The Knight Program in Community Building addresses today’s urgent issues associated with community building, including the complex problems of suburban sprawl and inner-city disinvestment. The program’s goal is to advance the knowledge and practice of New Urbanism and Smart Growth across disciplines through an innovative series of initiatives. The program is funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, which promotes excellence in journalism worldwide and invests in the vitality of 26 U.S. Communities. The Knight Program extends the Knight Foundation’s commitment to community service with a mid-career program of professional development.

Each year, the Knight Program selects mid-career professionals from diverse fields to take part in intensive community-building workshops, seminars and a charrette, while pursuing individual projects. Fellows are selected from fields such as architecture, planning, housing, community development, real estate, journalism, transportation and human services.

The Knight Program offers scholarships to promising students entering the University of Miami School of Architecture graduate program in suburban and town design. This unique program provides cutting edge training in the techniques of New Urbanism. Scholars take part in seminars, workshops, research and publications produced by the Knight Program.

A variety of publications on topics of community-building, smart growth and New Urbanism are sponsored by the Knight Program. These include the quarterly New Urban Post, the semi-annual Council Report, books, journals and other material. The Knight Fellows’ projects are published in case studies, research and journal articles on a variety of related topics.

The program sponsors seminars, conferences and an annual charrette in a Knight city. Past seminars include the “Transect Seminar,” “New Plazas for New Mexico” and “Civic Art 2002.” The Knight Program’s charrettes have focused on an inner-city neighborhood in Macon, Ga., and the Evergreen-Eastridge area of San José, Calif.

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Key West Rooftops. Drawing by Martha de Quesada, Miami School of Architecture.
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John Wolf has worn the hat of carpenter, general contractor, architect, developer, and chairman of the planning commission over the years. He has taught at the University of Colorado and is president of the Affordable Housing Alliance in Boulder.
What I Learned Last Spring

By John Massengale

N ew urbanists had a hard time talking about architecture. We can agree about most of the principles of the Charter, yet the two points in the Charter about architecture — that buildings “should be seamlessly linked to their surroundings,” and that this issue “transcends style” — don’t satisfy many. The godfather of new urbanism, Léon Krier, refused to sign the Charter because of it.

If we build on the strip, are we supposed to seamlessly link to Wal-Mart and all the other detritus of sprawl? Of course not. And having agreed that the city is more important than the building (“this issue transcends style”), how do we transcend style when it comes to the designing the building? By ignoring style? Show me where that’s been successfully done. Apparently, this is more, ___ than the CNU can deal with. For the good of the movement, the six founders of the CNU — KeNyon, DeShon, Gandy, V Louis — must have tacitly agreed to disagree. And to never discuss the source of their disagreement, architecture.

The 150 or so other architects in the CNU passionately hold a lot of different positions about what architecture should be. They come together under the “big tent” of the Congress but represent a lot of different groups: ideological Modernists, Fundamentalist Classicists, eclectics, Romantic Traditionalists, Progressive Classicists, environmentalists, ___ and more. In general, they get along very well. When the subject of architecture comes up, though, they’re prone to debating the number of angels on the head of a pin. And whether the angels are lined up axially or informally. And which of those two is more “natural” or divine.

My old boss Bob Stern used to say “architects all — must have a passion for architecture.” As a profession, we still get along very well. We work together under the “big tent” of the Congress but represent a lot of different positions about what architecture should be. We can’t just turn the clock back and pretend it was all a mistake. And even if we could, most people would disagree with us, so we won’t be limiting our potential done.

It’s the Rush Limbaugh paradigm: You can create a passionate following if you make everything a matter of Us versus Them. But on the other hand, Rush can never get enough followers to win an election. We live in a time of plurality and diversity, and most people do not hate modernism. It’s easier to attack sprawl than traditionalism. Architectural education at the market rate, usually consisting only of a few exceptions it still isn’t good enough. It’s still a struggle to achieve just the general public usually doesn’t believe that either.

In fact, we are at a turning point when general ideas about modernism and modernist architecture are clearly changing. Twenty years ago any college, university or museum that wanted to be considered first class knew it had to have a modernist building. Today, many of the best institutions around the country are skimming or replacing these buildings with traditional designs.

Architects are the last people to figure this out. As a profession, we still think that modernism is somehow better or more “of our time.” We thereby acknowledge that modernism and tradition are different in character, without explaining why only one is relevant or usable. When we visit a Palladian villa, it is not to pretend we are 18th century Venetians, or Jim Kunstler’s new urban paeans, but to recognize that it took the CNU four years of existence to produce its charter.

For architecture charter, it’s important to include the voices of classical and traditional architects who have not necessarily been at the center of the CNU. But their views on architecture, I should also say that the give and take at the Charleston meeting, there was a clear argument that these traditions are somehow tainted by past association with bad activities doesn’t wash either. There is virtually nothing associated with architecture that modernism is somehow better or more “of our time.” We thereby acknowledge that modernism and tradition are different in character, without explaining why only one is relevant or usable. When we visit a Palladian villa, it is not to pretend we are 17th century Venetians, or Jim Kunstler’s new urban paeans, but to recognize that it took the CNU four years of existence to produce its charter.

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Framing the Discussion

By Bill Dennis

This Council and its subsequent report propose to answer the burning question: How did we make such a mess of our collective nest, and how do we go about fixing it? Previous Councils have focused on design, both urban and architectural, and the results of our efforts to shape the public realm. The second Santa Fe Council dealt with the regulatory framework that establishes the playing field—one that is generally not level for the new urbanism. A friend of mine remarked that a gathering of 100 planners trying to rewrite zoning codes is like 100 monkeys trying to write Shakespeare. But try we must, because the present use-based system that has been in place for the last 50 years is a fog of confusion and unintended consequences. In the 1940s and ’50s, zoning codes promised a bucolic countryside dotted with tidy homes, streets and lives, with nature just beyond your front door. What this type of coding delivered was precisely the opposite, however. Relentlessly monotonous housing tracts, shopping malls, office parks and other detritus smothered in a spaghetti pile of nodes festerin our country. Changing codes from use-based is necessary; it is not sufficient, though. The human environment deserves the same study and care we have given other natural environments. A truly remarkable physical environment comes from the education and encouragement we can give to each other to create better place-based, environmentally aware and beautiful streets, buildings and neighborhoods. This is something that will never come out of a book of regulations, but will only extend from our individual and collective efforts.

