Assessment of projects should be in relation to their age. It is as ridiculous to compare I'On (a five-year-old neighborhood) to 300-year-old Charleston as it is to compare Celebration to Manhattan (this, however, is exactly done in the minds of its critics). Rather, we should compare Celebration with the central Florida subdivisions of similar cohort and I'On to its suburban counterparts.

Thus, we must learn to consider time and range when reviewing new urbanist projects. Manhattan was at one time the shantytown of New Amsterdam – no better equipped or salubrious than a Latin American favela. Seaside now has its chapel, school and proto-transit, and it is expanding to five times its original size. There is even talk of locating an airport and university in the vicinity. Who is to say that it will not, within this century, become the capital city of the new state of "Nawth Flahda"? Time is the secret ingredient of urbanism, that which differentiates it from architecture. It is the driving force of vision, without which nothing is possible in the making of cities.

The next Council is scheduled for Santa Fe, N.M. It is well in hand. It will further the emphasis of the original Congress in raising the standards of new urbanist design.

The Idea of Councils

By Stefanos Polyzoides

The new urbanism is both a professional discipline and a movement.

It is a discipline because its practice is based on a qualified set of principles that are directed to a particular goal: American families should live better lives than they now live, in places hospitable and beautiful that support their values and their needs. We aim to reverse the process of urban sprawl and to apply public policy and private development to the task of building towns, cities and regions based on the design of traditional neighborhoods.

The new urbanist discipline has now been collected into a Lexicon and a Charter. These two documents set up both the boundaries and the content of new urbanist production. They do not impose classes of solutions. They offer, instead, an urbanist language organized around a transect of options, all of them responsive in different contexts to the task of urban transformation envisioned by the CNU.

The new urbanism is a movement, because it aims through professional practice and free association to educate those with a role in the design of the physical world. Their practices can then be harnessed to realize the goals and purposes of the CNU.

New urbanist projects are based on a generalist posture and most often involve collaboration among specialist interests from many allied fields: landscape, planning, engineering, finance, real estate, etc. As a result, the movement is diverse in membership and represents an alliance of professional interests.

The new urbanism is now 20 years old as a set of evolving ideas and 10 years old as a formal organization. The activities of members have intensified in focus, volume and quality throughout this time frame.

Twenty years ago, the most pressing priority was drawing foundation urbanist ideas in project form. In rapid succession, priorities shifted to building at least one of these projects, to building projects under challenging conditions, to building projects that reflect more precisely the ideas and ideals of the Charter and Lexicon of the CNU, to changing the operating manuals, the codes of municipalities and

counties throughout the country.

As the membership of the Congress expands, as the projects representing it are becoming more numerous and more diverse, as the influence of new urbanist ideas begins to affect our nation more and more profoundly, as our influence spreads, we need more than ever to stay the course. The time has come to pause occasionally, to hone skills and share professional experiences. We must gather in meetings to direct the CNU as ideology and to energize it as a movement: Thus the idea of Charter Councils.

The *Charter* and the *Lexicon of the New Urbanism* are open-ended and subject to continuous updating and interpretation. The new urbanist movement will be as successful as the ability of its members to understand its theoretical nuances, to practice it with authority, to agree on ever-shifting tactical maneuvers, and to communicate all of the above to the world at large. Any movement is as good as the ability of its leaders to control its message and to maintain a living agenda, thus continuously enlarging and renewing its base. Charter Councils will be the prime leadership meetings of the CNU directed to accomplish this standard of success.

The proposition is simple: Meet twice a year. Once in Charleston in the spring, and once in Santa Fe in the fall. Gather the advanced practitioners of the CNU, and surround them with a limited number of members representing all the professional interests within the organization. Keep to the original limited-attendance Congress format where projects are presented by individuals on chosen themes. Organize debate across the meeting room from member to member and insist on critical discussion that deepens understandings and refines standards

We hope to exit Charter Council meetings with greater clarity of ideas, resolve in overcoming obstacles, optimism in knowing where we have succeeded and where we have not, and faith that after a lifetime's work we can ultimately prevail in changing the American landscape.

Think of the Councils as the chance to continue to learn as an experienced and accomplished practitioner from other colleagues. Take part with the certainty that the future of the CNU cannot be imagined by one person or defined by one narrow partial approach. This will be a long struggle measured in decades. Together in every way, we will prevail in the end.

From left: Marianne Cusato, Dan Slone, Stef Polyzoides, Chris Hubbard and Galina Tahchieva.

Photo: Rick Hall

How Do We Know When We've Succeeded?

By Ray Gindroz

The critiques at the CNU Council provided some insights for the process of developing standards and criteria for evaluating new urbanist design. Some valuable ideas emerged from these discussions about the qualities of developments that mark them as a success by new urbanist standards.

As we talked, it became clear that the principles of the Charter really do provide the best basis for evaluating designs. Is there an appropriate mix of uses? Does the plan support the definition of towns and cities and preserve the agrarian edge? Does it create neighborhoods instead of subdivisions? Downtown neighborhoods instead of business districts?

Key Attributes and Qualities

Throughout the discussions, attributes and qualities emerged which could serve to better relate the principles of the charter to specific design criteria. Our final discussion explored these in a somewhat light-hearted fashion, but with nonetheless serious intent. Here are some personal reflections.

Town-like: As a measure of success for new urbanist development, the most general and perhaps overarching attribute seemed to be "town-like," the quality of "being like a *real* town" or "*real* neighborhood." The less a project is perceived to be a "development" or a "project" or a "subdivision," the more successful it can be as a neighborhood or town. What then are the qualities that make this leap to urbanism?

Diversity: Architecture tends to strive for a unified whole with a minimum number of elements. Urbanism craves harmony and order but within great diversity. One hand or personality can create a building, but not an urban space. Therefore, those projects that included the work of several architects, or were built in a variety of architectural styles, were thought to have succeeded more in achieving the qualities of a "real" town.

Harmony: The diversity of the individual parts is unified by a set of shared elements that enable the various buildings to create public space. This calls for a set of conventions that are common to a significant number of individual buildings.

Traditional styles provide convention in a very flexible form – and different styles can work together very successfully when they all rely on a common system of order and scale.

In our work at Urban Design Associates, we have found the use of traditional styles to be effective in implementing urbanism, because the images and architectural vocabularies are understood by many of those involved in developing and building the project. There is still a general understanding of "correct" form and detailing, and craftsmen take great pride in getting it right. In the earlier stages of a planning effort, bold and potentially controversial concepts gain wide acceptance in the market place because they have a "comfortable" and familiar image.

However, we might be better served by thinking in terms of "conventions" rather than "style." As we all move forward in refining and developing the art of urbanism, new ideas and forms can emerge so long as there are means with which designers and their buildings can speak to each other, in a civilized manner, across time and space.

Adaptability: Urban building form is not dependent on building function. A grocery store can turn into a loft apartment, or an office can become an apartment. One of the great strengths of Paris is that all buildings have a residential scale with tall, graceful windows and shallow balconies. Some are office buildings, some apartments, some workshops and assembly rooms, and some combine several uses – and they all change over time. The specificity of the architecture determines the public space, its scale defined through the articulation of ground floors and mezzanines, rooflines, corners and windows.

Quality and Authenticity: There has been much debate about the need for authenticity but little discussion of what it means. In architectural circles, authenticity is often associated with work that is deemed to be "original," that is to say the work of one individual and most certainly "of our time." Personally speaking, I generally find these to be the least authentic buildings. All too often, they ignore the "place" in which they are built. Thus, the most authentic work is that which belongs in its region and place, work that taps into the culture and history of a town. Therefore, the best test of a new work is to ask where it is and whether it "fits" within its context.

Authentic Stage Sets: The

streetscapes of our cities are the spaces in which authenticity means the most. Those street spaces, lined with architecture that are "of this place," are invariably the most enduring and beloved by their users and citizens. Because the life of the city endures over time but the uses of buildings may change, the facade on the street has a role that is far more important than simply expressing the functions inside the building. The façade serves to create the setting for the life of the city. Its character and architecture should be scaled to the space of the street; its forms should be in harmony with the best traditions of its city.

I believe that the essence of Paris's greatness is its cross section in which the first two floors are retail or office uses, and the upper floors are residential. This creates (at least the image of) a residential city, with people living everywhere, providing the natural security and congeniality of a neighborhood, within which there are the best restaurants, shops, museums, and public uses. In many cases, building uses change. Offices and even assembly lines take place in buildings that have residential facades on the upper floors, but the buildings still creates the "stage set" of a Parisian mixed use street. Uses may change within the buildings, but their facades create a permanent, authentic stage set for the ever changing, continuously running theater of the street.

Calm, Cranky and Irritable: The most "calm" environment is probably the mind-numbing suburban subdivision. New developments that are conceived as a single project all too often tend to be calm to the point of boring. Howard Saalman, the architectural historian, commented on the uniformity of the Dutch housing complexes of the 1920s noting that no one looked for any excitement in them. On the other hand, the opposite may not be cranky, but rather animated or even eccentric.

Neighborhoods and towns that developed over time have irregularities and eccentricities that engage us as we move through them and often continue to intrigue us when we live in them. How can we manage to create this quality and character in a development that is brand new? I'On seemed to accomplish this very well. The quirky placement of houses, the roads

The Region: Metropolis, City and Town

1. Region: unified economic and planning unit.
2. Natural features define villages/towns/cities.
3. Built, natural, agrarian in harmony.
4. Infill and define edges/do not expand.
5. Contiguous/noncontiguous forms.
6. Historical precedents/ patterns.
7. Mixed use, mixed economy.
8. Transportation alternatives: minimize automobiles.
9. Coordinate resources regionally.

Neighborhood, District and Corridor.

10. Three elements: neighborhood, district, corridor.
11. Mixed use; single use; connecting.
12. Walkable uses, interconnected networks.
13. Diverse housing types and costs.
14. Transit corridors and urban centers.
15. Transit-oriented development.
16. Embedded civic, education, retail.
17. Graphic urban design codes.
18. Parks, civic, open space system.

Block, Street and Building.

19. Definition of streets and public space.
20. Contextually seamless architecture.
21. Open public safety.
22. Respect pedestrian scale.
23. Congenial, sociable streets and squares.
24. Distinctive public buildings and spaces.
26. Location, weather, resource efficient.
27. Preservation and renewal.

Total Principle Score

The CNU hascreated criteria for evaluating new urbanist projects. The above chart was used to evaluate projects for the CNU Charter Awards.

Urban Design Associates

From left around table: John Massengale, Milton Grenfell, Andrés Duany, Michael Morrissey and Neal Payton.

Photo: Mike Waller

Andrés Duany and Bill Dennis
.

Photo: Rick Hall
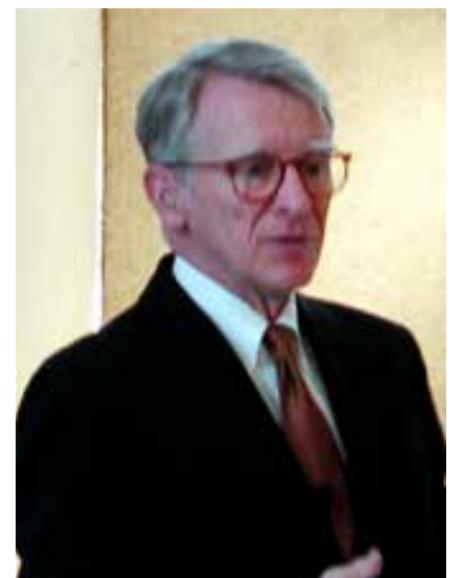
Mayor Joseph Riley.

Photo: Rick Hall

Thoughts on the Council

By Douglas Duany

I was asked to edit my verbal comments at the end of the Council by Diane Dorney. They relate directly to the proceedings but arose equally from my dazed reaction to the spread of sprawl as I drove through Florida to Charleston. I didn't feel nostalgia, but mourning.

I've expanded my comments as written language. You'll note that I am beginning to parallel process the breakdown and restoration of both natural and urban systems. I'll note also that I'm still not getting enough criticism from you. At least tell me if the whole thing is reading too abstractly

Looking to the Future

I feel that we're still in the first generation of a movement that will take three design generations. First generation efforts to develop alternative models occur within the landscape of sprawl and, while the experience has been very useful for the formation of character, it would be fair to say that we are all looking forward to more productive ways to expend our energy.

Transition to the second generation of new urbanism would begin only as codes and regional planning come on line, a difficult but crucial process that will eliminate most of the factors that hobble and compromise first generation projects. Plans have a tremendous power to elucidate, and we must engage them locally, at every scale, opportunistically and didactically.

Regional planning faces the opposition of libertarian type infantilism as well as the larger problem of the over-commodification of land. Yet failure would be egregious, not only because we can turn this into a formidable movement by potentiating planners and environmentalists to come into their own, but also because the whole democratic weight of NIMBY energy can be turned around and harnessed to a project that promises to save open space.

That codes and planning secure the framework for diversity is a seeming paradox that critics will never be able to understand. And how can we blame them?

Third generation urbanism begins with the slow return of the higher order of organic processes. It implies that the abstractions of instrumental reason and modernist disassociation have either crashed as systems or have taken a back seat in the relationship with our physical entourage.

More: the world has regained its naming and, since the bridge to the past has been repaired, the future has been recovered. I hope that architecture will also have been freed from difficult tasks of reconstruction to pursue meaning, that it will have been freed to operate as foreground to the larger medium of the vernacular mind.

This last scenario sounds implausible, but it's natural. The evidence for this millennial outcome *is* millennial: it litters the whole world, all cultures, all pasts, without exception, all pointing generating logos of human habitat. The extraordinary thing about is that *it hasn't been named*. Since it is not alive as a concept, *it doesn't exist*. Jacobs, Krier and Chris Alexander, each in their own way, have been hot on its

tracks, but this still constitutes one of the central intellectual failures of the academy, one that reveals its hidden strictures and justifies our opprobrium

This mature urbanism currently lies beyond our reach, but it has always been implicit. I recommend we continue to keep it within our view as the ultimate objective, as an end and means, if only to reduce the vulnerability to genetic deterioration that accompanies work carried out in the field of abstracted and isolated systems, the inauthentic shlock that will be generated by our wake.

Location

As seen even in this conference of hands-on designers, new urbanism has also developed its own versions of political correctness. These ideas are rarely endogenous to its practitioners, and I question whether these criticisms should be afforded as much weight as seems to befit them. I will try to place them in a real context and make the case that they are strategically flawed and operationally damaging.

One of these criticisms is the debate about the correct location of new neighborhoods. Metropolitan infill is considered politically correct, as is plugging into the existing urban zone (the old German planning term "Vorstadt" conveys this idea best). It is also generally acknowledged that suburban retrofit must be engaged, though I believe a comment at the council — "buy them out!" — underestimates the difficulty.

You've heard this before, but the question is why is it actually so hard to acknowledge that 94 percent of all construction is "greenfield"? I doubt it would have acquired such force if it did not parrot a criticism that is determined to ignore that half of our work has *always* been metropolitan. Its feels stupid to say we value infill: When faced with the straightjacket, we will always be constrained to point out that sprawl lies all around us, which it does unless one finds oneself ensconced in a New York or Boston of the mind (otherwise laudable places to be). Compared to the reality of the field of our engagement, which is the length and breadth of this country, internalizing academic views is inviting distortion.

Why is it so hard to recognize that newly built neighborhoods vertebrate and act as solvents? This is empirically verifiable. Alternative models must compete, that is the healthy nature of things. In an age defined by entropy, one of the most legitimate places for us to go is far out, out to the very outer edge of sprawl if necessary. ... If sprawl can be seen to reach out like a snake, we *must* nail it on its head: let sprawl react and organize itself in relation to our projects. This is very much a first generation context, an essential part of our practice until such a time as intelligent regional planning recovers.

Density

There has also developed a new urbanist political correctness about density. Ramping up the density scale is central, of course, and a concentration of effort is critical for providing first generation models of core urbanism at this particular stage. It has my passionate support and participation, but only if it is only one aspect of a larger whole.

Even within cities, quantitative factors are irrelevant to urbanism. I grew up in an extremely high density area of Barcelona with a miserable urban life. Even the local café was a down. To experience real urbanism, I had to go lowrise and take the trolley to Sarria, a nearby village that had been captured by the city, where no

buildings were higher than three stories. Or consider Jacobs' analysis of how unslumming (decreasing density) is the heart of the process that saves neighborhoods. I'm always a bit surprised about the way numbers are tossed around, as if they had more than the crudest meaning. Few streets will ever actually gather the density of interaction that Jacobs analyzes, and a quantity of walking dead is no substitute.

We need to deprogram, to turn the blower off, so as to develop the right set of sensitivities without which there will be dead urbanism irrespective of quantitative considerations. What I've learned is that successful urbanism is more about being defined as a place that enriches self than any other factor. It is about the qualities of chance meetings and observable interactions, an unquantifiable nexus seemingly brought together by strands of energy that I can only analogize by reference to an invisible spider web. And it involves projection of belonging, qualities that operate irrespective of actual numbers. I'm not being less poetic than you think; these really were the hypotheses that best fit a month of rigorous observation, prowling the big colonial city of Cartageña day and night for a month.

Low density new urbanism shares exactly the same set of qualities. It certainly is "urbanism lite," but it is urbanism, i.e., successful sets of complex relations that are open to secondary elaboration. Before we narrow ourselves into another version of the ever-failing future, it is good to remind ourselves that by outlawing low density between ourselves we would be outlawing the traditional density of American villages and towns (outside Main Street).

Just this should give us pause. To continue this line would be to lose the design range of the transect. We are in the business of restoring diversity to monoculture, and the market (amazingly and wonderfully) operates the same way if it is given the opportunity.

Good urban declensions are the necessary and interesting tools of regional planning, which are the only ways to stop sprawl. Visualize hamlets centered on rural greens (perhaps attached to a hall type) as the most appropriate development for environmentally rich areas. In our map, these connect by road to a more proper village, which also possesses a varied urban range. The villages connect in turn with a town that urbanized around a regional highway. People who are offended by these terms can continue reinventing the wheel. But I'll make sure not to settle in their versions, and I am describing the best maps of modern city planning.

Why should we hand low-density development to CSD? I wonder how many of those who disagree have actually experienced the pleasures of engaging in the retrofit of suburban housing areas.

To ignore the projection of desire of the majority of the population at large may or may not be arrogant or undemocratic, but it is guaranteed to be stupid and self-defeating. As Andrés says, we're not interested in the failures that litter the history of modern planning. Low density is part of the battleground, and we do it incomparably better and also restore community. In this area, NU has hobbled itself with high standards, to which we soon should be able to add John Massengales's term of "where appropriate."

The reason for not handing over low density is also political, as we should avoid being framed tightly in the Fear Wars that

> "The evidence presented in Charleston supports the conclusion that new urbanist projects are highly valuable as models."
>
> -- Rob Steuteville

> "It's important to draw the master plan as a collection of both what is on site and [as it relates to] the region as well, giving context to and impacting the larger realm."
>
> -- Ellen Dunham-Jones

> "I came away from Charleston full in the middle and wanting on the ends. ... The two "end" challenges at the extremes are regionalism and GOOD buildings."
>
> -- John Torti

Kentlands Charrette Photos

Kentlands town founder Joseph Alfandre (center) and Andrés Duany (right).

From left: Roger Lewis, Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk (seated at table).

Andrés Duany (left) sits across the table from Alex Krieger and the mall developer.

Project Name: Kentlands

Location: Gaithersburg, Md.

Classification: TND

Designer: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company

Consultants: Joseph Alfandre & Co.

Developer: Great Seneca Development Corp. (Chevy Chase Savings Bank)

Design Date: 1987

Construction Begun: June 1990

Status: Completed

Site: 352 acres (Net Site: 236 acres)

Project Construction Cost: $67M

Residential: 2,051 units
Houses: 477
Rowhouses: 378
Multi-Family Condominiums: 560
Apartments: 590
Live/Work Units: 46

Residential Price Range:
$127K – 500K (1994)
Current Range: $150K – $1.5M
Commercial:
2M square feet planned
Office: 30K
Retail: 450K
Live-Work: 72K

Public & Civic Program: Common greens, five tot lots, recreation center (clubhouse, pools, tennis, basketball), three lakes (with fishing piers and walking paths), elementary school, daycare center, one church, meeting hall. City ownership: Little Quarry Park, Village Green, Kentlands Mansion, Gaithersburg Arts Barn and Firehouse.

KENTLANDS (1987)

Andrés Duany presenting.

Photo: Rick Hall

Duany Plater-Zyberk & Co.

Since its founding in 1980, DPZ has designed over 200 new towns and revitalization projects for existing communities. The firm's early project of the town of Seaside, Fla., is the first traditional town to be built in the United States since World War II. Led by principal's Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, the firm's method of integrating design with accompanying design codes and regulations is currently being applied in towns and cities in areas ranging from 14 to 10,000 acres throughout the United States and Canada.

A significant aspect of DPZ's work is its innovative use of planning regulations, including the Urban and Architectural Codes that accompany each design. The codes not only address the manner in which buildings are formed and placed to create well-designed public spaces, they also codify the local architectural traditions and building techniques. DPZ's work is primarily carried out by the charrette process, which elicits a positive response from the community and regulating agencies while reducing the project design time.

DPZ also maintains an architectural practice. The practice explores the relationship of the individual building to its urban context and its participation in the specific local, geographical and historical tradition.

Good

• That the specific location on the highway network permitted the development of a very extensive commercial program. This program, within walking distance, allows Kentlands to be self-sufficient for most people's ordinary daily needs. The commercial complement of Kentlands includes most of the most useful big box retailers designed in such a way that they are pedestrian accessible. There is also entertainment commercial on the square, including an eight-plex cinema. There are also a good number (46) of live-work units along the main street.

• That housing is provided in great variety. There are single-family houses of all sizes, townhouses, condominium and rental apartments, as well as assisted living apartments. These are, to a great extent, located in close proximity to each other.

• That these buildings were developed by a great variety of builders, with relatively harmonious results.

• That the community association documents were so designed that the citizens were empowered to become the guardians of the master plan despite a relatively unsympathetic master developer.

• That there is an elementary school and there will be a middle school within the pedestrian shed.

• That most of the thoroughfares were built to be fully pedestrian oriented.

• That the stream and wetlands were reconfigured for beauty and human use and provided with crossings decades prior to the environmental legislation that would have prevented it.

Bad

• That within the Kentlands site there is a deficiency in conventional office workplace due to the radical overbuilding that was in place at the time of Kentlands' design (1988) and most of the subsequent years of development. There is, however a gradual adjustment taking place, with some restaurant sites now becoming office and with a majority of the many live/work units tending toward office on either two or three floors.

• That the designs of some of the more important thoroughfares were not permitted to be pedestrian oriented. One has been retrofitted to traffic calming, but some important ones remain unpleasant to cross and to walk along.

• That the association documents allowed micromanagement of the architecture by the city to the extent of initially frustrating some of the better builders.

• That the "vertical" civil engineering killed trees and disrupted topography that could have been saved by the plan. It is only now, after all is done, that we know how to do it "the old way."

• That the architecture of the town center and the town square are visually hyperactive and illiterate in the language of American commercial architecture.

• That the highway planning at the periphery of the site prevents sufficient connectivity to adjacent sites.

• The gradual loss of the affordable housing through market forces. Although a wide range of prices has been retained, the bottom end has been lost.

Critique by **Andrés Duany**

Vision Keeper

Mike Watkins
Kentlands Town Architect

Vctor Dover's final criticism of Kentlands is still ringing in my ears. "What about that view down the street past your office and across the dam that terminates in the *backs* of two houses? How did *that* happen?" It is the most difficult type of criticism of Kentlands for me to hear. First, because it is a valid criticism. And second, because the oversight is my fault — a reason certain to receive less attention than the first in my thoughts which follow. I know exactly the view he is talking about. The reasons certainly involve the Army Corps of Engineers but mostly my own inexperience in the early days of Kentlands.

The circumstances are not my reason for mentioning this criticism. What stands out to me about this criticism is that it is valid. Frequently when Kentlands is critiqued, I find much of the criticism to be born of ignorance or simply an attempt to gain attention by criticizing something many are excited about. Surprisingly, at the same time, a number of much more significant and legitimate criticisms go unmentioned.

Few criticisms of Kentlands really bother me because I see and experience every day just how well the place works. I "walked-on" at the Kentlands charrette in June 1988 and by the end of the year opened the Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company office on site, even before Mrs. Kent moved out in 1989. In the 13 years since, I have developed more than a few of my own criticisms. Grateful for this opportunity to share a few of my thoughts and at the risk of appearing defensive …

The "Island of Kentlands"

One ridiculous criticism is that Kentlands is an island isolated from its surroundings. Kentlands is surrounded by a sea of suburban sprawl to be sure. Despite isolation being one the primary objectives of sprawl, the Kentlands site plan proposed connecting with adjacent properties at every opportunity. The adjacent townhouse complex would have none of it. Then. Once the first phase was completed, however, these same neighbors insisted that the city require the developer to install pedestrian connections

to their neighborhood, which we did gladly.

The decision was made not to front buildings on the collector roads at the perimeter of the site but to build a landscaped berm instead. This was done for the (we thought) obvious reason that no one would want to live on a 4-lane collector road with high-speed geometerics (a 12-lane Parisian boulevard, yes, but not this suburban collector). Connections were made across the collector to integrate Kentlands with other developments.

When the adjacent 343-acre National Geographic Society property was rezoned for a mixed-use TND eight years after Kentlands, there was not one objection from any of the then over 900 families living in Kentlands to seamlessly integrate this new neighborhood with theirs. The property line that formerly existed is now virtually indistinguishable. Not very island-like. Kentlands also has bus service that connects it to the world beyond, and Kentlands Boulevard was designed to accommodate a future light rail line.

Socially and politically, Kentlands has become very integrated into its larger context, the city of Gaithersburg. Kentlands residents serve actively on many volunteer city committees as well as on the planning commission and the City Council. The city takes full advantage of the amenities that Kentlands offers to all of its residents — Gaithersburg's Oktoberfest brings thousands to Kentlands, a conference facility operates in the Kent mansion, and the city's art center will occupy the former barn.

The criticism that Kentlands is a nice place but built in isolation is more a criticism of the intentionally isolationist surroundings than of Kentlands.

"Details So Bad They Make Your Teeth Hurt"

This memorable criticism of Kentlands' architecture was penned by Eve Kahn writing for the *Wall Street Journal*. She is right. It is also true of most architecture built these days, so not a particularly insightful criticism. However, through The Kentlands Code prepared during the charrette,

By Mike Lykoudis

As a first generation TND, the successes of Kentlands as pioneering development have been noteworthy. It has served a role as the poster child of new urbanism's real-life, year-round communities and its considerable influence on HUD Secretary Henri Cisneros as a model for good future housing and community development. It has been a model for many communities struggling with their own future in the face of sprawl and has played a tremendous pedagogical role in the education of architects, planners, public officials, developers and students. In addition, it was the only community in its area that actually sold units through the recession of the 1980s.

Kentlands serves as a real town center for a wider area than its own borders with a quality of life for its denizens that allows children to play and adults to have pedestrian access to the public and commercial areas. The street network allows connectivity to the surrounding areas to provide those residents with access as well. In keeping with the principles of good community design, the residents of Kentlands can find their daily needs in the retail shops as well as big box retail in the shopping center. The live/work units provide additional amenities to both the residents and business owners of the town. The architecture, through its structural elements such as walls, opening and roofs, alludes to an architecture of permanence that is so important for a community to project itself into the future. Furthermore, a hierarchy of structural elements from the classical to the vernacular differentiates the public and private realms.

Kentlands offers continuing lessons about town making and building at the urban, architectural and structural typological levels. Its imperfections across the typological spectrum were the focus of the session's discussions. Because Kentlands was situated on a topography that presented a discontinuous buildable area, it was difficult to come up with a conceptual plan. The structure of the street plan seems unclear. The commercial and public functions and other significant uses and activities do not occur along the major streets nor are they easily found through the street network. Someone mentioned the fact that in a good plan it is easy to find the important buildings when you enter the city. In Kentlands this seems more difficult than it should be.

Other imperfections include the presence of the backs of houses to streets. (In later discussions this, in fact, may be one of those things that in isolation and if done well helps give a place character.) Another issue is the actual construction and quality of the architecture. As mentioned earlier, communities need to project themselves into the future to remain vital and to renew themselves. The relative permanence of the buildings is crucial to this aspect of town making. In Kentlands, the walls, openings and roofs seem to focus on arriving at an image of traditional architecture rather than using durable construction principles that will provide longevity to the fabric and public buildings.

While some may dub Kentlands an unlucky project, it certainly has been quite successful despite the obstacles that it had to overcome both as a pioneering endeavor and its own particularities as a project. There are lessons to be learned in Kentlands at all scales of urbanism and architecture. In particular, the importance of the clarity of the public space network, the relation of that network to the public buildings and fabric, and finally to the urbanism of its architecture including the principled use of regional materials and methods to achieve a real permanence, as well as its symbolic representation, of the architecture.

By Maricé Chael

Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk (Lizz) were and are my teachers. Kentlands is the town they conceived in Gaithersburg, Md. At the time it was designed — in June 1988 — the new urbanism did not have much to show for itself. Seaside had just begun to surface on the radar screen; Calthorpe was just signing his contract for Laguna West. Back then, said Andrés, "We knew nothing. Then something of a greater complexity hit us."

Kentlands is surrounded by sprawl. It abuts arterial roads, housing subdivisions, a shopping center and an office park. It is not clear from its periphery that Kentlands is the antithesis to sprawl.

Just listen to its residents. One after another, they testify that Kentlands has transformed their lives. "We live in a corner rowhouse, which is perfect for us," says Cathy Janus. "We used to live in a big house, too big for just three people. We spent all week watering the lawn, until we figured that our live-to-work ratio was too large." In Cathy's case, as well as others, the first visit to Kentlands was a revelation.

Cindy van den Beemt, her husband, and her 8-year-old daughter, Elkie, lived in two prior houses in Montgomery County, Md. One was on a cul-de-sac. The second house was in a more rural setting on two acres of land, which felt to Cindy "like Death Valley." She says, "We stumbled upon Kentlands, and we knew that it was the answer for us. I walk 75 percent more to places where I used to drive. Since most of us lived in isolated suburbia, we used our cars for everything. But we all need to unlearn those things. I've rediscovered the joys of being able to walk."

Kentlands, named after one Otis Beall Kent who purchased the property in the 1950s, is the brainchild of developer Joe Alfandre. Designed during a much-publicized charrette, it includes 352 acres planned as neighborhoods of mixed densities and housing types, and a commercial district. The charrette perspectives, drawn by the late Charles Barrett, recall the imagery of towns like Annapolis, Md. Duany tells the Kentlands story like a Greek tragedy. "Kentlands is, in retrospect, an unlucky project. We inherited a lot of things, like environmental discontinuity, that make it difficult to come up with anything remotely like a conceptually pure plan — the beginning of the bad luck. In the charrette, we discovered one beautiful oak. We designed a beautiful square around it. On the second night of the charrette, under an amazing blue moon, lightning hit that oak and killed it."

Mike Watkins has been the town architect in Kentlands for the past 13 years and is a resident of Kentlands. He reminisces about how he became involved with the project: "I've always admired the work of Andrés and Lizz. What attracted me to their architecture was how well-reasoned it was." At the time a recent graduate of the University of Cincinnati, he persisted in becoming involved in the Kentlands charrette. Eventually, Duany suggested that he simply show up. Said Watkins, "I didn't know exactly what I was getting into. I was put to work with Douglas [Duany] drawing landscaping details. Later, I worked with Lizz and Bill Dennis on the design of the neighborhoods."

There are six neighborhoods. Among them are the Old Farm Neighborhood, which contains a 19th century residence and barn as its focus, bordered by lakes of reconfigured wetlands from the '50s; and the Gatehouse District, which contains the elementary school and a church flank-

Chael/Kentlands
From previous page

ing among the buildings — its circus. At the edge of one neighborhood is a retail center, originally slated by the developer as a regional mall. It was to have been connected to the town by a main square fronted by main street buildings, which would have acted as the mall food court.

Of course, the real tragedy was that Joe Alfandre's company — through external circumstances beyond his control — went bankrupt. Due to the recession, the bank assumed control of the project. Subsequently, the original scheme for the commercial area switched from a regional shopping mall to a regional shopping center that includes K-Mart, Lowe's and Giant Foods, plus the usual complimentary row of stores. It is linked to the town by a main street of live-work units and a neighborhood town center, including storefront commercial.

By new urbanist standards, Kentlands' retail is compromised. Duany states, "The neighbors originally perceived the change to be a lower grade of retail. However, the uses were tailored to meet one's daily needs in the way that a mall would not. Therefore, one could actually live in Kentlands without owning a car from its inception. You can get everything you need from nails to steak."

Mike Watkins recalls being in the local post office and being drawn into a conversation by an elderly lady in a wheelchair. "I asked her if she lived in the senior apartments across the road. She said she did. She said, 'Kentlands is perfect for me. I can live here and do all my errands on my own; even though my doctor told me I couldn't drive anymore. I moved here from a retirement community.' That woman's quality of life is clearly improved because she lives in a town." Watkins told me this story via cell phone, walking about Kentlands. While we talked he bought a latte, did his banking, saw his travel agent and walked to his own live/work home conveniently located next to the DPZ office.

Kentlands' architecture attempts to balance the builders' need for prefabrication and the desire for quality construction. Most of the architectural details of the buildings are prefabricated, although the building materials are authentic. Duany, however, observes, "Wood rots if you don't detail it properly. We have actually destined the owners to terrific maintenance budgets because wood is not what it used to be — it's genetically modified pulp — and it starts rotting the minute you nail it in."

He also maintains that the builders' architects had bedeviled Kentlands' architecture by mere incompetence. According to Watkins, who with his staff oversees design review for all the projects proposed for Kentlands, "In the beginning, we were able to get only the necessities for decent urbanism approved and got zero in terms of architecture success. As things started to build out, builders said: 'Now we're ready to listen.' And later, some of them even asked for our advice and started going to better architects. They went to great urban places and took pictures. The smaller builders who worked with the smaller architectural firms did the better projects, in my opinion."

Notwithstanding the frequent impatience of Kentlands' planners with the architects and builders, the architecture of Kentlands is unmistakably about town making. Observing any typical street, the dooryards are shallow; the building walls give the street definition. The color of the brick and the architectural detailing vary from building to building. Streets with travel lanes built to satisfy fire regulations have been retrofitted back to size as yield-movement streets with on-street parking. The service alleys shield the garage doors and trash receptacles from the more for-

mal, tree-lined streets.

Duany said, "Probably the single greatest service of Kentlands to the new urbanism was that [then HUD Secretary] Henry Cisneros originated HOPE VI from an initial visit to Kentlands. Cisneros said, 'I love this stuff.' After some initial meetings, he actually said, 'Can you set up a training session?' Within two weeks he had 27 people at Harvard. Within two months he had 270 people at Harvard, and the new HOPE VI standards were written very quickly.

"Another thing new urbanists should pursue is a form of governance." Duany explains, "Joe in his very idealistic early period met a man, David Wolfe, who had written for Homeowners' Associations (HOAs) and had a theory that they should work like real governments, and that the people should be empowered — not just the developer. This doesn't always work as it should, but it worked in Kentlands. If you ever see the first page of the HOA document for Kentlands, it looks like the American Constitution. 'We the people.' Beautiful language. It empowered the citizens very early on and very powerfully. What happened in Kentlands is, when the bank came in and tried to sweep the plan away, the citizens didn't permit it. The citizens actually saved Kentlands. That was one of these almost miraculous circumstances. None of our other communities have had that document."

The residents of Kentlands also started their own newspaper publication. Diane Dorney, the editor, recalls, "I got involved in writing for the *Kentlands Town Crier* seven years ago. It has been a useful tool for getting things done in the town." Dorney's newspaper business has grown to include a number of other publications focusing on the new urbanism including *The Town Paper*, which is mailed bimonthly to a national audience.

As an activist, she recalls her involvement with the adjacent DPZ project, Lakelands. "I participated in the Lakelands charrette a couple of years after moving to Kentlands and realized that there were big problems with public misunderstanding of the design of traditional neighborhoods. This misunderstanding threatened to hold up approvals and compromise the plan for Lakelands. It became clear to me that there was a need to build support and consensus from the bottom up."

She says that public officials hear the comments of those persons who show up at the public meetings — loudly and clearly. The people who show up are usually the ones with negative things to say about the plan. Public officials tend to give that negative testimony a lot of weight. "I figured out it was up to people like us, residents who understand the benefits of this type of development, to give positive testimony in order to see it happen next door in Lakelands."

Another outcome from the Kentlands charrette process was the Kentlands Community Foundation. Cindy van den Beemt is its director. She said, "There are two separate entities that oversee our affairs. One is the Kentlands Citizens' Assembly (KCA), which has a Board. It governs the day-to-day activities like approving plans, renovations, landscaping and painting. And there is the Kentlands Community Foundation, which is a non-profit foundation originating in the Kentlands Charter." Conceived by Joseph Alfandre, he believed that such an organization might be a great tool to promote art and culture. Initially funded by the KCA, Foundation events include smaller community events and far-reaching events such as the annual Kentlands 5K Run, which draws thousands of people. Its intention is to be a force locally and nationally.

"We recently hired a student intern,

Daniel Creel, from the University of Maryland. His projects include researching the evolution of Kentlands and its implementation from a critical perspective. He is also examining and collecting material on archives of the original Kent Farm. This exhibit will serve as the basis for a town study, archive center and docent program. This will be located in the Carriage House, which will soon house the offices of the Foundation," said van den Beemt.

"The city of Gaithersburg has begun renovations of Kent barn to create a performing arts center," van den Beemt continued. "Scheduled for completion by late winter of 2001, the second floor will have a 99-seat theater, and the ground floor is to be outfitted for artist studios and galleries. The Kentlands Mansion, also renovated by the city, currently hosts special events, such as string quartet performances, which are open to all citizens of Gaithersburg."

Watkins recalls, "Today I was walking the neighborhood with Joe Alfandre, and we got a chance to reminisce a bit. Joe said, 'Andrés was really the general and you have been the man in the trenches. After I left the project, you became the vision keeper.' We spoke about the charrette plan: 'It's been intensified and massaged, but it is very much the same, isn't it?' In detail, it has really improved."