As is the nature of the Council, we have taken time to learn from history. Besim Hakim begins the discussion chronologically in the 5th century, with the esteemed historian John Reps jumping ahead eight centuries to the founding of new towns in France. Paul Crawford explains the more recent history of use-based codes informed by his 15 years as a planning director in the sausage factory. Peter Katz and Geoff Ferrell present a lucid approach to form-based coding, while the CNU Codes Project committee updates its research. Utilizing the transect as a common system for all new codes to plug into is explained in great detail by Andrés Duany, along with an explanation of how the SmartCode, a code his firm created, accomplishes this in practice. Chip Kaufman, Tom Lyons and John Wolf, Rick Cole and Matt Taeker ably cover the experience of implementing new codes around the United States and Australia. And Rick Chellman, Peter Swift and Rick Hall report from the front lines on the transportation code wars.

On the last day of the Council, an effort was made by attendees to develop solutions to problems being faced by municipal officials, developers and planners as they face the challenge of implementing the new urbanism. One result was the creation of a new urban code assessment checklist, which is included in this report in draft form. This checklist is to be refined by CNU/Council Code Committee, a committee that was formed during this Sunday morning session.

This remarkable collection of thought and initiative points to one inescapable conclusion: There is much work to do. Let’s get busy!
A Renewal of a Mississippi Neighborhood

By Dan Camp

In 1967, when the Urban Renewal Laws were adopted by the city of Starkville, Miss., the small neighborhood located between Mississippi State University and downtown Starkville was designated the Urban Renewal Area. This part of Starkville became very important in 1926 when the Sanders family built a cotton mill. Tenant housing was provided for the workers by the cotton mill. These houses were small, one room wide, several rooms deep, on small 25 by 100 feet lots. Schools, shops, churches and rail facilities were located in this area when the cotton mill was in full production.

The cotton mill stopped production in 1964 after having scaled back in the early 1950s. By the mid 1960s, most of the tenant housing was in a state of disrepair. However, when the urban renewal lines were drawn, a small part of the cotton mill tenements on Lummus Drive and Holtsinger Street was left out of the redevelopment plans.

I became interested in acquiring property for student housing in 1969 and started plans for a small, eight-unit group of townhouses. Alexandria, Va.; Vicksburg, Miss. and New Orleans, La., were drawn upon for their historical architecture styles in designing this first group of small townhouses. The location for these townhouses was to be on Lummus Drive. (Most folks, when asked about this location, thought it unwise.)

After successfully completing the first units, I began to purchase other property on Lummus Drive, each piece offering a different problem. In most cases, the lots were too small for more than a single family dwelling. It became necessary for each piece of property to be carried to the Planning Commission so that the square footage requirements of the lots could be relaxed.

Over the years, as I added new buildings to the neighborhood, it gave the area a unique appearance in regard to the rest of the community, and the demand from professionals to live on Lummus Drive increased. To give the neighborhood a feeling of permanence, I designed a patio home group that sold out quickly, each lot being only 30 by 36 feet. This grouping was done through a planned unit development with the covenants allowing commercial activity on the first floor, and living space above.

With the density increasing on Lummus Drive, Holtsinger and Maxwell streets, we had restaurants, beauty salons and quick-stops to locate in the immediate vicinity. Designing in small spaces has allowed me to explore the development of small cottages for the student market. The typical cottage will have between 300 to 550 square feet.

It has been necessary over the years to facilitate construction of certain millwork for the cottages and other structures in an on-site shop. French doors, curved top windows, wood molding, dormers, wood siding and door transoms made in that shop have given me great flexibility in my designs. Lightweight concrete has been used in casting our own column caps, bases and window treatments, along with real concrete stucco for walls.

It must be noted that, even with the redevelopment of the neighborhood, we have those residents who continue to live in the area; they did not sell, but chose to stay and become a part of the new emerging neighborhood. The future looks promising for the next five to 10 years for continued construction on Holtsinger Street and nearby University Drive.

Presentations are still made to the Planning Commission and the Board of Alderman for setbacks and lot variances. However, it becomes easier and easier each time, as the true feeling and beauty of the area have become evident.
**Project Name:** Cotton District

**Location:** Starkville, Mississippi

**Classification:** Infill

**Designer:** Dan Camp

**Consultants:** N/A

**Architect:** Dan Camp

**Developer:** Dan Camp

**Design Date:** 1969 – present

**Construction Begun:** 1969

**Status (Design, under construction, etc.):** Approximately 210 units completed to date; construction is ongoing

**Site Area (acres):** N/A

**Project Construction Cost (total):** N/A

**Residential (no. of units):**
- Houses: 40
- Rowhouses: 14
- Apartments: 160
- Live/Work Units: 10 (5 work units)

**Residential Price Range (Initial Target):**
1969: $115 per month; 2002: same apartment $575 per month

**Current Range:** $300 – $1,200 per month

**Commercial:** Retail: 5,000 sq. ft. (six different spaces)

**Commercial Price Range:** $1 per square foot per month, $12 per square foot per year

_Council Report III_
Dan Camp’s Cotton District

By Victor Dover

ike its maker, Dan Camp’s Cotton District is a folkly, amably rebellious, and practical. It teaches. It’s hum-ble and gregarious and is full of stories. It works hard and has a sense of humor.

The Cotton District integrates more businesses into the mix. The recent District Exchange building trades. Gradually the District done by residents of the old community, 1968. Much of the construction has been sustainably adding more invest-ment to the neighborhood, and in the architecture. A recent addition is a block area that would be useful instruction for every American town official, planner and developer.

Good Business

Dan Camp was practicing new urbanism for at least 20 years before new urbanism had a name, and he is an idealistic fellow. But he is also a bottom-line businessman. He is self-trained and self-made, having grown wealthy (anyone who gets to live in a house that nice should consider himself wealthy) by building well. And what did he build? Affordable housing without a government subsidy. Many people think it can’t be done in modern times, but there it sits, beautifully.

He reinvented the rental housing biz in Starkville, dropping the distinctions between developer, property manager, architect and contractor, preferring to do it all himself. In the process he confirmed an alternative model for delivering a tradi-tional neighborhood development. Camp says his real estate business is “not about location, location, location — it’s about cashflow, cash-flow, cash-flow.” Fulfilling location, location, location — it’s about other investors had neglected or abandoned, and he made money doing it.

redevelopment, he went to work on a part of town other investors had neglected or homogenized or static or corporate at all. I think this is partly because Camp has built out the quarter slowly, pondering each piece, even changing his mind now and then and rebuilding. He’s also navigation of one building on a lot; blocks in the District are more like compounds, organized collections of buildings. One is reminded of the blocks of colonial Phila-delphia or Charleston, where the grand mansions lugged against the edges while servants’ quarters, kitchens, workshops and stables formed midblock compounds of cottages and outbuildings. The Cot-ton District has a similar juxtaposition of building sizes and character. Small but dignified dwellings are integrated among large ones and yet there is a surprising sense of privacy and respect the Cot-ton District can be compared to George Holt’s eccentric Tulley Alley in Charleston — another case of a maverick builder adding pieces incrementally and holding the property for its long-term value. Camp persuaded the city of Starkville to assign PUD status for just 1 acre, which allowed him to outline the usual setbacks and other zoning complications.

The Cotton District has homespun street spaces, not just hometown buildings. There is no single monumental pavilion or curb detail or dimension applied through-out, but rather a big quilt of changing brick patterns, street widths, terraced sidewalks, garden walls and screen fences. Along the streets, most of the buildings align not to a single build-to-line, but in site-specific customized positions, dodging trees. The adjustments are slight, but deliberate. The combined result feels personal and authentic.

Good Architecture

The architecture in the Cotton Dis-trict is traditional folk art and has always relied the architecture school people who consider it subversive. The language is comfortable and familiar, but not corny. Camp bends tradition as it suits him, cheerfully altering his experiences in New Orleans and Europe into new buildings. Duany compares his napkin sketches of elevations to naive American drawings by 18th century planters. The outcomes tend to prove how robust the language of traditional architecture actually is. De-spite the fact that so many parts are a little bit off — basements, windows seem short, proportions stretched and squashed, ornaments oversized or understated, porches so shallow, and so on — the whole is still charming. The Starkville architecture folks say the Cotton Dis-trict is the most photo-graphed historic area in town, which is astonish-ing only when you realize that the buildings being photographed are almost all less than 20 years old.

To pull off the small-is-beautiful architecture in his way and on a budget, Camp is almost certainly doing things that conven-tional builders would be afraid to in the big cities won’t permit. A number of the cottages have wood post foundations — common from a long-lasting kind he found in historical Mississippi examples. Camp tells of how he navigated his way through the traffic details were de-termined by whether his elderly mother could

A tour of this little, six-block area would destroy many myths and proves new truths, in its busi-ness model, in the evolving design of the neighborhood, and in the architecture. A recent addition is a block area that would be useful instruction for every American town official, planner and developer.

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By Kevin Klinkenberg

If you’re in doubt of what to do, just do it. Don’t ask someone if it’s OK. That, among many others, is a bit of wisdom from Dan Camp — the iconoclastic builder/developer/designer/entrepreneur from Starkville, Miss. It’s difficult to even begin to write about Dan’s many accomplishments, let alone critique them. Trained as an industrial arts teacher, Dan is a self-proclaimed member of the “unwashed” amongst the architectural crowd. Without the burden of an architectural education, and all the philosophical confusion that goes with it, Dan set about building the Cotton District in 1972. He had none of the baggage of obscure French philosophers or anti-human avant-garde architectural wannabes. He simply wanted to build a better mouse trap, and make some money doing it. Thirty years later, he’s built a magical place that offers incredible lessons not only for new urbanists, but also for society at large.

Lesson 1: Love your craft. It’s not enough for Dan and crew to simply build with durable, long-lasting, beautiful materials. No, they take it one impressive step further and make many of their own building elements. From windows to bricks, moldings to columns, Dan fabricates some if not all of these for his projects. Most importantly, though, is that it’s done with an obvious love of the craft itself. Dan speaks of dormers as if they are fine pieces of furniture. Gutters are not utilitarian — they are works of art. Newel posts are aligned in the finest Southern tradition. We should all enjoy our labor so much.

Lesson 2: Build for the long-term. From the beginning, Dan took the approach that this endeavor was a marathon, not a sprint. He started with his worst land, as any smart developer does, and saved the best for later on. He very admittedly was looking for a way to make some money. The path, however, was through owning income-producing property, not the all-too-common build it and flip it technique. In fact, the only property he sold was a money loser to the tune of $250,000. Now, the banks bids for the rights to lend him money.

Lesson 3: Use creativity to achieve livable density. It would be an understatement to say that Dan has created some of the most unique small-residence solutions in America. From the 14- by 22-foot Dixie playhouses to the 16- by 20-foot cottage with a sleeping loft, these apartments are little jewels unto themselves.

The easy thing would be to say, “well, it’s a college town, of course we can get away with tiny, unique units.” However, anyone who has experienced the depressing monotony of typical “student housing” would be wise to question that assumption. In fact, the easy thing is to simply throw up any cheap, utilitarian structure, as would people in ways that will make us nervous. But life is full of pleasant surprises, when people are actually treated like adults.

Lesson 6: Take your inspiration from great places. Dan first started in the Cotton District after being inspired by Alexandria, Va., and its wonderful historic fabric. His fascination with places such as New Orleans, Rome and Charleston have led him to produce buildings of not only wide variety, but also great beauty. It’s a continuing lesson for us — take inspiration from the good things, not the bad. Industrial processes may be scientific fascinations, but beautiful places they do not make.

Lesson 7: Treat people with great respect. In every aspect of his business, whether it’s building, designing, selling, marketing or maintenance, Dan believes in treating people as a gentleman. It sounds trite and over-simplistic, but doing unto others as you would unto you truly does pay dividends. And the beauty of it is, it’s not a difficult thing to do. So what else to say about the Cotton District and Dan Camp? Very simply, how do we make them? How do we create a world where there is a Dan Camp in every town? As the new urbanism matures, and becomes the plaything of the nationals and the multinationals, let’s not forget about little Starkville. Miss. The Cotton District truly embodies the notion that small increments of great quality and joy, built over a number of decades, may produce the most satisfying places of all.

Psychosociology of the Cotton District

By Brian Herrmann

In recent years the Cotton District has garnered the attention of a number of professionals and media outlets working in fields related to planning and architecture. Often, those expressing initial interest find it necessary or beneficial to make a personal pilgrimage to visit this atypical neighborhood. In return, both the Cotton District and Dan Camp have received national acclaim.

I have completed an internship in which I lived with, worked and studied under Camp at the Cotton District in Starkville, Miss. As a result of my own visits and studies, I became interested in a concept that I deemed the “functioning of a neighborhood” — true diversity of daily routines. I chose to focus my attention on the potential impact that planning and architecture might have on this concept. If a causal relationship between the two existed, then I felt the Cotton District had the potential to demonstrate it.

The Great Conflict

Many older neighborhoods and newer subdivisions are considered to be works in progress. So too is the Cotton District. Yet, it has more in common with the latter, as progress here entails transformation from traditional neighborhood to mixed-use institution or town (in function, not incorporation) certainly resembles the sprawl growth patterns of yesteryear. On the surface the potential town seems the perfect throwback to the way things were. Herewith lies the great conflict. Everything related to the beautiful exterior is really the creation of one man. In essence the idyllic all-American town is actually a privately owned real estate (rental) business. Dan Camp, the man behind the operation, is every bit the determinist planner, authoritarian ruler and successful capitalist. The real Cotton District is by definition a capitalist success story. Yet, it took determinist planning and authoritarian rule in the presence of a larger democratic government to create this façade.