Duany reflects, "The best thing you can say about Kentlands is that it looks, and — more importantly — works, like 'a real place.' You get a high level of imperfection, but at the same time, you also get a high level of reality. It's easier to breathe there. After 10 more years of dust and grime and rot, people will think that it's 100 years old."
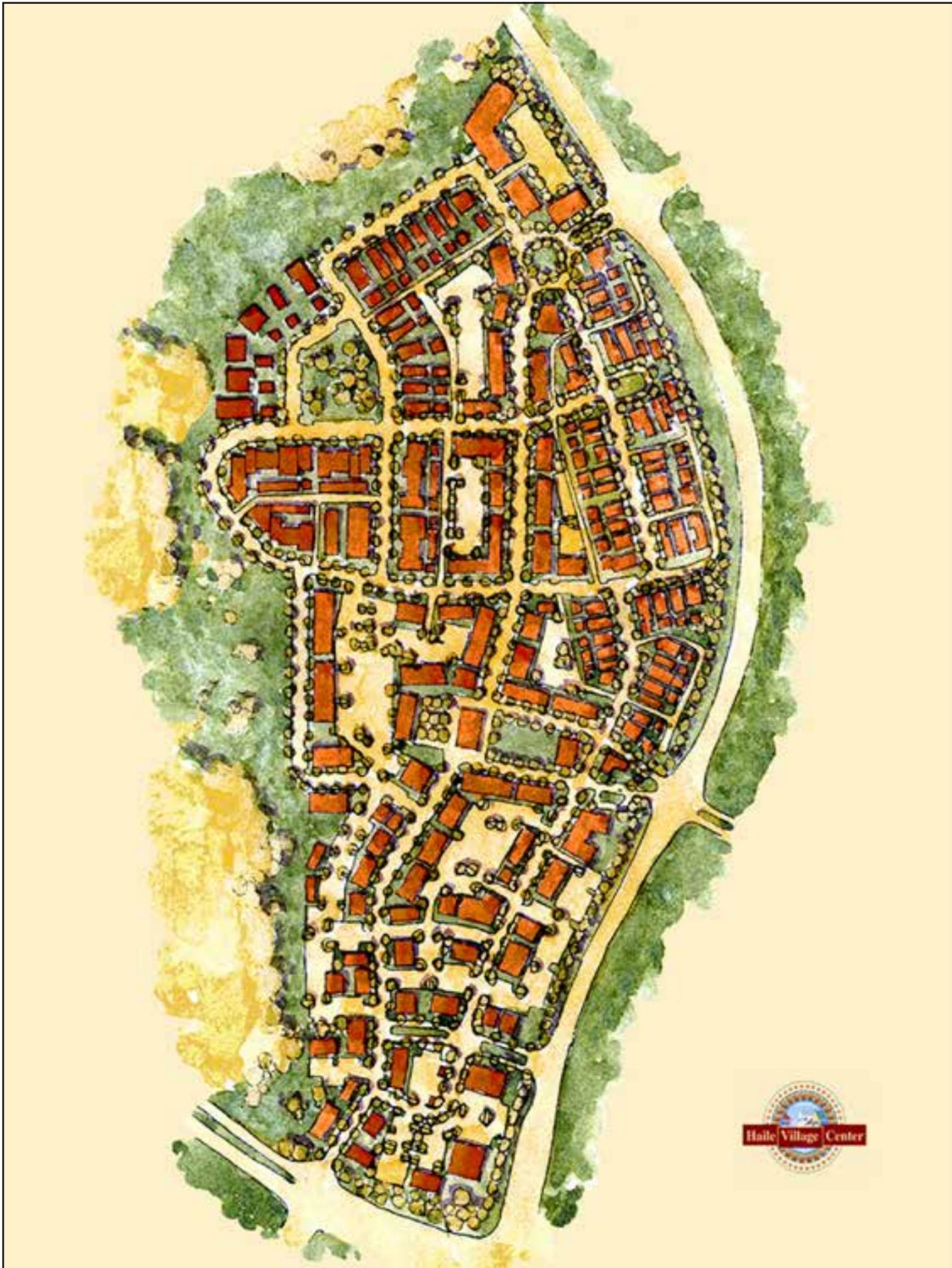
Project Name: Haile Village Center

Location: Gainesville, Fla.

Classification: Suburban Infill

Designer: Robert Kramer and Matthew Kaskel

Consultants: Eng, Denman Associates, Civil Engineers and Surveyors

Architects: Robert B. Kramer, AIA

Developer: Haile Plantation Corporation

Design Date: early 1990s

Construction Begun: 1994

Status: Under Construction (70 percent complete)

Site: 50 acres

Project Construction Cost:
Cost to Date: 35 million

Residential: 194 units
Houses: proposed
Rowhouses: N/A
Apartments: 56 (30 more proposed)
Live/Work Units: proposed

Residential Price Range:
Current: $120K - $500K

Commercial: 160K square feet
Office: 80K square feet
Retail: 80K square feet

Commercial price range: $15 - $19/ square foot

Public & Civic Program: Meeting hall, community building, park, totlot, square, plaza, close and neighborhood green along with golf course. Access to regional trail system.

HAILE VILLAGE (1992)

Vision Keeper

Haile Plantation Corporation

Robert Kramer, AIA, is president of Haile Plantation Corporation in Gainesville, Florida, where he manages development, construction and real estate operations for the firm. Haile Plantation Corporation is the original founder and developer of Haile Plantation, a 1,700-acre, 2,700-unit neotraditional development near Gainesville, and one of the top new urbanist efforts in the nation. The company is an active home builder and general contractor for mixed-use buildings within Haile Village Center. As a registered architect, Kramer also controls the master planning for Haile Plantation, including Haile Village Center. Kramer has presented Haile Village Center at the Congress for the New Urbanism in Charleston, the Seaside Institute and the Urban Land Institute at meetings in San Francisco, New York and Chicago.

Robert Kramer
Designer, Developer, Vision Keeper

The Good

- Success of residential above office/retail.
- Block and street patterns.
- Provides many neighborhood services.
- Public realm as community gathering place — farmers' market, etc.
- Flexibility of plan.

The Not-So-Good

- Absorption rate of retail and residential.
- Lack of significant retail — grocery.
- Collector street limitation.
- Small size of multi-family unattractive to national/regional developers.
- Need to make streets private — street widths.

Critique by **Robert Kramer**

The Haile Plantation Community

A variety of housing types will be provided in Haile Plantation. Conventional single-family residences with individual lots clustered around common parks or open space will be the predominant dwelling type near the perimeter of the site. In areas where special environmental features occur, clustering of dwelling units will be planned to preserve unique or significant sites. Patio-type homes or cluster homes will be designed to cause minimum disturbance of special sites.

Townhouse-type dwellings and garden apartment units will be the primary dwelling types within the town center. These housing types allow for the large percentage of open space provided which will benefit the entire community and also establish the architectural character of the town center. While there will be no "theme" architecture employed, the creation of a "special place" is important to the success of the Haile Plantation as a community.

The promenade, the central park, the shopping areas, offices and churches will provide links between the various neighbors within the town center and will offer many opportunities for the growth of a community spirit within Haile Plantation.

Historical planning devices — such as the village green, the residential square, the public garden and the town common — will form the spaces within the neighborhood and be the connection to the more public elements of the plan. These types of spaces provide the open space, the gathering places, and focus most often missing in areas developed in a piecemeal fashion.

The relationship of individual residences to these spaces — the park, the community facilities, and recreation areas — form the framework for the Haile Plantation Community.

These goals were set forth in a document written in 1979 by town founders Robert Kramer, the Fleeman family and Mathew Kaskel.

The Haile Plantation has been planned with two primary objectives:

- To develop a complete community in which people can work, shop, worship attend school and enjoy outdoor recreation and leisure time activities within walking distance or a short drive from their home. This objective is discussed in Section C: Community Planning.

- To develop a high quality man-made environment while preserving, maintaining and enhancing the natural beauty of the land. This objective is discussed in Section D: Environmental Guidelines.

All other planning objectives and design and development criteria were established with these two goals in mind.

Peer Review | A Dozen Lessons from Haile Village

By Jeff Speck

As someone who takes text almost as seriously as buildings, I am wary of attempting to write a worthy piece about Haile Village in the short time I can afford this exercise. Indeed, a place as carefully designed and well-wrought as Haile deserves an essay written and rewritten over weeks and months, not minutes. So, until I or someone else can take the time to do the subject justice, I will settle for putting on paper the lessons I have learned from the project, in hope that these notes will provide designers some of the value Haile has provided me.

Lesson 1: There is a place for town builders. Bob Kramer, like Dan Camp in Starkville, Miss., provides a role model for one type of developer, perhaps the best type. As town founder, developer, architect and builder, he has personally completed or overseen 100 percent of the growth of Haile Village, with excellent results. Far from feeling monolithic or monomaniacal, Haile Village seems authentically crafted and not at all controlled. This is a surprise, and a pleasant one. One must assume that only a rare designer could have accomplished such a feat. Still, we should not discount the promise of the one-man-show development model as a normative one.

Lesson 2: A project can be designed by a single architect if the style is suitably historic. Conventional wisdom suggests that authentic-feeling environments can only be created by multiple architects working in concert. Haile Village contradicts this wisdom, primarily because the vernacular-classical style used on most buildings is so generic and well-executed that the individual hand of the architect effectively disappears.

Lesson 3: Smart Growth is possible without transit. When working within the "planning disaster that is the State of Florida," one must be realistic about what constitutes Smart Growth. Given that every able adult resident of the area owns a car, and that local transit is a bad joke, Haile Village scores major points by providing a walkable downtown serving many square miles of otherwise single-use residential suburbia.

Lesson 4: Picturesque planning is appropriate for village centers. Although the plan seems unusually medieval or "cranky" for a mixed-use village, it serves its retail users very well. Of course, many medieval towns with similar geometries also contain significant retail uses.

Lesson 5: A very urban-feeling street definition is possible with freestanding buildings. Comparing the Haile plan to the experience of visiting, one is surprised by how little the street spaces suffer from their lack of party-wall buildings. As long as the gaps between buildings are carefully handled, one need not mandate a continuous streetwall in urban centers.

Lesson 6: A few slight curves are enough. The slight curves on the Haile Main Street are more than adequate at closing the street vistas. In fact, fewer, slighter curves would also have been effective.

Lesson 7: One can learn directly from the masters. The way that the meeting hall splits a larger space into two distinct places – a plaza and a square – is straight out of Camillo Sitte. The absolutely by-the-book square is no less pleasant as a result of its normality. The way the meeting hall tower is centered over its building, not in plan but in perspective, shows a careful assimilation of the best that the picturesque has to teach us.

Lesson 8: One not-so-small investment can make a big impact. The imported marble fountain in the town square — not priceless, but obtained at some cost and effort — gives the square a unique sense of place. The love of the developer for his community is perhaps most plainly manifested in this type of detail.

Lesson 9: The transect lends authenticity to villages. Curb detailing, tree placement, sidewalk design, building types and setbacks — among other things — vary appropriately from neighborhood center to edge, reinforcing the urban-to-rural transect that should be present in all new villages.

Lesson 10: Sometimes you can break the law. The ridiculous 24-foot wide no-parking streets required by the county work perfectly when cars park on them. If the developer had built continuous parking spaces, the streets would have been too wide. Instead, he provided "inadequate" parking, knowing that people would supplement the insufficient spaces by parking within the 24-foot travel lane. Thankfully, the police know better than to enforce the law.

Lesson 11: Bulb-outs may slow traffic, but they harm the sense of authenticity. The only detail of Haile Village that undermines its traditional feel is the bulb-outs that neck down the streets between parking spaces. Because these wiggly pavements do not occur in older neighborhoods, they seem out of place here. Now that we know people will park in the travel lane, many of the parking spaces that create the bulb-outs could be eliminated. Where parking spaces must remain, bulb-outs could be replaced by a cobble surface running along a straight curb.

Lesson 12: Houses with no front setback — and even with stoops on the sidewalk — can create wonderfully enclosed street spaces. They also allow for more efficient land use, since lots can be 20 feet shallower than the standard 100-foot depth. More new urban communities could make use of these houses without front yards.

The above lessons should not obscure the largest lesson of all, that one man can make a huge difference in many people's lives. In making Haile Village his life's work, Bob Kramer has provided a role model that many would do well to follow. A more thorough discussion of the project would perhaps focus less on the formation of the town and more on the formation of its founder. How can we build more Bob Kramers?

Peer Review | A Model Village Center

By Thomas J. Comitta

Haile! Haile! The gang's all here! The low country of Charleston provided an excellent host location for presenting the Haile Village Center project. Charleston, S. C., and Savannah, Ga., were used as comparisons for this 50-acre pocket of urbanism. This project is an excellent model for Village Centers and Hamlet Centers, representing the Principles of the Charter of the Congress for the New Urbanism.

Robert B. Kramer, town founder, architect and developer, presented the design results for the 160,000-square-foot retail center and the residential component with 225 dwelling units. David Coffey presented an enlightening post-occupancy evaluation. Essentially, those that live and work here are "happy campers." Bob and David talked their talk and walked their walk — both walking within five minutes to arrive from their homes to their workplaces.

Most impressive about Haile Village Center is its history. Since 1979 it has been planned, designed and constructed as a multi-use and walkable center. You can live, work, eat, shop, play and learn in this Gainesville, Fla., satellite neighborhood. The interconnected network of streets, alleys, lanes and passageways forms an organic system for circulation within the picturesque streetscape. Many large and stately trees grace the Village Center, and new installations provide an appropriate balance to the native specimen trees.

As part of an overall 1,700-acre master planned community, Haile Village Center is truly an oasis. It is surrounded by the residential customer base that uses the Center as the lifeblood of its community. What is most remarkable about this place is that it invokes a type of old town charm with a combination of traditional and modern architectural styles. What makes the difference is the building placement close to the sidewalks, parking on-street (and to the rear of buildings), and the organic form of the place, reminiscent of Saint Augustine, Fla.

The Haile Village Center accommodates 55 businesses, including a corner store and ice cream shop, a fine restaurant (The Third Place), a pharmacy, a dry cleaner, gift shops, service shops and offices. The Center has a community building, a day care center, a park and a well-crafted public realm. The housing types in the Center include: single-family villa, courtyard, sideyard, cottage, row-house, and townhouse dwellings; live-work units; flex-houses; and apartments above commercial. In short, "this joint is jumpin'" with excitement.

As other TNDs create their village centers, Haile Village Center should be looked upon as an inspiration due to its clarity, form, detailing and beauty.

Developer's Vision Keeps Project on Course

By Charles C. Bohl

Haile Village Center is one of those uncommon developments that lives up to its name, establishing the character of an organically grown village center through a careful composition of single-family building types, gently curving streets and lanes, a mature landscape, and public gathering places at a village scale.

The project is located in the heart of Haile Plantation, a 1,700-acre suburban, master-planned community (MPC) based on the suburban planned unit development (PUD) practices of the 1970s and located about three miles outside of Gainesville, Fla. Since Haile Plantation has very little frontage along the nearest major roadways, the village center was located near the geographic heart of the Haile Plantation's neighborhoods. This internal location provides good access to Haile Plantation's 6,000 residents but positioned the village center over a mile from the nearest arterials and where there is limited signage to attract passing motorists.

The 50-acre rectangular site for the village center is surrounded by Haile Plantation's suburban neighborhoods and is adjacent to the golf course. While there are no direct street connections to adjacent neighborhoods, a trail system provides good pedestrian connections. The site topography consists of gently rolling slopes, with a small pond at the southern entrance and a mix of mature live oaks, laurel oaks, sweet gum, hickory and loblolly pines that contribute to the village center's charm and sense of place.

Planning and Design

The village center has an irregular grid pattern of streets lined with brick sidewalks, shade trees and rustic lampposts. The main street is about 1/2-mile long and 40 feet wide, but narrows to as little as 21 feet at some points. The gentle curve of the main street allows the village center to unfold in a series of changing views as you move through it. The meeting hall and village green sit at the halfway point of the main street, and side streets extend out from this corridor to form a village center district rather than an isolated main street.

The houses and apartments are served by 11- to 12-foot wide, curbless *carriage lanes* consistent with the village character of the project as opposed to the more urban alleyways typically found in TNDs like Kentlands. Since the narrow width of the streets and lanes and the closure of the main street for events would have been prohibited had they been publicly owned, the village center's streets are owned and maintained by the community management association. Parking is provided in parking courts at the interior of blocks, small lots located behind buildings, and through parallel on-street spaces. Surface parking lots are concealed by landscaping, storage sheds and a pergola, which doubles as a performance stage during farmers' markets and community celebrations.

The character of the village center is also reinforced through the use of detached, single-family housing types that accommodate a mix of uses along the main street. The village center employs 18-foot wide lot increments, which can be combined to create different sized lots depending on the size of the tenant to be accommodated and the location of the building within the village center. A variety of traditionally-styled brick and stick frame buildings line the sidewalks along the main street and contain a mix of retail shops, service businesses and restaurants on the ground floors, with residences on the upper floors. Porches, arcades, awnings, stoops and balconies extend the buildings toward the street and over sidewalks, providing transitions between public and private space and enhancing the street's sense of enclosure.

Kramer has designed many of the 40 buildings in the village center, including a wide range of residential, civic and mixed-use structures. The design and construction of the village center's buildings over a period of seven years, plus variations in the styles, materials and frontages applied, give the village center an aura of a much older place that has evolved more slowly over a longer period of time. The mature character of the village center is also generated by the organic qualities of its gently curving streets and carriage lanes and the manner in which buildings and sidewalks have been designed around mature trees.

All homes and apartments within the village center are within a five-minute walk of the village green and shops along the main street. In addition to apartments above the shops and offices, single-family homes are permitted to have garage apartments and home occupations. The houses are situated on deep, narrow lots with buildings pulled up close to the sidewalk. Houses reflect a variety of traditional styles and include traditional elements such as porches, balconies, railings and fences, small courtyards, patios and side yards. Most houses have detached or semi-detached garages in back with living space above, including six units that are rented out as apartments.

The village green and the main street are the central gathering places within the village center, and the main street is frequently closed off to traffic for special events like the Saturday farmers' market. There is also a tot lot adjacent to the Meeting Hall, pedestrian paths that lead to the golf course, pond and nearby neighborhoods, and pocket parks at the northern edges of the site. Civic uses include the Meeting Hall, a sheriff's substation, the Haile Plantation community association's offices, and a preschool.

The Meeting Hall is situated adjacent to the village green on the most prominent site within the village center, terminating the view down the main street. The Hall provides a key gathering place for both public and private events, including Sunday morning church services, wedding receptions, concerts, community celebrations and private parties.

The village center contains a mix of land uses, including single- and multi-family residences, retail shops and services, professional offices, civic uses and public space. There are 55 commercial establishments, including a corner store, florist, jewelry store, café/pub, family restaurant, ice cream parlor, gift shop and two clothing stores.

The large number of service businesses and professional offices has provided Haile Village Center with a stable tenant mix that dampens the center's turnover rate. These businesses include real estate, insurance, finance and law offices, a dance studio, dry cleaner, day spa, dentist, veterinarian, interior designer, and a half-dozen small corporate offices, including the headquarters for a pizza company. Almost all of the retail and many of the office businesses occupy ground floor space with residential units located above.

Development and Management:

The general development strategy has been one of patient, incremental growth with a mix of businesses to satisfy some of the everyday needs of Haile Planta-

tion's residents. According to the president of the Merchants Association, however, the village center's businesses depend on a combination of business from Haile Plantation residents and local and regional customers. Other than the corner store and restaurants, the developer did not recruit any of the village center's tenants, and the full-service SunTrust Bank represents the only chain business. As such, Haile Village Center's business mix defies the conventional categories of shopping centers, and the developer views shopping center-type marketing as inconsistent with the types of businesses and customers drawn to the village center.

While approvals for TNDs can be difficult, all of Haile Plantation was approved in the late 1970s as a Development of Regional Impact (DRI). Through the DRI process, state and regional agencies assessed the impacts of Haile Plantation, and the county approved platting under an existing PUD provision. While the traffic and environmental impacts of the village center required some additional studies and amendments to the DRI, the process was relatively painless compared to most New Urbanist projects.

In addition to the unusual site location, low traffic counts and vertical mixed-uses, the developer had difficulty in finding large lenders willing to take on the smaller increments of projects that make up the village center. As a result, the Haile Plantation Corporation has financed about 75 percent of the village center through local sources of capital.

The only design review is conducted by Kramer, who acts as the town architect, providing would-be builders with copies of the *TND Series* of home plans. One builder described this informal mechanism as a "very strict design review process with regular follow-up visits during construction." Kramer also distributes copies of Ray Oldenburg's "The Great Good Place" to would-be café and restaurant proprietors, a tactic that has had a visible impact with the opening of the Third Place Café.

In contrast to most town center projects that are more typically geared towards pre-leasing space to regional and national retailers and restaurant chains, around half of the commercial buildings in the village center are owned and maintained by the small-business people who live in Haile Plantation. Since there is not much drive-by business and only a small amount of funds available for advertising, businesses rely on business from Haile Plantation's residents, local advertising magazines, the community newsletter, and word-of-mouth. The wide variety of public events and celebrations held in Haile Village Center also generate a large amount of business and help to introduce new customers to the village center's shops and services.

Note: This essay was adapted from the forthcoming book, "Placemaking: Town Centers,

Main Streets and Transit Villages," to be published by the Urban Land Institute.

Lessons Learned

• The sense of time and place found in Haile Village Center is a result of the consistent attention to village-scale typologies (e.g., the use of detached, single-family type buildings along the main street; carriage lanes; the small village green) and the organic qualities of its gently curving main street and the manner in which buildings and sidewalks have been designed around a mature landscape. These qualities have allowed a relatively young project to take on a more mature character without relying heavily on historic architectural references.

• Haile Village Center is at the opposite end of the spectrum from Celebration's town center, where large amounts of capital allowed the construction of the town center very quickly. In contrast, Haile Village Center shows what can be accomplished when the developer has the luxury of a longer-term development horizon. It takes time to establish the concept, to assemble a well-rounded mix of businesses, to finance a series of small, mixed-use buildings, and to work with businesses to design buildings that contribute to the village center character. All of this requires "patient money" focused more on long-term investment rather than short-term returns.

• The best way to "compress time" and create a place that looks like it has been built gradually over time in small increments is to do just that. The gradual construction of Haile Village Center has allowed for subtle adjustments to be made, as buildings are designed one lot at a time, responding to and learning from the buildings that came before them.

• While Haile Village Center's design is worthy of emulation, its success is more a testament to the developer's vision and perseverance than shrewd site location. For town centers in suburban locations, there is no substitute for good access and visibility from major arterials for at least a portion of the center.

• All good development requires equal amounts of vision, talent and leadership. Robert Kramer's combined talents as developer, architect and urbanist have provided Haile Village Center with the presence of a "town founder" who has guided the project throughout its development. Kramer's attention to detail, business acumen and low-key leadership has allowed the project to stay the course.

Project: Karow-Nord

Location: Karow-Nord in Berlin-Weißensee, Deutschland
(Karow North in Berlin-White Lake, Germany)

Classification: TND

Designers: Moore Ruble Yudell Architects & Planners, Freie Planungs Gruppe Berlin

Consultants: Mueller Knippschild Wehberg, Bernd Janzen, Tina Beebe, Lunetto + Fischer

Architects: Approximately 27 firms (Building Design)

Developers: ARGE Karow, Groth + Graalfs, GEHAG

Design Date: 1992

Construction Begun: 1994

Status: Completed 1999
Site: 243 acres (983,536 square meters)

Project Construction Cost: $1.13 billion
(2.5 billion German Marks)

Residential: 5,200 units
Houses: 0
Rowhouses: 400
Apartments: 4,800
Live/Work Units: 0

Residential Price Range (Initial Target):
$210K (465K German marks)

Commercial: 20K square feet

Public & Civic Program: Local and regional bus stops, groundwater protection area, new primary school, new secondary school, 17 child care centers, commercial center with neighborhood supporting retail, two youth centers, 21 acres (84,484 square meters) of park and play areas.

KAROW-NORD (1992)

John Ruble presenting.

Photo: Rick Hall

The Good

• Hierarchy and sequence of entry/ movement into and through

• Scale/transitions at edges toward existing village

• Elaboration of social housing into many patterns/types

• Response to agrarian character of site with landscape

• High level of social infrastructure/education/amenities especially public open space

The Bad

• Lack of integrated or nearby employment

• Sparse provision of retail, pubs, etc.

• Lower level of public transportation (buses only)

• Our favorite rental housing ("agrarian mews") converted to small, expensive row houses for sale—hasn't sold.

Critique by **John Ruble**

Moore Ruble Yudell

Since the founding of Moore Ruble Yudell with Charles Moore in 1977 (MRY), principals John Ruble and Buzz Yudell have built a varied body of work ranging from private residences to multimillion-dollar institutional, civic and mixed-use developments. The firm offers full architectural services including master planning and urban design, and the design of residential, commercial and academic buildings, and cultural and civic facilities.

MRY's staff of 40 includes five associates and seven other project managers who have managed projects from $2 million to $150 million in value. The firm has received numerous major awards for design excellence and in 1992 was honored by the California Council of the American Institute of Architects as Firm of the Year.

The highest priority of Moore Ruble Yudell is to have an intensive collaboration among the principals, with the collaborative spirit extending to include project staff and clients. The principals pioneered the use of client and community workshops in the design process. This experience has fostered a design approach that places value on richness and diversity, in which we have been able to resolve conflicts without compromise. The firm's responsiveness to clients and client-community groups includes issues of function and use, but goes well beyond to involve ideas, attitudes, values and images.

— Vision Keeper —

Adrian Koffka
Project Manager

During the eight years working on Karow-Nord, from the initial competition workshop to the completion of the last phase of building, all of us at Moore Ruble Yudell — from John Ruble, Buzz Yudell and associate Dan Garness to all staff involved, including the project managers — experienced many sentiments, ranging from excitement to frustration. We were proud to work on a project so grand in scale and complexity, and one that occurred in a significant moment in history following German unification. But it also was too far away, too large and too multi-headed to be able to predict what turn it might take any given moment.

The client, ARGE Karow-Nord, short for "Arbeitsgemeinschaft" (work team), consisted of several developers, local and regional planning agencies, the municipality of Weissensee, and the state government of Berlin. Funding came from federal coffers, imaginably tight and laden with regulations, and private developers, just as tight and always just-in-time.

Karow-Nord is no retirement community, company town or golf resort. It is a government-subsidized, low-income, rent controlled project reflecting high ideals of the society it was conceived for. Reminding ourselves that much was going to be achieved with very modest means is what kept us excited over the years.

An additional challenge was the bilateral planning team consisting of Moore Ruble Yudell in California and everyone else in Berlin: urban planners, traffic planners, landscape planners and architecture all of about 27 firms; and right these groups through all of former "Wessies," professionals from East and West Germany. As much as the distance made it harder to control the process, supervise the design, and be at hand for all of the hundreds of meetings, it allowed MRY to be a more neutral referee, often more at the pulse of the (East) German planning boards then the (West) German developers.

The actual urban plan, designed down to the last protruding corner, had to withstand several layers of processing. Inflexible zoning authorities would not allow certain massing to be shifted to create focal points: local urban planners who prepared the final planning drawings had a tendency to straighten out any lines that looked too romantic; the developers would exploit opportunities to grandfather in more units by inflating some roofs; and even computer errors in the translation of the drawings made it into the final plan.

Moore Ruble Yudell's design added to the complexity, straying from the image of other contemporary projects consisting of more repetitive patterns of blocks, but rather developing five distinct housing typologies, plus a hierarchy of green spaces and streets, and sprinkling public infrastructure throughout the whole project. One regret we might have was the small amount of commercial space, just enough to form a critical mass at the town's center, but not enough to also be dotted throughout the plan, like an occasional corner store or pub.

The plan had to remain calm to weather these multiple layers of chaos. When design proceeded on the various phases, being in Berlin even on a monthly basis seemed not enough to steer the diverse crowd of architects. Workshops were set up to "teach" the meaning and characteristics of the typologies and introduce design guidelines. Everyone listened politely, just to run off to their drawing boards like high school students saved by the bell.

Sometimes the final designs reached us by fuzzy fax, too late for comment. Our other plan, to lead by example, did not always succeed, as we designed our buildings at the same time as the other architects — ready for them to compare and contrast, but not adapt to.

So as every phase went up, our test became whether the scale felt right, the spaces in between the build-

Peer Review

Karow-Nord Master Plan: Urban Fabric and the Perimeter Block

By Galina Tahchieva

The Karow-Nord project is located northeast of Berlin and is adjacent to a small village bisected by a main thoroughfare. The first striking quality of the plan is its obvious contrast to the surrounding fabric of large rural blocks sprinkled with detached houses. It reads as a fragment of a large urban entity starting to develop, with the clear intention later to become a center for the surrounding lower density neighborhoods.

The geometries of Karow-Nord simulate the grand urban gestures of 19th century Berlin, but its architecture displays a different scale; the building types are smaller, and their volumetric patterns remind more of Tessenoff than the imposing urban fabric of a big European city. This unique mixture of high density, diverse urban building types and the hierarchy of public spaces makes Karow-Nord a successful attempt for an urban infill of a transitional character — a future urban center for the suburban communities around it. One of its main urban tools is the use of the urban perimeter block, which finds a new interpretation of a powerful historical precedent.

The urban structure of Karow-Nord is based on two urban villages connected by a town center perpendicular to the main axis of the dividing road. The town center is shaped as a forum and attempts to pull the east and west neighborhoods together. Two schools anchor its ends. Diagonal vehicular and pedestrian con-nections from the "forum" delineate a series of urban experiences and form the civic spine of the plan.

There are numerous public buildings sprinkled throughout the rest of the neighborhoods, daycares and other small structures. In spite of the relative lack of major neighborhood focal points, the overall structure displays a diverse pedestrian environment with the numerous public open spaces and civic buildings. Instead of concentrating the civic structures in one or two major centers, the designers have decided to follow a more natural "democratic" distribution of these amenities. This conscious urban strategy creates the feeling of an older place, organically developed and not contrived by a single geometric idea, but multi-layered as sequences of urban experiences.

The fabric of Karow-Nord is based on the perimeter block, which has a long tradition in the European social housing architecture from the late 19th and the beginning of the 20th century — with some of the best examples found in Berlage's South Amsterdam, Roda Bergen in Stockholm, as well as countless German examples. The interior spaces of the perimeter blocks may seem ambiguous as urban entities to the American planning professional; nevertheless they are typical and highly articulated building elements of European urbanity.

The more relaxed parking requirements of most European cities provides the extra public space within the blocks; this same space in the American condition will be dedicated predominantly to the storage of automobiles.

The typical American perimeter block consists of parking, surface or structured, surrounded by buildings (and not always on all sides); the European one is developed in two major ways – it has a semi-public core of open space in the middle designed as a park or a common playground, or the large space is subdivided in allotment gardens and spaces of more rural quality as in the Garden City tradition.

Karow-Nord interprets predominantly the first type with the common public space, and probably this is where it could have achieved a more diverse and hierarchical structure by mixing in the second tradition.

The German Siedlung planning offers an immense treasure of such techniques for shaping interior urban spaces, mixing grander urban scales with the intimacy of smaller private spaces. The more urban building types, such as apartments, frame the periphery of the blocks, while the smaller rowhouses and detached villas shape picturesque interior spaces. The resulting richness of terminated vistas and deflections is contrasting to the stable exterior frontage.

This elegant system of sequential experience of the urban and the rural is probably a missed opportunity at Karow-Nord. Instead, its designers have chosen the more conventional transition from more urban to more rural from the center to the edges of the project by "feathering out" of the density.

Another technique worth noting in Karow-Nord is the skillful hierarchy of pedestrian pathways throughout the plan. Though it does not explore the picturesque Siedlung methodology, Karow-Nord displays a complex pedestrian network. There are four different pedestrian choices — sidewalks along the streets, pedestrian passages between the blocks, pedestrian mews through the blocks and pedestrian pathways along the lake. This variety is a conscious effort to overlay the urban structure of the plan with a finer system of walking experiences.

In spite of some of its shortcomings, Karow-Nord Master Plan champions an impressive overall urbanity, which made it stand out among the other projects presented at the CNU Council. It successfully proves that higher density, simple geometries and "calm" architectural syntax can provide satisfying urban experiences. Karow-Nord was built several years ago, but it will need more time to grow into a true center for the surrounding communities. Larger trees, more diverse mixed-use, and the usual patina of "wear and tear" on the buildings will make this place more lively, more real and a better "fragment" in the future.

Peer Review

Karow-Nord

By Thomas E. Low

Areas of Excellence:

- balance of residential with supportive retail
- deliberate use of row house as space maker
- buildings and grounds are well managed
- use of tile roofs, wood painted windows enhances quality
- good analysis of urban precedent including villas, farmhouses and Eastern slab block apartments
- design was created through a competition workshop
- respect of existing street pattern
- hierarchy of apartment building types
- interspersion of 17 day care centers
- composed of a hierarchy of public spaces
- taxonomy of street types provides variety, including the diagonal pedestrian ways
- weekend garden design unique
- color coding is used to provide orientation and connecting corridors
- building height is scaled to the street
- the long linear/axial greenways relate to the historic greenways
- interesting use of communal garages as clubhouses
- urban gateways for autos and buses are designed as set pieces with mixed use
- nicely proportioned building facades with minimalist detail using synthetic stucco
- the natural landscape areas extend through the urban space, formal green elements

Possibilities for Improvement:

- The grassy front yards and setbacks on the townhouse buildings detract from urban character — appears somewhat suburban
- The addition of garden walls and fences could better define public, semipublic and private spaces
- Certain public spaces — the long linear plaza — lack human scale. If there were no sloping roofs on the buildings here it may remind the inhabitants of the eastern slab block spaces it is meant to improve on.
- The effect of this project on the greater neighborhood may have both positive and negative reactions. How do the adjacent neighborhood residents feel about their new neighboring community? Are some of them moving over into this project as a perceived move up?
- The transition between the existing neighborhood seems too abrupt — new apartments are directly across the street from the old single family houses.
- Even though it is a simple construction system, it does give the impression that it is not as flexible as it may need to be. Perhaps a broader range of building types would help, including some single family houses similar to the adjacent existing neighborhood.

Lessons We Might Learn:

- Because of the abrupt transition, perhaps the new devalues the old rather than complementing it and collectively enhancing the value of the overall. "Is my house no longer worth maintaining because it is probably going to be replaced by apartments?"

- This project is a good example to include in the planning design camps debate distinguishing between the formal and the picturesque. This project demonstrates the formal camp and mostly succeeds. The shortcomings are where the formal character exceed the human scale of its spaces — too much semi-public space, lack of privacy, and long vistas that are too horizontal in proportion.

- For the classically challenged, this stripped down architecture is refreshing as proper portions are clearly evident in their most rational forms — vertically portioned windows, facade composition, building rhythm, urban spatial proportion, celebrated vistas, and the urban context of the landscape. Because of this "bare bones" aesthetic, the use of synthetic stucco is not offensive. The designers show admirable constraint. (The current knee-jerk American development designer would automatically seize the opportunity to use this synthetic stucco material to embellish the facades with showy neo-baroque embellishments.) This project is unique in that it demonstrates that elaborate architecture may not necessarily be required to achieve success.

- This design approach is compelling for future new urbanist projects. It suggests that design can successfully diverge from "showy" or "perfumed" architecture and aim more towards traditional craft and urban vernacular. The project is modeled along the lines of the social housing designs for Amsterdam in the early 20th century championed by architects and planners like Berlage as discussed by architectural historians Vincent Scully and Helen Searing.

- It is interesting to speculate how this project would have faired had it been reviewed by the early 20th century Amsterdam Committee of Aesthetics or the Committee of Urban Beauty of the Housing. They might possibly make issue that, even against the standards of massive simplicity to which the architects apparently adhered, there may still be a desire to increase its logical or aesthetic power. This asks the question of whether this project is compelling enough to go visit. Ultimately this project demonstrates a good level of effort and does successfully achieve urban and architectural sophistication and harmony. The project delivers new urbanism in the form of good neighborhood fabric and is possibly worth a special trip to visit.

Karow-Nord Suburb

By Robert Orr

The Karow-Nord suburb project, designed by Moore Ruble Yudell Architects and Planners (MRY) of Santa Monica, Calif., is as much a commentary on East German post-communist society as it is about efforts to create traditional neighborhood development (TND) in the age of sprawl. Sandwiched between the ruddy and close-knit historic village of Karow and a bleak encircling band of 1970s East German Communist Housing, Karow-Nord seems torn in two directions. It clearly sneaks cheery nods toward the tasty rural urbanism of the historic village, while glumly plumping it roots and much of its content in the communist principles of the housing blocs, which ring the perimeter. According to MRY, the project "allowed us to reexamine the German tradition of Siedlungen or large-scale housing developments." It must be said that, although communist housing, so devoid of character, seems stultifying and unfathomable to the American mind, it is much loved by the East Germans, perhaps because it is the only lifestyle they have come to know. In the end, by embracing a direction of its own, Karow-Nord forecasts the extinction of the housing blocs and, somewhat more grimly, of the adjacent historic core as well.

One of the project's designers, John Ruble of MRY, presented a thoughtful, contextual and beautifully executed project. Its namesake, the historic agrarian village of Karow in Berlin Weissensee, is just northeast of Berlin in former East Germany. Covering 983,536 square meters just north of the Karow village center, Karow-Nord suburb includes 4,800 rental units, 400 for-sale townhouse units in two- to four-story buildings, and 20,000 square meters of retail. All parking is on-street with no parking lots or structured parking. MRY furnished the master plan and the design for a few of the apartment buildings, while all remaining buildings were divvied up between some 27 local design firms. The prodigious variety of output, which this Medusaian method would suggest, manifests itself in surprising homogeneity. In fact, the humongous project looks as though it could have been designed by one hand, albeit with enough variety to form a happy contrast to the monotonous and uninspired brethren communist Siedlungen just beyond.

John's prelude included analysis of the two agrarian models influencing his project: the prewar farming village and the postwar communist work camp, which characterized the two sides flanking the project. Key points for the village model were the accumulation of buildings along a central spine, Karow Strasse, to form a linear village center. Off the spine, tree-lined streets lead to modest neighborhoods on either side. The central street, Karow Strasse, is defined by rows of stately villas embellished with shades of classical detailing, precocious for a rural model. Pictures taken behind these graceful buildings revealed a transition from the linearity of Karow Strasse to quadrangular courtyard arrangements.

But more remarkable than this geometric transition was the dramatic stylistic transition these pictures revealed. The urbane character of the street transforms to a decidedly modest scene of mud-spattered agrarian medievalism in these rear courts. Charming vernacular barns, sheds and resplendent farm paraphernalia surround picturesque barnyards. Even though the presence of these agrarian behinds can be easily explained by their clear economic foundation for the village, their contrast with the stately and, by

comparison, tight — packed streetscape only a few steps away poses a startling adjacency – Venice meets Veneto.

Key points for the communist model were shown in photographs of multifamily housing boasting an aesthetic pretty much stripped of humanity. Multistoried masonry boxes devoid of detail, save repetitive, punched-out windows, surround potholed parking areas dotted with a sparse jumble of automobiles in various stages of fatigue. The state-structured lifestyle is unrelieved by any kind of landscaping. The stark proletariat vision captured in these views was made all the more grim following so close on the heels of the vim and vigor captured in the pictures of the historic model.

MRY's Karow-Nord Suburb project, shown in drawings and photographs, makes use of its entire site with an impressively even level of development from edge to edge. The site is made up of two rectangular blocks roughly in line with one another but sheared by a continuation of Karow Strasse from the historic village, which breaks through the middle of Karow-Nord as it heads north. In both halves, two- to four-story walk-up buildings arrange themselves compactly along grids of orthogonal streets, broken by diagonal insertions that connect to the grid most often with roundabouts, not unlike the L'Enfant model for Washington and Indianapolis. The rationale for the diagonal insertions was explained to have derived from a respect for preexisting natural features, which cut through the site along these lines.

Graphically, the diagonal insertions add considerable interest to the site plan. However, they are discontinuous, being made up of sometimes-vehicular streets, sometimes-pedestrian pathways and sometimes parks or gardens, and therefore offer limited relief or organization to the actual experience of the plan at grade level.

Most successful is the scale of the project. As MRY states, "The current center of Karow is a small historic village. Our task was to integrate 5,000 new housing units, schools, recreation and shopping into this delicate context, deferring to the existing small-scale character, while making a new identity for the necessarily denser new areas." The absence of elevators keeps the project below five stories and, like the height limits set for Washington, D.C., maintains a pedestrian scale to the benefit of the streets despite the large scale of the project. The maintenance of scale also cements a good relationship with the scale of the historic village, whose scale feels similar, despite being fewer stories.

MRY works with scale further by locating denser apartment blocks toward the center of the project and smaller scale courtyard villas, modeled on the barnyards in the village, at the perimeter. Not only do these nicely scaled courtyards recall the historic village, but also they successfully break down the dense massing of the apartments to the detached single-family house scale of the existing development just outside the project. There is a certain sameness of the streets, which might have contributed greater orientation if allowed to assume a hierarchy of proportions. Hierarchical streets might also soften some of the homogeneity, which plagues the design.

Although the use of multiple German architects for the design of individual buildings did not create the variety one would expect, it does imbue the project with a distinctly European flavor, which an American architect acting alone may not

Empathy vs. Stacking

By Robert Orr

The problem with lack of commitment evidenced in Karow-Nord's design is not unique to this project, and in fact plagues most all design and development today, even the most accomplished TNDs.