Camp is the ultimate capitalist. He uses authoritarian rule as means for creating his “all American” neighborhood that, through its very existence, scoffs at many federal and local government regulations that promote a type of development not adhered to in the Cotton District. In so doing, Camp exposes the fact that many of these land-use “regulations” disregard true democracy and purist notions of freedom from government regulation. One is left to question whether or not the ideal American town-building model is still realistic, or whether it now requires overwhelming private control and determinism to counteract an equally laden and bureaucratic system of government regulation and zoning. There are a number of new urban projects underway that will either provide answers or change many of the “regulations” in the process of attempting to find answers.

Pride of Ownership

Quite often, Camp and his family perform the same tasks as his workers, yet the family views the entire district as their home. Though family members are aware of the outside attention given to the Cotton District, this is not their motivating factor. The pride that the family demonstrates is not arthritic of ownership, especially home ownership. Because they view

See HERRMANN, page 38.
Melrose Arch: How and Who

By Paul Murrain

It is necessary to remember that the original intention was to put a shopping mall on the site. Designs had been done and things were ready to go. The owner, the Sentinel Mining Industry Retirement Fund, had previously bought and land-banked 90 suburban subdivisions, built in the early 20th century and in full occupation.

A major financial institution like the Retirement Fund is extremely conservative by nature. It traditionally funded and developed what it knew: the usual business parks, shopping malls, etc. Therefore, the key challenge and ultimate success was in persuading the Retirement Fund that its investment was better spent and better protected by building traditional urbanism.

This involved not only illustrating many things from the new urbanism movement in the United States, but also engaging them in what was happening in the post-industrial economy. That is, how lifestyles and work practices were changing across the world, and that what they were proposing was at best a short-term expedient and at worst a complete dinosaur.

Of course, all the usual “specialist advisors” were somewhere between skeptical and downright hostile, predicting financial disaster for a dense, mixed-use scheme in South Africa, trotting out the usual mantras about South Africa being different from the rest of the world, etc. But it is worth noting that while South Africa was different in some respects politically and socially, it was no different in what people wanted from their built environment.

Nothing short of a revolution had happened in 1994 with the institution of black majority rule. This had taken the spatial controls of apartheid away, if not the balance of economic power. Therefore, despite the remarkably smooth nature of the transition, there was in many respects a greater desire to protect, isolate and bunker each use category and development, because violence and certainly the perception of violence had grown enormously. The significant point here is that traditional mixed-use urbanism was the way of the future, and urban design consultants, investors, and architects were playing catch-up.

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Project Name: Melrose Arch
Location: Johannesburg, South Africa
Classification: Center
Designer: Osmond Lange Architects and Planners, Arup Planning and Development
Consultants: Urban Solutions, urban design; Paul Murrain, urban design
Developer: Sentinel Mining Industry Retirement Fund & Mines Official Retirement Fund

Design Date: 1997
Construction Begun: 1998
Status: Phase I complete
Site Area: 18 hectares

Project Construction Cost (total):
R3.5 Billion ($350 million)

Cost to Date: R1 Billion ($100 million)

Residential:
- 170 units
- Houses: 0
- Rowhouses: 0
- Apartments: 150
- Live/Work Units: 20

Initial Residential Price Range:
R1 million – R5 million ($118,000 – $591,000)

Current Residential Price Range:
R2.5 million – R5 million ($295,000 – $591,000)

Commercial (planned):
- Office: 2,286,000 sq. ft.
- Retail: 400,000 sq. ft.

Commercial Price Range: R85 – R110 per square meter per month ($0.85 – $1.10 per sq. ft.)

Public & Civic Program:
- Two public squares, hotels, social halls, places of instruction, 3,850,000-square-foot underground garage beneath entire site
Peer Review

The Creative Energy of Melrose Arch

By Joanna Alimanestianu

Left the Council perplexed. Within a new urbanist plan, how can “architecture of invention” (not to be specified as modern, avant-garde, deconstructivist or postmodern) be acceptable in certain contexts and not in others? Why did I react so differently when viewing the images of Prospect, Colo. and those of Melrose Arch? Both followed the principals of new urbanism! Both allowed, even encouraged, architectural experimentation. Since I am a traditionalist at heart I should have felt uneasy with both. Well, no. Prospect made me uncomfortable while Melrose Arch left me intrigued.

Was it because I prefer cities to towns? I hope not. Like many people, perhaps it is simply my expectation of what a city is all about. Urbanity allows and encourages variety and extremes. We go to the “city” to be amazed, inspired and to absorb the energy. Smells of all sorts merge, loud noises mix into a continuous hum, bright and colored lights flicker in the background. Spiky hair, piercings and tattoos walk among gray suits. The unexpected is expected. We don’t want to like it all — in fact, much of it we don’t — but we aren’t bothered. With the intensity and density of urbanity comes tolerance. This also seems true about the buildings of a city, those buildings that create the spaces. In a dense, strong, well-defined ground plan, unexpected architecture, even awkward architecture, blends together to become an ensemble.

In a village or rural setting the parts that make the whole are more visible. Everything and anyone who is different immediately comes to our attention. That which is strange can quickly become disturbing, even irritating. If you want to be noticed, just walk down a local neighborhood street with pink hair and a boom box. In a city, on the other hand, you have more freedom to express yourself, be yourself and yet remain anonymous. At Prospect the problem might just be that the architectural experimentation is too obvious. It certainly cannot go unnoticed. Just from the images I could tell that there was something special about Melrose Arch. I wanted to know more. Once back home I called my South African friends who live in Johannesburg and asked them whether they knew Melrose Arch. Their response was enthusiastic: “There is nothing like it anywhere around.” Their friends who live in Melrose Arch agreed:

“I love it. Everything is there in one neighborhood. It’s a place where you feel free, you feel alive.”
They were so sure even though the housing part was not yet finished and the offices were closed on the weekend, the place was bustling with life as they ate Saturday lunch at an outdoor café.

They explained that it exudes that “creative energy” that is so South African. They insisted, “It’s really a place you must visit!”

Congratulations, Paul! How could you ask for more?

Though I am convinced that Melrose is a wonderful place and a great success, especially considering the context, I am left with some thoughts, some questions.

I see the people are talking about. But I wonder whether the exuberant environment it has become will in turn have the capacity to inspire creativity. It could also have the opposite effect and intimidate or numb those who occupy it.

My South African friends tell me not to worry! And yet I continue to wonder if the objective for most of the designers wasn’t to express themselves, striving for something new and different, rather than designing a place in which others can think.

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But an additional argument in favour was the very essence of the spirit of the new urbanism: to include less established, multi-racial, talented, younger practices. This adds a sense of confidence to go this way, at least for the first phase.

The nature and content of the code, particularly with reference to the economics of the architecture, has been and remains one of the most discussed issues of Melrose Arch. The urbanism is traditional, the architecture is modern. How a country with a dubious past views its new beginning is far more open than any other recent example. The urbanism is blending together to become an ensemble.