It has something to do with the oft-stated remark that one can go into any pre-'50s community and discern palpable commitment to good, even great design. The same adventure into a modern suburb uncovers nothing even approaching good, much less great. Why is it that the ancients were so good at everything, or at least why does it seem that way? Are we so much stupider today? Do we lack their talent? Are we evil conspirators bent on destroying the past, or merely so limited in prowess as to grasp only the most cacophonous disorder shoved in our face as source to inspire our petty monuments to solipsism? Is public masturbation the only act we value? Do we just patiently await luxuriant suffocation under some inevitable tsunami of semen?

Personally, I don't buy the conspiracy or the slacker theories. I believe that our intellect, our education and our will to improve our lot have not declined since the admired times of our recent ancestors. In fact one could easily make a case for the opposite scenario. We have gotten better. It is exactly our improved capabilities that have gotten in our own way. The tremendous capabilities served up to us by technology have launched us inescapably into a completely different relationship with our environment.

Although we humans are largely to blame for creating this relationship, it was not out of self-conscious cynical fatalism, but born of the same simple will to better ourselves which has driven human patterns for eons. The evolving process is insidious, just as it used to be, but hugely accelerated in recent years by breathtaking advances in technology. We now have far greater powers to get things done, and much fewer encumbrances to stop us. As a result, we do not live in anything approaching the same world as our ancestors. But do we?

It used to be that when you wanted to build something you had to summon up immense effort, not to mention capabilities. Besides the same finance and property problems faced today, one had to dig, cut, carve and carry everything (by yourself or by someone you probably knew personally) from its raw in-the-ground state to its final state in a building you could use and admire. And to know how to refine, shape and assemble these raw materials … well, there were no instruction books or kits to assemble. It wasn't easy.

One had to look hard at the building next door, talk carefully to or employ people close by who had done it before, and then try to do it at least as well as others had done. Mostly things repeated, but small improvements came along, and on rare occasions people did a whole lot better, and even rarer, with some schooling, influences could include a wider margin of history and geography. But the point is, the building process was fraught with hardships and severe limitations. Judgment in the end recorded the building's success at fitting in with other buildings, and therefore at being a contributor to the community as a whole. Judgment placed no value on solipsistic expression.

The process necessitated complete empathetic immersion into the work of others. The process would explain why there is such a strong sense of the whole in any antique village and why nothing strays far from forms, which are proven to please the eye.

Today, financing and property assembly are the only hurdles in the way (excepting public opposition, whose rage and spittle counter all development, good or bad, these days). With enough money and property one can do just about anything one wishes; no physical impediments stand in the way, no feat looms too large to accomplish the most minimal of goals — acres and acres of land and

have achieved. In this regard, however, the MRY buildings curiously feel more German than buildings designed by the local architects, whose designs seem to draw instead on Dutch sources. The massing, the use of geometric glass forms within masonry masses, and the sculptural roof shapes captured in John's photos bear more relationship with 1917-1931 de Stijl and early modern Dutch housing projects, especially those of Michel de Klerk.

It is safe to say that the approach toward parking and private gardens is the most foreign to the Western eye. Participants at the conference had the most questions about the seeming anomaly of these two issues, to which John consistently responded that, "That's the way they wanted it." Parking is noticeably minimal and private gardens simply do not exist.

Even though public transportation is currently unavailable (there are fuzzy plans for the future) and therefore might suggest a higher need for automobiles, private car parking is limited — available

only on-street, with no grade parking lots, no structured parking and no private garages. John showed several small, enclosed garages in scattered locations around the project, but these are for temporary use by residents to work in or wash their cars, not dedicated for parking. Significantly, the odd use for these garages makes them fill social functions for the community. They serve as gathering places and foster contact and dialogue amongst residents, many of whom gravitate toward the garages just to meet with neighbors. The success of these garages suggests that the project might have been enhanced with the addition of other community fostering functions.

The striking lack of private gardens was explained to have derived from the fact that, for East Germans, gardens are a state-supplied amenity. As such, motivation for personal involvement with gardens that one would expect elsewhere is entirely eradicated in East Germany. The

Project: Celebration

Location: Osceola County, Fla. (Orlando metro area)

Classification: TND

Designer: Cooper, Robertson & Partners; Robert A.M. Stern Architects (Co-Master Planners)

Consultants:
Architects: Cooper, Robertson & Partners; Robert A.M. Stern Architects
Architect of Record: HKS, Inc.
Civil Engineer: Post, Buckely, Schuh & Jernigan, Inc.
Structural Engineer: HKS, Inc.
Landscape Architect: EDAW, Inc.
Graphics Consultant: Pentagram Design, Inc.
Lighting Consultant: H.M. Brandston & Partners, Inc.
General Contractor: McDevitt Street Bovis, Inc.
Pattern Book: Urban Design Associates
Town Center Bank Building Architect: Venturi, Scott, Brown & Associates
Town Center Post Office Architect: Michael Graves
Town Center Cinema Architect: Cesar Pelli & Associates
Town Center Preview Center Architect: Moore Anderson Architecs
Town Center Town Hall Architect: Philip Johnson, Ritchie & Fiore Architects
Town Inn Architect: Graham Gund Architects
Swim and Tennis Club Architect: Ham-

mond, Beeby & Babka Inc.

Developer: Disney Development Company

Design Date: 1993

Construction Begun: Spring 1995

Status: Under Construction (70 percent)

Site: 9,600 acres

Net Site Area: 4,900 acres (2,400 wetlands)
Greenbelt: 4,700 acres

Project Construction Cost: N/A

Residential: 8,065 units (a mix, breakdown not available)

Residential Price Range: mid-100Ks - 1M+

Commercial: 5.2M square feet
Office: 78K square feet (downtown), 1M (office park)
Retail: 68K square feet (downtown)

Commercial price range: NA

Public and Civic Program: 7,000 acres preserved wetlands, K - 12 school, Teacher's Academy, golf club, playground, wak/bike trail, tennis courts, pools, hospital with fitness center, downtown lake, tree save program, water recycling.

CELEBRATION (1993)

Brian Shea and Paul Whalen.

Photo: Rick Hall

Cooper Robertson & Partners

Cooper, Robertson & Partners is a 70-person architecture and urban design firm in New York City. The firm has executed major architectural and urban design commissions for universities, museums, and new town developments as well as private residences since its inception in 1979. The principals combine significant experience in government and academic administration with private practice experience, acting as representatives for development clients both public and private. Clients benefit from the firm's ability to blend design capabilities with the familiarity and skills required to navigate public, institutional and private arenas.

Robert A.M. Stern Architects

Robert A.M. Stern Architects is a 140-person firm of architects, landscape architects, interior designers and support staff. The firm's practice is premised on the belief that the public is entitled to buildings that do not, by their very being, threaten the aesthetic and cultural values of the buildings around them.

This discussion is limited to five topics commonly confronted by designers of new communities. They include 1) plan form and infrastructure; 2) mixed-use vs. multi-use; 3) town centers and retail programs; 4) multi-family housing; 5) building types; architecture; and codes. Positive and negative aspects of each topic are included. Only physical design issues are raised; although as important, issues of marketing, ownership entity and management, and social/demographic/equity issues are not addressed here.

Positives

• Plan form and infrastructure: The plan responds in specific ways to the unique features of the land. Because of the site's isolated conditions and lack of historic development, the land's features become the history of the site and serve to shape the plan. Thus tree stands, wetlands, cypress heads and water determine the physical framework of the plan. The land is essentially an archipelago of islands, connected by several large-scaled roads and parkways. Each piece is highly idiosyncratic in shape and character and is given special design emphasis.

• Mixed-use vs. multi-use: Celebration provides a mixed-use village comprised of residential neighborhoods, retail services and cultural and recreational services within a walkable village setting.

• Town center and retail program: A compact, mixed-use town center was built out in the initial phase of Celebration, establishing the focal point for Village I at the lake and wetlands shore. Based on a small-scaled building format, over 26 buildings were developed on three mixed-use blocks — buildings at the perimeter framing streets and open spaces while screening out the required grade parking in the middle of the blocks. A variety of mixed-use buildings (retail shops with apartments above), smaller office buildings and apartment houses become the "background" buildings of the town, while civic and iconic buildings (church, post office, town hall, cinema, etc.) are located on prominent sites to orchestrate one's passage through town.

• Multi-family housing: The Town Center provides smaller-scaled, individually designed apartment buildings and mixed-use buildings, integrated with and highly responsive to adjacent commercial buildings, as well as single family residential neighborhoods. Ground floors were designed with taller floor to floor heights (12'6" to 15'0") to allow conversion to future retail or professional offices as the Town Center builds out.

• Building types, architecture, and codes: Celebration's Village I neighborhoods developed a variety and mix of housing within a small-scaled street/block/alley pattern (bungalows and cottages, village and estate houses, townhouses and apartments) in any given precinct of the Village. Here, there is a clear place-making strategy integrated with residential codes, i.e., linking a place (a street, square or park) with lot specific types and sizes, house types, architectural styles and architectural standards. A family of styles was identified and housing experts extracted the essence and digested the essential elements of these styles. The Celebration Pattern Book was created, a type of code appropriate to the owner/builder entity (i.e. The Disney Company), establishing community, architectural, and landscape standards by style and lot size/type while raising the bar and the level of quality for national builders.

Weaknesses

• Plan form and infrastructure: The plan form that results (streets, blocks, open space) is highly idiosyncratic, curvilinear, and picturesque vs. a more straightforward exploration of the simple orthogonal grid modified by site characteristics. Also, although a street hierarchy was established, the road network tends to be large-scaled, overly engineered, and with little gradient from rural to urban in design detail.

• Mixed-use vs. multi-use: The southern connector, an elevated highway, severely impacts the center of the site. As a result, larger-scaled, auto-oriented uses (i.e., office, office/flex, hotel and retail) are located at the edge of town as a buffer to the highway, rather than integrated into the fabric of the town.

• Town center and retail program: The retail program was a bit of an unknown, the fear being either to build too much or too little retail, without enough parking. As a retail operation, the Town Center's lack of exposure and access from highly traveled roads (State Route192, in this case) has forced the location of a larger retail center at the periphery of Celebration, isolated from the "center of town" and its residential neighborhoods. Another shortfall has been the inability to seed the outlying residential neighborhoods with neighborhood retail centers. Everyone must drive (or bike) to town (and now to State Route 192) to shop.

• Multi-family housing: In later phases, larger-scaled apartment "complexes," located in "super blocks" have weakened the original concept of a mix of housing types, incomes and lifestyles within a compact village setting. Built by single (usually regional or national) developers and builders, of repetitive building types, construction and styles, these complexes are more "suburban" and "project"-like and are isolated rather than more fully integrated into a neighborhood setting.

• Building types, architecture, and codes: The results can appear too stiff, too repetitive, "mass produced," "built-all-at-once," with little room for the more idiosyncratic, one-of-a-kind, more authentic, innovative results of a single owner or small-scaled builder approach. Mass produced houses compromised in the use of more traditional materials and execution of construction details. Also, there is surprisingly little flexibility and variety of lot size and house type on a block-by-block basis in earlier phased neighborhoods. And, some have argued, there are too many styles, particularly when a variety of styles are executed on any one street or place. The most useful and memorable places (i.e., Verandah Place) are those in which architectural style, house type and massing are singular and consistent.

Critique by **Brian Shea**

Peer Review | Comments on Celebration

By Todd Zimmerman

Celebration presents as many questions as answers concerning the potential for the principles of the new urbanism to bring about meaningful changes in American settlement patterns. That said, it might have done more to bring the new urbanism to the awareness of conventional builders, developers and the general population than any other single project.

It should be noted that Celebration is commonly marginalized in many quarters as a "special case." This is the result of a number of factors stemming from the fame, mystique and supposed unlimited access to capital of its sponsor, the Walt Disney

Company: the 15 years of planning with famous and expensive consultants and designers; the elaborate and sometimes peculiar "signature" buildings designed by "name" architects; the establishment of the town center through brute force in defiance of market economics. The inability to determine the precise impact of the "halo effect" of the Disney name was the reason that Celebration was excluded from consideration in the 1999 Eppli and Tu hedonic pricing study of communities designed according to the principles of the new urbanism, published as *Valuing the New Urbanism* by the Urban Land Institute.

Despite the vaunted design and development expertise underlying it, Celebration — in common with many other properties purported to be designed according to the principles of the new urbanism — is remarkably conventional when seen in plan; it consists of single-use areas artfully arranged without intervening buffers to provide the impres-

sion of a small town. As such, it is an excellent example of an "engineered," as opposed to "organic," integrated-use settle-

The Designer's Review of Celebration

By Brian Shea

Celebration is a new community planned and built by the Disney Company, located south of the theme parks of Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla. The approved plan was completed in 1992-93.

Overall Plan Organization

The master plan comprises 10,000 acres — 2,300 acres north and 7,800 acres south of I-4. Essentially a conservation plan, over 7,000 acres are set aside as wetlands, leaving 3,000 net acres available for development. The plan responds in a very specific way to the unique features of the land. Because of the site's isolated conditions and lack of historic development, the land and landscape features become the history of the site and serve to shape the plan. Thus natural tree stands, wetlands, cypress heads and waterbodies become its physical framework. The land is essentially "an archipelago of islands" in a "sea of green," each piece highly idiosyncratic in shape and character. The vast wetlands to the south provide the natural edge, the "coastline" providing an unimpacted view that will remain pristine forever. Overlaid on this complex pattern is enormous infrastructure — an interstate highway, I-4, the Southern Connector, State Route 192, powerlines and gas line easements. This further divides the land, and in this case, the elevated Southern Connector severely impacts the entire central portion of the site. Strategies for the disposition of uses (i.e. larger-scaled, auto oriented, specialized single uses, and districts) have been to locate them close to these major roads, while the smaller-scaled residential neighborhoods are focused inward, towards the wetlands.

A third layer contains the waterbodies, either existing or created as a "natural" system for water retention and drainage. The strategy here was to combine water features and have them line the wetlands to increase the sense of natural edge as well as to enhance the view south from the settlement towards the wetlands. This also involves water as a design device and civic feature in the creation of the town center lake, Water Street canal, the water course on the road to town, and as a focus for residential neighborhood settings.

The overall plan is organized about a series of boulevards and parkways, open spaces and parks, which connect this archipelago of islands. Celebration Boulevard serves as the road "outside of town," which lines "highway world" linking a series of special-use commercial, heath campus and retail districts. Celebration Avenue (the road to town) and Main Street (through town) link a series of residential communities adjacent to and oriented to the wetlands coastline. The mixed-use town center and village are centrally located on the largest undisturbed piece of developable land.

Village One and Town Center Plan

The Phase One Village contains several residential neighborhoods, the mixed-use town center, and many of the community's civic, institutional and recreational facilities within a compact walkable pedestrian environment. The Village takes both town plan and architectural clues from a host of precedents found in Southeastern and Florida towns, including Charleston, Beaufort, Savannah, Madison, Coral Gables, Winter Park, St. Augustine and New Orleans. The Village is pushed as close to the wetlands as possible to take advantage of this amenity. A lake becomes the focal point of the town center at the wetlands edge. The Village is framed on each side by wetlands fingers, which give size and definition to the settlement. A golf course serves as a greenbelt buffer to the highway and as a public open space for the adjacent neighborhoods. Rather than privatizing its edges, the golf course is fronted by a parkway, house fronts and trail system. Two town greens flank the town center: one serves as a setting for a community church, the other as the public face of the community school. The plan is organized about two axes, an east/west Main Street and a north/south Water Street and canal, tying clubhouse to lake. The crossing of these two streets is marked by a square and becomes the focal point for the town center. Here is where the mixed-use retail and commercial are located as well as civic and institutional buildings. Also, here is the location of the higher density housing — apartments, townhouses, and flats above shops.

Celebration Avenue is orchestrated as the main street through town. It purposefully threads its way through the landscape. Starting from US-192, the road leads through open land, wetlands and cypress heads, following a water course leading to a bridge through the wetlands. As one gets nearer to the town center, the main street bends to the water and is lined on one side by large houses with wetlands on the other side, then houses on both sides, then onto the larger buildings of the town center. All the icons of a small town — church, bank, town hall, post office, office buildings, clock tower and school — are given prominent sites and become visual and civic markers on the passage through town. After passing the town square at the crossing of Canal and Water Streets, the road proceeds west through town to the next residential village.

Village One is comprised of a series of special places set within a modified radial grid. Small parks and squares, embedded wetlands, plus a variety of streets, parkways and boulevards become the setting for a variety of housing types and settings. All are focused on and within a five- to ten-minute walk of the mixed-use town center.

Residential Neighborhoods

Phase One Village contains a series of residential neighborhoods, which embrace and surround the town center. Several key plan principles were applied to these neighborhoods, including:

a. The creation of a variety of residential settings and places within a modified grid radiating from the lake and town center.

b. A hierarchy of street types, from a golf course parkway, boulevard with canal, tree-lined, two-way streets, narrow one-way lanes, mews and alleys .

c. A mix of house types, lot and house sizes, from single-family estates to apartments. This also provides a wide

Vision Keeper

Joe Barnes
Former Celebration Town Architect

Early last December, I made that most American of pilgrimages – the family trip to Walt Disney World. Although my boys were anxious to tour the Magic Kingdom and meet the characters, they were nowhere near as anxious as I was to walk the streets of Celebration. It had been almost two years since I left had Celebration to move to Mount Pleasant, S.C., to work on I'On. As I exited Interstate 4, I experienced the same nervous feeling one must get walking into a high school reunion and knowing that your high school sweet heart is there with their new spouse. After all, working on, thinking about and living in Celebration had occupied over six years of my life – a much longer period of time than most teenage romances. I had many unanswered questions about what had taken place in Celebration after my departure. How had the town grown and matured? Did people enjoy living and working there? How did it look? What did the future hold for Celebration?

When I reach Celebration, I was struck by how little and how much it had changed at the same time. Everything was is in the same place, just a little different. The street trees were bigger. The lawns and shrubs a little shaggier (a relative term for the well-manicured lawns and gardens of Celebration). There had been some turnover in some of the shops and restaurants in Downtown Celebration. The kids playing in the parks and playgrounds were a bit bigger and playing different games. For a while, it felt like I had not left at all. In addition to these subtle changes, some major pieces of the overall Masterplan were in place. The Celebration Presbyterian Church, the Water Street Apartments, and the Celebration Hotel had been built, filling some of the major gaps that existed when I had left the town. Celebration looked good and felt good. The town I had worked on for so long was active and vibrant. The visual and spatial relationships we had spent so much time studying, designing, arguing about and often redesigning were, for the most part, working. But more important than the emerging quality of the visual and spatial relationships, were the social and spiritual relationships emerging in the town.

During the initial planning stage of Celebration,

Charleston, Savannah, Beaufort, Winter Park, Coral Gables and Key West, I discovered places that were not only beautiful but that had the ability to retain and enhance real estate values. These places were not just pretty and economically successful. They were places people were proud of and felt connected with. The residents of these places had developed what I like to call "emotional equity" in their neighborhoods, villages and towns.

Celebration is definitely a place where people can build up overtime and use it to enhance their lives. This ability to establish and build an emotional equity account in Celebration can be illustrated by my son Harry's reaction when we parked the car and walked down Market Street. Harry was barely 3 years old when we moved from Celebration. I was confident that he would remember little if anything from the time we lived in Celebration in a third floor apartment above Gooding's Grocery store. As with most things my son says or does, I was surprised by his reaction. He remembered people, places and events. He found our old apartment and his bedroom without assistance, he found the playgrounds we use to play in, he recognized some old friends, and he recounted some of the events we attended. In short, Harry's emotional equity account was still open. While we were in Celebration, Harry felt like he was back home. Perhaps Harry felt like he was back home because Celebration is a memorable place with character and depth – a place vested with the power to enhance the lives of its citizens.

During my short stay in Central Florida I also discovered several things that could have been, and can still be, improved upon. These maxims could help to remedy these things:

Use the Pattern Book as a tool, not as a benchmark.

We conceived the Pattern Book as a way to educate architects, builders and homeowners about some of the basic design principles of the town. This document enunciated the residential architectural vision for Celebration. While the Pattern Book was a valuable tool used in the architectural education of the people designing and building houses in Celebration – many of whom had not seen a well-designed house in quite a while – it did not inspire as many as we had hoped. The Pattern Book was meant to be a starting point, a "floor," for

I had the difficult task of traveling to some of the most beautiful and cherished places in the southeastern United States, places that were to serve as precedents and inspiration for Celebration. During my visits to places like

Peer Review | The Celebration Debate

By Andrés Duany

Celebration is perhaps the most prominent and certainly the most controversial of the second-generation new urbanist communities. Along with Harbor Town, Kentlands, Haile Plantation, Southern Village, Newpoint and Laguna West, Celebration followed Seaside by approximately eight years. They collectively offer corrections to the problems and deficiencies of Seaside and a furtherance of its promise.

Controversies have swirled around Celebration since its inception, eliciting two full-length books ("The Celebration Chronicles" by Andrew Ross and "Celebration, U.S.A." by Douglas Frantz and Catherine Collins) as well as countless articles. This discussion intends to clarify the principal issues, separating the intentions and actualities of the plan from the popular sport of shadowboxing the developer who promoted it — the Disney Corporation.

Celebration had a very long gestation, indeed a prehistory. Its genesis was in the late 1960s when the Disney Corporation purchased some 27,000 acres in central Florida nearby the then-quiet city of Orlando. Following the success of Disneyland in Anaheim, Walt Disney began conceiving a second-generation theme park in Florida. It may be remembered that the design establishment of the time (less cynical than today's) had admired Disneyland. In the influential essay by Charles Moore, "You Have To Pay For The Public Life" (*Perspecta 10 – Yale Architectural Journal*), Disneyland was proposed as a surrogate public realm. The planning profession (at its technocratic peak, before Jane Jacobs) heartily approved of the crowd handling, the transportation interfaces, and the amazing monorail. Disneyland was hailed for its potential to influence actual communities. This praise must have affected Walt Disney, for he envisioned the Florida project to include a habitable new town to be called EPCOT (Experimental Prototype Community Of Tomorrow).

EPCOT was to embody the most advanced planning techniques; indeed, it was the kind of futurist vision possible to contemplate only in the heyday of the space program (Cape Canaveral is about one hour from Orlando). It was a remarkable project, not least because it could have been built. The design was completed to the extent that plans, renderings and a model were prepared and, with Walt Disney serving as narrator, a short film was produced.[1]

Disney's unexpected death in 1966 halted the process, and the generation of administrators that followed him, either lacking the vision or perhaps having the good sense not to attempt an urban experiment at such a scale, shelved everything but the name. EPCOT was eventually built as another theme park, or more precisely, a turn-of-the-century-style world's fair of the sort where different countries are represented by surrogate pieces of their architecture, food, artifacts, and inhabitants in native costume for the delight and instruction of the visitors. EPCOT does this rather well, but it is not a community intended for habitation, let alone a demonstration of visionary urbanism.

The idea died for a couple of decades until the advent of yet another generation of management — the present one under Disney Corporation CEO Michael Eisner. Eisner assembled a staff that was, arguably, the equal to Walt Disney in vision. He set about to fulfilling the potential of the company, including the revival of the idea of building a model city.

Eisner's first step was to restore to America the role of architectural patron.[2] This involved the retention of first-rate architects for various Disney office buildings, hotels and even some park structures. Under the new entity of Disney Development Company and president Peter Rummell, Wing Chao and others served as architectural advisors. Graves, Venturi, Stern, Gwathmey, Gehry, Isosaki and other such illustrissimos, designed buildings. The critical success of this venture probably emboldened Eisner to the resuscitation of the new town idea, but one that could hardly be more different from the original EPCOT.

Some say Celebration would not have been undertaken were it not for the need to maximize the value of Disney's enormous land holdings. After every conceivable idea for theme parks, hotels and office parks had been allocated, there was still substantial territory left over. Another, more intricate story involves a geopolitical scenario where two additional interchanges on I-4 would open up this sector of the Disney holdings for development but only if a project as appealing as Celebration was to be proposed.[3] Both of these are plausible scenarios. The latter, if true, was a brilliant strategic move, as two exits were duly granted — one for a new entry, in addition to a major new toll way connected directly to the airport (The Greenway). This sort of move is no less than a responsible development company would make in the vast game that is the urbanization process in the Sunbelt. There is nothing dishonorable about it.

Even beyond the prehistory and the elaborate permitting maneuvers, the incubation of Celebration was unusually protracted, taking over eight years. This was due to the careful consideration of every aspect, and perhaps also to excessive caution with the marriage between the then-impeccable Disney reputation with the tainted trade of Florida development.

The design process was not only long; it was also elaborate. To create Celebration, a new design team was assembled. Peter Rummell had been brought in to head Disney Development from a career with Arvida, the most prestigious of Florida's real estate development companies. He was seconded throughout by Tom Lewis, formerly head of Florida's Department of Community Affairs and an architect with a record of public service. They began by holding an invited competition to choose the firm who would design this prestigious Disney project. Invited were Robert A. M. Stern & Associates, Gwathmey/Siegel, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) and Edward D. Stone Jr. What DPZ would do was assumed, but to the evident surprise of the Disney Development team, all but one competitor (Ed Stone's was a conven-

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Barnes, previous page

residential design in Celebration. Unfortunately, it became a "ceiling" for many. And while it is difficult to find a poorly designed house in Celebration, it is also difficult to find a house that is truly superior in design. The Pattern Book should be used as tool in conjunction with individual design knowledge, passion and exploration. It is not the end-all and be-all of how to design a house. In practice, this maxim means that those responsible for administering the design guidelines need to encourage more creativity and discovery by those using the guidelines and to not encourage people to simply "study for the test."

Increase the mix and variety of adjacent lot, house and street types.

Celebration has become a more monotonous place as it has grown. The scale and design of the streets, houses and lots are too repetitive. Some of this can be avoided and corrected by mixing things up a bit more. At the time when Celebration Village, the first section of Celebration, was being designed, the thought of putting lots and houses of various sizes and price points in close proximity was a radical idea. People, both internal and external to the project, thought we were crazy and would not be able to sell the lots and houses at the prices and pace called for. Design and marketing decisions lead us to make sure similar lot types/sizes were across the street from each other and that the transition between lot types/sizes occurred at the alleys. The end result in Celebration Village was a series of attractive, well-scaled streets and parks lined with similarly sized houses.

As Celebration grew and other sections were developed, this rule of "like lots facing like lots" created too much of a good thing, and everything started to look the same. Since it will be difficult to get many of the production builders to completely change the design and detailing of their houses, inserting a finer and looser grain of lot types, sizes and configurations within the network of streets and parks will create a bit more texture, diversity and visual interest in the neighborhoods. A lot that is too small or too difficult for a production builder to put one of their houses on is a great opportunity for insertion of a unique, custom-designed house. This practice will add much needed character and diversity to the town.

Recruit builders who want to do smaller custom-designed/custom-built homes.

Celebration has no minimum square footage requirements. If desired, you could put the smallest house on the largest lot in the town. Even though Celebration does not have a "minimum square footage requirement," the builders in Celebration have fallen into the trap of making sure the house is proportional to the lot size and that custom houses have to be big and expensive. It is almost impossible to find a builder who wants to build a custom-designed house that is less than 3,500 square feet. A buyer who wants a small, well-detailed house has nowhere to go. Either they have to build a larger than needed custom house and spread their dollars over unneeded square footage instead of spending it on quality details, materials and design features, or they have to buy a smaller production house and try to retrofit it to meet their design vision. Neither option is good for the buyer or the neighborhood. Bringing in builders who want to focus on building smaller houses would allow Celebration to increase its visual and social diversity.

Use the architectural design principles around the entire house.

One of the great accomplishments of Celebration was to improve the level of architectural design and detailing for large regional and national production builders. Up until Celebration, custom or small volume builders built most of the houses in new urbanist communities. In order to achieve many of the goals of the town, we needed large production builders as part of the team.

The production builders were understandably apprehensive about Celebration's design requirements. We had an 88-page Pattern Book and an affinity for using talented and high priced architects. In order to alleviate these fears, we set some boundaries on the design review process. We made our expectations and areas of paramount concern very clear to the builders. As community developers, we were primarily concerned with the design and detailing of the portions of the house that created the public realm or could be seen from the public realm. We focused most of our attentions on the first 20 feet of depth of house. What ever happened to the inside of the house or beyond the first 20 feet really was up to the builders.

While Celebration arguably has the best designed production housing in any new urbanist community, our failure to have the same design principles applied to the entire house created a number of situations where the houses have "Queen Anne" fronts and "Mary Anne" backs. Transitions and connections are awkward and unresolved, and the massing and roof configurations are complicated and expensive. In the end you get something that is not as attractive and probably cost more. We were successful in getting the builders to see value in paying attention to the fronts of the houses, and I am confident that, if we pressed the issue, we would be successful is getting them to see value in designing the rest of the house with appropriate massing, portions and detailing.

Continue to do research, challenge earlier decisions and principles in an ef-
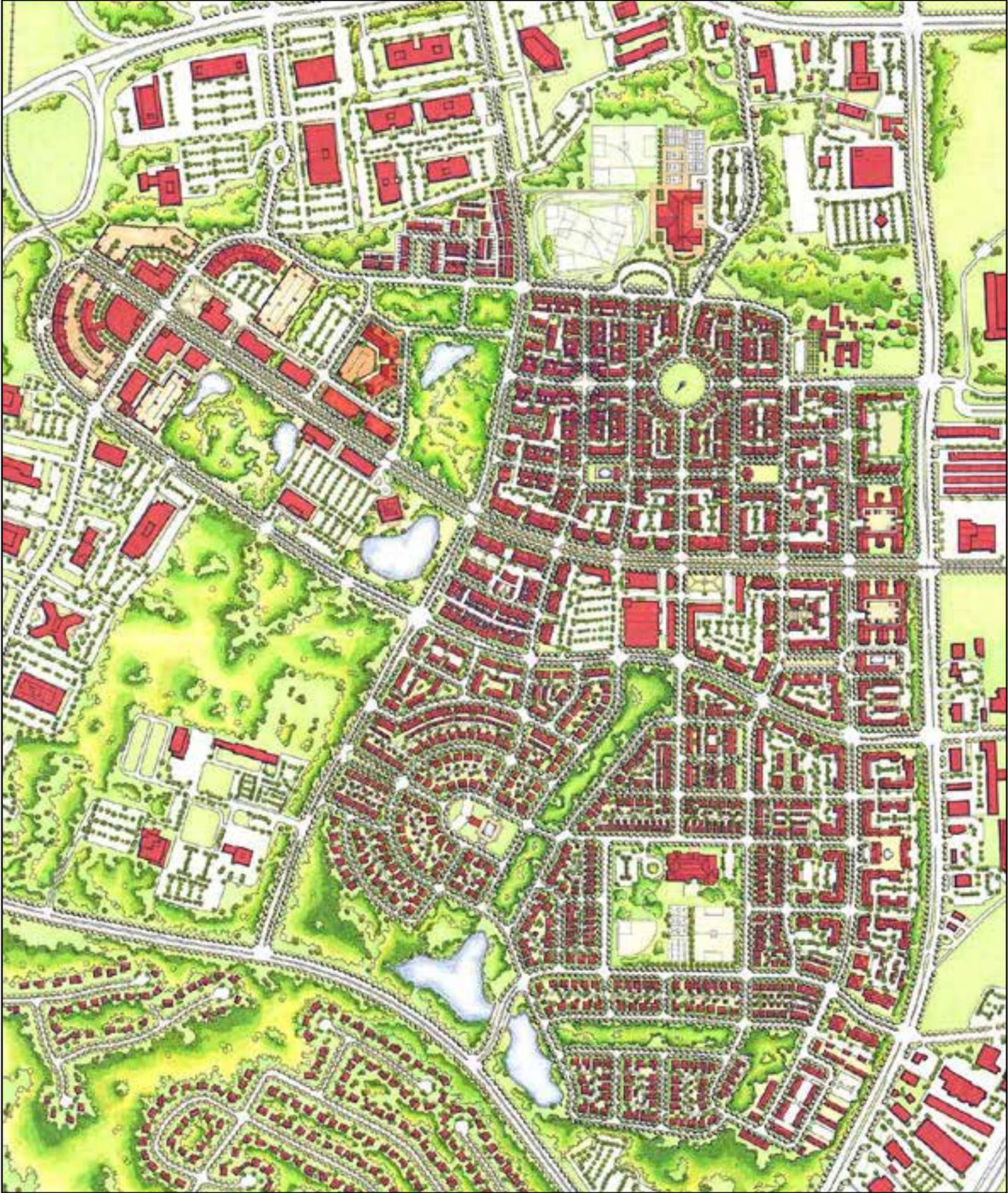
Project: King Farm

Location: Rockville, MD (Washington, D.C., area)

Classification: Suburban Infill TOD

Designer: Torti Gallas and Partners · CHK

Consultants: Loiederman Associates (civil engineering), Land Design (landscape architecture)

Architects: Torti Gallas and Partners · CHK

Developer: Penrose/Pritzker – King Farm Associates

Design Date: mid-1990s

Construction Begun: November 1996

Status: Under Construction

Site: 440 acres

Project Construction Cost: $400 million

Residential: 3,200 units
Houses: 425
Rowhouses: 825
Apartments: 1,950 (1,100 rental/850 condo)
Live/Work Units:

Residential Price Range (Initial Target):
$150K - $600K

Commercial: 3,125,000 square feet
Office: 3 million square feet
Retail: 125K square feet

Commercial price range: NA

Public and Civic Program: Parks (150 acres), elementary school, middle school, two proposed light-rail stops.

KING FARM (1995)

John Torti presenting.

Torti Gallas and Partners · CHK

Torti Gallas and Partners · CHK, Inc.'s design philosophy is based on the inextricable relationship between urban design and architecture. We are dedicated to the holistic design of the built environment, which includes both the responsible development of greenfield sites at the edges of our metropolitan areas and the revitalization and redevelopment of our inner cities and suburbs. In all, Torti Gallas has designed over 325,000 residential units and planned over 450 residential and mixed-use communities.

As architects, we design residences and public buildings to be functionally and aesthetically innovative, economically sensible, and a delight to the user. As master planners and urban designers, we ensure that our buildings, neighborhoods and campuses contribute to the cities and towns of which they are a part -- aesthetically, socially and economically. As a market-focused firm, our partners have specialized expertise in the development and design of new towns and villages, neighborhoods, campuses, homes, Main Streets, workplaces, senior living residences, and civic and institutional buildings.

In addition to the 250 design awards with which the firm has been honored throughout its history, in the last five years we have received national design recognition from a variety of prestigious professional organizations and magazines.

The Good

• It is a TOD – A 10-minute walk from Washington D.C. Metro station and includes the first two stations of a future light rail from the Metro station to Northern Montgomery County.

• The plan has a very clear diagram that organizes the neighborhoods, the center and the circulation. Basically, it is the simple Cardo and Decumanus concept.

• King Farm is being built by a range of national, regional and local builders. This has given it a tremendous ability to build at the enormous pace of the strong market in the last six years and also creates a modest amount of diversity.

• King Farm is a true mixed-use town. There will be two jobs for every adult resident. There is a balanced mix of live-work-shop-play activities.

• There is a good process of review and approval of the architectural design.

The Bad

• Employment neighborhoods are separated from residential neighborhoods.

• Better control is needed of vinyl and architectural detailing.

• The Town Center should have been designed by multiple architects.

• The siting of single-family houses could have had better fit with block shape and grades, especially the houses with connected rear garages.

• Buildings turn their back on Route 355 (main arterial road in region).

Critique by **John Francis Torti, Robert Goodill, Cheryl O'Neill**
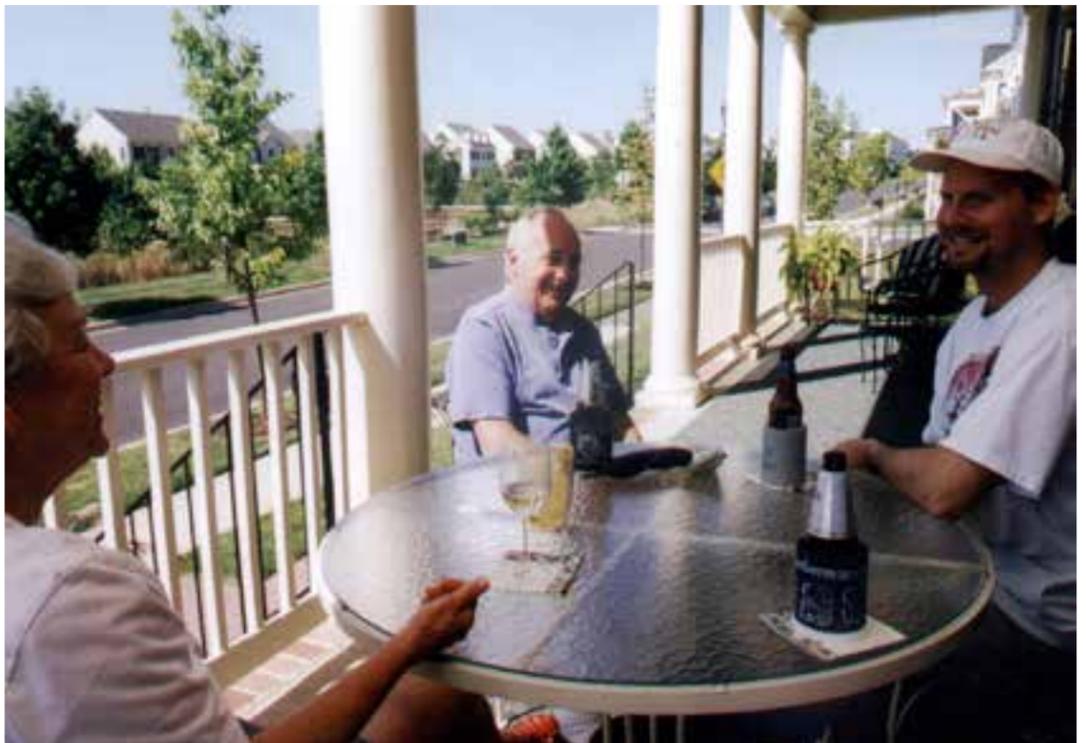
The comprehensive plan.

Vision Keeper

Vision Keeper Vince Graham once made the observation that new urbanist communities differ from conventional suburban development in that, as they are built, the vision becomes reality and the addition of more streets and blocks of the town only serves to strengthen the livability of the place. Public space and the public realm become real, tangible places for real-life experiences. Conventional suburban development evolves only as a compromise of the original vision, the myth of the individual inhabiting the wide open landscape diminished with the addition of each building.

So it is with King Farm, a new urbanist development in Rockville, Md., just now beginning to reveal its street network and system of public squares and parks. The completion of each phase of the development has seen the addition of a richer texture of housing types, both for-sale and rental, addressing a wide cross-section of the residential market in the region. The Village Square will provide a diverse array of retail, anchored by a supermarket and apartment buildings above retail stores in most locations. Office buildings simply conceived to line the sidewalk and offer ground level retail and restaurant opportunities screen parking from prominent public views and contribute to a rich texture of life throughout the day.

New urbanist communities not only have an ob-

Matthew Bell
Former Town Architect
for King Farm

ligation to their ideological basis, but also to their place in the market. If such acceptance in the market place is any indication of the success of King Farm, then by almost any measure one must conclude that the project is a big success.

A few simple rules guide the vision of King Farm. First, buildings and landscape must be conceived to support the urban pattern and the fabric of the town. They are judged as such. Buildings make the space of the street. Landscape plays a supporting role. Second, allow the pedestrian and the car a simple detant. Providing for the car is a reality, but intelligent rules regarding its behavior are necessary. Third, tame the distorted, gyrating single-family house, so often found with oodles of gables and too many doo-dads, and make it respectable, as though it had been here all along. (The sum of the parts is always greater than any singular effort). And finally, provide a program of places to live, work, study and recreate all within the community, and all reachable on foot.