The Code and the Architecture

Despite the fine grain of the architecture, particularly along the main street, it was understandable that the Pension Fund would want to use its usual checklist of architects. This ran the risk of one or two architects attempting to achieve variety rather than many hands responding to a code; a familiar issue to new urbanists.

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The Office Typology

A significant change in the form of the office buildings is of great importance. There is no deep plan space. Depths are between 12-15 meters with central courtyard spaces. These offices are to remain under the ownership of the Pension Fund.

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fund would want to use its usual shortlist of architects. This ran the risk of one or two architects attempting to achieve variety rather than many hands responding to a code; a familiar issue to new urbanists.

The Selection of Architects

A limited competition was held over an intensive few days. An invited selection of architects across the country was brought to Johannesburg and given a day-long briefing on the tenets of new urbanism, as well as technical briefings. They were given a specific building to work on, a copy of the code, and then they left to produce their designs. Those chosen did not necessarily work on the building they had been given initially, but the 11 buildings of the now occupied first phase were procured this way. The residential buildings came on slightly later and are currently under construction.

Conclusion

Melrose Arch is a commercial success. This is so much to do with the creation of a coherent active public realm of streets, squares and mixed use as it is with the specification of the commercial architecture. Perhaps this is no surprise to a new urbanist audience, but it was a great risk taken at the time by a major pension fund. It is a thrill to see them financially rewarded for believing and trusting what new urbanism espouses. It is now accepted by the property industry that Melrose Arch is the address. In the evenings and weekends, traffic is already a problem as the street café, bars, and restaurants draw the crowds.

It must be pointed out that security is a major issue in South Africa at present; hopefully not for too long. Melrose Arch is far more open than any other recent or contemporary property development, and that openness includes bringing public transport along the boulevard. In South Africa this is an extraordinary step forward in itself.

In Melrose Arch, design codes and review have been introduced to South Africa with considerable success. The first phase results are the test bed for any future alterations to the coding. All urban design can do is to put in place a street system (that takes the permeability to the boundaries in as fine a grain as possible), introduce mixed-use public places, and leave the political process to do the rest.
A new, lively urban place has recently appeared on the Johannesburg scene. The streets of Melrose Arch have become a destination of choice for a diverse population of South Africans. Lined with shops and cafes, with tables and revelers spilling out in to them, these streets provide an alternative to the walled and fortified environments of recent development practices.

Paul Murria’s presentation of this remarkable project generated a good bit of discussion on several key issues. Two in particular were discussed at length: Open Urbanism in an Age of Fear and Trauma can we create urban environments that are considered a place of safety in a nation with high crime rates and great concerns about public safety. The hope is that this is only a phase, and once some of the root causes are dealt with, it will be possible to make the connections and fulfill its ambition of an open urban environment. This, therefore, is a strategy for extreme conditions.

In spite of this, the urban atmosphere of the place itself has become a key part of its success. The workers who come to serve the families that have bought condominiums, or to work in the shops and restaurants, use the street spaces as social places, just as do the middle and upper class whites who come to the restaurants. This is new.

With the prevailing fear-driven mindset resulting in increasingly fortified and isolated urban places, the streets of Melrose Arch themselves help us understand, more importantly, this makes it possible to have active façades on the streets. There is also on-street parking which further animates the space. The cumulative effect creates an space that is part of the urban in the sense of promoting urbanity and civility. People are in the same “room” as many other people — they can enjoy the company of strangers and feel part of a larger community. Although much of this is due to the nature of uses, it could not exist without this quality of place.

The streets are animated. Side-walks are wide enough for cafés and landscaping. The design of the streets encourages cars to behave in a civil manner as they move through the space at slow speeds. In the discussion, there was some concern about specific aspects of the design and cross section. For example, is the diagonal pattern disruptive or effective? Are arcades appropriate for a commercial street? Does the landscape in the median on the Boulevard create a barrier in the center which compromises the urbanity of the space? The photographs in the presentation were taken shortly after the complex opened. It will be important to document the success and failure of various parts of it as the development matures and as additional phases are completed. And most importantly, subsequent phases should be conceived as part of a united overall concept that integrates the phases.

First, the development program established important conditions to stimulate diversity. Development lots are relatively small, which results in each block having several buildings. In addition, several different architects were selected to work on the project, ensuring urbanism rather than large scale architecture. The architects have different approaches and work with various architectural vocabularies. Therefore, by its very nature, the development program has created a framework for diversity and individual expression for the parts.

Secondly, strong urban codes were developed to establish the continuities and harmonies that create urban space. Ratios of solid to void, articulation for the first and second floors, criteria for window patterns on upper floors, cross sections, key landmark locations, scale and rhythm of facade articulation, and definition of entries were described verbally and graphically.

Thirdly, there was an interactive process. The architects were invited to working sessions in which they developed designs for individual buildings, testing the codes in both plan and study models. By interacting with each other, within the framework established by the design codes, they were to create urban space.

The quality of individual buildings vary in the built development. In the discussion, some respondents felt that the more exuberant buildings in key locations disrupted the continuity of the space, while others felt that it was just the right amount of vitality and energy. Where the buildings violated basic urban principles such as the amount of shop front on street façades or continuity of street character, there was more consensus on the quality of the result. It is as if the common ground (or least most solid ground) for the uncertain fields of current architectural thought is urbanism!

Therefore, the Council found this to be an encouraging and powerful development. It faced the difficult question of security and managed to convince investors that it would be possible to create such a place. And it provides us with a way of understanding of those key qualities of urbanism that can be an integral part of many different architectural vocabularies.
Prospect: Project Evaluation
By Mark Sofield

New urbanism, at its best, can accommodate a broader range of living patterns than other suburban development models. It is also quite successful at promoting that capacity. The success and high profile of the new urbanism was a key factor in Prospect’s acceptance by Longmont, the municipality that contains it. More importantly, the weight of experience and knowledge behind the new urbanism was critical to Prospect’s design.

In its smaller moments, new urbanism seems little more than a marketing scheme, albeit an effective one. It has sold itself so well that its founders’ utopian aims are now often overshadowed by its developers’ pecuniary ones. The originally broad and inclusive concept has been narrowed to a nostalgic, easily marketed image of a time that never even existed. In Prospect, the weight of early homebuyers’ expectations for the homogenous, quasi-historic building styles of so many other TNDs nearly collapsed the whole enterprise.

The Plan
The charrette that produced Prospect’s land plan was an unusually fertile one, so much so that the ultimate design had to be synthesized from three complete, and completely viable, alternatives. The plan is as intelligently composed as it is experientially rich. I am continually impressed by its subtlety, and I work in apprehension of not designing up to its full potential.

A number of awkward instances in the plan result from a limiting over-attention to market considerations. For me, the most problematic one is the requirement that similar building types face each other across public streets or parks. The plan’s adherence to this precept has led, ironically, to the dilution of the urban form, especially at some key four-way intersections. Prospect is also frustratingly insular. Of its five vehicular entrances, only one could be made to continue an existing street. We are alienated from the subdivisions that surround us, and I wish there were more opportunities for connection.

The Regulations
Prospect’s Urban Regulations — the documents that control the size, shape, use and position of the buildings that fill out the plan — are as clear and comprehensive a set of instructions as one could hope for. Likewise, the covenants that set out the official relationship between the commercial and civic aspects of this venture are a model of efficient but comprehensive legal structure. They are also the underpinnings of what will eventually be an efficient and comprehensive community.

The Architectural Regulations are an ongoing problem. Already much revised, they still fail to convey the full breadth of the building types we seek to promote. While these regulations are an unavoidable legal necessity, we may never be able to completely control such a physical, material undertaking through written prescriptions.

The Buildings
The best aspect of the architecture in Prospect is its diversity. This follows more from our desire to accommodate a range of tastes, living patterns and incomes than from a desire for novelty. The architectural variety endows the public spaces and expands the usefulness of the private ones. The dwellings and workplaces are tailored to their users in a way that no other speculative subdivision I am aware of attempts. The strongest designs synthesize local building forms, modern construction technologies and tectonic theory, and the emerging sensibility of the place itself.

The multiformity comes at the expense of coherence. I have more than once been accused — by residents as well as distant critics — of destroying the urban fabric of the project and the clarity of the plan. Our least successful buildings, often by non-local architects, are unfortunately also some of our highest profile ones. As Prospect progresses I hope to get better at integrating the streetscape without suppressing the individuation that is so important to our idea of community.

The Town
Ultimately, a lot of what’s wrong with Prospect is also what’s right about it, and this paradox gives the neighborhood its particular energy and flavor. Other projects seek to displease as few potential buyers as possible. We try instead to please those home and business owners who are more interested in choice and character than in conformity. The consistency of our diversity is one of our key attributes. It is also the most difficult one to convey in photographs. To really understand Prospect it is necessary to come here. A walk through the neighborhood will show that the range of building types, forms, materials and colors do often coalesce into pleasing and coherent urban compositions.
Project Name: Prospect
Location: Longmont, Colorado
Classification: TND
Designer: Duany Plater-Zyberk
Consultants: Douglas Duany, Sandy Brown; Landscape
Architects: Many
Developer: Kiki Wallace
Design Date: January 1994
Construction Begun: November 1996
Status: Phase Three under construction
Site Area: 80 acres
Net Site Area: 77 acres

Project Construction Cost: $10 million infrastructure only; $145 million including building construction
Cost to Date: $5 million infrastructure only; $67.5 million including building construction

Residential: 700 units
Detached Houses (including accessory units): 297
Attached Houses: 123
Apartments: 198
Live/Work Units: 82

Initial Residential Price Range: $125,000-$275,000

Current Residential Price Range: $190,000-$700,000

Commercial: Current: 15,000 sq. ft., projected: 150,000 sq. ft.
Office: 75,000 sq. ft.
Retail: 75,000 sq. ft.

Commercial Price Range: $125-$250 per sq. ft.

Public & Civic Program: Skating rink, pool, community building, playground

ALL IMAGES IN THIS SECTION COURTESY MARK SOFIELD AND KIKI WALLACE.
Prospect represents a noble experiment in the on-
go ing testing of new urbanism. Many of the prin-
ciples of the Charter are in evidence here and are
accomplished with a sure and steady hand. The neigh-
borhood structure, variety of streets, building types
and uses, and a general regard for the civic realm are all vis-
able. The experiment at Prospect undertakes is about
what effect style has upon the character of the neighbor-
hood. There are three questions that this experiment
tries to answer:
1. Is there one style that is more appropriate to our time
and this particular location?
2. Do we live in certain way today that calls for a new
expression of style?
3. How do we allow freedom of individual expression
and still create community?

Until recently, the word "modern" used to refer
genetically to the contemporaneous; all art is modern at the
time it is made. Léon Krier makes this distinction
between "modern" and "modernism." Modernism is a
style that represents a certain philosophy and has certain
style characteristics, ironically including some motifs that
might be completed more successfully. The first

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style characteristics, ironically including some motifs that
would not be house people. Therefore both the material and
the construction were not oriented to the way anyone
would have to live let alone how we would live today (very few
windows, if any, for example). Secondly, these buildings
were agglomerated into piles on precipitous pitches, and
were never meant to be laid out as individual buildings on
a street within a neighborhood. The use of barns and silos
in a neighborhood are also mixed metaphors — what
one can renovate a barn and live in it, is questionable.

In the beginning of Prospect, some "authentic"
craftsmen houses were moved in. These houses are
considered by the developer to be okay (not like the Disney
"Disneyland" houses, because they are not compromised;
they are really from the 1920s). But if there is truly a
way that we live today, a way we must live today to be
called "real" then how can anyone justify living in
these houses? My suspicion is that the people who live
in these houses, and the ones who live in reproductions
of these houses, and the people who live in the "modernist"
modernist houses all live pretty much the same way. They
all have internet connections, drive cars, don't have
outhouses, have a wide variety of furniture and family
structure, and come from all political and philosophic
strains. They all eat, sleep, have sex and are conversant
with all of the latest gadgets. No hoop skirts or carriages
are in evidence at the traditional houses, because they
have completely modern people living in them doing
completely modern activities. So it turns out that there
is not a particular style that represents how we live today,
and neither modernist nor traditionalist architecture
has moral superiority on this subject. What it all comes
down to in this experiment is choice, and what we like
as individuals, neighbors and communities.

Andrés Duany said that he was unable to find any
textural vernacular architecture in the area and that all of
the architecture was imported from elsewhere. The
Historical Commission lists 46 historical styles that oc-
cur in Colorado, not including native architecture, and
several of these are considered vernacular versions of
historical styles. As is true with many places in the West
(inded in the world), styles of architecture are imported
from elsewhere and then adapted to the local conditions.
There existed dozens of accomplished architects, espe-
cially during the 1920s, who were able to adapt styles from
each of the Charters and keep the vernacular alive and climate
of Colorado. These "other modernists" could have served
as a rich source for further development.

In any case, the makers of Prospect decided to look for
French inspiration in the 1920s, and applied to their site
Did they look at nuclear power plants? Or silicon chip
fabrication centers? Or shopping malls? No, surprisingly
they looked to the simple, temporary and somewhat
charming buildings that were built 130 years ago at min-
ing sites, as well as agricultural buildings such as barns
and silos. The "mine-shaft modern" vernacular has a
striking look about it, but fails to be a serious answer to
modernity on several counts. First, the structures that
occurred at mining sites were meant to shelter many
people, not to house people. Therefore both the material and
construction were not oriented to the way anyone
would have to live, let alone how we would live today (very few
windows, if any, for example). Secondly, these structures
were agglomerated into piles on precipitous pitches, and
were never meant to be laid out as individual buildings on
a street within a neighborhood. The use of barns and silos
in a neighborhood are also mixed metaphors — what
one can renovate a barn and live in it, is questionable.