King Farm may never congeal into the kind of community its designers initially conceived. Far too many variables out of the direct control of the designers exist for such predictability. However, King Farm at least offers the possibility for community and a real sense of place to occur, too often missing in the world as its built today.

Peer Review | King Farm Urbanism - Striking Though Incomplete

By Steven Hurtt and Peter Hetzel

Most new urban developments have been so non-urban in size, density and location that their failures at creating anything approaching true urbanism can be forgiven, while their successes in challenging sprawl deserve high praise. Typically, their successes are internal: They lie in their design of neighborhoods and the adaptation of a variety of building types and traditional urban forms to provide a wider range of housing, use types, street infrastructure, civic facilities and pedestrian realms that promote community. Just as typically, their failures are external, commonly caused by a cultural, regulatory, planning and political context.

King Farm, one of the largest new urban developments built to date, has both a site and permitted density that enable it to achieve a level of urbanism which is striking though incomplete. Located near a heavy rail transit station in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C., the potential for making the area around this Metro station a truly urban place and the failure to do so is made manifest by King Farm's presence and success.

Transit and the Culture of Sprawl

The failures are rooted in the planning culture of sprawl that preceded King Farm's development. First among these is the Montgomery County zoning code, which promotes low density, segregates use types, and locates use types in relation to auto rather than transit access. The second is the Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority's design attitude toward rail stations, which follows rather than leads development and envisions new stations as serving bedroom commuter havens rather than local or regional town centers.

King Farm and vicinity begs to be developed as an urban place. It is located in an extraordinary transportation corridor served by three parallel rail and road ways: on the west by I-270; on the east by the Metro line and Shady Grove stop; and between them by a major arterial, Route 355. (Route 355 originates on the banks of the Potomac in Washington D.C., and links the older communities of Bethesda, Rockville, Gaithersburg and Frederick).

But the land-use pattern predetermined by Montgomery County for the King Farm site placed office development parallel to the I-270 corridor (following developer preference for a visual presence on that corridor) rather than centered on the Metro station. And the Metro station is designed exclusively for buses and cars. There is no evidence of an urban vision here; no hint that the Route 355 corridor and Metro

station could be a pedestrian-oriented urban place with a dense concentration of mixed uses. One can imagine an urban place, a Main Street, a grid of intensely developed blocks, major intersections and plazas, all centered on and served by Metro. While Route 355 in Rockville is a six-lane arterial, in other locales along its length it is a Main Street. The model and opportunity should have been apparent. The urban pretensions of King Farm now dramatize the non-urban, even anti-urban conceit of the Shady Grove Metro station.

While King Farm today shows little built intention of creating an urban frontage on Route 355, the plan provides the type of urban street and block structure that makes such a transformation feasible. Multiple entrances are located along 355. Long rectangular blocks and a new boulevard parallel 355. As is true throughout King Farm, the block structure is one that can enable future density increases, whereas conventional sprawl cannot.

If there is good news it is that King Farm manifests a change in this sprawl culture. We are told that Montgomery County, the city of Rockville, and the developer worked together to enable city annexation of the King Farm site and thereby a higher density than permitted by county regulations.

The Plan

Like many new urban developments, King Farm's signal success is its urban plan. The street pattern generally takes the form of a grid, an interconnected network separated into small blocks. While the grid pattern is clear and memorable, no street is so continuous or unrelieved by incident (topographic, ecological-landscape, slight curvature, or identifiable community building) that one would confuse this place with a pre-1940s platted grid town or city. It has that "designed suburb" feel, where the conditional is not left accidental, but is used to create focus, closure or picturesque effect.

The streets vary considerably in width, their size related to the amount of traffic and quantity of parking needed, not some universal standard. Neighborhoods have clear centers and importantly the center of one neighborhood is visually

linked to at least one other, so one never gets the sense of a neighborhood removed and isolated from the larger community. There is a homogeneity of building type and a related lack of that mix of building types on single blocks so common to real urban environments because the higher density apartment blocks are concentrated on a street that parallels 355 and in a central east-west band that includes the town center retail.

The Neighborhoods and Their Centers

If neighborhoods are understood by their boundaries and their centers, it is easy to pick out King Farm's neighborhoods. On the plan, three major neighborhood spatial centers are readily identified: one a circle, one a horseshoe, one a large square with an elementary school. The circle-centered neighborhood is not yet begun. The horseshoe-centered neighborhood is almost entirely completed. The large, square-centered neighborhood is nearing completion, but the elementary school is not yet evident. Each central space is on or near a topographic highpoint, intentionally making each the more significant. The houses facing these spaces were evidently coded to have porches, and the effect is one not only of architectural consistency, but one that suggest this place has a clarity of social and civic purpose. Who else would choose to live in such a place?

Civic Buildings

One of the challenges of new urbanism is re-creating uses and forms that are "civic" in use and character. While it is not clear whether today's culture will not support the traditional forms of town hall and church/temple, it is clear that developers no longer see these forms as important "amenities" to sales or part of their responsibility.

Looking to developer's amenities and to an historic pattern of "civic" community structures, new urbanists have converted a range of uses to serve as central "civic" buildings. Often little more than developer amenity community pools, meeting and exercise rooms, they are re-conceived as central and made architecturally important. King Farm uses this pattern. Of those "civic" buildings built, the most successful is central to the horseshoe-shaped neighborhood center. Taking advantage of a fall in topography, a grand room and a grand façade are located above the exercise, pool and locker areas. Those that are one story only have much less presence but nevertheless provide neighborhood focus.

Connections

One of the challenges for any new urban project is how it connects to and faces the rest of the world. Does it succeed in connecting to and facing that world? Or does it fail because it has no through roads that connect it to the surrounding road network and adjacent communities? Does it fail like most suburban developments, with a gated mentality and form separating it from the larger community and turning inward to turn a back rather than a face to the rest of the world?

Of the 11 entrances to King Farm, nearly half could be considered continuous with other roads. Most significant of these is Redland Road, which is made one of the two parallel boulevards that traverses King Farm — the other, one block to the north, is designed to receive a light rail transit line. Redland Road is one possible route between I-270 and the Metro. When the remaining neighborhood segment is built out, it will be these parallel boulevards and the block between that are the core of King Farm. Much of the higher density apartment blocks are gathered along these roads. Between is the town center and public square surrounded by King Farm's retail. But this must have been one of those hard choices. While it centers the retail in King Farm, it also locates that retail further away from the Metro location and Route 355.

The Town Center

King Farm's retail shops are centrally located between two major east-west boulevards that cross the site. One boulevard,

By David Brain

There is no doubt King Farm is an impressive example of the new urbanism's success on a number of fronts, a clear indication of the growing acceptance of new urbanist principles as we see these "second generation" projects realized.

First, it is impressive in its scope and scale, including 3,200 dwelling units along with 3 million square feet of office and 125,000 square feet of commercial space. It includes two schools: an elementary and a middle school. Although we were told the residential component of the project dominates the *pro forma*, the project promises to provide for employment at the rate of three jobs for every dwelling unit. The project offers a mix of housing types, covering a healthy price range enforced, in part, by inclusionary zoning that requires 15 percent of the housing units to be "affordable."

Second, it is impressive not only in the relative completeness of its mix of uses, but also in the extent to which all of the pieces are apparently being realized nearly simultaneously. The developer has chosen to pursue a strategy based on the model of Celebration, encouraged by example to complete the town center as a way of increasing land values and sales. The commercial component has proceeded apace, with two 150,000 square foot office buildings already in place. The successful engagement of production builders has made it possible to build the residential component very quickly, presumably enabling the town center to come to life almost immediately.

Third, we are told that the project has been a financial success, selling out the residential component in five years, and that the designers are continuing to work with the developers to fine tune some of the minor mistakes made as a result of the familiar resistance to new urbanist principles in the first phase. It seems clear the financial success of the project so far has been crucial to the designers' ability to continue to instruct the developers on principles of good urbanism. We can reasonably hope future phases will be even better as a result of this process of learning by experience. Likewise, we can hope continued financial success encourages other developers to learn from King Farm, the same way the King Farm developers learned from Celebration.

Finally, it is nice to see a transit oriented development that has more than one light rail stop proposed within its boundaries, with the line running close to both the town center and the schools. Transit seems to have more than a symbolic presence.

Overall, the presentation in Charleston suggested a familiar story of wins and losses in a continuing struggle with conventional development patterns represented, in this case, by the city of Rockville's commitment to an existing master plan, with zoning that segregates uses more than would otherwise be desirable under a new urbanist scheme; by the multifamily developer's resistance to demands imposed by new urbanist practices; by the fact that the employment area is not only divided from the traditional neighborhood, but removed from the jurisdiction of the town architect; and by the negotiations with production builders to get the right quality and character. Like every new urbanist project, its history provides a quick course in the standard practices of conventional suburban development and the way they conflict with traditional urbanism.

Without visiting the site, it is difficult to do a complete — or fair — review of the outcomes of these struggles, especially when it comes right down to the quality and livability of the neighborhoods. However, the presentation of the project at the Charleston Council raised important questions and suggested some significant lessons. At the very least, the discussion identified some things to watch as the project comes to maturity. The remainder of these remarks is my reflection on these questions and lessons.

Several people noted that the urban design does a good job of concealing the underlying division of the whole project into three separate zones, as required by the city of Rockville's commitment to the existing land use plan. The clear neighborhood structure is strongly emphasized in the plan, with three defined neighborhoods sharing the village center. Even so, the underlying zoning is responsible for the most obvious weaknesses, from the standpoint of urbanism. In spite of the diagrammatic power of the neighborhood structure (and strong formal features) to mask the rigid Euclidean logic, the legacy of the existing master plan creates disconnections and prevents a finely grained mix of uses at some key points. Most strikingly, it dictates the lack of integration between the traditional neighborhood section and the office and employment area, a disconnection that seems to be given emphasis by the way the greenways interrupt the street grid along the boundary between zones.

The plan has equally obvious virtues. First, the block size seems appropriately short and walkable. Second, the street grid seems well connected, with the exception of the office area and the interruptions introduced by the desire to save significant trees, by storm water considerations, or by the unfortunate discipline imposed by the presence of suburban arterials. Third, the plan promises a nicely modulated variety of public spaces, from small pocket parks and modest squares that add a little spice to the neighborhood, to the larger, more pointedly civic spaces that define central places.

In the discussion in Charleston, it was noted that one of the successes of the project is that the diagram has remained strong, in spite of a variety of pressures conspiring to compromise the plan. As I look at the site plan posted on the project web site, however, I notice only the larger and more dramatic public spaces seem to have survived into the current version of the site plan (presumably as it is being built). The more modestly scaled and irregular spaces, originally shown in the neighborhood to the west of the village center, seem to be gone. If I am correct in this observation, this might be a more important compromise than might be immediately apparent.

Their importance is highlighted by a comparison with Kentlands, with which I think King Farm seems to share many virtues. In Kentlands, I have been struck by the comfortable way the neighborhoods are inhabited by the residents, by their evident sense of living in a place characterized by its details and qualities. The distinctiveness of the neighborhoods is achieved not by marking boundaries or by grand gestures calling explicit attention to the interventions of the designer, but by the combination of irregularities in the plan and regularities in the typological variation that give the fabric of the neighborhoods their texture. One has to think it may be the variations and imperfections in the plan that provide a kind of experiential traction for the residents, creating opportunities for the patterns of life to seem molded to the distinctiveness of a place.

In his discussion of Kentlands, Andrés Duany noted it was the geometrical imperfections in the plan that allowed for adjustment and inflection to meet later demands that could not be predicted at the beginning of the project. Victor Dover noted, too, that every improvement at I'On had to do with "breaking the back of an overly zealous *parti*." Duany talked about the way he tries to insure this by handing the plan from designer to designer, allowing each to revise it sequentially, each leaving a "scar," a trace of the plan's genesis. The result, he commented, is less perfect but more resilient, more able to absorb change more organically. From my point of view,

By Laurie Volk

Reality check: The top *five* builders listed in the most recent *Builder Magazine's* "Builder 100" completed nearly 100,000 new houses last year. In contrast, approximately 300 new urbanist properties built approximately 2,000 new houses last year. Although the number of new urbanist projects is increasing annually, new urbanism still comprises a very small percentage of the nation's annual housing production. King Farm, with a mix of national, regional and local production builders completing approximately 500 units a year, therefore represents an important achievement in translating new urbanism into a context that can potentially be reproduced by large-scale developers across the country.

From the market and development perspectives, the most important criteria of new urbanism include:

• A five-minute walk to the neighborhood center.
• A variety of residential units, from inexpensive rentals to higher-priced detached houses.
• A hierarchy of streets, from high-capacity boulevards to narrow rear lanes or alleys, that accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists as well as motor vehicles.
• Streets fronted by buildings and front doors, not parking lots and garage doors.
• A neighborhood center, organized around a civic place, such as a plaza or green, and including higher-density residential as well as, potentially, a mix of non-residential uses.
• A town center—if the area is large enough to accommodate more than one neighborhood—that serves several neighborhoods, and contains a mix of civic, commercial, retail and residential uses.

King Farm succeeds with each of these criteria: Each neighborhood is contained within a five-minute walk; the residential component ranges from rental apartments to expensive detached houses, and moderate-priced rentals and for-sale detached houses comprise up to 15 percent of the unit count; there is a clear hierarchy of streets, from arterials that traverse the site (one of which is designed to accommodate future light rail), to alleys; with the exception of the multi-family adjacent to Frederick Road, buildings and front doors face the street; each neighborhood has a center, distinguished through design (crescent, circle, and square) as well as by use (school, community center, parks and greens); and the town center, with a mix of uses, including apartments and a grocery store, is well-located, central to both the primarily residential neighborhoods as well as the office park.

King Farm is also an important new urbanist project because it successfully accommodates the underlying discrete zoning plan (with separate "pods" for office and multi-family). There has yet to be the "perfect" new urbanist project; therefore, the successes of new urbanism should be measured not only in how many deflections there are in the street plan, but also in how successfully the project was able to overcome such obstacles or impediments to new urbanist development as cumbersome or even hostile zoning; protected natural features that interrupt the circulation network; risk/reward parameters of conventional development finance; builders whose business models do not recognize the value of quality "details."

However, it is critical to experience a new urbanist development in person in order to make any reasonable assessment as to how well the community "works." In our market analyses, we recommend building both sides of a street as soon as possible so that potential renters and buyers can experience what it will really be like to live there. I have not seen King Farm except in plan, so the true test of how successful it is remains, for me, unanswered.

Project Name: I'On

Location: Mount Pleasant, S.C. (Charleston metro area)

Classification: TND

Designers: Dover, Kohl and Partners, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company

Consultants: DesignWorks, LLC, (landscape),
Seamon, Whiteside and Associates (engineers)

Developer: The I'On Company

Design Date: May 1995

Construction Begun: Summer 1997

Status: Under Construction (40 percent complete)

Site: 243 acres

Project Construction Cost:
$3.3 - 4.5 million (commercial center only)

Residential: 759 units
Houses: 759

Residential Price Range:
Initial Target: $160K - 1 million
Current Range: $295K – 2 million

Commercial: 30K square feet approved

Public & Civic Program: Swim and tennis club,
clubhouse, two lakes with boat ramp, boat house, six neighborhood docks, bird rookery with trails and observation area, creeks with trails, parks and playgrounds, athletic fields, sites for churches and community buildings.

I'On (1995)

Victor Dover presenting.

Dover Kohl

Design is the key to liveable communities. The Dover, Kohl & Partners team is focused on revitalizing traditional towns, growing neighborhoods, and fixing sprawl – by design. Our Master Plans emphasize complete neighborhoods as the basis for sound communities. Often Dover Kohl's work has revealed potential in overlooked real estate and has helped challenge outdated zoning or transportation policies. The firm stresses a hands-on, visual approach to smart growth.

Victor Dover and Joseph Kohl hold degrees from Virginia Tech and the University of Miami, and are charter members of the Congress for the New Urbanism. Victor Dover is credentialed by the American Institute of Certified Planners and has served on the board of numerous nonprofit organizations. Joseph Kohl serves on the South Miami Council of the South Dade Chamber of Commerce.

Dover Kohl strives to maximize public involvement in planning the built environment. Most of the firm's plans are designed in intensive charrettes; these on-location events merge the modern design studio with interactive town meetings. Each charrette is customized for the situation. Computer visuals, pioneered by Dover Kohl, and drawing in teams make planning more meaningful for citizens and clients. To implement the resulting plans, the firm typically produces simple, illustrated Codes that can replace conventional zoning.

Good Things

• **Cranky, Differentiated Street Network**
We used an "irritated grid" of streets to produce inherent traffic calming and closed vistas at I'On. The plan was manipulated to conform to a loose rule of no more than about 600 feet of straight stretch. This was especially useful given the absence of mature trees on much of the property. The organic character of the cranky streets and the narrow, well-defined street spaces impart the feeling of a more mature place.

• **Public Waterfronts**
The marshfronts and the two largest lakes at I'On are faced with the *fronts* of buildings and have become signature urban spaces with continuous public access to the waterfronts and natural areas.

• **Architecture**
I'On has highly varied, superb house designs executed with good details in an appropriate regional style. This is due to the founders' careful coaching of the architects and builders. As one coaching tool, they provide prospective homebuyers and designers an illustrated "Traditional Lowcountry Vernacular" booklet that surpasses the Code, extending customs and good habits.

• **The Guild**
Quality control is also promoted through competition and cooperation via the "I'On Guild," a new urbanist version of a preferred builder program. Only Guild members are allowed to build at I'On. The Guild rewards craftsmanship with special recognition and holds regular meetings for education and to compare techniques.

• **Position of Buildings**
Street spaces at I'On reflect clever manipulation of setbacks and porch treatments. For example, buildings in the latest phase of new houses on North Shelmore Boulevard, leading away from the Square, have been situated and designed to achieve the impression of attached buildings. Elsewhere, the non-perpendicular side lot lines create the slight deflections in the dooryards. These produce large impacts on views and the relaxed feeling of certain street spaces.

• **Transect**
There is a transition from more urban (around the Square and in the central boroughs) to more of a rivertown character as one as one moves along the sequence from the heart of I'On to the marshfront. This change in character would be even better if more pronounced, but it is there. I'On offered an early glimpse of how the tools of the urban-to-rural transect can be used to introduce more varied spatial experiences in new developments this size and larger.

• **Sets and Series**
I'On isn't all one-of-a-kind custom houses. Matched sets of buildings, such as the group of narrow houses on Civitas Street and the grand "Three Sisters" on Ponsbury Road, while not identical, prove the positive power of repetition and similarity. Most new urbanism projects are designed in counterpoint to the rubber-stamped houses in identical subdivisions of conventional sprawl. That's the case in I'On, too, but I'On also has small sets of buildings that are deliberately, refreshingly similar. My colleague J.J. Becker once said, "Where there is no repetition at all, there is no order."

• **The Canals**
In the middle of I'On there is a two-block-wide strip of land between the two largest lakes. Two canals were dug to connect the lakes, and specially designed houses flank these canals in an almost Dutch relationship between buildings and water. The canals are bridged at key points to preserve street continuity. To my knowledge there is no precedent for this kind of development in the Carolina Lowcountry. It adds tremendous interest to the place, turned some good addresses into great ones, and makes rowing around in a skiff lots more fun. Taken by itself, this expensive, lyrical feature is probably hard to justify businesswise; viewed in context, it is hard to imagine I'On without it.

Minor Complaints

• **Mostly Just Houses**
There are no apartments, no rowhouses, almost no workplaces, and very little retail at I'On. All of these "controversial" elements were in the original plan — and would have made I'On a more practical, richer, more sustainable place — but they were knocked out during the government entitlement process.

• **It Should (and Will) Be More Heterogeneous**
I'On is not boring, but somehow it's still too similar. Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised given the limited palette of building types (detached houses, detached houses and more detached houses), but despite its extreme, block-by-block spatial customization, varied heights and good architecture, I'On still cries out for more hierarchy. (Someone at the Charleston Council said, "It's all violation, no grid.") I think this will correct itself over time as civic buildings grow in. When one visually compares I'On with Charleston or the Old Village at Mount Pleasant, one big difference is the landmark spires and church steeples that pierce the skyline of the old towns. I'On will have this civic presence someday — and special sites are reserved for additional civic buildings — but I am impatient.

• **It Turns Its Back on Part of a Bordering Road**
The southern boundary of I'On is tree-lined Mathis Ferry Road, a historic and scenic rural corridor. The streets in the new development connect to Mathis Ferry Road at several points, and the primary connection at Shelmore Boulevard is substantially spruced up. But along most of this stretch, I'On is introverted, and house lots back up to a too-skinny, thinly forested "buffer" in a manner that more resembles conventional subdivisions than it does a traditional town. The backs of the houses are plainly visible from the most heavily traveled road. This ostrich treatment of this edge doesn't work, for I'On or for the character of the rural road; either such roads should be fronted by the public faces of buildings and park spaces, or the greenbelt should be made wide and thick enough to pull off real screening and preservation. (The town founders did, however, propose relocating some overhead wires and extensively restoring the live oak canopy along Mathis Ferry Road. That proposal was promptly squashed by the highway officials and power company.)

• **Minimal Interconnections**
There are a handful of places where I'On's streets connect to the surrounding subdivisions, far more than one expects in contemporary suburbs, but there still should be more. Some residents from adjacent subdivisions objected, so several reasonable and useful connections were removed from the plan. I mention this because those studying I'On should seek to exceed this level of interconnectivity.

• **Creek Club Façade**
OK, it's a small thing. But despite the tight control of so many design details, the wonderful Creek Club turns a disappointing backside façade toward the end of the Shelmore Boulevard street vista. This issue takes on unusual importance because, starting south of the Square, Shelmore Boulevard is the grandest street winding through the boroughs along the center-to-edge transect, and it culminates with a long view toward the marsh and the Creek Club. The informal Club building is a delight in most respects, and the façade facing the marsh is perhaps even more important than the street. This might have been resolved by slightly angling the building to reduce the visual pressure on the secondary façade, or by giving the building another front to end the axial view, or both.

Critique by **Victor Dover**

Peer Review | Fighting the Uphill Battle

By Victor Dover

I'On is a rare project from the designers' perspective, because for the most part its physical plan got better in implementation.

We're all unfortunately conditioned to expect that the geometry of fine plans will be diluted and dumbed down, or that the architecture will not live up to the promise of the urbanism. Such is not the case at I'On. Certainly many changes have been made; we're still redesigning the upcoming phases. But the developers and architects and builders firmly grasped the principles in the town plan and then surpassed them, fine-tuning and sculpting the spaces as they went, improving with experience in each phase. I'On is anti-generic: each street, each intersection, each building's site plan have been customized and localized, their geometries torqued and squeezed in a stage of design-detailing and reconsideration typically skipped. For this the town founders deserve the credit.

Cranks & Subtleties

Now, because I'On is anti-generic, it's also a bit inscrutable at first and challenging to some new urbanists. It doesn't follow a pure order or ordinary grid. It is cranky. Streets turn and bend away in short distances, spaces widen and narrow and lots are nipped off, and in the plan there just aren't that many parallel lines. I'On only makes sense from the pedestrians' perspective. I saw CNU folk turning the master plan around in their hands, trying to figure out which way is up, but when you're standing at I'On, the place unfolds very understandably. The deflections and bends and asymmetries that look conspicuous in the master plan are all, as it turns out, pretty subtle.

A frequently overheard comment is that I'On doesn't look *new*; the slight cranks and imperfections in the streets and building positions make it feel agreeable, not disorderly.

The close-up, spatial experience dominates, and the big picture is not obvious, even with a map. The overall *parti* is hard to see. Does anybody care? It turns out that the 2-D diagram is secondary. Design lessons learned at I'On are nonetheless transferable to other situations.

Battle Damage

Now, although the geometry is intact, it should be said that there are some specific shortcomings at I'On, of the kind that will make it a little less livable, less profitable and less wonderful community than it might otherwise have been (and less ideal an application of New Urbanism principles).

These shortcomings stem not from the original plan but from the sad, tense political drama that enveloped the project. Not enough mixed use or places of employment? Insufficient street connections to the surrounding subdivisions? Absence of apartment buildings and rowhouses to complement the detached houses and cottages? Not enough economic diversity? Commercial components buried inside the development instead of occurring naturally at the roadside? Density too low? None of these mistakes were in the original plan.

All of these obvious errors were forced upon the developers/founders in a grueling permitting process. Each illogical change was demanded because the thing, as originally planned, was just too much like a real town and not enough like the conventionally zoned 'burbs. Once these punishing changes were made, government approval was grudgingly issued, but a less persistent developer would have given up long before that point.

Despite all the changes, I'On turned out to be a really good place and has even won over some (but not all) of the detractors. Despite all the delays getting started, I'On once built was so attractive that it has rapidly sold for astonishingly high prices, and it pulled ahead of all competitors in no time flat.

Perhaps this shows how resilient new urbanism is even against body blows from the zoning camp, but naturally one can't help wondering how much better it might have been. I suspect history will record I'On as important in part for its physical character, but also in part for the painful, nobody-really-wins story of how it came to be permitted in the last years of the Zoning Era, against terrible odds.

New urbanists should take away from this case study three lessons about the government approval process:

1. Try for all of those rejected features again next time. Any visitor to I'On can detect that, fine as it is, it would be better with more connections, some rowhouses and apartments, and more logically located businesses.

2. Good urbanism can adapt around constraints, to a point. It might have been tempting to throw in the towel on I'On, insisting that if it couldn't be perfect or denser and more diversified, it wasn't worth doing. As it turns out, pragmatic problem solving was a good path.

3. Persist. Those in opposition to new traditional neighborhoods typically hope to beat the developer in an expensive war of attrition, wearing them down, dragging out the battles. I'On's founders stuck with it, and plans were eventually approved. Limitations and all, it's been worth it.

Vision Keeper

Vince Graham
I'On Developer

Below are historical background and thoughts on the charrette, planning and neighborhood building processes for I'On.

Background

The subject property is a 243-acre infill site in Mt. Pleasant, S.C., located six miles from Charleston's historic district and three miles from the Old Village of Mt. Pleasant. The site is surrounded by conventional development of the 1950s, '60s, '70s, and '80s. Approximately 60 percent of the acreage was comprised of former agricultural fields, 30 percent was 30-40- year-old hardwood growth, and 10 percent took the form of three man-made lakes. The charrette took place in May 1995. I'On received approval in March 1997, and ground was broken on the first house in March 1998. Approximately 180 homes are now occupied in I'On, with another 100 homes or so under construction. Also, 12,000 square feet of commercial space is complete and occupied, with another 6,000 square feet under construction. Two civic buildings have also been completed.

Mt. Pleasant is a bedroom community of Charleston. With the exception of the Old Village, which was built up in the 18th and 19th centuries, the town is characterized by conventional sprawl with a population of 45,000 spread over 26,000 acres. In 1992, well in advance of the project charrette, the town of Mt. Pleasant adopted a town-wide Master Plan incorporating traditional neighborhood principles. This plan praised the Old Village of Mt. Pleasant as the model to emulate. It even recognized the subject property as an ideal location for a TND. Unfortunately, the town's zoning was not consistent with the Master Plan, and the underlying zoning for the subject property was "R-1" specifying 10,000-square-foot minimum lot sizes with accompanying requirements of conventional development (minimum lot widths, setbacks, etc). Thus, to develop the property as intended would require a zoning change to "Planned Development."

The founders (Tom and Vince Graham) retained Dover Kohl and Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) as land planners for the neighborhood. Over an intense three-day period in May 1995, the founders led the combined firms on a tour of the best models of urbanism in the region, including Savannah and Charleston, as well as the historic areas of lesser-known coastal towns like Beaufort, Rockville and Mt. Pleasant. In addition, the group toured Newpoint, a three-year-old TND the founders were currently building in Beaufort.

Over the next seven days, the group worked in Charleston (not Mt. Pleasant) to develop a design code and plan comprising 800 single-family lots, 440 multi-family units, 90,000 square feet of commercial space, and a number of civic sites. Andrés Duany presented the plan to a standing-room-only crowd at the Mt. Pleasant Town Council chambers in mid-May 1995.

The founders spent the next few months working with members of DPZ and Dover Kohl to fine tune the plan and code to ready them for rezoning application submission. The rezoning application was submitted in August 1995. After several public meetings, it received a 7-2 recommendation for approval by the Mt. Pleasant Planning Board. Prior to being reviewed by Mt. Pleasant's Town Council, compromises were made to the rezoning application reducing single-family lots to 730 and multi-family units to 120. This application was rejected 5-4 by the Mt. Pleasant Town Council in December 1995.

After much debate, the founders elected to continue with option payments to purchase the property. They worked behind the scenes to decipher what kind of plan those Council members who voted against the application would support. They also worked with Victor Dover and Xavier Iglesias (of Dover Kohl and DPZ) and Seamon-Whiteside and Associates (a local planning and engineering firm) to make further compromises to the plan, such as removing the multi-family component, reducing the number of thoroughfare types from 11 to 4, reducing commercial

Peer Review | The I'On Plan: A Picturesque Design

By John Massengale

Let's begin with this: Vince Graham is one of the best new urban developers. He's shown that with the work he's built at I'On, Newpoint and Port Royal.

Full disclosure: I was part of the I'On charrette team, run by Dover Kohl & Partners and Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company. During the charrette, I sketched the original parti, which was considerably modified by the end of the charrette and has been more modified since. I bring this up because I will talk about the parti in this discussion.

At the moment, one of the worst things about I'On is its introduction to the visitor. A traffic engineer's circle built by the state just outside the entrance misses the opportunity to make a beautiful civic gesture leading in. Instead of, perhaps, a small green with a stone monument (like the old monument to Jacob I'On found on the site), we have the perfectly circular obstruction, with not bad but uninspired planting.

Once in, we come to a half-completed town center that so far lacks enough bulk to create a sense of place, and a road on the right that leads to the majority of the finished houses. Part of civitas Street, it is unfortunately one of the weakest of I'On's streets.

The Charleston-type Single Houses on it are suburban versions of the real things just across the Cooper River. They are smaller than most of Charleston's Single Houses but they are farther apart, with larger setbacks and a more random alignment. These changes from the original model significantly weaken the quality of the street.

The most characteristic Charleston Single House has the side porch enclosed at the street, with a solid wall and a classical doorway that serves as the main entrance. The entry stair can be outside the porch, but it's more common to pull the stair into the porch, where it is hidden from view until the beautiful front door is opened.

The Single Houses on this first street, however, are more conventional, contemporary suburban, with under-detailed stairs pulled out between the porch and the sidewalk. The setback required to do this creates a vestigial yard between the sidewalk and the house. In Charleston, this yard would usually be nonexistent, with the house flush to the sidewalk, or smaller and more architecturally detailed, with brick walls and the like. The I'On houses fill the space with unsatisfying proportioned suburban lawns and shrubby plantings. The tighter, more regular streets of Single Houses in downtown Charleston are much more beautiful.

It is said at this point that the newest part of Civitas Street, currently under construction on the other side of the neighborhood, promises to be much better. The detailing of the houses there is better but still simple, and the relationship of the houses to the street is more traditional and less suburban.

It's clear at I'On that the development team learns from their experience, always making later parts of the neighborhood better than the earliest parts. Some of the newest completed parts of I'On are at the back, in the area around the Creek Club, where the architecture and the streets are much better. The streets have the advantage of tall trees, which were used well, and the houses are better sited and better proportioned.   At this part of I'On there are few single houses, and many center-hall, classically inspired houses (known in Charleston as Double Houses). Once the construction dust settles, this will be one of the more handsome neighborhoods in South Carolina.

In between those streets and the entrance, I get lost. I was at the charrette, I worked on the plan, I have been back to I'On 10 or 20 times, and I still get lost every time I go there, because I can never get a good mental picture of I'On's plan in my head. And that's because, I think, so many "local" adjustments have been made that it is difficult to imagine the overall order.

The original parti had a long organizing "spine" that stretched from the entrance all the way back to the Creek Club. Much of it was similar to the current Ponsbury Road. It wasn't straight, but it was straight enough that one could usually see a good distance along the street from practically any point, and this gave a good mental picture of its length from one end to the other.

A problem immediately popped up, namely the wetlands that run across most of the site, parallel to the road that runs along the southern boundary of the property, Mathis Ferry Road. This had a long section in its middle that the local environmental regulations made uncrossable, forcing the plan to split and go around it at each end. The result was the forerunner of the current split between Ponsbury Road and Perseverance. This schizophrenic access gave hierarchical problems. The plan could have had a main axis going back to the Creek Club on the east and another going back to a different point on the water on the west, but the lakes interfered with the best places to connect the two.

I'On was the first proj-

ect where Dover Kohl and DPZ worked together, and my first exposure to Victor and Joe. I was very interested to see how they worked, which was to sit down with the plan and "walk" through it block by block, expertly adjusting the streets as they went to accommodate the terrain, create terminated vistas, etc. This was very different from my process at the time, which was always interested in the overall gestalt.

Having later worked with Vince Graham on a small charrette in which he sat down and drew on the developing plan, I know that he has a third method. I start by drawing the overall framework and refining that. Vince goes as quickly as possible to drawing individual lots, sometimes before the street is even drawn.

The result is a very picturesque method, in which one again "walks" along the street, this time with even more specific focus than in Victor and Joe's method. Vince also works habitable lots into the alleys, a technique he learned in Nantucket, and he likes to put houses on a body of water without a street separating the houses from the water. The result is an A street with front-loaded garages, something usually not seen in new urban developments. Both techniques can blur the differences between A streets and B streets.

On Nantucket, that's not a problem, because most houses there don't have garages, and the architecture is consistently good, both in the front and the back.   At I'On and Newpoint, the entry side mixing front door and garage is less successful. Simply stated, the majority of contemporary architects and builders are not very good at integrating front-loaded garages into the streetscape. One of the

Peer Review | Between Hope and Reality: Thoughts on I'On

By Philip Bess

By the waters of the Hobcaw we walked 'round and dreamt;

And said to the founders: "Sing again to us the songs of [Z]I'On…."

The vision is father to the deed. But when the deed is planning a new town, the vision governs only in its origins and only in part. The meaning of any human initiative becomes clear only over time (its full meaning arguably only at the end of time), and this is especially true of town planning, which of its very nature involves many actors across many generations. Thus in evaluating I'On, however briefly, it is both necessary and just to acknowledge not only that towns are not built in a day *literally*, but also that towns are not even built in a day *metaphorically*.

Located along the marshes of Hobcaw Creek in Mount Pleasant, S.C., a mere 10-minute drive from Charleston, I'On is a very high-quality residential environment that also currently exhibits many of the vices of conventional, high-end sprawl development — over-dependence upon the car, mono-functional land use patterns, a lack of middle- and lower- end market hous-

ing, and institutions that lack the physical presence to be visible symbols of *community* in I'On. That's the bad news. The good news is that the waterscapes are good and the streetscapes very good; the physical environment promotes neighborliness; and I'On is likely to eventually get better because of the strength of the Dover Kohl master plan, the vision and savvy of I'On's founders, and the quality of design and construction that has already become an established pattern. Its various shortcomings notwithstanding, I'On is a qualitative quantam leap ahead of conventional sprawl development.

Since both town planner Victor Dover and town founder Vince Graham (who together presented the I'On project at the Charleston CNU gathering in late March 2001) are aware — and justly proud — of the many virtues of I'On, and since neither are unaware of (or even in some cases responsible for) I'On's current deficiencies, there is little point in belaboring the latter. Let me therefore make just a few brief suggestions for the refinement and improvement of both the formal and the social orders of I'On — assuming that

the desired end of I'On is that it ultimately be either a traditional town or urban neighborhood. (If these suggestions have already been considered and rejected by its founder and/ or town planner, then we will just have to agree to disagree on some details of what nevertheless remains on the whole a well-conceived and well-executed project.)

First (and I think most obviously): There is a need for more walkable retail internal to the site; at the very least a convenience store or stores within a five-minute walk of most of the houses. I understand that founder Vince Graham has been denied by the town of Mt. Pleasant the amount of retail he originally sought; but I hope he will continue to be diligent in pressing for it. Without it, residents of I'On will continue to be excessively automobile dependent.

Second: I would like to see a bit more discipline in the master plan with respect to

the front/back relationship of buildings to the street. Victor Dover spoke convincingly at Charleston in March 2001 of the sacrifice of this "sacred cow" in order to orient the fronts of certain houses to views of the water and their backs to the street (*a la* Rockville, S.C.). I am persuaded by the building lots in I'On that do this back-of-the-house-to-the-street move in order to front the water; but there are several other lots at the periphery of the property that similarly invert the "proper" front/back relationship of house to street with no more apparently compelling reason than to squeeze out some
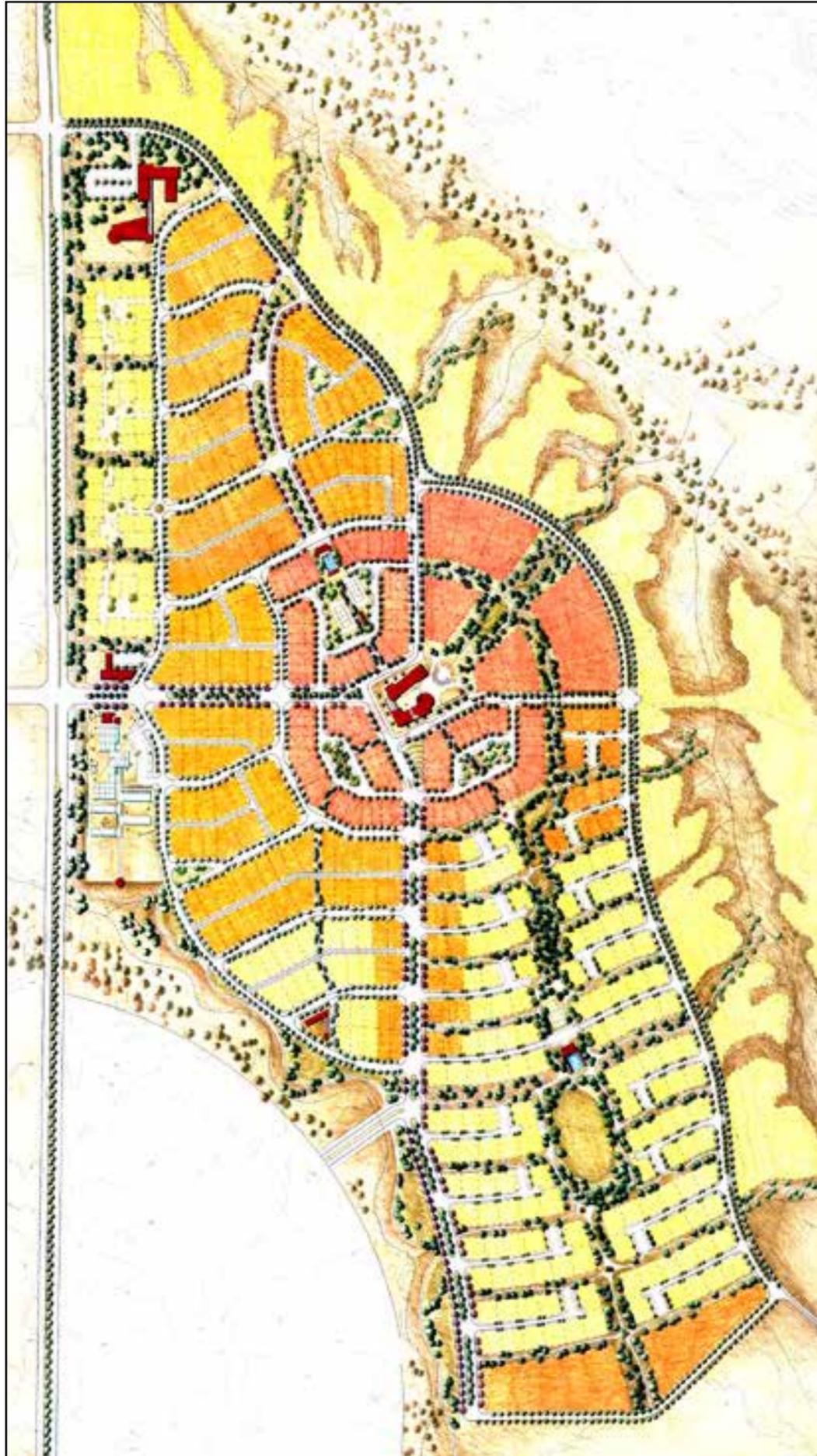
Neighborhood One

Project Name: Community of Civano

Location: Tucson, Ariz.

Classification: TND

Designers: Moule & Polyzoides, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, Community Design Associates (Wayne Moody)

Consultants: MMLA (Site Engineers), IBA-COS (DOE's Build America Program)

Architects: Moule & Polyzoides, Paul Wiener

Developers: CDC Partners, LLC; Managers for the American Communities Fund of Fannie Mae

Design Date: September 1996

Construction Began: 1999

Status: Neighborhood One in progress

Site: 830 acres (Neighborhood One: 380 acres)

Project Construction Cost: NA

Residential: (proposed) 650 units
Houses: 625 planned
Townhouses: 25 planned
Apartments: 0
Live/Work Units: 0

Residential Price Range:
$114K – $200K

Commercial: 33K square feet

Public & Civic Program: K-5 charter school, tennis courts, pool, hike/bike trails, plant nursery, tree and plant-save program; water recycling, facilities in Neighborhood Center to support community activities, developer support of active community advisory committees.

Civano (1996)

Stef Polyzoides presenting.

Moule & Polyzoides

Moule & Polyzoides - Architects and Urbanists was founded in 1982 to provide fine, comprehensive and personalized architecture and urban design services.

They have pioneered a new approach to architecture and urbanism, focusing on physically reconstructing the American metropolis, rebuilding a sense of community, and addressing the environmental dilemmas of suburban sprawl. Their work is known for its respect for historic settings. Its aesthetic root is in the exploration of design in the context of cultural convention and of nature.

Moule & Polyzoides' project management team is made up of both principals and project managers; the principals are Elizabeth Moule and Stefanos Polyzoides. Twenty-five members, including six registered architects in California with licensing reciprocity nationally, are organized around project teams that follow the work from its inception to its realization.

The firm has an international reputation for design innovation and a strong track record demonstrated in over 100 completed projects. Work from the firm has been published all over the world, showcased frequently in various museum and university exhibitions. In addition, Moule & Polyzoides has received numerous awards for excellence. Design activities encompass campus architecture and planning, preservation and transformation of historic buildings, neighborhood and town center design, housing, and civic architecture.

The Triumphs

• The Civano Standard was established and has been followed throughout Neighborhood One. This represented the first ambitious Environmental Performance Guidelines for a new urbanist greenfield project ever.

• The project accommodated the production house process and was marketed as a middle class neighborhood. Affordability was a key objective from the beginning.

• The first neighborhood was designed in balance between a diverse new urbanist building fabric and greenways. Its urban structure (grid, ROW and blocks) was designed to take the best possible advantage of desert solar resources.

• Unconventional building types were introduced, designed in detail, and finally built into the plan of Civano. Site plans were drawn for all the production housing work.

• The first neighborhood is focused on a remarkable neighborhood center building that accommodates many sustainability principles in its construction and environmental controls design.

• The desert landscape was harvested and reused in the streetscape design of the first neighborhood. Approximately 6,000 trees and cacti have been salvaged, with a survivability rate exceeding 90 percent.

• The architectural standards (both of types and styles) utilized were regionally inspired. Modest builders executed some simple and beautiful production houses.

Critique by **Stefanos Polyzoides and Lee Rayburn.**

The Disappointments

• The project was designed more as a neighborhood, not as a town. This occurred primarily for two reasons: 1) the project was originally planned in phases, but the phases were not planned concurrently; and 2) the project suffered from management changes, which delayed implementation of the original phasing plan. Regional coordination by the city of Tucson has not been as strong as originally anticipated, with the result that in the last five years, sprawl is beginning to close in.

• The project was under-funded and inadequately administered during its first three years, with the result that both its large-scale and detailed execution suffered. The project has been 100 percent owned by Fannie Mae for the last two years. There are inevitable problems in having a large institutional finance organization in charge of the development of a highly innovative project that demands entrepreneurial thinking and action.

• No development code was officially adopted at the inception of the project, with the result that arbitrariness of execution is increasingly becoming the norm.

• The Civano Standard has not been fully adopted by the city of Tucson in a manner that established environmental and urbanist performance as necessary and coequal. The result is sprawl subdivisions beyond Civano that may meet aspects of the Civano environmental standard.

• The desert was scraped as part of the civil engineering work of the Neighborhood One.

• The city of Tucson's technical departments initially resisted the provisions and some of the key concepts of the project and compromised it often. This proved to be in some cases expensive and damaging to the quality of what was finally built. Though this has improved as Neighborhood One has continued its build-out, it remains an area of concern.

• Architecture and quality of place have become compromised in some aspects when measured against the very survival of the project. Civano may no longer be the highest measure by which one understands the new urbanism as a combination of community and environmental design initiatives. However, we continue to believe that no other project is attempting to meet all of its goals. We should also note that other developers and builders continue to look to Civano as an inspiration as they begin to explore this combination.

Vision Keeper

Civano is an attempt to integrate community building concepts of the new urbanism with an advanced environmental protocol. Located on the edge of Tucson, Ariz., on 800 acres of the Sonoran desert, it is planned to have three neighborhoods and a town center district. The project will eventually settle over 1,600 households and may accommodate as much as 1 million square feet of commercial, retail and institutional space. Civano's approach to community planning and development stands in contrast to the vastly common homogeneous tracts of conventional suburbia that lack diversities in density, building types, uses and buyer groups.

Civano is designed to an environmental standard:

1. Buildings will use 50 percent less energy than specified in the 1995 Model Energy Code.

2. Buildings will consume 65 percent less potable water than Tucson's baseline 1990 residential average.

3. Construction activity will generate 30 percent less solid waste and 40 percent fewer trip miles than the local average.

4. One on-site job will be created for every two residences, with 20 percent of the housing being "affordable."

Eighty-five percent of these achievements are to be accomplished through the urbanism itself, with the remaining 15 percent depending on new building technology. This stands as a departure from typical development projects in the region which, over the last quarter century, have compromised Tucson's two great natural resources: the aquifer and the desert landscape.

Neighborhood One at 400 acres will contain ap-

Vinayak Bharne
Civano Town Architect

proximately 600 dwelling units and will be built in two phases. Four fundamental concepts have governed its design: Community Building, Connection with the Land, Respect for Climate, and Regeneration. Community Building is achieved by a mix of uses and the conscious design of pedestrian-friendly blocks and livable streets. Connection with the Land seeks to respect the indigenous natural patterns of the landscape, drainage and erosion patterns, the visual setting, and flora and fauna. Respect for Climate acknowledges the natural patterns of the sun, wind and seasons. Sensitive design, material choices and proper orientation of building types create public places that support human comfort through natural means. Regeneration includes strategies for conservation, restoration of the native riparian habitat, and the stewardship of natural resources. Each action and resource is viewed as an opportunity to actively create energy and balance, thus serving more than one purpose.

From its inception, the design of Neighborhood One responds to the challenges of environmental responsibility, endeavoring to introduce sustainability into

architecture and urbanism:

Public space orientation - Neighborhood One is designed as an integrated network of various open space types. Some are part of a typical array of new urbanist streets, parks and squares. Many of the street angles in the neighborhood layout acknowledge the direction of the site's topography as well as the summer solstice sunrise and the winter solstice sunset. This facilitates street shading through building elements and trees. A system of walkable parks and greenways will mirror the network of major boulevards. Thus pedestrian linkage is given equal status with vehicular linkage. Others are derived from the existing natural patterns of the site, for example directing the flow of water run-off into areas that support vegetation and wildlife. Within this open space framework, residents will be able to access on foot all buildings and uses in each neighborhood in a manner that supports maximum social interaction.

Pedestrian dominance - The plan for Neighborhood One is conceived with a distinct center and a series of edges that define clear, if graduated boundaries between densities, housing types and uses. The plan calls for a mix of uses with retail and commercial concentrated around the neighborhood center, carefully located within a quarter mile radius (five-minute walk) of the neighborhood matrix to encourage walkability. The blocks that make up the neighborhood are designed to a pedestrian-friendly size in support of building types that favor the shaping of a pedestrian-friendly public realm. A strong and vibrant social edge is created along the streets by placing, in almost

Peer Review | Impressions of Civano

By Milton Grenfell

In an exceedingly hostile world — environmentally, urbanistically, legally, financially, and architecturally — the founders of Civano have persevered and brought into being something good and full of instruction. As a practitioner in the more benign Eastern United States, I can only imagine that the hard won lessons of Civano will be of great use in saving the sprawl burgeoning and rapidly degrading fragile lands of our West.

This project stands out in the clarity, detail and ambitiousness of its goals. By the founders' own admission, these goals were achieved with varying degrees of success, but rather than run down a long checklist of what worked and what didn't, I'd like to focus on what particularly interested me and what I think might have the greatest impact on the revival of traditional urbanism.

First on my list is their determination to create a place that has a "potent nature and potent city," coexisting. Although it was persuasively argued by some that nature may have been given the upper hand over man, to the diminution of certain urban qualities (such as connectivity), by and large it appeared to me that the transect from surrounding desert to captured tongues of desert within the town, to streetscapes, to courtyards, was sharp and strong — potent.

Second, using the DPZ Lexicon gives certain clarity and legibility to what certainly to Eastern eyes is a very eccentric project. This open sharing of ideas, in this case the Lexicon, is a powerful feature of the new urbanism movement, which should be commended and encouraged.

Finally, the most exemplary aspect of the project was its approach to architecture, which it seems to me might be rendered in the following formula: Wisdom of Precedent + Exigencies of Present = Creativity.

A couple of examples stand out. I admired the manner in which in-depth studies of local precedent (some as far back as 1,000 years) for courtyard houses generated an "alley" solution that created finely articulated shared courtyards to accommodate automobile storage, gardens, and play areas for children. After the long tedious alleys of many TNDs, these back-of-house places seemed like pieces of Alhambra. Another example was the town center tower. At Eastern charrettes, we design towers not knowing, frankly, what, if anything, they'll ever be used for. But here, this tower, with perhaps its roots in the towers of mission churches, harnesses the dry heat of the desert to produce air conditioning for the town plaza. In short, by closely studying origins — both natural and man-made — the architecture of this place has become truly original.

But it has not rested here. Their originality has been made accessible to production builders. Builders, who heretofore had made careers out of "Taco Bell adobe" houses, have here been led to build something radically different. If Polyzoides and company can induce such a massive shift in their builders' way of building; surely we can get our builders to construct proper cornice. The successes of this heroic undertaking should be of great hope to all new urbanists.

Peer Review | Civano - Oasis or Mirage?

By Daniel K. Slone

Several new urban projects have "talked the talk" of environmental sustainability. Some of these are unbuilt and yet to be proven. Some of these projects are only beginning, and their character is still forming. Others have appeared, making modest gains but causing few revolutions. In contrast, Civano has been under construction for several years and has been viewed as the leader, where the lessons of merging urbanism and environmental sustainability would be learned and the bar for environmental sustainability in new urban and conventional projects would be set to a new height. It now appears that this oasis on the route to sustainability may not be completed in the same spirit it was begun. Even if it is, there are issues regarding some of the lessons that can be drawn from the project. There have been many — and there will be many more — important lessons from Civano. Now, however, each of these lessons will have to be carefully examined to determine whether it is mirage or reality. Instead of unabashedly moving forward the marriage of new urbanism and environmental stewardship, misinformation out of Civano threatens this marriage, just as the financial misinformation about Kentlands haunted new urbanism for years.

Civano has developed and advanced many of the key concepts of the adaptation of environmental sustainability to large-scale new urbanism. Civano belies the challenge that aggressive environmentalism can only be implemented at the level of a Village Homes (Davis, Calif.) or Eco-Village (Loudoun, Va.) project. Civano explored the edge of rational energy efficiency, pushing the envelope to show just how far commitments can be made before they become economically infeasible. The project broke new ground in builder training, showing that local builders could be trained to render new urbanism in a sustainable landscape and make the inside of buildings more environmentally sustainable as well. The project showed that factoring the sun, heat and wind into the layout of the streets of new urbanism was feasible, provided that the design of the buildings was also properly adjusted for orientation. Civano also expands the cultural base of new urbanism, integrating the Southwestern "compound" into the lexicon. Its enclosed, irregular space is foreign to open space concepts from other parts of the country but delivers strong neighborhoods that feed back into the streets and community park life.

Other parts of the Civano story are harder to pin down. Its developers report that $22,000 was added to the cost of the average house; equaling about a 16 percent increase in the house price. They argue that while a 5 percent increase is typically enough to destroy competitiveness, buyers should find solace in a 7.5 percent recovery of their overpayment from energy savings over seven years and a faster appreciation of the house value because of the superior design of the community. The math resulting in the $22,000 figure is, however, suspect to the point of uselessness. Included in the figure is the cost of scraping off the entire surface of the project, saving all of the plants and putting them back. This is not a normal cost; it may not even have been a rational cost. The cost of alleys is accrued to the houses. The avoided costs of the driveways and curb cuts are not subtracted. At this time the figure carries no lesson.

Civano included a section known as "Desert Homes" based on the model of Village Homes in Davis, Calif. Village Homes is a walkable community with an aggressive environmental agenda, including an unusual edible landscape. Homes front on pathways instead of roads. At Civano it appears that the model will not be explored as originally intended. Again, this has nothing to do with whether the idea is good or bad; it has to do with the commitment of the developer.

Vision Keeper

Bharne/Civano
From previous page

all cases, the garages at the back of the homes off of separate alleys, by requiring that virtually all homes have usable front porches, and by paying special attention to front house setback requirements. The calibration of many street-type options in a manner that supports a pedestrian orientation specific to the climate defines the character of each neighborhood street and introduces the native flora into the fabric of the town.

Diversity of types - All housing in Neighborhood One is designed as variations on eight housing types. The various production houses, through the diversity of their size, configuration, style and prices, encourage spatial variations on their arrangement on lots and a range of densities and allow for the inclusion of a variety of socio-economic groups. The Neighborhood Center area is comprised of townhouses, courtyard housing, detached patio houses and villas. The Neighborhood General area is made up of university homes and cottages. The Neighborhood Edge area is composed of desert country homes and compound housing. They range in price from the low $100,000s to the mid $200,000s, encompassing the middle price range for the Tucson market.

All of the housing types are designed to meet the established standards relative to energy conservation and the use of solar energy resources. Most homes are designed to have a solar water heater and the ability to accept photovoltaic (PV) panels. Individual building massing and orientation is designed such that summer heat gain shall be minimized to the greatest extent possible through various passive solar techniques. Design strategies include minimizing openings on the westerly building facades, shading south facades with various devices, providing thermal mass building surfaces on the west, designing south faces sufficient to delay daytime heat gain into interior spaces, and providing light-colored, non-absorbing building colors on solar-exposed building surfaces. Where possible, attention has also been paid to using landscaping to provide shade, or to avoid the blocking of solar penetration into the homes in winter.

Civano, however, as it has developed during the first neighborhood, has not fully implemented its founding urban and environmental vision. The lack of initial funding and coordination and skepticism on part of the city of Tucson's technical departments mitigated the quality of execution of the neighborhood as a marriage of new urbanist and environmental ideas. The natural desert landscape was scraped during the early civil engineering processes of the project. An urban code had been envisioned to guide the development of the neighborhood, to ensure visual compatibility among disparate building types through vernacular building traditions, and to outline the desired thermal performance of the buildings in terms of shading, day lighting, ventilation and insulation to achieve human comfort levels while minimizing energy expenditure. Unfortunately, the code was never officially adopted by the project, aggravating disparities and non-coherence in its building fabric. Finally, the absence of a "regional" vision for the place threatens to isolate the project as a single neighborhood, surrounded by sprawl that is gradually closing in.

But Civano is a project still in progress. It is hoped that the lessons learned from Neighborhood One will become important foundations for future endeavors. Neighborhoods Two and Three hopefully will be designed within a consistent regulating standard of open space, building types and environmental performances. Whatever the criticisms one can make of Neighborhood One, it should be realized that it does represent a marked change for land development standards; a strong foundation for improvement; and has been a source of encouragement for other developers and builders interested in a different protocol for land development.

Civano's vision, if maintained, could be a dramatic departure from business as usual, one that amalgamates the pragmatics of production housing with environmental responsibility, social equity and financial feasibility. It will be a vision to think native — to reinterpret the regional, Southwestern living traditions, its light, its colors, its building materials, its historic building types and styles — an invitation to consider the future in concert with the best of the past, and an interpretation of places known, lives lived and deep-rooted traditions rediscovered.

Peer Review

Civano Types - Production Housing in Balance with the Environment

By Victor Deupi

"Architectural harmony is the best way to ensure mixed-use." (Stephanos Polyzoides)

Someone — I cannot remember exactly who — once said that a sustainable community is a community that aims for sustainability: a tautology, perhaps, but a fair one nonetheless. Indeed, I suspect that we all are guilty of having expressed similar sentiments beneath our breath.

Why is it, then, that so much of what is referred to as "environmental" architecture today is nothing more than the stylized dressing-up of technology for non-scientific reasons? Why is it that the technical gymnastics associated with "dec-tech" have emerged as the only viable solution to the complex environmental crisis facing contemporary production building? Numerous are the architects and engineers jet-setting across the globe to carry out sophisticated research on the energy cycles of igloos, yurts and other innocuous building types simply as a means of translating that data to glass boxes, skyscrapers and other conspicuous energy consumers.

One does not have to look very far to see the less than satisfying results of such eco-mania. The whole process has become so convoluted that one wonders if it is truly possible to recapture the common sense principles that informed those very same vernacular structures that have served humanity so well for so long.

Civano, a New Urbanist development near Tucson, Arizona, is challenging the perception that production building is unsustainable by employing a series of urban and architectural types that establish

a balance between environmental responsibility, social equity and economic feasibility. Founded originally in the 1970s as a public policy initiative, Civano had little to do with either new urbanism or any other deliberate attempt to create a traditional neighborhood development. Rather it was

developed in response to pressure exerted by advocacy groups and government agencies alarmed by the energy crisis that was holding the American economy in a vise-like grip. Its foundation was not preceded by an economic or market analysis, and the preliminary design employed typical suburban planning strategies. Though the scheme promoted solar technologies — that admittedly had not been market tested — no attempt was made to link the solar

village with emerging concerns about unregulated growth, especially in the Southwest. The idea languished as a concept for 15 years. During that time, the greater Tucson region experienced enormous population growth largely accommodated through conventional suburban models and

constantly expanding infrastructure. More recently, within the last decade alone, the city has witnessed a population growth of approximately 12 percent and an increase in vehicular use of nearly 50 percent. Moreover, the residents have been provided with a narrow range of housing options, and the city suffered tragically from a loss of its own identity as a special place in the desert. This sad predicament gave rise to a series of environmental challenges that brought

to light the need for Civano to reinvent itself, emerging from the ashes of Tucson, phoenix-like, to meet the goals of balancing development and sustainability.

The new Civano establishes a thoughtful energy code, making it a model for sustainable growth in the Southwest. Fundamental among the tenets of the development is the recognition that environmental and growth management movements have moved from focusing on single issues to interconnected processes. Consequently, the developers of Civano committed to protecting the environmental capital of Tucson and the Sonoran desert by maintaining air quality, decreasing water usage, and regenerating local environments. These goals are to be attained primarily through the principles of new urbanism, decreasing infrastructure cost and maintenance, integrating work and living, and creating a more stable, attractive community for people of all incomes. The consequences of such a strategy will be that potable water consumption will reduce by 65 percent, fossil fuel energy consumption will fall by 50 percent over the 1995 Model Energy Code, and internal vehicle miles will decrease by 40 percent. One on-site job will be created for every two residences, and landfill-destined solid waste will be reduced greatly. Similarly, 20 percent "affordable" housing will be provided, and a cooperative city-developer sustainability work program will be developed. By implementing such a program, the developers of Civano quickly discovered that sustainability and new urbanism are not at all incompatible, but

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Slone/Civano

From previous page

Another aspect of the Civano discussion that may have little guidance for others is the debate over its location. This has less to do with Civano itself than it does with how badly this discussion is held whenever it occurs. Civano is criticized because it is at the edge of a planned area for development. When the project was first conceived, it was far from other development. Now, because the project took so long to begin, development has reached it. Civano is criticized because it may not have the "critical" mass to be an urban area. This critique is typically offered by people who do not seem to have ever left a city, and consequently they believe that only city-like density is viable. They do not appear to believe that villages of 2,000 homes, like Civano, or less grow organically. Travel across the United States and you will find towns, villages and hamlets of all sizes, many of them smaller than 2,000 homes. Talk to people who grew up in "real" pre-WWII towns, and one out of three will tell you they traveled to some other town or city for any shopping beyond daily needs.

The real question for the Civano region is how well other development will occur around the project. As the edge discussion occurs, rarely do participants ask the important question — from where do the utilities come? If an edge-town does not provide its own utilities, then it may well contribute to sprawl if developed too early. The utilities are extended to the edge-town, and then developers along the utility path typically have the right to extend off of those utilities. Moreover, because of the locality's desire to pay for

excess capacity, many localities are eager to add new development, whether or not its timing is appropriate. This is how sprawl can be encouraged by new towns or villages on the edge. Civano, even if it is not by definition sprawl, may be responsible for encouraging this form of sprawl.

There are many important questions to ask about Civano. Does this 1,000-acre development offer an appropriate model for the remaining 7,000 acres owned by the State Land Office? Is the delinquency in development of the Town Center a symptom or a cause of Civano's sales issues? (A town center is planned, but its character is unclear; a neighborhood center appears destined to be principally office use.) What is the consequence of saving the Town Center for last as several other projects have done? Is Civano a cautionary tale emphasizing the importance of balancing market study and vision? Or does the cautionary tale lie in Civano's over-engineering? If it is legitimate to utilize the "Southwestern compound" of Civano to create neighborhoods, how are these charming, but often walled islands tied together with engaging streetscapes? How do we discuss walkability in areas where it gets too hot to desire to walk even five minutes?

Civano is one of several projects exploring the integration of new urbanism and environmental sustainability. Haymount, Va., Coffee Creek Center, Ind., and Stapleton, Colo., are others. In part these projects only ask if buildings can be done better, greener; if landscapes can be more carefully integrated; and if key infrastructure such as water and wastewater can

be sustainably designed. But the more important question they raise for new urbanists is whether there is a subtle flaw in the urban model. The flaw is the expulsion of nature and ecological systems from urban areas. Instead of merely replicating the urban form, new neighborhoods must be improved by reintegrating these systems.

Civano has much to teach about reducing the human footprint of building and neighborhood. Building orientation, architectural coding to accommodate the differences in building orientation, waste and energy conservation techniques are all possible lessons from Civano.

In order for Civano to answer questions about the cost of environmental sustainability and new urban elements, much more focused, transparent and rational accounting must be done. Continued use of the current analysis will only cause harm. In order for Civano to advance a broader view of new urbanism's flexibility to adapt to regional conditions, a more open inquiry into the public consequences of the design differences is necessary.

Almost every development project has compromises and mistakes. In towns, we hope the mistakes become quaint "idiosyncrasies" over time. The compromises

may or may not weaken or destroy the new urban character of the place. Civano began as one of the best-planned places integrating new urbanism and environmental sustainability. It has run into problems. It is still unclear whether these problems result from management or the failure to assure the project's *economic* sustainability. The project has already been compromised. It is unclear whether it will be further compromised. The cost of these compromises to date is disappointing but not devastating. Civano still has the potential to be extraordinary. Because of the importance of Civano, great care must be exercised in analysis and explanation of its successes and failures.

Until more careful, detailed analysis is presented, Civano lives between oasis and mirage. It is a sort of haunted oasis — never in the same place. The haunted oasis offers real water to some travelers, but it is not on the map and its location is undependable.

Project Name: Southlake Town Square

City, State: Southlake, Texas (Dallas-Fort Worth Metro Area)

Classification: Town Center

Designer: David M. Schwarz/Architectural Services, Inc.

Consultants: Graham Associates

Architects: David M. Schwarz

Developer: Cooper & Stebbins L.P.

Design Date: 1996

Construction Begun: 1998

Status: Phases I and II completed
Site: 135 acres

Residential: 0 (under consideration)

Residential Price Range: NA

Commercial: 320K square feet
Office: 160K square feet
Retail: 160K square feet

Public & Civic Program: City hall, public library, county court and offices, post office, 12 acres of city parks.

SOUTHLAKE (1996)

David Schwarz presenting.

Photo: Rick Hall

The Good

• The success of the pedestrian environment and the extent to which the community has embraced and used the project.

• The success of the project as commercial environment. (Directly related to #1, above.)

• Combination of a variety of architectural expressions without seeming contrived.

• The inclusion of the city's town hall into the project — adding further legitimacy to the project as being Southlake's "downtown."

• Successfully accommodating a large component of automobile traffic without sacrifice to pedestrians.

The Bad

• The alleys (the "B" streets) that access the mid-block parking areas should have been 5 feet to 10 feet narrower.

• The design of the rear facades of buildings: not enough variation, too much of the same material and fenestration.

• Parapet height too consistent; more variation in building story height.

• More variation in sill height at the second floor.

• Loss of ability to close off the town square from F.M. 1709 (the primary arterial road servicing the project) by building on the front block (on which are currently located a small events pavilion and retention pond). (*This was mandated by city during PD approval process.*)

Critique by **David Schwarz**

David M. Schwarz/ Architectural Services, Inc.

David M. Schwarz/Architectural Services, Inc. is a Washington, D.C.-based design firm established in 1976. Its second office in Fort Worth, Texas, opened in 1985. In addition to work in Washington and Texas, the firm designs cultural, institutional, commercial, sports, educational and residential projects. This design-oriented firm emphasizes architecture as both a service and an art. Priority is given to developing designs that interpret and positively impact the built environment. It is the firm's belief that buildings should enrich and improve quality of life. The firm specializes in clients who want architecture of excellence, buildings by which people will be inspired and speak of favorably.

The firm's work is approximately 75 percent new construction and 25 percent restoration and rehabilitation. A strong commitment is made to urban life and a concern that the built environment reflects, enriches and improves quality of life. David M. Schwarz/Architectural Services, Inc. believes that a good understanding of the past helps us to understand the present and perhaps indicates courses for the future. These views have enabled the firm to adopt a strong commitment to historic preservation and designing projects that are sensitive to their surroundings.

Vision Keeper

A primary goal for Southlake Town Center was to create a development oriented to the pedestrian that would foster a sense of community for a city whose only commercial development to date consisted of several "strip centers," pad site restaurants, and some "big box" retail. Bringing a mix of uses to the site in close proximity to each other was identified as important to reinforcing town square as Southlake's "downtown." The master plan was viewed as a 20- or 30-year blueprint and therefore needed to be flexible enough to allow for a variety of future developments.

The basis for the master plan is a modified grid pattern. The grid plans of such towns as Charleston, S.C., Savannah, Ga., and Annapolis, Md., were studied. Like many American towns, town square's grid is modified to adapt to its specific site characteristics. The two primary east–west roads bordering the site, East Southlake Boulevard to the south and State Highway 114 to the north, are not parallel. In order to achieve regular shaped blocks that front onto each of these roads, the street grid is shifted on the interior of the site. The grid plan accommodates three parks of differing characters. The largest is 6 acres and is located on the steepest portion of the site, an area with the best stand of existing live oaks that would be expensive to develop.

The traditional American "Main Street" serves as the model for the type of urban space that has been reinterpreted by town square. The existing zoning code was amended to permit buildings to have a "zero" setback from the sidewalk, eliminate the requirements for side and rear yards, and allow for on-street parking. We also modified the zoning regulations to allow for bay projections, corner tower elements, show windows and other similar projections into the sidewalk zone. These kinds of elements were incorporated into the building designs

Michael Swartz
Project Manager

to create variations in building massings, mark particular building entrances, and emphasize certain block corners and street intersections.

Few American downtowns contain buildings erected in a single time period or reflective of a particular architectural style. Similarly, in designing the individual buildings of town square, we wanted to incorporate such diversity. Building facades are therefore intentionally derivative of a variety of commercial styles and idioms. At the same time, we wanted there to be an underlying structure that would act as a subtle ordering devise. This was accomplished by using a 25-foot module in the planning of the buildings. Façades are varied in width from 25 feet to 100 feet in multiples of 25 feet that also happens to correspond to the buildings' structural grid and the typical width of the smallest retailers.

Accommodating the automobile has been a key issue in the planning of town square. Americans are very attached to their cars and, in the case of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, the development practices of the past 50 years and an overall lack of public transportation outside the central business districts have made the car essential. We wanted to make sure the automobile, and the need to park a lot of them over time, would not undo the pedestrian character we were aiming to create;

consequently, much of our early planning was focused on this issue. In fixing the block sizes, it was important to develop a block dimension that was small enough to relate to the pedestrian, yet large enough to allow for future parking garages. To achieve this, we developed a series of "A" and "B" streets. "A" streets define larger "super blocks" that are large enough to contain future parking garages. The "B" streets break the "super blocks" into a series of smaller, pedestrian-sized blocks and provide access to the parking areas (and future parking decks) at the center of blocks.

The intermingling of uses is one of the most important factors that has contributed to the success of this project. The first phase was constructed to a height of two stories in an "office over retail" format that provides for roughly equal amounts of each use. The office tenants provide a weekday, daytime population, which helps to support the retail use. At the same time, the stores and restaurants are an important amenity for office workers. Restaurants bring additional daytime patrons to town square as well as evening customers, which has been of great benefit to the retailers. The developer and the city have worked together to sponsor events such as evening concerts, weekend festivals and parades. The inclusion of the city's new town hall (which also contains county offices and functions) on a central site fronting onto the town square solidifies town square as the center of Southlake's civic life. This use adds additional daytime and evening (City Council and other related meetings and hearings) population to the streets and public square. The now annual 3rd-of-July celebration attracted 20,000 residents and visitors last year.

The most gratifying aspect to this project has been the way in which the residents have embraced the place and claimed it as their own.

Peer Review | Southlake: Shopping Center, Office Park or Downtown?

By Ray Gindroz

In the past few years, we have begun to see a remarkable change in the attitude of shopping center and office park developers. After many years of insisting on formulas for single-use shopping centers or office parks, a number of experienced developers have created mixed-use developments that look and feel like downtowns.

At what point do such developments actually acquire the urbanity of a downtown? Or in other words, what does it take for the ugly duckling to turn into a swan?

The design of Southlake has accomplished this transformation. In so doing, it helps us understand what the essential qualities are that must be present to provide the diversity of use and activity to become the heart of a community.

Public Engagement

The project began with controversy. A shopping center and a big box retail complex had been proposed for the site. The community rebelled, blocked the development and requested that it become a park. The developer wanted to build a shopping center and office park, which would not have met community demands. This may have been in part a reaction to the fact that Southlake had no civic or urban center.

David Schwarz proposed to the developer that the site be thought of as a downtown. Downtowns by their very nature have something for everyone. They have parks, which are the center of community life and therefore respond to community concerns. They have shopping and offices, which respond to the developer's program. They have civic and cultural facilities, which enabled the city to build a new, high profile City Hall. And they have housing to provide 24-hour seven-day-a-week activity, security and stability.

In this case, as in so many others, the public dialogues (or battles) increase the number of constituents for whom the development is conceived. Instead of being focused on the needs of a single user, such as the developer or his brokers, the design is conceived as a means of fulfilling the goals of many different groups. It becomes a common ground for many interests. I would argue that this is the essence of urbanism. It makes the single-use, object building approach untenable and leads directly to the creation of urban space. To be built, the images and designs must address a civic purpose.

Precedents and Tradition

To convince the developer, the architect superimposed the plan of downtown Fort Worth on the site, along with the street patterns of the courthouse square area of the developer's hometown. The developer then was able to visualize the scale of the site in relation to downtowns he knew. The plan was then developed using these familiar, traditional models. Although the dimensions changed to suit program needs, the basic form and patterns remained intact through the process.

And so the design is a series of downtown blocks, with buildings that wrap the perimeter of the blocks with parking and service areas in the center. They define streets that lead to a central park with retail on the ground level and offices on the upper floors. The streets lead to a grand central park with a new City Hall built in the flamboyant manner of 19th century Texas courthouses. It has become a center for the region — a kind of "instant downtown" — to which people drive considerable distances to shop, stroll, walk in the park, go to the movies, have dinner or just enjoy urbanism.

Urban Space

The framework of streets and open space establishes the plan. It calls for streets that are lined with mixed- use buildings. The design and design guidelines enforce the new urbanist principle that "the primary role of urban buildings is the creation of street." Although the block dimensions are based on the requirements of standard retailing and office building construction, they establish a human-scale, interconnected grid.

The design of sidewalk pavement, streetlights, the cartway, landscaping and street furniture, was coordinated with the design of the building facades. The streets and parks were conceived as urban rooms, to be designed as a whole, rather than as a collection of individual parts. In photographs, the proportion of spaces seems comfortable and pedestrian in scale, in spite of the rather large dimensions of blocks and street widths.

An Urban Architecture

The buildings are designed to conform to the standard dimensions and bulk of speculative office and retail buildings. However, these standard volumes have been transformed into urban buildings. In some cases, the building program was modified. For example, the original program called for a 24-screen multiplex (which would not have conformed to the block dimensions) but was modified to be three 8-screen theaters. The buildings have continuous facade lines along the streets in order to create the urban space.

The street facade of each building is the most elaborated and carefully designed part of each building. The budget is spent on the street facades, with a much more basic design for the rear facades, with the garages and alleys in the middle of the blocks. David Schwarz felt that the City Hall was less successful because it is a building in the round, and therefore all four facades must be richly developed. The commercial building facades are articulated in manner of the traditional Main Street commercial buildings. The ground floors have a high percentage of glass storefronts, set within a regular spacing of piers and pilasters, and framed with a first-floor cornice that provides signage. Upper floors have a smaller ratio of glass to solid, but with sufficient number of windows to provide "eyes on the street." Buildings have a cornice or some other form of articulation at the roofline. Though continuous in floor plan, the facades are articulated as smaller urban buildings, with a different architectural character for each.

There is diversity through the use of a number of traditional architectural styles, including Moderne. David Schwarz commented on new urbanism as attempting to compress time, to replicate what would normally take many years to build. He has successfully achieved that goal with his own architecture and has enriched it by engaging a number of different architects to contribute to the mix.

Capacity for Growth and Change (or "Rome Wasn't Built in a Day")

The plan will be developed in phases over time. The key to its success is the framework of streets and open space. Within the blocks there is great flexibility in both land use and configuration.

Several blocks are proposed for residential development, even though they could not be developed at the same time as the first phase commercial uses. The plan provides good residential block dimensions and locates the development across the parks from the commercial uses. Other areas, originally proposed for big box retail uses, may be developed for hotel or mixed-use development, simply because the success of the project has changed the market.

Even the blocks that have been built have flexibility. For example, the three- and four-bay parking garages have only one bay with a sloped deck. In the future that could be removed and the flat-floored decks converted to residential uses.

As with so many new urban projects, Southlake is brand NEW! Towns develop over time. The creation of an instant downtown is a remarkable success. As it matures, as the trees grow taller, as new development is added and human beings modify and change things, Southlake will become even more convincing as a downtown.

Principles of New Urbanism

David Schwarz spoke of working with a set of "values" rather than following "principles." Those values included creating pedestrian scale and a belief that architecture ought to promote a sense of community, a means of bringing people together comfortably, of enabling different people to occupy the same space and respect their differences.

Whatever the words are to describe it, the participants in the Council felt that Southlake successfully fulfilled many of the Principles of the Charter, specifically:

6. Historic precedents and urban forms.
7. Mixed-use, mixed economy.
8. Pedestrian activity to reduce auto-dependence.
10, 11. Create neighborhood.
12. Walkable, interconnected networks.
16. Embedded civic uses.
17. Graphic urban codes.
18. Parks and civic space.
19. Spatial definition of streets and public space as a role of buildings.
20. Contextually seamless architecture.
21. Open public safety.
22. Pedestrian scale of streets.
23. Congenial, sociable streets and squares.
25. Distinctive public buildings and spaces.

It is, therefore, an excellent example of new urbanist theory and practice.

Other recent examples of new downtowns have similar programs and designs and are also very successful. But, several of the others were developed as part of a comprehensive master plan. For example, City Place in West Palm Beach is part of a downtown plan. Reston Town Center was part of a new town plan.

Southlake is all the more impressive because it is the result of a creative architect and adventurous developer responding to public concern with a new solution — which is in fact an old solution: Build a Downtown. Through their efforts, the success of Southlake will be seen as a major turning point transforming development practices away from single-use projects to ones that create urbanism. And we are all grateful!

| # Southlake: A [New] Urban Fragment

By Neal I. Payton

Southlake Town Center is an urban fragment situated incongruously on a major arterial in a North Dallas suburb. Depending on one's perspective, it is either a really good shopping center, a regional destination that provides a connection from a highway to major arterial, or the first phase of a vibrant, mixed-use, mixed-density town center. Sitting upon what had been a 140-acre horse farm, within a conventional suburban context, the project does not so much relate to context (there really is none to speak of) but attempts to be the seed for a new urban order. It is a beacon of mid-density urbanism in the middle of nowhere.

Southlake exemplifies how the politics of development can be used creatively by new urbanist designers to implement an agenda with broad-based citizen support. Built on a site that three developers had tried and failed to rezone, local citizens supported a golf course program on the site's 140 acres. Instead, David Schwarz proposed the model of the typical Texas courthouse town, complete with town green, and a city hall substituting for the courthouse itself. In effect, the plan cleverly reinterprets the regional shopping center program in order to create a place of civic importance. Moreover, the plan's fragmentary nature makes an additional contribution to the new urbanist agenda. It is designed as one piece of a larger urban puzzle, a puzzle yet to be fully conceived.

Beginning with a conventional shopping center program of neighborhood retail, pad sites and big box retail along the highway, the plan turns the center inside out, creating blocks and streets lined by mixed-use buildings (office over retail) surrounding mid-block parking structures hidden from view. Its success, from a developer's point of view, comes from its hardheaded pragmatism. At the center of the project, a town green and City Hall add a civic dimension to the development rarely encountered in modern retail centers, recalling instead the typical Texas courthouse town. Such civic mindedness is balanced by an attention to the contemporary realities of shopping centers, in particular parking and service. Southlake's plan carefully imbeds these two drivers of suburban space in precisely the correct quantities to fulfill modern retailers' requirements.

This accomplishment is not without some tradeoff. Southlake's blocks are big; the longest is 850 feet, while the narrowest dimension is 350 feet. These dimensions allow retail buildings to surround above ground parking garages and additional bays of surface parking. Such dimensions, while no doubt efficient from the developer's point of view, reveal the dilemma faced by designers of new urbanist, "Main Street" projects. Blocks that are two to three times the size of conventional American city blocks feel more institutional, more like a conventional

shopping center, and dilute the pedestrian experience and its ability to connect to a larger context with a multitude of routes and passages.

EAST SOUTHLAKE

Of course we will have to imagine such external connections, guessing where they might occur, as the designer presents site plans that are framed precisely by the project's boundaries. Schwarz claims he views this project as a fragment, yet he fails to provide any sort of graphic speculation as to how the project might be expanded in the future. If he intends this project as a virus of sorts, created to overwhelm the suburban miasma with a germ of urbanism, one would hope that he provide some sort of road map to urbanism's eventual triumph.