The second approach would be to strictly regulate
the form and allow all manner of treatment. The overall
mass of the buildings would act in support of the street,
with careful definition of height, roof pitch, porches,
fences and any other element that helps to define the
street as a place. The treatment, consisting of materials
and colors, could be uncoded and be allowed to vary ac-
cording to the individual homeowner's desires. This is
not so different from what Prospect is evolving into,
like building types face each other. In this example,
traditional building styles could be on both sides of one
street, and they could change at the next block down or
over to all modernist styles. This is similar to what was
done in many of the best developments of the 1920s,
such as Coral Gables. The effect would be to strengthen
the imagery through an immersive environment. There
would be both harmonies of styles by street, and variety
within the neighborhood. This is what is implied by
the Charter principle of buildings being seamlessly linked
to their surroundings.

The third approach is to strictly regulate the
treatment, but allow the form to be free. This does not
guarantee as strong a street space, but it can create a
certain degree of harmony from the relatively narrow
range of materials and colors. The Weissenhofsiedlung
project used this approach by keeping everything white
and allowing the forms and configurations of windows
to vary. On a strong site plan this could be a worthy ap-
proach. It would create another type of street where the
creative joys wrought by the many might be discovered
over a longer period of time.

Unfortunately, Prospect illustrates the problem
of changing horses (or houses) in midstream. There
is little in the way of remaining regulations for either
form or treatment, resulting in a cacophony of styles.
As good as any single building is (there are instances
of both styles) altogether they don't yet add up to a town.

Of course, in all approaches the ultimate savior is land-
scape. Eventually the street trees will grow up and take
the curse off of any of the styles. In this way, urbanism
always trumps architecture.

Andrés duany defines urbanism as the contribution of
the many over time — and perhaps the tenuous jumble
that is Prospect will coalesce over time and meld into
something that will be seen historically as a place that
both exists nowhere else and could exist at no other time.
It will then interestingly become a period piece instead
of timeless, but it will have a definite character, one that
reflects its founder, town architect and the pioneers
who remained in the wagon train for the whole wild ride.
The Prospect Vernacular and Charter Principles

By Randolph Stewart

First I would like to qualify a few things. I am not an expert in new urbanism; however, I have lived in traditional urban neighborhoods in Virginia, Georgia, Florida, and now South Carolina, providing me with a rich living awareness of the urban experience. I have never visited Prospect, nor do I know Code and Architectural Guidelines. I do not know several important facts about Prospect such as: what the existing percentage mix is in the variety of styles for the homes built there; how many traditional vs. contemporary homes have been built within the last year, what the composition is of the ARB, and what style homes are found in surrounding neighborhoods. I trust the reader will judge this critique keeping in mind that it is written from an "interested" and for me any misstatements concerning Prospect.

When I first viewed the material and presentation provided by Kiki Wallace, the developer, at the CNU Charleston seminar, I thought to myself — have I been as: what the existing percentage mix is in the variety of streets and squares that should be created at the onset for market or developer concerns in regards to architectural style. The Charter states streets and squares "...should be seamlessly linked to their surroundings and that the key here and the contradiction of Prospect is the word "collection" ... not the word individual. The size, scale, proportion, product mix and site are the same for both the "traditional" and the "Prospect Vernacular." The earlier forms of traditional architectural style have become compromised and an extreme mix of style and color can now be found. Who were the losers, the new urbanists and the original buyers who perceived a neighborhood that would look one way and began seeing it turned into something totally different? Had they known, would they have built their homes in Prospect? What does it do for appraised values and the Charter as we strive to improve on TND's quality of life and chances of success. 

The Prospect Vernacular homes are not, in my opinion, sufficiently focused on the sidewalks and streets. The porch size used in traditional style homes was reduced and forgotten in many of the "Prospect Vernacular" homes. Many of these homes are small, small urban dwelling industrial in nature. Certain forms are contrived and do not follow function. The size of the windows on the street facade was minimized, leading to a feeling of "stray away" instead of "welcome." It is as if one were saying, "How much can we make the houses? There is a wide color palette available with the natural tones from the mountain ranges and sunset reflections. The intensity of some of the colors, however, seems wrong, although interesting, make it impossible to blend with other homes that exist in Prospect. The eccentric variety of roof forms adds to the confusion. As one walks down the sidewalks, an element of harmony should be evoked, pleasant and understandable. Having permitted the extremes, the sense of time and space that came before was ignored and can no longer be placed in proper context. The woven mosaic that was intended went awry. Now it seems as if Prospect, even though presumably successful, is on parade, so people will come through the neighborhood, as if a circus came to town. 

The Charter states that individual architectural projects should be seamlessly linked to their surroundings and that this issue transcends style. As the "Prospect Contemporary Vernacular" began to appear, it too met all requirements of the regulating plan ... and also established a genre that I feel, and the developer has set to admit, should have been apparent from the onset. Viewed separately this vernacular has appeal and merit, but not in context with other styles of architecture as found in Prospect. The "Prospect Vernacular" shows elements that create sense of time and place as a contemporary Colorado mining town. This provides a seam and links Prospect with its surroundings. One must make development decisions predictable. Extreme changes in architectural style cause uncertainty. New urbanist communities, either new, renewed or infill, must weave a fabric that is continuous and unbroken. Individuality is encouraged, but not at the expense of what the people who came before envisioned and were led to believe. Dynamics with evolving styles, details and trends are healthy; however, the original intent must be pure and not diluted. 

As stated in New Urban News, "When a block is constructed, it looks like a collection of many individual buildings... Looks like a lot of different things." 

The key here and the contradiction of Prospect is the word "collection" ... not the word individual. The size, scale, proportion, product mix and site are the same for both the "traditional" and the "Prospect Vernacular." The earlier forms of traditional architectural style have become compromised and an extreme mix of style and color can now be found. Who were the losers, the new urbanists and the original buyers who perceived a neighborhood that would look one way and began seeing it turned into something totally different? Had they known, would they have built their homes in Prospect? What does it do for appraised values and the Charter as we strive to improve on TND's quality of life and chances of success. 

EPA smart growth principles foster distinctive attractive communities with a strong sense of place. Prospect confuses that sense by attempting to blend extremes. Could a new urbanist community exist exclusively of "The Prospect Vernacular" become successful? Yes, I feel would one love to participate. Does a fractured architectural style and palette offer the opportunity for failure for the TND! I believe so and would not like to participate. Does a TND with the same monochromatic, mundane architectural styling from the beginning to end provide a sense of time and place? I do not believe so. As design professionals we walk a fine line between market demands and creating an environment that provides the sense that it evolved thru time. This creates the sense of place.
Three views of Los Alamos redevelopment.