Phase 1 of the project is complete, about 1-2 million square feet divided equally between retail and office space. It includes the town square lined with highly agreeable reinterpretations of early 20th century American commercial architecture. The high quality commercial edge was accomplished without the benefit of an architectural code, but by the designer choosing architects

for these structures with whom he was supremely confident. However, in this first phase, the project's bloated block structure is already evident in the experience of the center green. It is big; too big for the scale and density of buildings on its edge. It is simply, a flaccid and unmemorable space. Moreover, the square's lack of definition by buildings along its southern edge further dilutes its perception as a typical Courthouse Square. The space feels more like a ceremonial green in front of a minor royal palace than it does a space of democratic capitalism. Southlake reminds us that the art of urban design requires more than archaeological accuracy.

Its designer, David Schwarz, also reminds us of new urbanism's internal politics. "I am not a new urbanist," he declares. "New urbanism tries to compress time." This is an extraordinary statement from an architect whose design originates with the typical Texas courthouse town (the model was the developer's own home town) and whose architectural work borrows heavily from a panoply of American architectural traditions woven together to create civic and commercial building of exceptional quality and urban significance. It also indicates the degree to which new urbanism is still misunderstood, even by many of the profession's most significant practitioners.

"We don't care about the five-minute walk. We don't care if the streets are narrow. We care if it feels good," he continues. The disingenuousness of his disclaimer suggests a clever marketing strategy distancing himself from some his potential competitors – one imagines him at the interview making such declarations. It also indicates the difficulty many high profile designers have in operating within a milieu dominated by a very small cadre of personalities.

Ultimately, of course, Schwarz's disclaimers notwithstanding, Southlake is a new urbanist town center. Schwarz has studied the both the historic urban typologies that he and his clients admire and the programmatic realities of contemporary commerce. Like any pragmatist he as adapted what works and modified the rest.

The result, one hopes, upon full buildout, will include a broad range of mid-density urban housing typologies, office space, liner retail, and even possibly big-box retail coalescing into a place that looks and feels like a real town. Unfortunately, that day is not yet here. Southlake suffers from its phasing at present. It looks sort of like a town, but it lacks the full program compliment that allows it to act and feel genuine. Landing the civic building as an "anchor," to use the vernacular of the development community, was a masterstroke, but until the buildout is more fully complete, it will remain merely a really good shopping center.

Orr/Commentary

the moving of mountains, for example, to facilitate a simple left turn from one interstate highway to another.

At the level of delivery and execution, the ancient's ardor of process is completely marginalized by user-friendly instructions and easy assembly kits. There is no need to learn a craft, or carefully examine buildings in the neighborhood. All the pieces that make up the construction process are so accessible that one is left with comparatively inconsequential decisions to make, such as which style or color to use. Where the materials come from or in what locale they get placed doesn't matter. To the consumer (the term that has replaced *craftsman*) they are a simple purchase at the regional retailer with the swipe of a card. And the decision to purchase one product over another has entirely to do with how products compare to their competitors displayed on adjacent shelves. They would never be selected based on an empathetic understanding of a building next door.

Naturally, the packaging of products is of paramount importance to stimulate consumption. However, the suppliers' largest focus has to be on the tremendous cost of warehousing, shipping and inventorying products. Inattention to warehousing and transportation can reap the largest havoc on profit margins. Therefore, tremendous energy goes into calculating and designing profiles, lengths and groupings of products so the highest quantities fit in the least space on 18-wheel trucks and on shelves in retail stores. Stacking considerations become the primary determiner of the shape and profile of vinyl, "wood grain" clapboard siding, for example, the 8-foot height of ceilings, and the 4-inch increment of window sizes.

And by extension, the aesthetic of the sum of these products, those ubiquitous suburban house that dot our landscape, derives from stacking requirements as well, as in turn the aesthetics of the entire community — those sprawl images new urbanists love to brandish. The aesthetic of design is the efficiency of stacking.

We humans are no different from other species in the animal kingdom. We seek the easiest path and always have. Therefore one cannot blame either the suppliers or the purchasers of production products. They are available, easy to use, and inexpensive. Why not?

"Why not?" may be acceptable for consumers and suppliers, but it is not for designers. If designers follow the path of the consumer, they also remove themselves from empathetic relationships with the environments they create. Technology's initiative is to place empathy at distance, but in so doing it also makes us lose sight of the fragile human structures that make up neighborhoods and communities, the delicately balanced structures that reveal palpable change from one environment to another. By succumbing to the ready allure of technology, our insertions can be little more than quotations of real environments. They may make us feel we have duplicated a cherished concept, but they produce little more than one-night-stands. Site plans become like warehouses, with every inch of space filled with image-tagged products stacked to the same efficiency as our retail brethren. The result has as little to do with rural villages or garden cities as the retailers' products do with colonial or modern houses.

Presumably the designer is educated (often highly) and therefore capable of achieving some degree of distance and reflection. Presumably, the designer is capable of empathy. From such a standpoint, it is possible to imagine withdrawal from the seduction of consumerism and immersion into the same empathetic mindset as the ancients. Christopher Alexander teaches the importance of placing oneself in the place of a project to absorb the totality of nuances, the "I" that makes up the whole, of which the project is only a part. Alexander's "I" is similar, I believe, to Nietzsche's description of ancient temples when he speaks of the "atmosphere of inexhaustible meaningfulness" that hung about them. One's assimilation of this meaningfulness requires repose and focused effort, a good bit of will, and a trust in one's instincts.

But it is possible to lead oneself toward abstention from consumerism and away from ambivalence to empathy with our environments — in essence to succumb to the experiential path much trodden by our ancestors. Abstinence from our base urges heightens our consciousness and exposes us to the same limitations the ancients faced, thereby raising the significance of subtle yet important nuances and humbling us to respond to them like early highway builders, for example, had to acknowledge and accommodate the impediment of seemingly insignificant hills and marshes.

Through empathy, we *stupid* descendents can actually rise to the *superior intelligence* of our predecessors and create environments equally respectful of human conditions. Through empathy, too, we can become more discriminating in our use of consumer products (with which I repeat I do not take issue). Perhaps, like Martha Stewart, we can edit pre-selections that would enable suppliers to take it up a notch. Perhaps respect for human conditions could find equal footing to the rigor environmentalists demand of respect for endangered species conditions.

Orr/Karow-Nord

absence of need may explain why personal gardens have been eliminated from the program, but it also signals a forfeiture of opportunity for personal identity these gardens might have provided. Perhaps as the rigors of communist principles wane over the years, personal gardens would have allowed new feelings of self-esteem to find expression. Similarly, the project's use of inboard porches suppresses individual expression and contributes to homogeneity by trapping individuality within walls.

Another factor contributing to homogeneity is the general acceptance of communist principles by the designers. Even though the buildings of Karow-Nord Suburb find cheerier expression than their East-Bloc brethren, one senses a nervous attachment to the old regime that makes gestures to escape glum communist aura seem furtive. As a result, a certain pall settles over the entire project, which prompted one conference participant to challenge whether Karow-Nord would ever be included on a list of must-sees for an architectural tour.

Though private gardens are absent, a public network of green spaces and linear parks weaves throughout and organizes the project, extending to the fields beyond. The public parks and squares are given distinct shapes that give each neighborhood a particular focus and identity. The unique squares do contribute identity, especially when seen from the air, but because the courtyard shapes can not be seen from the streets, and because there are so many of them, their geometric differences diminish in value as organizing devices. Their contribution to variety is limited to internal identity and to alleviating what might have been a monotonous site plan of cookie cutter shapes spread evenly like frosting across

the whole project. And since the courtyards' functions (children playgrounds, bench get-togethers, etc.) are basically the same in every case, the different shapes act like little more than color patterns in parking lots at shopping malls, which help shoppers wend their way back to forgotten parking spaces. MRY claims, "Our scheme draws from the traditions of Garden Cities, growing out of the existing town pattern." Indeed, the project does use Howard-like "roundabout" devices and villa courtyards just like those in the Karow village, but something is missing. The project is neither a garden city nor a rural village. Even though the project contains pieces of both these worlds, it is not of them to the extent that one might be confused for the other.

One might argue that neither "world," rural village or garden city, has any pertinence to life today. Neither, therefore, should be copied or alluded to in *nostalgic* ways — one should maintain distance with a proper sense of irony. But in this case, the irony is missing too. There are no clever uses of tropes, out-of-scale elements or chuckle-inducing, out-of-context insertions. Rather one is left with the impression that the designers truly admire the contribution of their predecessors and *wanted* to reflect commitment to the same accomplishments. But somehow this intention falls short. The commitment is missing — missing in the same way commitment is missing from a one-night-stand. The wet spot is there as testament to proclamations of undying love, but the bed is empty and the participants gone their separate ways.

In the case of Karow-Nord Suburb, the familiar pieces of historic Karow village and of Garden Cities fall short of authenticity perhaps because the designers sought to fill the bareness of their site in a similar fashion to the efficient stacking model above rather than be inspired by an informed empathetic immersion with the surroundings. Not only do we feel that the existing settlement patterns are cut off abruptly at the perimeter of Karow-Nord, but the project in turn casts a brooding and sinister shadow back at the pieces that gave it birth. Indeed the patterning of the project, the even filling of program over the entire site, gives the impression that the design actually continues beyond its edges, out of view under the surface like the cropped borders of a photograph. The edges seem poised to "un-crop" and spread outward, engulfing existing settlement, including the historic Karow village itself. In fact, John confirmed this intention for expansion during his remarks. With the death of the source, the quoted parts used throughout the design lose their meaning, like the breakdown that comes from disconnected minds in the movie "Matrix."

If development today invariably means a marked reduction in quality over what was there before, then Karow-Nord Suburb must be judged a resounding success for breaking this unfortunate pattern. It displays nothing but improvement over the communist housing East Germans have endured over the last 50 years. Even though it suffers some shortcomings, overall it is a vast improvement over the glum vision characterized in the communist housing photos shown at the beginning of the talk. It is a cheerful and charming project that provides a unique marriage of communist and new urbanist ideals. In the end, its embrace of the communist lifestyle is tempered to incorporate richer community orientation and, one would hope, more positive ambitions for a fully functioning society.

Graham/I'On

from 90,000 square feet to 30,000 square feet, and reducing the total unit count to 759 (a number felt to be economically and politically supportable).

This new plan and rezoning application was submitted in December 1996. After the requisite public hearing, it received an 8-1 recommendation for approval by the Mt. Pleasant Planning Board, followed in February by a 7-2 first reading approval by Town Council in February 1997. The plan and rezoning application received 6-3 final approval by Town Council in March 1998 (one Council member who had supported the rezoning in February switched his vote after intense lobbying by rezoning opponents).

The founders then worked directly with their project engineers to fine tune the first phase of the plan. Particular attention was directed to the first sub-phase of the plan comprising 45 lots, three parks and three street types. The intent was to provide a small phase of diverse home sites, each of which would be built upon during the first 18 months to quickly demonstrate the TND concept to prospective buyers. Lots in this sub-phase ranged in size from 2,500 to 15,000 square feet. Infrastructure construction began in the summer of 1997 (two years after the initial charrette took place) and ground was broken on the first house in March 1998. Homes built in the first sub-phase in 1998 sold for prices ranging from $160,000 to $625,000. [Side note: In 2000, a home sold in this sub-phase for $1.7 million, directly across the street from the home that initially sold for $160,000.]

During the time the Planned Development ordinance received first reading approval in February 1997 and infrastructure groundbreaking in the summer of that year, the opponents of the project gathered a petition of 3,500 registered voters, which they presented to Town Council, requesting that governing body overturn the approved ordinance or otherwise hold a referendum enabling the citizenry to vote on the zoning. The founders challenged this action, and a Circuit Court Judge placed a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) on the town prohibiting them from acting on this petition. This TRO was subsequently lifted, and while the Town Council voted 6-3 against overturning the rezoning, they did schedule a town-wide referendum be held in October 1997.

The founders continued their legal challenge, while preparing a campaign to win support for I'On at the polls in October. Sitework construction continued unabated throughout, despite the opponents' legal attempts to stop it. One week prior to the scheduled referendum, Circuit Court Judge Markley Dennis ruled that a municipality could not hold a referendum on zoning issues. The opponents appealed this decision. The appeal was heard by the South Carolina State Supreme Court in December 1999. In January 2000 the Supreme Court ruled unanimously to affirm the lower court decision.

The principal opponents of I'On targeted the incumbent supporters for defeat. In the town-wide election of September 1998, four of the six Council members who had voted to support the rezoning of I'On were defeated at the polls. During the next Town Council election in 2000, the mayor, who had supported the rezoning was also defeated, and the other member of Council, who had voted to support the rezoning, elected not to run. Despite all its aesthetic, economic, environmental and social successes, which were widely acclaimed in the media, I'On

D. Duany/Overview

are gathering like storm clouds. In operational terms, we would skirt the danger of alienating a huge market that we can capture by leading gently in.

Lots and Time

We have come to recognize the maturing of urbanism across time, but I feel we do this fourth dimension a disservice by not providing deep lots, a crucial element in future densification. Consider the historical persistence of property lines or the citification of long burgage lots. Whatever may be the actual relevance of the backyards to actual needs, we should set up the framework for organic development.

Our concentration on ensuring the public space means that we overlook the back. Coding back setbacks will prevent the deep floor plates we see nowadays in new suburbs from the air. Our culture continues to talk about the yard as if it was still real, and we do the same. But the backyard is gone, adding special poignancy to the absurdity of sprawl. Not only is it a good instinct to not eschew this sprawl practice, there are also good reasons for it.

Well-considered rear setbacks are essential for creating the well-proportioned spaces that accommodate garage apartments gracefully. In the short term, a deep yard, no matter how degraded, services the remnant culture of our agricultural past and helps deflect misguided criticism. Seen more positively, it can meet some of our inchoate yearnings for balance with nature and give us the tool of the interface between the urban block and its green back (Rus in Urbis). I was recently in the backyard of a block in the very dense West Village looking at the full moon though tree branches. New urbanists may very well end up being the only ones who provide green. I recommend it as part of the market competition between alternative models.

Of course we face development pressures for long blocks, but I put this in the same category as the argument for low ceilings: The costs are proportionally fewer for wider blocks, as utilities and paving are a largely question of frontage. Lots in the neighborhood general should be deeper than on the edge, as they lead eventually to the development of a secondary "mews" grid, based on alleys, which will result in a smaller, more articulate block system. The new urbanist compromise of providing for passages in long blocks will act synergistically, as long as we provide them with right of ways sufficient for future roadways.

To all the hardheads who object to all this talk of designing for the future, I can only say that we ignore providing green backyards at our peril. There is something called the market. Municipalities act responsibly when it comes time to adopt rational codes.

Lots and Wildlife

Still more on lots. Strictly speaking, there was too much of a division in a few Council comments between "lizards" (ecological concerns) and development. The concept of urban wildlife is always missing as a factor in this stark rhetorical dichotomy, justified only because deep wildlife is threatened and development is currently sterile.

In cases where it can be handled well, good low-density urbanism can become a proper ecological edge of its own its own, one that can help flatten the bell curve of ecological performance of the transect.

This is especially true in certain vulnerable ecologies I've lived and worked in. Over the last few years, I've created an oasis for wildlife in my backyard: the population of lizards, birds and butterflies

has increased by a huge factor, so much that we only know the larger lizards by name. And a balance of grass does increase the diversity of bird wildlife if it isn't managed as "industrial lawn." There is a popular movement out there that we can graft on to, typified by the book "Noah's Ark." Those environmentalists who have a hard time dealing with the built world will be able to find useful employ.

Urban wildlife is well equipped to invade this energy rich transition zone (they've had a lot of practice) as long as we provide a mix of canopies and refrain from modern practices. Go up a local highrise in summer and look toward old metropolitan areas: The chances are you won't see them. The visible stuff is the bad stuff. This is traditional. We just have to recover a lost practice and add a few twists of our own. Foresting is peculiarly American and serves as yet another example of the universal precept of urban intensification, of getting away from "either-or" to "and."

The problem is that NU urban codes assure only the crucial public urbanism (the street), while backyard private landscape codes are outside their general purview, except in careful ("boutique") or ecologically minded developments. Pity, Seaside started so well as a sustainable model of a landscape. DPZ landscape codes would transform the edge of the back and alleys into wildlife corridors if they were followed.

The new generation of municipal landscape codes is actually crammed with heavy tree-bush ratios that ordain natives and limit grass, but I hesitate to further load new urban codes with these. There is such a thing as too much regulation, and waiting

for the water crisis, like waiting for the gas crisis, is not practical.

What I do suggest is continued work in developing simple alternative models, based on the soil preservation that is also crucial to percolation, and backing these with simplified planting codes and easily accessible native retail nurseries.

Undermining Districts

Going to the future again. I think it is time to fully engage the undermining of all districts, i.e., all single-use areas, even as one accepts it as a category in regional planning. There is no such thing as spreading ourselves thin on too many fronts. There are many potential participants and only one war to be waged, which is over reintroducing genuine multiple use.

Much has already been done along these lines, much of which I'm not on top of. I do know that shopping malls are well in hand, which is a logical development, as they have increasingly imitated urbanism. Taking the next step will be dictated by the market.

Some of DPZ's battles with Caribbean tourist practices are too little known, but the more intelligent tourist complexes have been driven into doing false imitations of urbanism. Hopefully the road back to authenticity may become clear as warehousing increasingly cheaper tourism becomes economically untenable.

I'm circumstantially interested these days in breaking up hospital districts by folding in other components such as housing. Even the modern hospital needs to be rethought and brought back to its type (courtyards) for medically sound reasons.

I also believe that warehouse dis-

tricts can be undermined with property lines in such a way as to make future redevelopment easier. I would only speculate about possible techniques without having done a design exercise, but the potential is immense.

Seen through these lenses, hybrid suburban projects can be exploited rationally as a major step towards undermining sprawl. This may sound like a stunner, and I confess it surprises me. The Congress was instituted (at least in part) to hold the line on quality, but I think it is possible that a hybrid project, if it is worked out in all its aspects in the fourth dimension, can receive an NU imprimatur as an acceptable way to make a future retrofit easy. Many practices have been used in the past: e.g. the provisioning of road widths with the expectation that parking will be retrofitted, or of parking lots for future infill. Developing a set of guidelines that would tackle the issues of connectivity and provide the range of public reservations could be useful and could stand as a minimum code for broad suburban areas of the transect. I'd be interested in seeing if a system could be worked out that would allow the buffers of arterials to become the mixed-use avenues and boulevards of the future.

In spite of Charleston, I've heard various people commenting about the current lack of criticism, so consider this a contribution. Please trash away, as it would be a mistake to follow the modernists in their lack of self-criticism.

Graham/I'On

was effectively used as a galvanizing issue for the anti-growth forces of the town to defeat the incumbents who "voted to support developers against the will of the people." To this day, I'On continues to be attacked by its opponents.

Technique

In his discussion of I'On, Victor Dover stated: "We [planners and architects] are all unfortunately conditioned to expect that the geometry of fine plans will be diluted and dumbed down, or that the architecture will not live up to the promise of the urbanism."

Victor and I concur that it is a grave mistake to think this way, because such thinking leads a planning team to try and formulate some kind of idiot-proof code. Such codes are more difficult to understand and enforce. This thinking reflects a tendency to treat the neighborhood building process like clockwork, in which a machine and manual are designed, wound up and let it go. Building a great neighborhood is not so easy.

The I'On design code has been boiled down to a small set of simple rules that enable good design. Note the emphasis is on *enabling* good design, rather than *preventing* bad design. We supplement this code with an easy-to-understand architectural primer, entitled "Principles of Lowcountry Vernacular Architecture," which serves as a vision conveyance tool. The primer explains the rationale behind the code for the benefit of architects, builders and customers unfamiliar with the traditional architecture and building techniques of the region.

The third tool used is a set of Community Patterns. These patterns, developed with each phase of construction, serve as another layer of vision conveyance tools and set forth expectations for specific lots. For example, a corner lot might be encouraged to have a wraparound porch.

The I'On design coordinator, who

has a unique combination of architecture, construction and sales experience, works in a proactive manner with architects, builders and purchasers to convey the vision and assist with architectural design. This person also administers the I'On Design Committee, the architectural review body for the neighborhood.

Members of the I'On Guild execute the individual building plans. The Guild is composed of builders who were recruited and selected based on experience, financial strength, customer service and an overall conscientiousness for their craft. The purpose of the Guild is to foster a culture of doing things right. Initially, there were 10 members of the Guild. Now there are 18. Having so many hands involved allows the neighborhood to quickly achieve a level of diversity and sense of authenticity that otherwise only comes with significant periods of time. The founders view the Guild members as critical neighborhood building partners. Whereas the founders are responsible for constructing the streets and parks of the public realm, the Guild members are constructing the buildings of the private realm. The founders' aim was to create a situation where their work and that of the Guild members is complementary. Properly executed, this approach results in the whole being continually greater than the sum of the parts. Equally important to the success of the neighborhood is that Guild members are the best customers for lot purchases, *provided these members are able to sustain their own economic success*.

I feel it is a mistake to spend so much time and energy during the charrette to come up with a detailed plan for the whole neighborhood. Trying to do it all up front leaves no room for learning and improvement as you go along. I've come to believe a charrette should focus on a conceptual plan that everybody recognizes will change as the neighborhood progresses. Far more important is to arrive at principles and focus

design energy on the first phase, bearing in mind how this phase will be marketed and the costs of infrastructure. With this in place, planners should set themselves up to periodically return to reevaluate and improve the plan. Embrace change while holding to principle.

At I'On, we've had at least three major plan changes, with countless minor changes. We learn as we go, attempting to tinker our way to excellence. Savannah is a good example of this. Oglethorpe initially designed four wards on about 40 acres. Two more were added during his lifetime. Eighteen wards were added by later generations. The designers who built the later squares worked to adapt and improve Oglethorpe's original plan.

It is easy to criticize I'On for its homogeneity. However, there already exists an incredible diversity of urban situations, buildings, price ranges and lot sizes. As Americans, our TV culture seems to have us hard-wired for instant gratification. The neighborhood will evolve and change over time. The important thing is that the bones of the urbanism enable this evolution. Again, thinking about Savannah, the first 100 houses were 16-foot by 24-foot log cabins on 60-foot by 90-foot lots. Over time, these cabins were removed or torn down, and the lots subdivided to achieve the diversity you see today. In other words, be patient.

Finally, a few thoughts on the political situation surrounding I'On. As discussed, the neighborhood is located in close proximity to two historic districts that are the most sought after places to live in the area; the Town had adopted a clear vision for the kind of development they wanted; we had two of the best, if not the best, planning teams in the country creating the initial plan; no less than four environmentally-oriented groups endorsed

Deupi/Civano
From page 35

rather naturally and inextricably linked.

The Civano "Idea" is based on a continuum that ranges from building to neighborhood to region, a model typically referred to as a "transect." This system of classification relies upon a conceptual range of rural-to-urban for the useful dissection and classification of the typical elements of urbanism. For example, at the regional level, Civano seeks to create a strong identity that mixes districts, neighborhoods, corridors, agriculture and recreation, elevating infrastructure to the realm of civic art. At the scale of the neighborhood, Civano follows closely the principles espoused in the Charter of New Urbanism, clearly identifying streets, blocks and public spaces, while at the same time creating a more intimate relationship between buildings and their immediate natural surroundings. Finally the architecture of Civano is based on a regionalist view of syntax, type and grammar, taking into account local traditions of making walls, roofs, and openings, using the available stock of building materials and methods of construction.

But perhaps even more surprising than this rich mosaic is the diversity of housing types that will make up the nearly 2,000 homes in Civano, for they underline the basic relationship between architecture and urbanism. According to Stephanos Polyzoides, the architect responsible for the scheme, "[a]ll housing … is designed as variations on eight housing types. Through the diversity of their size, configuration, style and price, these types encourage many spatial dispositions, a range of densities and a variety of socio-economic programs. The neighborhood center area is comprised of townhouses, courtyard housing, detached patio houses and villas. The neighborhood general area is made up of university homes and cottages. The neighborhood edge area is composed of desert country homes and compound housing." The houses range in price from approximately $90,000 to $200,000 and employ a variety of strategies designed to meet a high standard of energy conservation. Most homes contain solar water heaters and photovoltaic panels, are oriented to reduce the impact of heat gain in the summer, minimize openings on the westerly facades, employ natural shading devices, and use non-absorbing light colors on solar-exposed surfaces. At the same time, the homes are designed to maximize the solar gain in the winter through carefully positioned openings and orientations, setbacks and carefully situated deciduous and evergreen trees.

Each house type meets the standard of conservation in a slightly different way. The compound house, for instance, is typical of the Southwest region as it is organized around a southward facing private patio. Each such house is arranged to form part of a cluster around a loosely planned central space available for parking and other services. The block is maintained by a continuous perimeter edge that alternates from building wall, to patio enclosure, to entry gate. What is most important about the compound house though, is the pattern of space between the units rather than the unit itself, as the compounds capture the winter sun most effectively. The detached patio house, on the other hand, is a long and narrow single family unit that resembles in plan a typical side-yard house, usually in a 30-36 ft. x 100 ft lot. Like the side-yard, the street is defined through exterior walls and porches, whereas the patio is created through party walls and exterior walkways. Each patio house has a rear garage that is accessed through an alley. The character of the patio type recalls the traditional adobe form with flat roofs, plaster walls, wooden porches, and cleverly located window and door openings. The desert village home also recalls two well established housing types: the Radburn plan in New Jersey from the 1920s and the village homes project of the 1930s in Davis California. According to Polyzoides, "[b]oth projects are organized around houses located on lanes with their principal rooms (living rooms, dining rooms, etc.) facing a greenway in the back. Characteristic of these two historical precedents is the confusion between house fronts and backs, and the ensuing lack of identity and visibility of each unit and of the projects as wholes." But do not let the novelty confuse you: The homes are designed to front a pedestrian walkway that serves as a natural ecological zone, capturing the winter sun through strategically located courtyards and tree plantings. The townhouse is perhaps the most recognizable of all the Civano house types in that it provides greater density while maintaining the visual integrity of the individual unit. The Civano townhouse is organized into clusters of four double story units on 36-foot by 100-foot lots, entered directly from the street. Not surprisingly, the garage is situated in the rear alley. Like the patio homes, the residual interior space can be formalized through covered walkways or alternatively used for planting. The university homes are single family cottages resembling the early-twentieth century detached houses in the neighborhoods surrounding the University of Arizona in Tucson. The houses, with their rear access garages and perimeter garden walls, ensure that the definition of the street is maintained and that winter sun is maximized. Finally, the courtyard houses consist of single L-shaped units that when clustered into groups create individual private patios. The units can be single or double storey houses, and each one is serviced by a rear alley detached garage.

The great Renaissance architect and writer on architecture, Leon Battista Alberti, made famous the city house analogy over five hundred years ago, noting that "if a city is like some large house, and the house is in turn like some small city, cannot the various parts of the house … be considered miniature buildings?" This fundamental reciprocity is clearly evident in the distribution and arrangement of the various house types at Civano. If architecture is to play an important role in the future fabric of our cities and in the development of the built environment, it will be necessary for architects to consider production building and growth management in harmony with the environment on a much greater scale. The lessons derived from Civano could very well provide us with the most compelling and instructive way forward.

Barnes/Celebration
From page 23

fort to improve the quality the neighborhood.

An enormous amount of time, energy and thought went into the design of Celebration Village. We felt like we were re-inventing the wheel, and for the most part we were. Very few development projects undertaken in recent history were so highly scrutinized, had such high expectations, and had so many critics. This was a Disney project after all, and we had to make sure we had all the bases covered. The efforts to make things excellent are evident in Celebration Village. Unfortunately, once development started, most of the research stopped. This has led to the creation of neighborhoods that do not have as much character and are not as memorable as some of the first sections of Celebration. The town runs the risk of becoming stale and boring.

Celebration is a large project and is being developed over many years by many people. On projects as large as Celebration or as small as an infill block, it is imperative the development team constantly tries to improve upon what has been done in the past, to study what has been successful and figure out how to improve on it and to learn from what has failed and figure out how to correct. Today's success is tomorrow's starting point, and mistakes should not become precedents.

Celebration's Future

As a friend of mine has said, "Better built than perfect." Celebration is not perfect and, just like everything else built by humans, it never will be. The two top goals of the Celebration development team were to create a great place to live, work and play and to create a place that others could study and learn from. I believe those goals have been achieved.

Shea/Celebration
From page 22

range of incomes and lifestyles.

d. An alley system is incorporated as a device where different house types come together, also eliminating extensive curb cuts, driveways and garages on public streets and park frontages.

e. Placemaking is reinforced with a family of architectural styles and particular house types applied to each residential address (see discussion of the Pattern Book on pages 48 and 49). The architectural styles embody the classic styles and uniquely American hybrids found within towns of the Southeast, including classical and colonial revival, Carpenter Gothic, Low Country and Acadia, Mediterranean and Country French.

The neighborhoods radiate about each side of Water Street, north/south streets lead to the town center, while smaller scaled streets and pedestrian alleys link the neighborhoods east/west. Each neighborhood contains an interconnected system of parks — on the east side an embedded wetlands park becomes the center point of the neighborhood, the linear park and canal of Water Street becomes a setting for apartment buildings and ties the golf clubhouse to the lake at the town center, and to the west a series of small parks and squares tie a variety of residential blocks together. West of the 35-acre school campus, a series of linear "private places" orient this neighborhood to the golf course open space and public trail system. In many ways, the most successful residential places are the small-scaled settings, such as Verandah Place, Lake Evelyn and Savannah Square, where there is a unified application of house type, building massing, architectural style, and street and public space design.

Zimmerman/Celebration
From page 21

ment, demonstrating that the principles of the new urbanism are compatible with a conventional "master-planned community" land sales program.

The intentional opportunity for some organic change in use within its built environment is exceptional for an "engineered" property. The ground-floor rental apartments feature high ceilings and structure that allows front façades to be punched out for conversion to retail. This transformation has already occurred on a few units along Celebration Avenue as the commercial center of gravity begins to move from Front Street up Market Street toward the "100 percent corner."

Conversely, there is apparent inflexibility in the size of the school. The Celebration Company's interest in "seniors-oriented" housing may have more to do with the desire to reduce the pressure on the school than to provide age diversity through age-segregation.

At the scale of the house, Celebration has achieved a minor triumph. That is the reconfiguration — by the massing provisions in Urban Design Associates' pattern book — of the typical one-and-a-half-story Florida house into a form that supports a well-proportioned traditional streetscape. The influence of this alternative is beginning to be felt beyond Celebration.

The pattern book and its progeny developed for other projects may ultimately have quite a significant impact regarding traditional house design as component manufacturers seize the market opportunity of providing properly dimensioned and proportioned builder-grade doors, windows columns and trim.

One would think that a mixed-use "community" (in the parlance of real estate marketing) that will ultimately consist of 5,000 mixed-tenure dwelling units on 4,900 acres, surrounded by a 4,700-acre preserve, would be an opportunity to make a positive contribution to regional sustainability. However, from the regional perspective, Celebration seems to have accomplished very little beyond the required wetland preservation. A tenuous argument could be made for slightly increased efficiencies in infrastructure and maintenance and corresponding reduction of vehicle miles traveled and non-point source pollution. The special accommodation for non-polluting vehicles may put Celebration in the forefront in this regard.

Perhaps, given the fragmented nature of the developable land and the hostile character of the major thoroughfares, Celebration is as regionally responsive as a single land holding, however large, can be.

Massengale/l'On
From page 31

best models for doing this is Tom Graham's house at I'On, but that model hasn't been followed at any other new urban project that I know of.

Some of these unusual conditions came from the dimensions of the site, such as the difference between the eastern lake and the property boundary, which made it difficult to get normal double-loaded streets and alleys.

But the planning also comes from the personal preferences of the planners. The platting along the eastern lake is similar to the model Vince used at Newpoint, which is based on South Carolina towns along the water where the old roads between the houses and the water have been removed over the years.

Victor, Joe and Vince all like picturesque plans. Vince once said to me that

Massengale/Overview
From page 4

There are some obvious comparisons with the Modernist principles of architecture and urbanism, which swept away traditional design. Even though they invented "the science of Ergonomics," many of the Modernist designers who made furniture only paid lip service to the functional paradigms for the comfort of people sitting in their chairs.

The proof is in the pudding: In the name of functionalism, superstar architects and designers like Mies van der Rohe and Charles Eames designed some of the most uncomfortable chairs in the history of the world. They were less interested in comfort than the expression of modern materials and industrial processes.

Van der Rohe wanted to perfect the assembly process of chairs made with curved chromium tubing. Eames was fascinated by the manufacturing process for bending a piece of plywood. Both wanted to tackle problems like speeding up the mass assembly line, or how to make chairs that would stack efficiently for storage. Each wanted to create an unprecedented form that expressed their industrial age and individual creativity. That produced a very different result than the traditional values of Good, Better, Best, which judged objects not on the basis of their originality, but on the execution and elaboration of ideas and forms that had been proven to work.

Enough looking at different examples of 18-century chairs trains the eye to see the differences and appreciate the distinctions that distinguish one from another: One sees immediately that while one Chippendale chair might have a pair of front legs with beautiful curves, another chair has legs that by comparison are only good. Similarly, one chair might have a beautifully carved top rail, but another might have even better carving. Put that all together, and you have a list of objective criteria for judging furniture.

The same principles apply to architecture and urbanism. Traditional buildings and streets are judged not on their originality, but on the quality of their design and their execution of enduring principles distilled over time. Twentieth century architecture and urbanism rejected timeless principles of design for principles judged to be of the time. This was often done by turning traditional principles on their head, to create what Machado and Silvetti call "unprecedented reality."

The search for novelty made the criteria for judging architecture and urbanism subjective, while the standards for judging traditional architecture and urbanism are comparative and objective. For example, within the various forms of classicism —

Romantic Classicism, Palladianism, etc. — we can say which in each category are Good, Better or Best.

This has many useful benefits. One is that you can teach the principles for making a good traditional building or street to anyone, so that the student does not have to be especially talented to reach the level of Good. With the looser standards of Modernism, only the most talented and inventive reach the level of Good. The exception is in a Modernism based on well-defined principles, as is taught at Cornell. But in this age of Eisenman and Koolhaas, that is rare.

Another benefit is that when dealing with the contemporary building culture, we can have different standards for different clients. Pulte Houses gets the *parti* and materials that a budget for the Good level can support, while the high-minded developer of the Windsor, an expensive Duany Plater-Zyberk designed TND-like resort in Florida, gets a code for the Best. Pulte might be allowed to use the Windsor line (no relation) of wood substitute windows, while Windsor can be held to the highest window standards, with only wood (unclad) allowed.

A large obstacle to improving the buildings in new urban developments has been the cost of quality materials and supplies. Most of the projects can't afford the best supplies, and there is an enormous drop in quality from the best to practically everything else.

When dealing with window manufacturing companies, we can have one set of standards for the economy budget (Good), another for a better budget, and third for the highest budget (Best). If we can pull some of the largest manufacturers and builders up to the level of the Good, we will have accomplished a lot. Trying to raise the level of design and construction of the pseudo-traditional materials and supplies prevalent in the building industry today is one of the primary missions of the Institute for Traditional Architecture.

Implicit in Good, Better, Best is also a way to resolve Rob Steuteville's problem: If we create a scale with Good assigned 1 to 10, Better 11 to 20, and Best 21 to 30, we can grade the 27 piazza on the same scale as the 9 TOD town center without disparaging the town center.

There are also less obvious implications. Comparing Seaside to Celebration illustrates one of them. At Seaside, Duany Plater-Zyberk and Robert Davis proposed a regional, construction-based vernacular, while Robert A.M. Stern Architects, Cooper-Robertson & Partners and Urban Design Associates planned Celebration to be built with a stylebook. Thus Seaside has blocks with consistent building types

such as Charleston houses facing each other across the streets, while Celebration intentionally makes every block and facing block have a mix of styles that are primarily confined to the massing and the front façade.

This is partly, I think, because my old boss Bob Stern likes playing with style, designing one house with five elevations, for example. And perhaps partly because so much of Urban Design Associates' work has been with inner-city clients who cannot afford traditional construction: Their traditional component is mainly in their urbanism and their facades.

But more importantly, Seaside was built by private owners and small contractors, while Celebration was built by national "homebuilders." There was plenty of money to be made at Celebration, but most of the builders did not want to spend too much time thinking about their Product: a generic name that accurately reflects the amount of design time spent on the individual buildings.

Achieving the streetscapes that were built at Celebration was an important achievement. It was enough to say that inside the houses the homebuilders would build a product their buyers would want.

Celebration raised the standard for large-scale development in Florida, where there are only a few new projects that can be called Good. But if you drive from Celebration to Miami, for every 100 places you see along the way — new or old — Celebration is better than 99 of them. That's something to be proud of.

This is probably the first time since CNU I in Alexandria that we will spend so much time talking about design. Everyone who was there knows that was a very special event: You looked around the room and thought how lucky you were to be at the start of something like the CNU. We talked a lot about design, but the unspoken sentiment below the surface was how we would use design to change the world.

I also remember CNU IV, here in Charleston. Mark Schimmenti said, "This is the best. All this great discussion and then you step outside and you're in Charleston." I think we'll have just as good a time this weekend. On with the show. Thank you for coming.

Note: This essay was compiled from the author's opening remarks at the first Council meeting.

Watkins/Kentlands
From page 9

efforts were made to improve the quality of the trim. I've probably given away as many copies of *The America Vignolia* as have ever been sold. In the case of one particularly embarrassing trim detail and even before Kahn's visit, I gave up working with the architect and the builder and tracked down the subcontractor in the field. We met at his pickup. I showed him several examples from various books of how the detail was properly done. He apologized and immediately began retrofitting the homes that were not yet occupied. We agreed not to tell the builder or the architect.

The ambitious vision of Joe Alfandre, the original developer of Kentlands, Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk included many issues considered to be of greater importance than the trim details. In negotiations with the suburban production builders of Kentlands, some battles were lost while we focused on winning the war. Kahn is right about the architecture. We simply cared about other things more.

"Where's the Corner Store?"

Among the objectives that mattered most but is completely absent from the critical discussion — and from the neighborhood — is the corner store. One of the greatest benefits of the traditional neighborhood is the ability to walk to a store or similar "third place." The Gatehouse District, the first neighborhood in Kentlands, has at its center an elementary school, a church, a childcare center and a site for a corner store. But no store. The site was sold at a very reasonable price to someone who proposed doing exactly the kind of store we had always imagined, and plans were enthusiastically approved by the city. Regrettably, the sale included no requirement that the store be built within a certain time frame. The owner of the lot has since moved to another state, listed the property for sale, and is now asking more than twice what was originally paid for the lot. The provision of such an amenity is far too important to be handled so carelessly. Providing this, or a similar type of essential neighborhood use, is something that this movement should tackle collectively.

Open Space

The neighborhood would have benefited from a more careful and deliberate approach to the programming and provision of the "open space," which is not at all the same thing as simply more open space. The residents are making great use of the space provided, but sometimes must do so in spite of the characteristics of the space — the lawn in front of the clubhouse that is used for outdoor concerts but slopes

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Massengale/I'On
From previous page

"none of the best streets in Charleston" are straight. In fact, if one looks at a map of historic Charleston, one will find that most of the streets are straight as an arrow. There are notable exceptions, as on Church Street, where the street curves around its eponymous church, or where Church brilliantly meets Water Street. But the differing perceptions of Charleston have as much to do with individual preferences as reality.

Most new urbanist designers fall into one of four camps, which relate to historic models from a century ago. There are the classicists and City Beautiful types, more medieval designers with plans like Camillo Sitte's, planners with curving streets a la John Nolen and other American planners of the 1900s and teens, and the "Unwinites" who combine different tendencies in one. Most of us fall in the last camp, but some are at the more

medieval end of that scale, and others at the more classical end. Joe, Victor and Vince are probably the former, while my personal preference is the latter.

Thus I'On has the intersection of Ponsbury and Sowell as it is today. At this stage in the construction of I'On, one can still see that Ponsbury aligns perfectly to the north and south of Sowell. But where they come together, they have been shifted to hide the alignment. Sitte would agree with the shift. I want the connection, so that one can sense the connection from Mathis Ferry Road to the Creek Club.

Although I don't know all the considerations that went into the phasing, I would like to have seen Perseverance built before Ponsbury because it is more of an organizing spine in the image of the development. We will see if it's developed in a way that one will mentally connect it from beginning to end. The boulevard section in the middle is unusual because it is not strongly connected to the neighborhood

center and the entrance from Mathis Ferry Road. Hierarchically, we usually expect boulevards to be entrances, or at least expansions of major through streets.

Many of the straight streets of Charleston have a power that comes from their axial arrangement. Church Street would lose its interest if the view to the church weren't straight, contrasting with the curve. And the way in which Market Street terminates at the temple-like public building above the covered market and then splits to go around the market is one of the most effective bits of urbanism in the city.

On the whole, the beauty of the streets of Charleston comes from the architecture and the regular rhythm of the trees rather than the brilliant arrangement of the streets. Interestingly, they don't photograph well – the curving streets are much more photogenic, although they are only different, not better, experientially.

An insightful perception that Doug-

las Duany pointed out is that even the streets in Charleston that are not straight rarely curve. When there is a bend in the street, it is more often made by the intersection of two straight pieces than a smooth curve.

In the early days of new urbanism, designers were afraid to make curving streets, because of their suburban associations. But the truth is that straight streets require either good architecture or mature trees, or they are very disappointing. In a new urbanist development with spec-built houses and young trees, curving streets are safer.

By the time of the I'On charrette, a Miami style of new urbanism that wavered between the sensibilities of Nolen and Unwin was evolving; I'On is more like Unwin. I worry about the Nolen plans, which are often very pretty in plan but not memorable in person.

Watkins/Kentlands

from side-to-side comes to mind. With good intentions, residents are going about furnishing and planting the open space but with no master plan in mind and no list of native or appropriate plant materials. Although there have been some efforts to reinforce the environmental quality of existing wetlands and lakes, there is considerably more potential here than has been realized or even proposed. A master plan for the open space that includes responding to the needs of the community and the enhancement of the natural environment should be undertaken.

Principles or Politics
Early on, principle and politics were tightly interwoven. On the last night of the charrette, the vision initiated by Alfandre, Duany and Plater-Zyberk was shared with Gaithersburg's Mayor Ed Bohrer, the City Council, the planning commission and the general public. The mayor understood that this vision was established on a foundation of principles. He set out with great determination to do everything he could to see that these principles were executed with as little compromise as possible. They became the criteria for evaluating the project as it moved through the approval process. When Alfandre handed the project back to the lender in 1991, the expectation was that they, too, would follow these principles. In recent years the relationship between principles and politics has weakened. When Ed Bohrer passed away a few years ago, Kentlands — and Gaithersburg — lost one of its strongest visionaries and advocates for sound principles.

A great example is a certain "tree save lot," the source of considerable emotional debate at present. Several years ago, while attempting to receive approval for subsequent phases and under pressure from a few residents, lots previously approved for houses were identified as "tree save lots." The developer was required to set these lots aside, never mind that they sloped severely and would serve no useful purpose. Never mind that the physical design of the street was eroded. More open space was provided. Several years ago, the large tree on one of these lots died and was hauled away. Recently the developer sold this overgrown, vacant lot to a builder who submitted a plan to the city to build a house on that lot. Politics, not principles, have ruled the raging debate thus far. The tree is mulch now, and we still can't build a house on this lot originally intended for one. Despite the understanding and support of the principles of the new urbanism by most residents and city officials, the noisy few attempt to persuade the community and city leaders to ignore the principles and listen to them.

"Kentlands Is Made of Real Brick, Real Wood ..."
To avoid the visual blight of aging faux materials, The Kentlands Code permitted only authentic materials, with few exceptions. The problem that became quite evident after just a few years is that even the "real" wood available today does not "age with dignity." Several houses have already been completely "reclad" because the original simulated material failed. I am in the process of preparing recommendations to the Kentlands Citizens Assembly for additional simulated materials, not available when the code was first written, to replace some of those "real" materials.

Dinner and a Movie, Walking Distance From Home
Even places that are not as beautiful as they might have been still manage to work as intended. Market Square is a good example of this. While the buildings are cheap and rudimentary, the space they

shape is decent and the uses they house encourage people to gather there. "Chance meetings" of neighbors occur constantly to the point that it no longer serves as a valuable escape from a hectic office to concentrate on writing an article (I have to go to a coffee shop in a strip center for that). Market Square offers a wide variety of food venues — a coffee shop, a wine bar, a diner, a sushi bar, etc. — and as a result attracts a very diverse group of people. The range of activities available to those without a car attracts students in droves. Just hanging out in the square is a great source of entertainment (both good and bad) for them and, consequently, for the rest of us. Even the bad behavior should be a considered a success for Kentlands. Not because of the problem itself, but because the problem is forcing people to interact with one another to address it. Clearly the careful placement of a bench isn't going to whip an immature teenager into shape, but the pressure of the community to behave as a part of the community can begin to address such attitudes of disregard.

Gaithersburg: Maryland's Smart Growth Laboratory
While written off by some as an isolated, greenfield project, Kentlands laid the groundwork for a different future in the city of Gaithersburg. This 13-year-old town has influenced the planning process, policies and principles throughout the city and the surrounding area. With the demonstrated success of Kentlands, the city has pursued new street design standards, zoning ordinances; bikeway standards and other policies, all based on traditional neighborhood design principles. Furthermore, the city hired DPZ to do a downtown revitalization plan in 1995. Other efforts include the redesign of the city's major commercial strip, the design of several new neighborhoods and a mixed-use center, and the retrofitting of existing neighborhoods. As other well-designed neighborhoods are built and existing ones are enhanced, Gaithersburg is becoming a city that offers many great choices for nice places to live and work and shop. Gaithersburg even bills itself as "Maryland's Smart Growth Laboratory." As a result, and despite the flaws, Kentlands and Gaithersburg serve as models for the greater Washington area and across the country.

When it came to choosing battles in the compromise gauntlet of building Kentlands, I chose those I thought would make the place the strongest community possible. I also chose to fight those battles that had to be won "now," foregoing others that could be revisited later. I sought to protect the value of the neighborhood, the greatest determinant of property values. There is still room for improvement, and I am optimistic that as Kentlands matures it will get better. It will just take more of what it has always taken — time and determination.

When critiquing Kentlands, prominent views of backs of buildings should be noted to keep folks like me humble. I live and work on the street Victor Dover mentioned, and I am faced with this view several times every day. While I regret that others who live here must suffer such mistakes too, this one serves as a constant reminder to me of the daily and lasting impact this profession has on the lives of those who live in these places we design.

Massengale/I'On

The architecture and streets at I'On steadily get better, but the landscaping is the Achilles Heel of the project. Most of the landscaping is modern suburban style, with meandering clumps of plants rarely found in the natural local landscape. The worst part is the first lake, where all the "groupings" are supposed to be "natural," but none are. Perhaps it is the vista across the lake that lets us see just how flaccid the design is.

The designers should have studied the lake and gardens at Middleton Plantation, just outside Charleston. Middleton has a great garden by the English classicist John Bridgeman. Most of Bridgeman's gardens were torn out by the Romantic classicist Capability Brown or his followers, so Middleton is historically rare as well as beautiful.

Bridgeman knew how to use the local plants of the South Carolina Lowcountry. At Middleton he created the perfect antidote to the suburban garden, but not enough professionals study its lessons.

The I'On charrette was one of the early charrettes, where new urbanists were feeling their way along. Design techniques were more highly developed than in the very beginning, but there was still an adventurous aspect that has been lost to professionalism in most charrettes. Peter Katz came over to me during the charrette and said, "I love working with the people who go on charrettes. This is great, isn't it?"

He was right.

I'On was one of the charrettes I went on with Charles Barrett, now deceased. Charles was a unique talent, who was a master of perspective. His technique was also unique.

Charles would surround himself with local and archetypal images before pulling out a new sheet to draw on. He would then start at the upper left-hand corner of the sheet and work his way diagonally to the lower right-hand corner. When he was a quarter of the way through the process, there would be a diagonal line a quarter of the way from one corner to the other: Everything to the left of the diagonal was almost completely rendered. To the right of the diagonal was blank.

If you look closely at some of Charles's drawings, you will find a few dachshunds here and there. But that's another story.

Bess/I'On

extra building lots. This may or may not be necessary for the financial success of the project, but it is not good urbanism. *More importantly:* With respect to NU projects generally, I think they should be designed to be "connectable." That is to say, I would propose as a *general* rule of thumb that the edges of NU greenfield developments be designed as either streets or alleys in order to make possible connections to future adjacent neighborhood developments. I realize that this might go against the wishes of residents much if not most of the time. But this resistance to connectivity is itself *anti-urban*; it should be one of the objectives of new urbanists to be persistent in doing the correct urban thing, and to lead rather than follow the culture wherever possible.

Third: I am pleased to see that the boroughs of Shelmore, Montrose and Westlake all have sites designated for civic buildings (and I am distressed that the boroughs of Ponsbury and Eastlake appear to have no such sites). The sites generally are located in such a way as to allow the

Koffka/Karow-Nord

ings pleasant, the vistas unobstructed. Between visits, Karow-Nord developed a spirit of its own. Some designs had veered from John and Buzz's intentions so blatantly that they would make an extra trip to Berlin to plead with the developer, city or fellow architect to make a change, always respectful not to encroach on the design autonomy of others. At times, though, what looked unacceptable on the drawing board became less objectionable once it had been built and integrated into the context of scale, landscape, streets, colors and materials. Our own town started to surprise us.

More control might have resulted in a more unified architecture. Some details that still strike us as unfortunate, misguided, even ugly, would have been deleted from the drawings. For example, had our design guidelines become a rule instead of a recommendation, all buildings would have had low brick bases, as this was a feature of the surrounding villages. As it turned out, the schools and daycare centers all were faced in brick, as we recommended, to distinguish the public from the private; yet only some of our apartment blocks had brick bases, maybe as a nod to us as master planners. Most others did not, and in one quarter supervised by a developer other than the lead firm, some housing blocks were faced in brick all the way to the eaves. Disappointed at first, we made our peace with these disparities quickly as Karow began to look more and more like a real city.

At my most recent visit, in December 2000, seeing Karow-Nord for the first time as a tourist, not a team member, what astonished me was how natural it felt. Yes, there was the delightful Christmas Market right where we had planned a space for it, but it wasn't that picturesque spot that excited me. It was the people going about their business, frantic in their pursuit of Christmas presents, running to the many busses piling up on Karower Chaussee, huddling in the cold air at the pedestrian crossings, hurrying past storefronts with tacky season's decorations. They did not notice how the plan worked, what axis they traveled, how public transitioned to private. They went about their business in a normal town. Suddenly I remembered a quote from architect Peter de Bretteville who stated that architecture should interfere with human life as little as possible. That December it sure felt like that could be achieved.

future civic buildings to terminate an axis either frontally or obliquely; and this, too, is good. But I would change one thing about several of these civic building sites. Many of them designate a small block for a civic building and then locate the building within the block (in a manner reminiscent of the classic American Midwestern courthouse square). But I think it would be better in most cases to let the block become a public square, and move the civic building so it fronts the public square. I'On seems destined to become a place of good streets — no small accomplishment! But it would be even better were it to acquire some good public squares fronted by good civic buildings.

Fourth: Related to Point Three, a concerted effort should be made by the founders to ensure that I'On's civic buildings be grander in scale (and, if possible, materials) than the housing stock. This will be a challenge, because the quality — if not monumentality — of I'On's housing stock is high. I pass along one possible strategy, suggested to me by Robert Davis.

A. Duany/Celebration

tional resort) also designed neo-traditional plans. After a men's room conversation, the three sympathetic architects (Duany, Stern and Siegel) contrived a proposal for jointly preparing a plan. In the meantime, Lewis and Rummel had arrived at the idea of pursuing a "consensus plan." A charrette duly took place in the Gwathmey/Siegel office not long afterwards. "Seaside" book co-author Keller Easterling (at that time a Stern employee) played a prominent part in the design. The resulting plan called for a continuously curved grid, both simple and elegant, which, as it turned out, did not take the wetlands sufficiently into account. Ultimately, this and other realities of the site would cause the plan to be modified to the present one.[4]

At this point, the project became submerged in the permitting process (by all accounts well handled by Tom Lewis with attorney Bob Rhodes in charge of environmental issues). During this time designs for a proposed Disney Institute was studied, in a competition between KPF, Morphosis and Moore Ruble Yudell. Ultimately a site was chosen outside of Celebration. When it emerged for detail design years later, the team stood as: Robert A.M. Stern with Paul Whalen as lead, assisted by Dan Lobitz; Jaquelyn Robertson with Brian Shea as project manager. EDAW was charged with the landscape plan. It is this team, with the addition of Ray Gindroz of UDA, who contrived the urban and architectural controls, that was responsible for the final design. Despite gracious acknowledgement by Tom Lewis, DPZ did not participate, except indirectly through the influence of Seaside and whatever ideas from the original consensus plan happened to be incorporated along the way.[5]

This team's master plan, currently being built out as planned, finally broke ground in 1994. Like all new urbanist towns, Celebration includes a wide range of mixed-use and residential building types, a network of walkable streets, and at least one town center. Development entitlements include 8,065 residential units; 3,100,000 square feet of workplace; and 2,125,000 square feet of retail, including the main street shops. The question of whether Celebration is a new urbanist town is no longer under debate since it fulfills as complete a checklist of the Charter's principles as can be found in any new urbanist project. Controversies, though, have emanated from sources other than the purist new urbanists: the entrenched development industry, for one, perhaps fearing that Celebration's success would change the rules of the game; and for another the avant-garde academic establishment, absolutely terrified that such a conservative design could actually result in a respectable, socially responsible community. From these sources, skepticism continues to be produced despite "the facts on the ground."

The facts are that Celebration is one of the most intricate and accomplished examples of urban development since the 1930s. The diversity of housing in close proximity at Celebration breaks new ground as it includes rental apartments and rowhouses, all seamlessly integrated with single-family houses and quite expensive mansions. This ideal is a risky marketing proposition for developers. Few new urbanist towns do as well, while conventional suburban development does not even acknowledge the possibility. The large, mixed-use town center also includes apartments above stores, a school, a branch college campus (Stetson University) and a hotel, as well as useful retail and restaurants (not one a national chain), a bank, a church and plenty of office space. It includes a cinema attached to a late-night bar and an ice cream store. The town center

is associated with a lake along a public waterfront drive.[6] The lake is part of a simple and elegant drainage system along a central canal that is both a beautiful civic element and environmentally responsible. There is a golf course accessible to the public and shared visually by all as it is fronted by a public drive rather than privatized by backyards.

But Celebration is certainly not flawless. In terms of the housing, there were two errors made: One relates to the marketing, the other to affordability. As to the first, there are not enough townhouses to meet demand. This is a common mistake among the new urbanist greenfield towns. Since there is no precedent for higher-density housing types located so distant from the center, conventional rearview market analysis yields no conclusion other than that they will not sell. But such methods do not take into account that, while townhouses are meaningless without a town, they are a very desirable residential type when there is one. A row of townhouses isolated amidst suburban parking lots has the double disadvantage of lacking the big yard in the back without the compensation of a lively street in the front. But Celebration is a town, of course, and thus the 200 or so original townhouses that were reluctantly provided sold out immediately, and there are no more to be had in the town center. More are now being built in the outlying areas where they make as little sense as in a conventional suburban development. It is difficult to retrofit to a higher density, so it is always advisable in such cases of skepticism to provide the paper density and to reduce it subsequently if there is indeed a failure of demand.

The second error in the housing provision is social and also one of public relations. It involves a Florida law requiring a ratio of affordable housing to be included in projects of a certain size. In most cases developers, as is their right, opt to make payments to the agency in lieu of providing their actual construction. This practice is supported by the agency because it allows all their housing to be clustered, facilitating its administration. By new urbanist standards this is irresponsible as it segregates the society. In the case of Celebration, this was certainly an opportunity lost. This, in fact, would have responded to much of the criticism regarding affordability that, as with all new urbanist communities, is lost due to scarcity regardless of its original selling price. Besides, it is now difficult for Celebration to accommodate the schoolteachers, babysitters and service industry workers that a modern 24/7 society requires (except in the ancillary apartments, which meet some part of this need). In fairness to Disney, Celebration is being built in Osceola County where there is an abundance of affordable housing. The elected officials of the county made it very clear to Disney that they wanted no lower cost (under $125,000) housing in Celebration.

Beyond these criticisms, the plan itself makes several important improvements to the Seaside model. True alleys were provided to accommodate the parking (in Seaside, the few planned alleys have been gentrified), and the privacy of the backyards was carefully secured by "backbuildings" (such outdoor privacy is neglected at Seaside). Also, a set of controls discourages the purchase of houses by individuals who would use them primarily as vacation houses, which can undermine the reality of community (this is an obvious problem at Seaside). This is another learned point from Seaside where many buildings became spectacular investments rather than homesteads. In Celebration, a house sold within one year of its completion requires that the profits above the C.P.I. to revert to the Celebration Foundation. Thus Celebration has become a proper full-time community

rather than a resort. This achievement should be applauded by those critics who demand such statistical ideals from new urbanist communities.[7] In addition, this constraint (which lowers the desirability and consequently the value of the real estate) is not a policy that the usual for-profit developer would undertake. In this regard, Celebration is a reflection of the idealist economic model of Ebenezer Howard, so seldom implemented.

A trivial controversy was made prominent by a *New York Times* article and must, therefore, be addressed here. Its details are vaguely remembered, so only a generalized taint remains regarding an oppressive Disney paternalism. But the healthy investigative instinct of the journalist does not mean that the reporting was anything but ideologically driven. There was a protest led by some Celebration parents against the curriculum of the town's public school. Their dissatisfaction was presented by the *Times* as a civic failure of the community, but it is actually the symptom of something else. That residents coalesce around a gripe is a manifestation of healthy community life (see Baumgartner, "The Moral Order of the Suburb") and the outcome is revealing of the actual balance of power. Celebration's residents were more conservative than the developers and did not appreciate the Celebration School's innovative curriculum, one that had been designed primarily by the Harvard School of Education. The residents ultimately succeeded in altering the course at the public school against Disney. This demonstrates that the terms of the association documents are not entirely loaded to the advantage of the developer as they routinely are with the several hundred thousand other such homeowners' associations currently in place across the United States, those that seem to have slipped beneath the horizon of our intelligentsia distracted as they are with more important issues of free artistic expression.

An interesting and valid set of questions regards the retail component. This one is debated principally within the development industry. It concerns a main street that was fully built-out very early in the project, providing the commerce to serve the community before the population was there to support it. Several of these shops have failed. This has caused some to question the decision of building retail at all or, more cogently, to question its location for the main street is placed at the center of the community and away from the traffic flow of the highway that passes by its edge. Because of Disney's wealth, some assume the surviving shops must be heavily subsidized. This is not so, as shown by the fact that a few of the most sentimentally compelling have gone out of business (a bakery, a bookstore and a bicycle shop). Indeed, the shops are centrally managed; the merchants are recruited proactively as is the case with any modern shopping center. The subsidies are no more than incubator tenants receive in a conventional shopping mall as the management helps them get a start in business. These "subsidies" are about to end at Celebration, as is standard practice. In any case, the main street in a new urbanist community should not necessarily be considered a profit center; it plays the role of the principal amenity. It is the marketing equivalent (and equivalent line item on the budget) of the clubhouse and guarded entry of the conventional suburban housing pod, from which no developer expects to make a direct profit.

Be that as it may, the main street in Celebration was placed at the centroid of the community, where it does not have access to the economic energy of the regional traffic but where it provides "walk to town" convenience to a significant number of residents, especially children. The criticism that the shops should not have been located internally is valid in economic

principle; along the highway they would certainly have been successful from the very beginning. However, had the shops been so located, the regional traffic may have overwhelmed the smallish main street and undermined its role as social condenser of the community.[8] The result could have been that of Seaside, where the town square has become a regional destination. Great numbers of outsiders do support the relatively cosmopolitan mix of merchants at Seaside, but they overwhelm the residents and dilute the sense of community.

Besides, a close study of the plan shows that there was really no other choice. The highway, where the town center could have been, is cut off from the community by a second, limited-access expressway. As it is, this awkward residual area between the two regional thoroughfares is where the employment area is planned. Four office buildings by Aldo Rossi, Celebration Health Center and a branch of Florida Hospital by Stern are complete, and others that will provide the balanced employment are currently planned for construction. It does continue to be a problem that these workplaces, cut off by the tollway, will not be within walking distance of "lunch" on the main street; but there is no better solution available than the one that was implemented. Celebration's is what we call an "unlucky site" in this respect.

The tenuous economic situation of the main street is another manifestation of the citizen's relative power. Disney could assure the success of the shops by introducing the main street to the infonet that distributes the millions of tourists to its various venues. Celebration could easily have become part of the visitor's itinerary. While the merchants sought it, the residents did not wish it, and the Disney Corporation complied against its own best financial interests.

Beyond these controversies, there are lessons to be learned from Celebration's corporate management. For example, the main street maintains four restaurants at different price points. The most expensive is a "white tablecloth and wine" operation suited for special occasions, while the most economical one will feed a family nicely without undue hardship. This is not the usual situation. Following the dictates of highest and best use, most Florida waterfronts have restaurants that have either become simultaneously expensive or been reduced to providing cheap tourist food. Corporate management can maintain variety when appropriate, assuring that ordinary and useful things remain available. The alternate is the antiques or t-shirt-and-tourist-trinket-emporia typical of most historic main streets. Mom and pop stores may succeed economically, but they do not usually serve the ordinary needs of the surrounding residents. Celebration maintains its traditional main street of useful, ordinary retail with modern shopping center-style management. This, it seems, is the future.

Celebration is controversial in other ways related to management. One has to do with its political implications; the second has to do with its physical results.

Management, such as there is in Celebration, is usually tagged by critics as "private government." This critical term cleverly implies secession from the travails of American democracy. This is not so. The property owners' associations[9] of Celebration are actually an additional layer of government willingly engaged by the residents. It does not preclude the usual overlay of county, state and federal government. In fact, the Celebration associations are not unlike 200,000 other property owners' associations common to the post-war suburbs.[10] Associations are municipal governments by contract. At the time of

A. Duany/Celebration

purchase, future residents agree to abide by a stated set of rights and responsibilities. Is this more restrictive than moving into a city subject to a municipal code one has not been reminded to examine? And what of the unquestioned commonplace of being born into a government? How fair is that? One day, as is the case with virtually all such developments since the 1920s, I expect that Celebration will be incorporated as a municipality, with the association as its basis.

What exacerbates the Celebration governance controversy is that, in this case, the current controlling entity is an enormously powerful corporation. I experimented with this relationship three years ago by purchasing a lot in Celebration and designing a house to be built on it. Coincidentally, I went through a similar process for a house in my hometown, the city of Coral Gables, Fla. I found my experience at Celebration to be superior to that provided by the presumably excellent municipal government of upper-class Coral Gables. The details are beyond the scope of this paper, but the experiences opened me to the possibility that American municipal government is often less responsive to its citizens than an American corporation is to its customers. The competence and alacrity so often lacking in the public sector is commonplace in private enterprise. And besides, the correction of mismanagement by a corporation with a contractual relationship to a customer can be readily engaged by arbitration or threat of lawsuit. A municipality is usually unresponsive to remedies other than concerted political action — a rather labor-intensive, long-range and iffy proposition not worth engaging to correct the minor humiliations Americans have learned to endure from their municipal governments.

In the end, Celebration must be assessed the way all urbanism should be assessed — not by photos and short visits (which suffice for architectural criticism), but by inhabiting a place for a period of time.[11] Does the community improve how the day is lived? Does it accommodate the ebb and flow of life?

I spent several days in Celebration sampling the quality of the morning coffee, the kind of groceries and newspapers available at the market, and the "third place" atmosphere of the eateries. I even tested the police and maintenance functions by engaging in mild civic misbehavior, such as throwing trash on the ground and vandalizing parts of the urban furnishing.[12] I joined seniors and kids gathering, and I experienced how late at night I could hang out (martinis were available till midnight from a satisfyingly flirtatious bar girl next to the movie house). Celebration tested well in such ways, and particularly well when compared to developments of equal age, which is how urbanism should be evaluated. I don't know about New York when it was still New Amsterdam, but Celebration certainly outperformed Miami on its sixth birthday.[13] Time is a tremendously important factor in urbanism, one that is seldom internalized in the current assessment of the new urbanism movement.[14]

The other controversy over controls is architectural. It centers on The Celebration Pattern Book, conceived by Ray Gindroz and UDA. This document is of a different order altogether from the Seaside code, and indeed from most any other code ever written or drawn. It has a precision, clarity and completeness that should elicit admiration from anyone who studies it as an intellectual achievement. But its very comprehensiveness goads critics. In addition to those arguments from architects concerned with the infringement on their prerogative for creativity, one can legiti-

1. Golf Club House
2. Town Hall
3. Post Office
4. Movie Theater
5. Inn
6. Library
7. School
8. Bath and Tennis Club
9. Market
10. Church
11. Bank
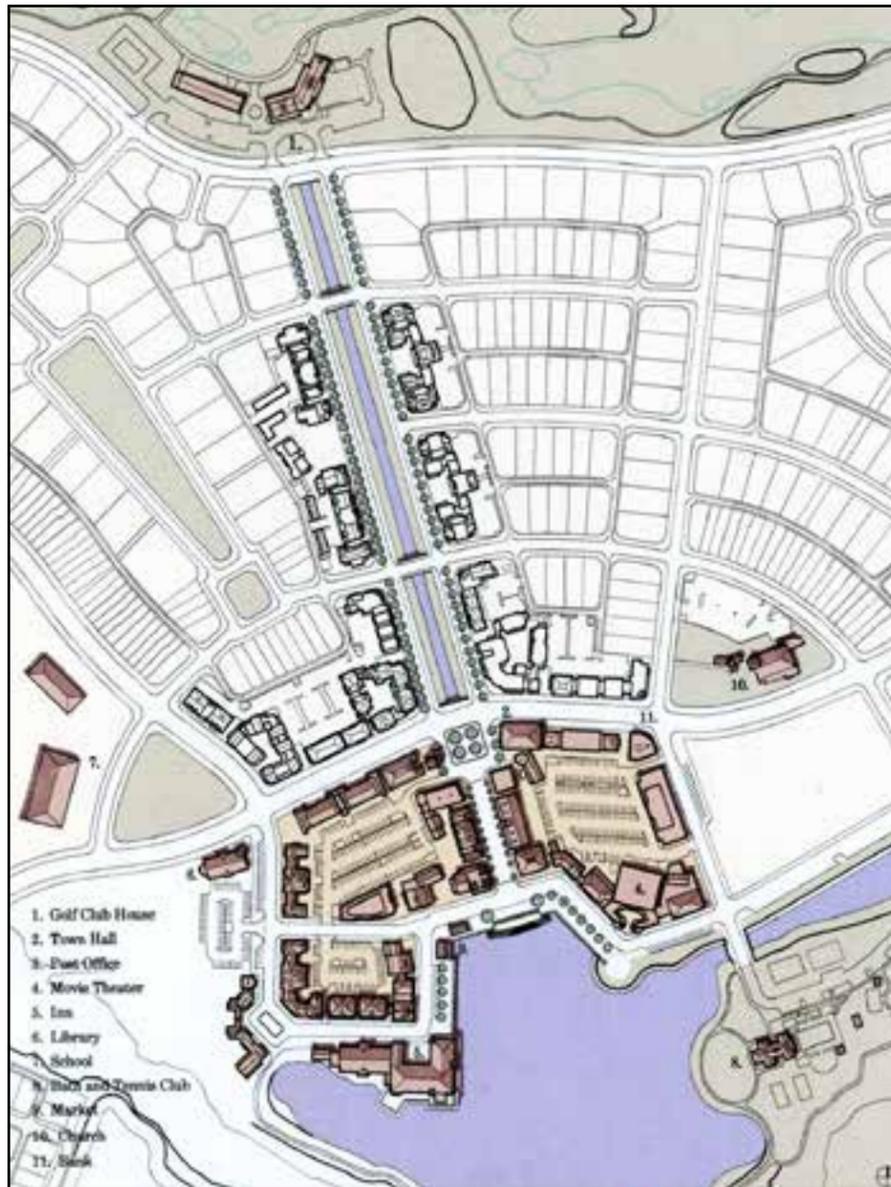
mately raise the question: Does it improve the urbanism when its physical manifestation is so precisely prescribed?

First, to the complaining architects, one would have to respond: Why is it that there are no complaints of repression when a single architect designs all the buildings; however, when a design is distributed to scores of architects that would not otherwise be involved, there are problems? This concern is a knee-jerk reaction and compels no further attention, but there is an interesting question regarding a tradeoff in quality. Many creative possibilities are precluded by codes, but so is substandard performance and kitsch. It is a truism that, by raising the bottom, a code inevitably lowers the top. A code operates like a sine curve controlling symmetrically the oscillation between the brilliant and the dismal. While no building in Celebration rises to the level of the best buildings at Seaside, no building falls to the level of kitsch. This range can be attributed to Seaside's looser code, which allows better but also worse buildings. Seaside has buildings by Rossi, Holl, Chatham, Berke, Machado, Silvetti, Gorlin, Merrill, Mockbee and Krier, all by code, but it also has buildings that will improve when blown down by a hurricane.

A code itself is a neutral instrument that can be adjusted, but it cannot eliminate the exceptionally bad without limiting the exceptionally good. The application of The Celebration Pattern Book has led to a general run of architecture that is uniformly good, but not more. This potential problem has been mitigated in Celebration by the two-dozen commercial and civic buildings at the town center that are not coded – at least not in the usual sense. For these, the old stable of Disney star architects were invited and given the "theme" of the small southern town. They worked together in cycles of mutual critique to achieve the necessary compatibility that a code normally assures and that urbanism requires. Thus, Celebration presents two patterns of coding. The Pattern Book, which prescribes at a level corresponding to the builders' manuals of the 19th century, and the organic method, common in the 1920s of regionalist collegiality (which was later undermined by the manic individualism

induced by modernism).

Some who object to the Pattern Book are correct in assessing that one would not need an architect at all, and it is a waste to engage one. This may be so, but it remains an important instrument for those instances, all too common in the American building industry, when an architect is not involved. In the meantime, we can look forward to a new section of the Pattern Book, in use but not yet printed, which creates modernist patterns for the office buildings already underway. This will be added to the six traditional styles already included in the Pattern Book.

Another controversy (one of no permanent interest) regards the quality of the construction. Some early residents complained about what they perceived to be shoddiness. This is understandable but unfair. The quality at Celebration was similar to that of the corresponding price points in competing developments. The dissatisfaction stemmed from expectations projected on a Disney product. Disney is perceived to be the creator of perfect environments, and those that purchased did not take into account the realities of the Florida context. In any case, the corrections were duly made, and housing at Celebration currently exceeds the norm in both workmanship and quality of design.

After that difficult initial period, the national builders have learned how to build traditional houses correctly, and they have also learned that they are marketable, particularly when assembled on traditional streets within a walkable neighborhood. These builders are now elsewhere projecting new urban communities, and many others are following them. The list is becoming longer, and it includes some large companies.

Many individuals who participated in the Celebration project have gone on to influence the development industry. The subsequent achievements of the designers are well known. Peter Rummel has since become CEO of the St. Joe Company, with the largest real estate holdings in Florida. St. Joe, having purchased Arvida, is committed to the new urbanism and is now doing excellent work

in Watercolor (adjacent to Seaside) as well as half a dozen other large and prominent sites. Celebration's first town architect, Joe Barnes, is now the general manager at I'On. A group of executives has spun off and now consults under the name of Celebration Associates. Tom Lewis is a vice president of Walt Disney World and a resident of Celebration.[15]

Celebration promises to become the most influential new town since Radburn, N.J., the project that in 1927 introduced the cul-de-sac and the collector road to America. This is obvious in Florida where, like the ripples of a stone thrown in a pond, the effect is more visible close to the impact point. On any given day, you can see developers troop through what is now the most visible of the new urbanist models.

Despite this projection, the question persists: Is it economically possible to build a Celebration without the deep pockets of a Disney? The answer is yes; even the main street is economically feasible. This is demonstrated by a visit to Haile Plantation in nearby Gainesville. This superb new urbanist community was designed and developed by Robert Kramer under conventional constraints. Haile Plantation, as accomplished in every way as Celebration, must become an integral part of any study tour, so one cannot talk oneself out of a commitment to the new urbanism by concluding that Celebration is a great concept but "only Disney could do it."

Why, then, doesn't The Celebration Company (or its current parent company Disney Imagineering) continue in the business of building new towns? The answer is simple. For all its success, the effort and time that it took to develop Celebration made it comparably less profitable than producing a single Disney movie of even middling box office success. It is not a rational allocation of Disney's resources to invest in further new urbanist projects. But for the rest of us, it is.

Endnotes:
[1] This film was subsequently shown to the designers of Celebration.
[2] Eisner's fascination with architecture may have had its origins with Robert Stern's design for his parents' New York apartment.
[3] In Florida, a Seaside-type development opens doors to permitting.
[4] These early plans are on record in a history album at the Celebration sales office.
[5] Seaside and Newpoint visits were led by Robert Stern.
[6] Celebration is not a gated community. The security forces are the Osceola county sherrif.
[7] I was pleased to find that, adjacent to a lot I purchased for research reasons, were houses occupied by a black family and a gay couple. This sort of random occurrence is considered highly significant by those who reduce the judgment of urbanism to quotas of diversity.
[8] Besides, Route 192 is a brutal commercial strip that would have destroyed the environmental qualities of the Main Street.
[9] There are two: a residential and a commercial one. The former will one day be entirely controlled by the residents. The commercial association will likely continue to be controlled by the Celebration Company. Main street, like other modern retailing must be centrally managed to remain competitive.
[10] These numbers do not include the management associations increasingly common in inner cities, or the otherwise similar condominium associations.
[11] To their credit, the authors of these two books lived in Celebration for long periods of time. That is why the books are worth reading.
[12] The result was gratifying: I was not arrested, and the damage was quickly made good.
[13] Founders' Day: November 18, 1995.
[14] For example, in the writings of Alex Marshall who has been proven wrong continually as the years pass in a sort of rolling error that is peculiar to urban criticism.
[15] Tom Lewis may yet write a book on Celebration. He is so evidently proud of his very real achievements that one fears that it will be overly celebratory.

Gindroz/Overview

that wiggle around the lake, all seem circumstantial responses to natural forms, however willfully they were designed. Walking the streets at night was very convincing. It had the sense of a neighborhood that had been there for a long time.

Another example is Pittsburgh, the city in which I live. It is a city with dramatic topography. Unlike San Francisco, Pittsburgh has slopes that are too steep for extending the grid. Therefore, all the urban patterns of the city were built coping with the topographic form. Nothing too terrible was done. We don't have endless sprawl because it gets stopped by a ravine. On the other hand, some of the most beautiful places are ones in which a formal order has been imposed in the landscape, only to be interrupted by a gorge or steep hillside. Ask anyone in Pittsburgh for a compass direction and you will receive a blank stare. We follow rivers and valleys, not the compass. The result is an extraordinarily eccentric city that has maintained its stable neighborhoods, its commercially viable downtown, even through the dark ages of the '80s and '90s. Its survival, in spite of terrible economic problems over the past 20 years, demonstrates the enduring power of places that engage. It is also difficult to control many of the events and developments that take place around our work.

But we saw several examples in which the presence of a human-scale new urbanist community is beginning to change what is happening around it. King Farm began with having no impact on projected development across the highway. That is now changing for the better. When Haile Plantation Town Center was built, there was no evidence in the city that urbanism was valued in new development – and that is now changing as seen in other new developments in the region. So we should see our efforts as part of a larger evolution of the places and towns in which we work. By understanding the context, we can not only better understand what we should do on our sites, but also understand what we can influence. us. Eccentricity can engage.

Rome Wasn't Built in a Day
When reviewing the built work, it is often easy to forget the fact that this work is brand new. The passage of time – and the interventions that others will make – will change the spaces and places of these towns. They will become more authentic as time goes by. It is impossible to compare Celebration or Kentlands or King Farm to traditional towns that have been lived in for a hundred years.

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Brain/King Farm

as a sociologist rather than a designer, these imperfections are precisely the place where the life of the neighborhood has a tendency to take root, as (for example) in the little impromptu pocket park that emerged in Kentlands as a result of a little leftover space along one of the alleys.

The balance of formal geometries with the resilience of more informal and contingently defined spaces is important to the generation of a robust sense of place, making it possible for a place to carry a sense of its particular history. If the traces of change aren't smoothed over but remain as singular opportunities, they can be persistent reminders that urbanism is collaboration between generations and not a design project to be completed by a single firm. Here, I think, is the point at which we really see what Ray Gindroz called the "art of the plan": in a careful balance between the diagrammatic rhetoric of the urban designers, and the points at which the designer wisely chooses to cede ultimate control to history. (I can't imagine anything more difficult than this kind of leap of faith for a designer, and I'm sure it is even more difficult for a developer, where money is at stake and not just principle.)

It is difficult to tell if the balance is there in King Farm, but my sense is that sometimes it is, sometimes it isn't. It is at these critical points where the power of a well-financed developer and the engagement of the production builders appear as mixed blessings. On the one hand, the developer of King Farm was clearly willing to make a serious investment in the public realm and to push toward a healthy mix of uses. However, insofar as the developer can be convinced to go along with new urbanist ideals, there seems to be a danger of either doing too much, filling in all the opportunities, or becoming focused on the grand rhetorical flourishes intended to indicate the urbanism of the place while compromising little things that may actually add up to the real stuff of a dynamic urbanism.

From all indications, King Farm offers a number of examples of places where good urban design counterbalances the naturally homogenizing tendencies of the production builders, turning what might otherwise be tedious repetition into urban fabric that can support rather than wash out the sense of place. John Torti described the challenge of convincing the developer of the multifamily component of the project to introduce more variation into their product, and to adjust conventional practice in order to bring the buildings up to the street and put the parking behind. Although the result has clearly come a long way from what it would have been by conventional practice, the pictures suggest there are places where the urbanism may not be finely grained enough to tame some of the apartment buildings. Some of this is, no doubt, largely as a result of the constraints resulting from the requirement that they respect the underlying zoning. Or, in some cases, it may be that the architecture falls short of sustaining the quality of the streetscape. If so, I would guess it is an indication that the codes need to be stronger.

In what I believe are some of the townhouses, stylistic variation has apparently been introduced for visual relief and picturesque effect. Although the result is quite attractive, for me this solution highlights a crucial issue in making the difference between a project that simulates the architectural variety of a traditional urban setting and the establishing of a building tradition with the potential to support real urbanism. Again, it is difficult to tell from photographs where King Farm falls in one category or another. What makes the difference between superficial scenographic

effects and a durable and dynamic urbanism? It seems to me that the difference lies in the way the armature provided by a network of properly scaled streets and public spaces is filled out by the a varied and historically layered pattern of small and distinctive places. In other words, it is a matter of not only what has been built, but also the gaps and opportunities that remain, the creative promise and possibility that are both left over in plan and inscribed in the guiding principles of the codes. This is not so much a criticism of King Farm as it is a question I would pose concerning its future. Has the plan retained sufficient opportunities, and are the codes strong enough?

John Torti expressed concern that the code developed for King Farm might be both insufficiently prescriptive and lacking in the necessary authority. I believe his instinct is correct, that the code can be a crucial tool in the long-term success of a plan. However, one might want to emphasize not the prescriptiveness of the codes, but rather their generative power, their ability to provide the basis for variation that is responsive both to the vagaries of the market and to the demanding task of sustaining a place-making project over a period of time that extends beyond the involvement of the original developers. It is particularly disappointing that the office area was not only disconnected from the traditional neighborhood and the village center, but that it was removed from the jurisdiction of the town architect and, evidently, from the expectations associated with accomplishing good urbanism. It seems less likely that its opportunities will be well used as a result.

In certain respects, this is a project that makes more sense in its regional setting than many of the first-generation traditional neighborhood developments. It is clearly capable of becoming a focal point for redevelopment in the area, a center of employment, commerce and transit. At the same time, as Ellen Dunham-Jones noted in Charleston, it has something of that too familiar appearance of a chunk of urbanism placed in an otherwise suburban setting. Again, this is less a criticism of King Farm than it is an issue to be addressed more generally. Given the realities of property ownership and the practical challenges of the development industry, there is a persistent "project orientation" that makes it perpetually difficult to do more than just fill in spaces between suburban arterials while leaving fundamental challenges of the suburban context unresolved.

It is a very good sign that some adjacent parcels have been pulled in, as it were, and that the designers were asked to do new plans for two sites beyond the original one. For me, however, the big question is: How will this town grow, both as it extends and as it intensifies? Will it mature as urbanism or simply build out?

Criticism of projects often focuses in on current shortcomings, losing sight of the fact that some qualities of places can really only happen in the fullness of time. As someone pointed out, time is on our side, or at least it ought to be. As buildings and people age, they may be a little worse for wear, but urbanism ought to blossom as a project matures. Perhaps in general we need to think more about the process — instead of asking only what a place looks like today, or even simply how it is designed to look, consider its capacity to develop and mature over time. This kind of criticism requires familiarity with the project as it appears on the ground, as it comes to define unforeseen opportunities, and as the fulfillment of those opportunities is enriched by a tradition and guided by supportive codes.

Hurtt and Hetzel/King Farm

Redland Road, passes close to the Metro rail station on the other side of Route 355. The parallel boulevard to the north of Redland Road is designed to accommodate a light rail line in the wide median. If King Farm has a Main Street, this transit boulevard will be it.

One long side of the rectangular town square opens onto this transit boulevard. The remaining three sides are lined with three-story buildings containing retail shops on the ground floor and apartments above. The location of apartments above retail is a significant achievement in this mostly suburban county.

The square is appropriately modest. But buildings facing the town square and adjacent streets seem overworked, each with a retail base that is more solid and less glazed than one would anticipate, and with upper-story pavilions interspersing and book-ending the façade in an unnecessarily agitated manner. The landscaping along these streets is suburban in type, with overly large tree boxes surrounding very modest trees, this in the place that the exact opposite is traditional.

The four-lane boulevards are difficult to cross. The combination of speeds by drivers experienced with sprawl and visibility limited by the curve of the boulevards at the town center make for a potentially deadly combination. One would hesitate to send a savvy 12-year-old across these boulevards much less a younger child.

While the inclusion of any food store must be counted a success, the big box supermarket is a suburban form by virtue of its single-floor plate and large surface parking lot, which resist town center urbanism. The conventional narrow arcade facing the parking lot attempts to humanize the building and a couple of chairs and a table encourage occupancy of the arcade, supported by a Starbucks inside the supermarket. But fumes from idling cars make one reflect on the advantages of an arcade large enough to occupy comfortably (the Piazza della Republica in Rome came to mind).

Building Materials
As elsewhere, many builders have built the buildings at King Farm, each of whom had to be persuaded to adhere to specific architectural codes. That the use of exterior building materials is mostly convincing at King Farm is a tribute to the design and administration of these codes. Vinyl siding has been successfully contained by brick and wide vinyl trim boards. Windows are also framed by substantial vinyl trim boards, except at dormers that often appear poorly glazed and trimmed.

Still, one misses the simple clarity of older communities in which a common sense fire code required closely spaced structures to be of masonry and permitted other structures to be of wood; a world in which striving for curb appeal, and the use of more expensive materials on the face of a building did not distort the architectural clarity of the whole.

Endnote
King Farm has been a significant economic success. Demonstratively, there is a large market in search of community and urbanity. From such successes we will draw the strength to prevail against sprawl, civic decline and environmental degradation.

The Pattern Book

By Ray Gindroz
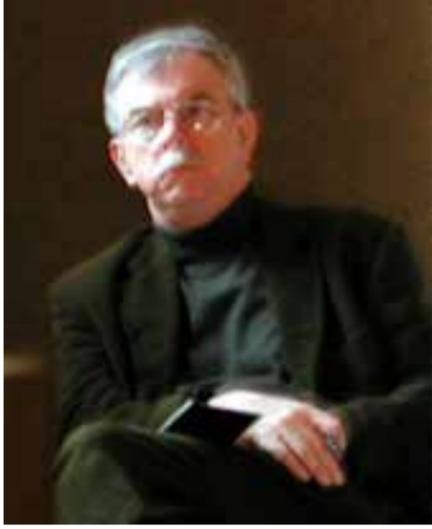
Photo: Rick Hall

The character of the public spaces of American neighborhoods are dependent on the qualities and character of the architecture of the houses. This is not a new phenomenon. As we look at a portrait of neighborhood streets from long ago, we are struck with both the richness and harmony of the buildings that line these streets. The facades are aligned, as are the front porches. Each building is different, expressing the individuality of its occupants, yet the scale of the windows and other architectural elements is all beautifully proportioned and harmoniously integrated. The buildings are in a variety of architectural styles, yet they all reflect well-balanced composition and correct detailing. Equally impressive is the balance that was achieved between the individual expression of each house and harmony with which they work together to create community form. Often these neighborhoods were built during rapid building booms.

How was such a sophisticated level of design maintained across so wide an area in so short a period of time? There appears to have been broad consensus on the design of houses among all those involved in building these neighborhoods. A means of achieving this consensus was a series of pattern books — builders' handbooks containing principles for design and design details, which presented clearly and concisely the architectural and other elements of traditional styles.

These pattern books set forth the concepts, but each builder found ways of interpreting them, elaborating them, even bending them. The result was the exquisite balance of individual expression and unity found in America's finest traditional neighborhoods.

Unlike zoning ordinances, pattern books were actually perceived to be helpful tools. Asher Benjamin's "A Builder's Companion," for example, provided useful details and helpful hints on how to build correct porch columns and eaves.

As they evolved through the 19th century, pattern books became part of marketing. The pages include three-dimensional drawings of the houses along with plans and large-scale details of key elements such as porches or roof details. Thus, prospective homebuyers could see a variety of house styles through realistic sketches of the finished results, along with the floor plans and key details for each style. The pattern book tradition continued until the Second World War. After the war, architects became interested in the Modernist style and lost interest in traditional architectural patterns. In the great post-war building boom, pattern books fell into disuse.

In our practice at UDA, we long ago became frustrated with the way in which our urban designs were being built. The pattern of streets and public open spaces may have been well conceived, but the character of the houses often worked against the quality of space. Therefore, we began to develop a modified version of traditional pattern books as a second, equally important type of Urban Assembly Kit. Our goal was to help restore the consensus among builders, designers and homebuyers that once existed and that enabled them to create the beautiful historic neighborhoods we so admire.

While the regional pattern books provided stock plans with details, we began to identify the key details and design qualities that could be used with any floor plans. Builders have strong ideas about the interiors of houses but are usually open to ideas for the exterior form. And it is the exterior that is critical for urban space. Thus, in a highly proactive way, our pattern books help all concerned to "see" the overall vision for the neighborhood and appreciate how each new home will fit within that context. They present a collection of design details and building construction methods that spark the imagination and support the overall design concept for the neighborhood or town.

Let's turn our attention to the town of Celebration in Florida to see how a pattern book is helping to ensure that the vision for that community is reflected in its "as-built" reality.

Celebration was conceived to be a new, traditional, small Southern town. The plan and the images which describe this vision called for gracious streets lined with houses in a variety of architectural styles, each expressing the individuality of its residents yet still contributing to the harmony of the public spaces of the town.

Although the vision was clear, it was not without its challenges. The houses were going to be built by production and homebuilders who were accustomed to building a very different type of house in the Orlando region.

Urban Design Associates was asked to develop a tool for bridging the gap between those who had created the vision and those who would build it.

We turned to the nearly lost American tradition of pattern books for inspiration. American's great neighborhoods were built in rapid building booms, with many builders and craftsmen working together in shared architectural and urban vocabularies. Pattern books were seen as helpful to the builders. Often called "A Builder's Companion," they provided the tools builders needed to compete in the market and to build a good house.

The process of creating a pattern book for Celebration began with two parallel studies. We visited and analyzed 22 towns in the Southeast, identifying their architectural styles, building types, and the dimensions and character of their urban spaces. We also asked for the builders' favorite plans and the design criteria most important to them. Using those plans, we transformed the massing into a traditional house type.

The result was the "Celebration House." (See diagram 1 below.) It has the larger ground floor and small upper floor of the developer houses, but its composition is that of a traditional house with a central main body and a series of side wings. The facades facing streets are the most important to design in correct traditional styles and with elements – such as porches – that contribute to the character of the street.

In the first phase, there were four lot types, each of which has a typical house type.

In turn, each of these house types can be built in one of six architectural styles (see sidebar). Patterns for each of the six architectural styles are also presented in the Celebration Pattern Book. Axonometric drawings illustrate one way in which the Celebration House can be interpreted in each of the six styles – styles that were selected only after we had conducted our study of the architecture and urban character of small Southern towns.

The pattern book contains six pages for each architectural style. The first page describes the essential qualities of a given style. On the subsequent pages, patterns for the elements of that particular style are identified and described.

The result is that we have crafted a kind of assembly kit, consisting of the basic massing of the house, on which windows and doors are placed, to which special elements such as porches can be added, with a palette of materials and colors appropriate for each style. This kit of architectural elements can be used to create an almost infinite number of different houses.
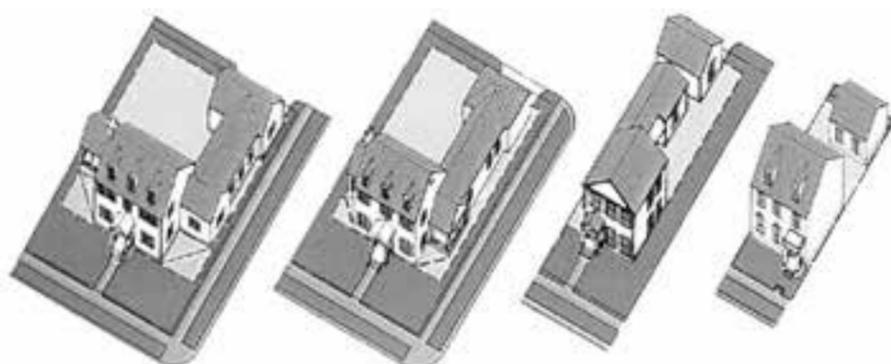
Diagram 1. The Celebration House has a larger ground floor and small upper floor. Its traditional composition allows for a series of side wings to be attached to a central body. Shown above are the four lot types that were built in the first phase at Celebration.

Urban Design Associates

Coastal

Classical

Colonial Revival

Mediterranean

French

Victorian
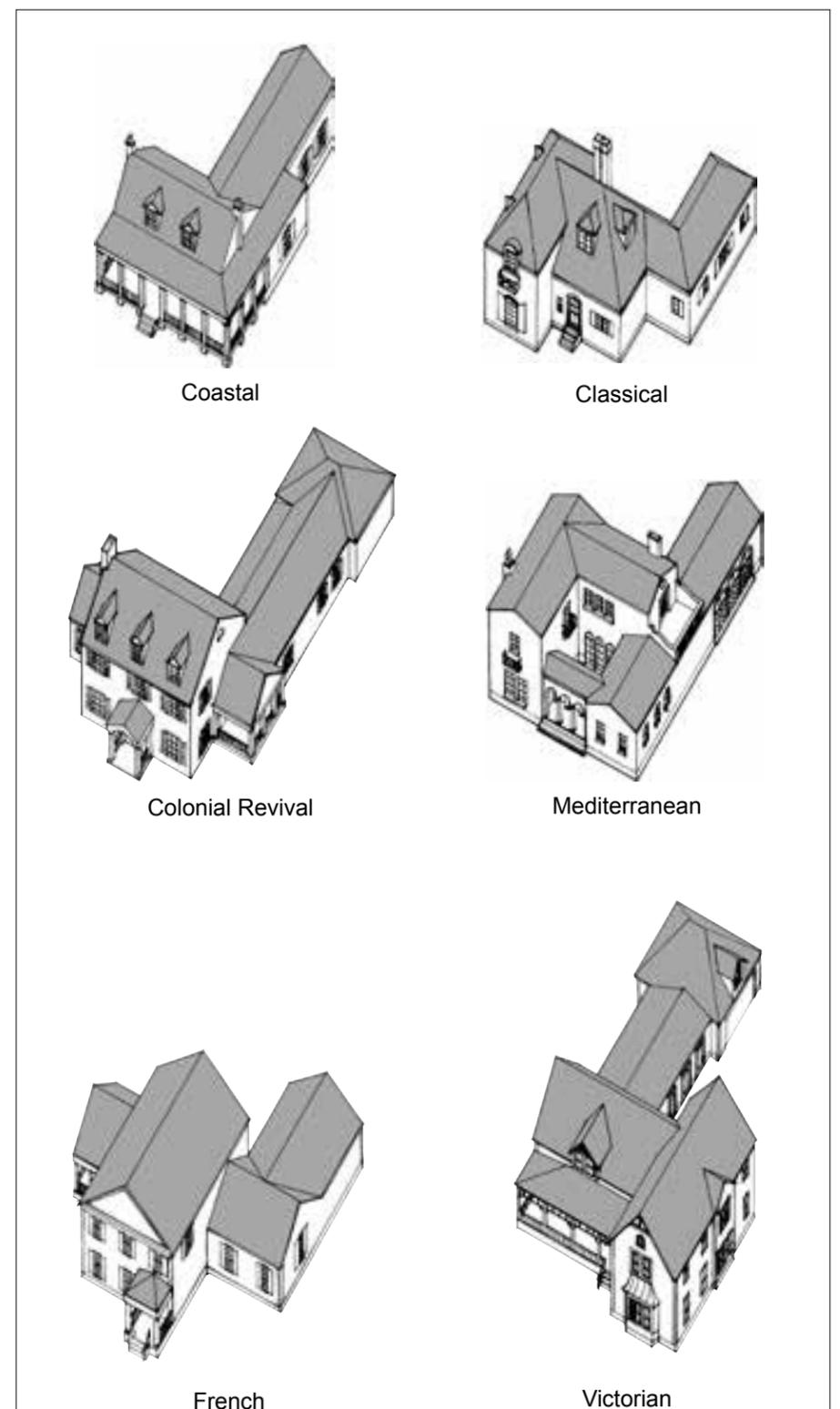
There are six architectural styles presented in the Celebration Pattern Book. They were selected by Urban Design Associates after analyzing the character of housing types found in the Southeast region of the United States.

Urban Design Associates

Elements of Style

Each architectural style is further broken down into six different elements and presented on its own page in the Celebration Pattern Book.

1. Essential qualities - Each of the six styles have been established through studying historical precedent.

2. Massing - Patterns for massing establish the roof pitch, height and overall form of the buildings. For example, the Colonial Revival Style has simple gable or hip-roof forms. If the house plan is complex, it consists of a collection of smaller, simple forms. Key details include elements, such as eaves and cornices, illustrated in both a wall section and in a detail view.

3. Windows and Doors - The proportion and profile of windows are essential attributes of each style presented. They are the most visible, figural elements of a house and our eyes are drawn to them. The Pattern Book establishes both the proportions and principles for placing them on the mass of the house.

4. Special Elements - Details for special elements – such as typical porches or dormer windows – are provided.

5. Materials and Colors - A materials list is provided and illustrated in a large-scale partial elevation that includes some key details. In addition, appropriate color palettes are specified, as well as the application of these colors to various parts of the house.

6. Possibilities - Using this series of elements, one can create an extraordinarily wide range of possible house designs – with very different architectural character – particularly when you take into consideration the variations achievable with different house types from small townhouses and cottages to large mansions.

Think about it exponentially, and you realize the combination of building types and architectural styles in a pattern book provides a very rich palette indeed of architectural forms to use within the Urban Assembly Kit. Start with six architectural styles, with which there are six different possible massing types, windows styles, types of special elements and combinations of materials. These can then be used in six building types, each of which can be placed on one of six lot types within six different block types and can be served by six different types of streets. It is this multiplicity that produces the extraordinarily rich tapestry of traditional American neighborhoods. By understanding the parts, we can once again begin designing such neighborhoods.

Pages from the Celebration Pattern Book

Each of the architectural styles in Celebration was chosen after a careful study of historical homes in the Southeastern region. In the Coastal style home, the porch depth and building height were determined to take full advantage of the coastal breezes.
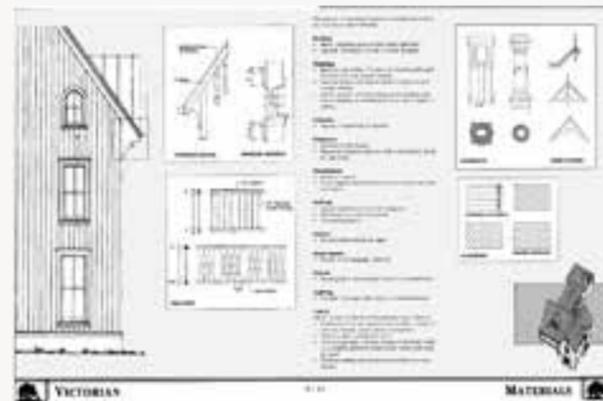

The palette of material is based on traditions both in the Southeast and in Florida. Shown above are the materials selected for the Victorian style home.
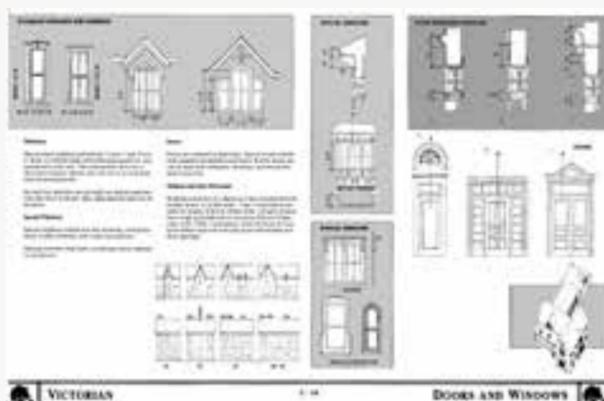

The proportion and profile of windows and doors are essential attributes of each style presented. Shown above are the appropriate door placement and window patterns for the Victorian style home.
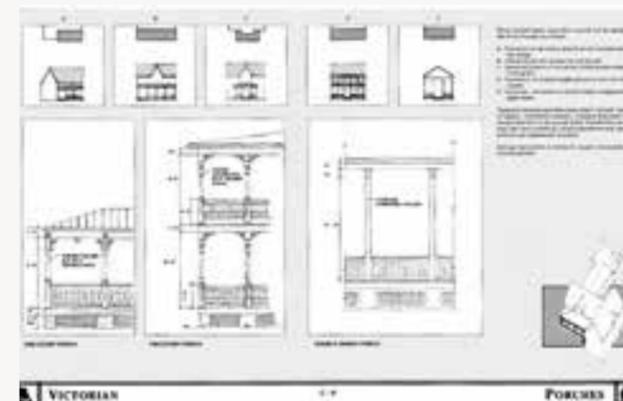
Details for special elements, such as porches and dormer windows, are provided. The Victorian porch has railings and columns specific to that style.

From a kit of parts, an infinite number of possible combinations exist.
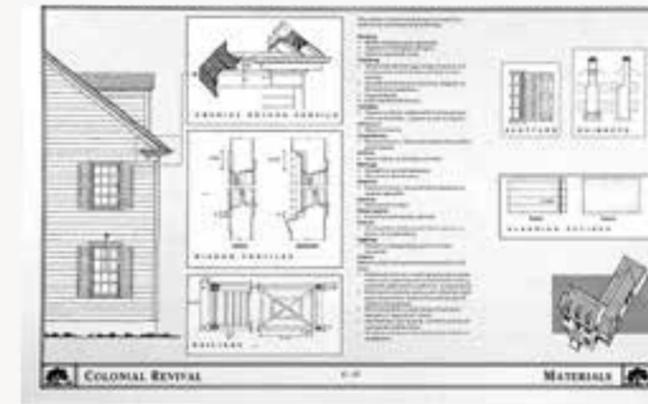
A materials list is included in the pattern book and illustrated. Here, materials permitted for the Colonial Revival house are shown in large-scale drawings.

All photos and graphics by Urban Design Associates.

A Victorian window.

A street in Celebration designed following the Celebration Pattern Book.

Victorian, Coastal and Classical houses as seen in Phase 1 at Celebration.

Graham/I'On
From page 41

the plan along with a substantial number of community leaders; and the developer had a track record of successful TND development within a 90-minute drive of the subject property. A lay-up, right?

If we had it to do over again, certainly we would have done things differently. It is important to recognize that our society has politicized property rights and democratized land use to the point that most rezonings involve a political campaign. A strategy for this campaign should be developed well before a charrette. DO NOT make the naïve mistake of assuming that citizens or their elected leaders will "get it" after hearing a lecture or reading a few articles on new urbanism. Some may take years to understand the concept, while others may never understand it. And there are some for whom accepting the principles of TND involves an admission that what has been built over the last 50 years was a mistake. They may be unable or unwilling to make such an admission. Also, NEVER assume that if a politician or appointed board member likes a project or thinks it is "the right thing to do," they will necessarily support it in a public forum. Few are those who possess the political will or guts to stand up to an angry room full of NIMBYs or a well-connected citizen. Though the above may appear the cynical musings of an embittered developer, I believe these lessons reflect political reality, and we ignore them at our peril.

It is extraordinarily difficult to win such a political campaign in most areas of the country for three reasons: (1) the shoddiness of the built environment of the last 50 years makes people distrustful of anything new; (2) the private/exclusive mindset embodied in the suburban mentality (which has spread to many urban areas) leads people to believe that any more development will degrade their privacy and exclusivity; and (3) it is in the best short-term economic interests of existing property owners to limit supply. Keep in mind that an open charrette may not be the best course of action. [See Debra Stein's excellent article on this subject at www.gcastrategies.com/article_nc_3.html.]

The endless land use laws and government regulations with which we saddled ourselves in the 20th century make construction and development one of, if not the most, politicized industries in the country. I believe this to be the major reason why design and building practices are in such a sorry state. Our regulations restrict competition, reduce production, discourage incentive and virtually prohibit initiative and innovation while increasing risk. The fixing of quantitative minimums, licensing and forbidding outright of many economic activities considered routine by those who built prior to the 20th century is almost beyond belief.

Between the fixation on quantities with accompanying rewards for production, a builder, developer or subcontractor has less incentive to do a quality job or risk new capital in a game that is intentionally rigged against him or her. The thinking public has come to expect deterioration in the built environment, and sadly this cancerous inertia has spread throughout the public and private sectors. To advance our design principles in the mainstream, these barriers to creativity and imagination must be removed.

Bess/I'On
From page 44

He told me of a plan he had for a recent town-planning project where a property designated for a religious building would be given to a congregation willing to build there at a level of quality acceptable to the founder. As further incentive, the founder would agree to donate 10 percent (literally, a tithe) of the profits from the sale of any house within the development purchased by a church member toward the construction cost of the church building itself — an interesting incentive program, and not unlike what one might expect from Robert Davis.

Finally: In order to encourage the kind of economic diversity characteristic of good towns and neighborhoods, there needs to be a greater variety of housing types than currently exists at I'On. Again, it is my impression that this is already on Vince Graham's agenda and has been from the outset. Still, I would encourage him to be aggressive on this matter. In particular I would encourage the construction of single- and multi-family units, rental and owner-occupied units, all on the same block. Many of the blocks at I'On are small, and this is quite charming. But I would encourage the construction of a greater variety and mix of housing types on the bigger blocks, which I have confidence would work at I'On because of the already general high quality of both the typical streetscape and the housing design and construction. But I would even go one step further (which is easy for me, because I'm only the critic here): If he hasn't already done it, I would encourage Vince Graham to commit a certain percentage of his building lots to "affordable housing" and to bring in non-profit religious or secular community development corporations who specialize in providing it — again, with the proviso that it must be of a certain quality of construction that does NOT call itself out as subsidized housing. I suspect there may be several such housing providers nearby to I'On; but if not, I would suggest that Vince Graham contact Jonathon Bradford of the Inner City Christian Federation (ICCF) of Grand Rapids, Mich. For more than 20 years, the ICCF has been providing quality, *urban* "affordable housing" in some of the poorest neighborhoods of Grand Rapids; and Jonathon has been a quick study on the NU formalist rap, including the merits of gentrification for poor neighborhoods (provided, of course, that organizations like the ICCF remain diligent in looking after the interests of the poor).

So these are some of my thoughts on I'On. I met Victor Dover and Vince Graham for the first time in March 2001; which was also the first time I saw I'On, at a pig roast hosted by Vince. I am enormously impressed with their abilities and their commitment to good work, and nothing I have written here should cast any doubt upon that whatsoever. I also realize that

This ad, which appeared in the *Washington Post* in 1990 and marked up with balloons by Kentlands town architect Mike Watkins, was sent to the builders in Kentlands per Andres Duany's request in order to try to prompt them into doing a better job. Watkins said the builders thought the marked up advertisement was funny; however, their standard practices remained the same.

several of my suggestions — particularly regarding connectivity and affordable and mixed housing — made in the interest of better urbanism at I'On would possibly be vehemently opposed by the kinds of people who have already bought or might be considering buying at I'On. But can new urbanists be surprised that the souls of many who buy what we sell as an alternative to suburbia are themselves suburban? And that they bring with them the NIMBY attitudes characteristic of suburbanites? This, after all, is America! Nevertheless, if the more generous angels of our nature are to triumph over our suburban cultural habits — which is to say, if we are to revive urban culture — I think these are the kinds of battles that must be fought.

Laurie Volk and Rob Steuteville take part.

Photo: Mike Waller

Approximately 150 practioners from across the country gather to discuss design.

Photo: Rick Hall
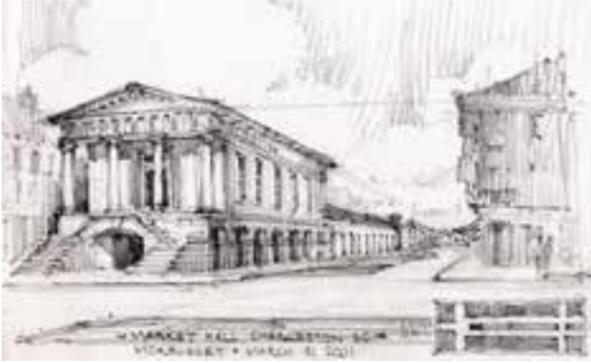
Charleston's
Meeting Hall and Market Sheds

By Michael Morrissey

Located at the busy intersection of Meeting and Market Streets, the Market Hall commands perhaps the most conspicuous site in Charleston, S.C., and is the focal point of the city's market area. Extending from Meeting Street several blocks east to the Cooper River, this long linear market area demonstrates the delightful marriage of urban design and architecture and is worthy of study.

Historically, this area was the center of the 19th century commercial district. In 1788, Revolutionary War General Charles Coteworth Pinckney conveyed the land to the city of Charleston with specific instructions: "to lay out a street from the channel of the Cooper River to Meeting Street 100 feet broad and in said street to establish a public market or markets for the purpose of vending all sorts of butcher meats, poultry, game, fish, vegetables and provisions."

The original markets were erected from 1790-1806, and a cornerstone was laid for a combination Mason's Hall and Market Sheds. After fire destroyed several blocks, including the hall and market sheds, the city enacted legislation dissuading the use of timber for new construction. Subsequently, a permanent market complex was designed and built by architect Edward Bricknell White. The Meeting Hall and upper-story meeting room has served numerous purposes over the years and was most recently the Confederate Museum. In 1989 Hurricane Hugo damaged the hall, and the city is currently completing restoration of the building.

The Urbanism

The original plan of Charleston located a square at Meeting and Market Streets open on four corners (a double axial square). As the city evolved, the square was filled in and the market area, as a set of civic buildings, was squeezed into a unique linear urban model. Extending four city blocks and approximately 2,000 feet long, this linear market system sits within a tight urban section. The cross section is a 140-foot right-of-way formed by three-story buildings that create a 1:4 proportion. Centered into this space on a narrow 50-foot lot between North and South Market Streets is a linear, one-story market shed capped by Market Hall. The two-story market building, or hall, in the center of an urban space or streets is common in England and is most probably a cultural carry-over. Interrupted only by north-south streets, this long, linear, one-story market system creates a continuous, walkable pedestrian experience animated with market stalls, restaurants and shops.

The Architecture
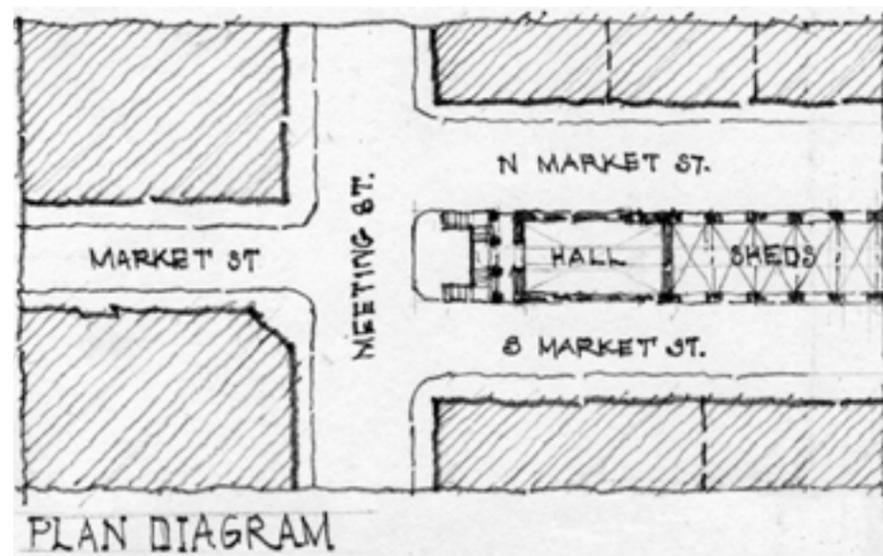
The Market Hall, as a civic building, is strategically located to terminate Market Street from the west and acts as end-cap to the linear shed system east. Edward Bricknell White's temple design rises two stories in height and presents an elevated pedimented portico supported by four Roman Doric columns. With a flexible use of materials, White used old and new technologies to suit budget constraints while evoking a "Roman" antique character.
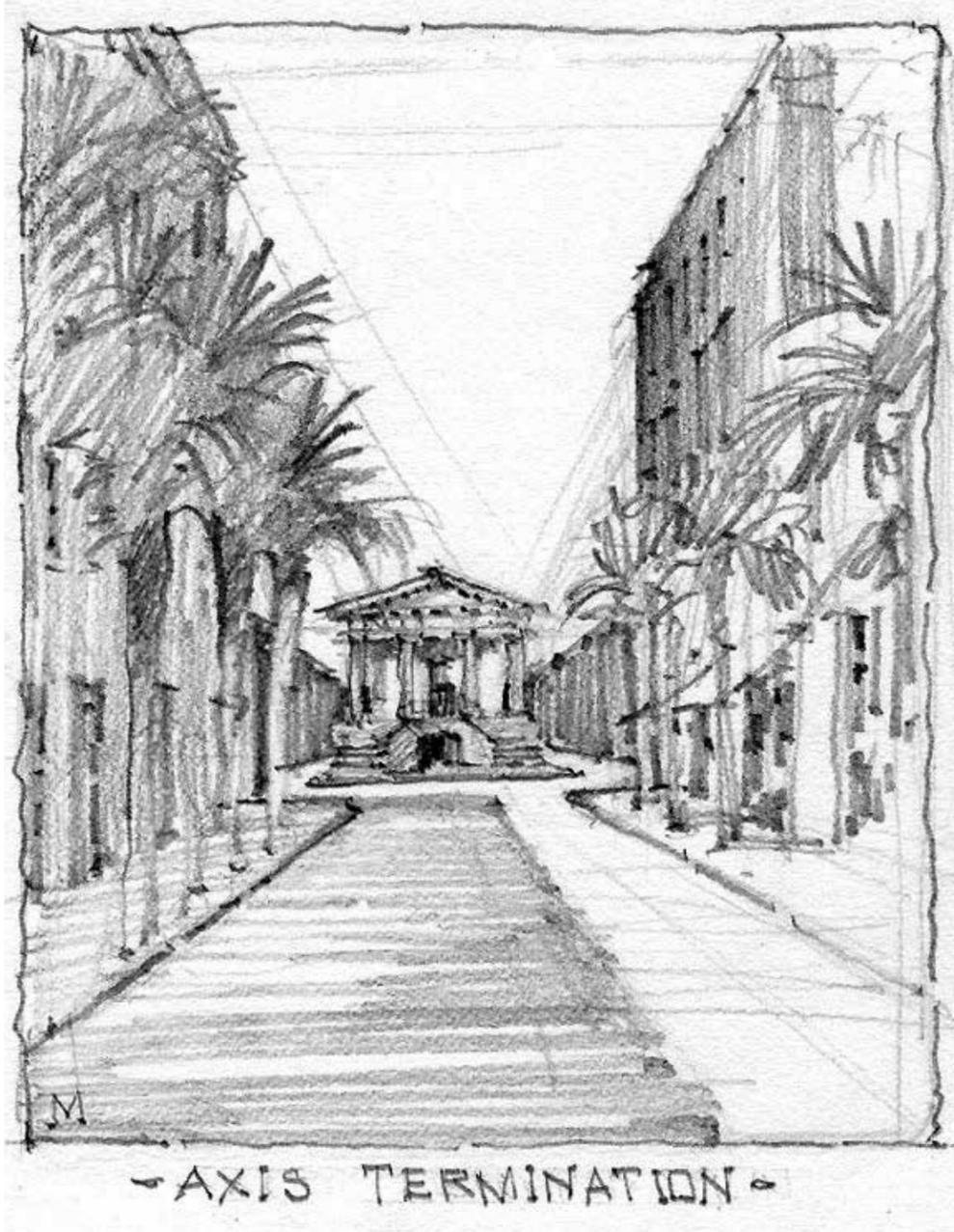
Brownstone stucco over brick gives the appearance of a rusticated stone base, ashlar temple walls and turned stone columns. Cast iron metope ornament, an early 19th century state of the art technology, is incorporated into the material palette in lieu of carved stone (ancient) or stucco (renaissance). The cornice, portico and Doric capitals are red sandstone, while the triglyphs and moldings are cast cement. The pattern of cast-iron ox skulls with garlands, or "bucrania," and ram's heads in the metopes possibly allude to the abatoir activities of the market, and they are a direct borrowing from the same metope ornament on ancient temples where animal sacrifice was integral to temple ritual.

White has used the classical language with great flexibility, transitioning the heavily rusticated arcade at the temple into the plain stucco arcade of the market stalls. The temple front is composed of a series of golden section rectangles — the central intercolumnation is one golden section rectangle; the side bays, three stacked to emphasize the central doorway.

The topographical perspective view taken from the southwest corner of Meeting and Market Streets shows the dramatic effect of the Meeting Hall with Temple Form. The elevated portico and double flight of brownstone steps creates a dramatic sense of civic authority and dignity. Like a train arriving at the station, the composition of the hall and sheds brings the Market to Meeting. Here the urbanism and the architecture come together at the crossroads: to mediate between the marketplace and the Meeting Hall, between the shed and the temple, and between the everyday and the ideal.

Resources: Jonathan H. Poston, "The Buildings of Charleston: A Guide to the City's Architecture," University of South Carolina Press, 1997.
John W. Reps, "The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States," Princeton University Press, 1965.

– AXIS TERMINATION –

PLAN DIAGRAM

140' ROW
N-S STREET SECTION THRU MARKET
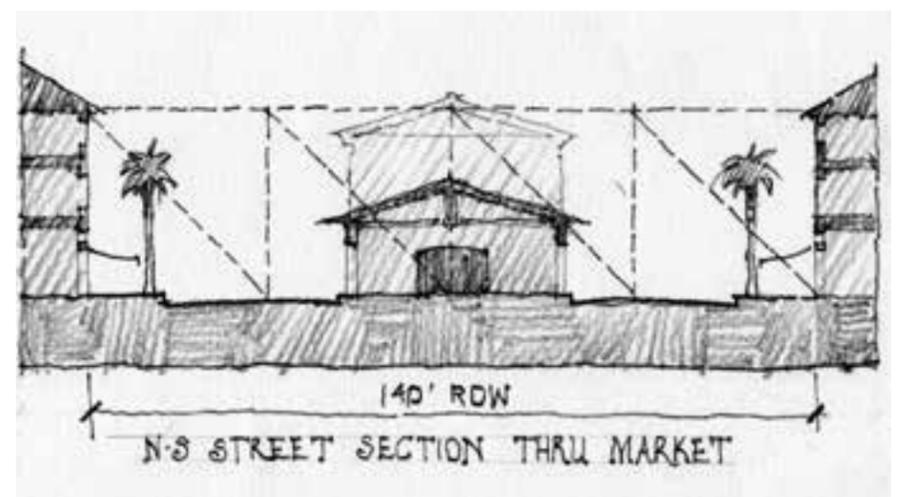
This publication is a record of the Council meeting held in the rotunda of the Gibbes Museum in Charleston, S.C., from March 30 to April 1, 2001. The first in a series of twice-annual meetings, the Charleston Council was organized with two primary goals: to provide a forum for committed new urban designers to share their cumulative experiences and insights, and to provide a place for new urbanists to have a give and take and dialogue in a way that is increasingly difficult at the now larger, annual congresses.

New urbanists are often criticized for focusing too much on design but as the CNU grows and diversifies, designers become a smaller and smaller part of the overall membership, and design becomes less a part of the discussion at the congresses. There has not been an extended group discussion of new urbanist designs since the first congress in 1993.

Therefore, the first Council meeting focused on the evaluation and critique of first generation new urban TNDs. Designers from each project presented their work and their own evaluations, and a rotating jury made up of members of the audience responded, followed by a discussion open to the audience at large. Anyone who has been to architecture school is familiar with the system.

The second Council meeting will be in Santa Fe, N.M., October 13 to 15. For at least the next few years, future Councils will alternate between spring meetings in Charleston and fall meetings in Santa Fe, organized by Bill Dennis. A Council of 10 or 12 people will decide how the meetings will be organized and what they will discuss.

The first Council meeting would not have been possible without the help of Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. and his staff, the Charleston Office for Cultural Affairs, the Gibbes Museum of Art, the Program in Historic Preservation and Community Planning at the College of Charleston, and Shelley Poticha and the staff at the Congress for the New Urbanism.

John Massengale

Council II
Santa Fe, New Mexico

October 13 - 15

Presenters:

Thomas Dolan – Live/Work Types

Erik Valle and Jaime Correa of Correa Valle Valle

Michael Dennis – Student Housing Types

Dan Solomon – Red Vienna and Large Scale Housing

Javier Cenicacelaya – Infill Housing in Bilbao

Ray Gindroz of Urban Design Associates – Hope VI Housing

Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk of Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company

Stefanos Polyzoides of Moule & Polyzoides – TOD Housing Types

www.charrettecenter.com/designcouncil

THE SEASIDE INSTITUTE
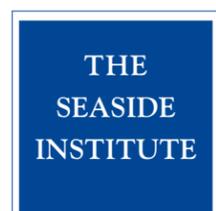
Upcoming Seminar

Andrés Duany's TND II: The Advanced Seminar

November 14 -16, 2002

For some ten years, standard TND courses have been taught at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and The Seaside Institute. These seminars have become progressively more focused as the projects have been built, but they remain theoretical.

Now there is substantial feedback on these first generation new urban communities. The time has come to hold an advanced seminar involving the designers, developers and other interested participants.

For more information, please call 850.231.2421, or register at www.theseasideinstitute.org

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