View of Arboleda neighborhood development.

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’ 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 documented in over 100 completed projects. Their work 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.

Streets and Buildings

In the work of the new urbanism, we start with the premise that buildings and the space between (streets and squares) must be a balanced ensemble of pavement, streetscapes, green and building walls. In the three projects we are presenting, we are looking at this fundamental relationship at the level of the Neighborhood, the District and the Corridor.

Neighborhood: Arboleda – King City, Calif.

Arboleda, a new 120-acre neighborhood on the edge of King City, is a farming community of 10,000 in Monterey County, California. The existing town is a square-mile grid plan, with four main existing neighborhoods aligned with a main street, bound together by schools where they overlap. Development in the 1950s – 60s ignored the traditional grid pattern and created edges that were catedarized by building col-de-sacs. The rears of houses “mooned” the agricultural greenbelt, with fences displaying a blank face to the open space view. Part of our task was to heal this seam.

There is a Spanish term, “ensanche,” which means to create an addition that ends up completely transforming the existing situation for the better. To do this required a careful study of existing conditions and examination of precedents for street types and blocks from regional examples, such as Pacific Grove, Monterey and Carmel. We were able to document a full catalogue of existing street types appropriate for the new neighborhood: commercial street with diagonal parking, commercial street with parallel parking, parkway, street, edge street, and lane. These streets are, first and foremost, places. Their calibration of width, configuration, materials and definition by building types is what gives a neighborhood its unique character. It is important to get the streets right, because while buildings may change over time, streets are forever.

As in the existing neighborhoods of King City, we used the school to bind the two halves of the neighborhood. A parkway to the south of the project acts as a mediating element for the existing clipped edge and allows for that edge to be opened to new neighborhood over time. A neighborhood center along the main corridor that leads to Main Street offers a wide “rhoad” (with mixed-use buildings around a green) to catch as much activity and passing traffic as possible. The building types around this civic green are neighborhood center — two to three stories, with retail or office on the first floor and residential above.

There are two zones of Neighborhood General. Neighborhood General I is contiguous to Neighborhood Center and has closer setbacks, fences, and more buildings that touch — courtyard buildings, townhouses and duplexes. Neighborhood General II has greater setbacks, no fences, and is mostly institutional house forms. Neighborhood Edge is the least dense, with substantial setbacks, larger lots, no curbs, no sidewalk and fronts facing the agricultural greenbelt. The details of the streets in all cases reflect the particular density and character of each transect zone.

The code for Arboleda consists of one page for each transect zone, with both technical and illustrative diagrams provided for ease of administration. In addition, we have provided by request of the developer, who will build the majority of buildings, an architectural code that describes building types (courtyard, live/work, townhouse, etc.) and regional style (Monterey, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Craftsman). It is unusual in our work to code style, but it is done in the interest of improving production housing and creating a strong link to the existing neighborhoods by means of a common treatment, as well as the form of the building types and network of streets.

Finally it is worth noting again the example this project provides in its treatment of the edge. Léon Krier states that for a town, a center is a necessity; an edge is a luxury. A clear edge to nature provides not only a five-minute walk from edge to center, but a three-hour walk in nature from the edge. The turning of a stable edge to the greenbelt is a rare occurrence in California, but it is necessary to create a general understanding of what makes a town different from conventional sprawl development.

District: Los Alamos, N.M.

Los Alamos is perhaps one of the ugliest towns in America, with one of the most beautiful settings in the world. It is composed of a number of mesas separated by steep canyons that give it the appearance of Greek islands in plan. Because of topography, conventional sprawl is not possible. However, the downtown imploded through standard development practices of the past 50 years. Los Alamos began as a closed “secret” city in the 1940s to develop the Manhattan Project. As befits a military town, it was laid out on a strict Roman castrum grid that created a fine grain of blocks and streets. It contained one of the first pedestrian shopping centers, which worked very well, as everything was within a five-minute walk. Over time a new shopping center was built a 10-minute walk away. This single act doomed the downtown as a functioning unit and created two districts that required the constant use of vehicles for all daily activities.

The diagnostic drawings, consisting mostly of figure/fields of road networks, blocks and buildings, show very clearly the dysfunctional nature of this town. Over time the fine grid of streets became superblocks, with quarter-mile intersections over a mile length of corridors. This automatically creates traffic that goes 55 mph (posted 35 mph) as well as a discouraging pedestrian environment. Another drawing shows that 70 percent of the downtown is asphalt — roads and parking lots. Fully one-third of the traffic in the downtown is cars going from one parking lot to the next. The amount of parking space keeps land value low and discourages density and mixed-use.

The present day confusion is created by use-based codes and streets that only respond to the care and feeding of automobiles. Our strategy for remaking the downtown focused on changing the area through the integration of street types and building types that would work together to create unique and memorable places. The Regulating Plan created four main districts, based on intensity of use and the five-minute walking distance. There is a Civic District, Main Street District,
**Los Alamos**

**Project:** Los Alamos Downtown Master Plan  
**Location:** Los Alamos, New Mexico  
**Classification:** Infill Master Plan  
**Designer:** Moule and Polyzoides  
**Consultants:** White Mountain Survey, Lloyd & Tryk, Thomas Leatherwood, RCL, Inc.  
**Developer:** Los Alamos Main Street Futures Committee, Sid Singer, Los Alamos County  
**Design Date:** Summer 2001  
**Status:** Plan adopted Fall 2002, Downtown Development code to be adopted Spring 2003  
**Site Area:** 200 acres  
**Project Cost:** N/A  
**Residential:** 400 – 800 units  
**Commercial:**  
- Office: 500,000 – 600,000 sq. ft.  
- Retail: 200,000 – 400,000 sq. ft.  
**Public & Civic Program:** Performing arts center, community center, outdoor amphitheater, “park once” structures, Science City center, government center, parks

**Arboleda**

**Project:** Arboleda Neighborhood  
**Location:** King City, California  
**Classification:** TND  
**Designer:** Moule & Polyzoides  
**Consultants:** Crawford, Multari & Clark  
**Developer:** Creekbridge Homes  
**Design Date:** Spring 2002  
**Status:** Approval expected Spring 2003  
**Site Area:** 120 acres  
**Project Cost:** N/A  
**Residential:**  
- Houses: 400  
- Rowhouses: 100  
- Apartments: 150  
- Live Work: 150  
**Commercial:**  
- Office: 50,000 sq. ft.  
- Retail: 50,000 sq. ft.  
**Public & Civic Program:** Elementary school, post office, community center, parks

ALL IMAGES IN THIS SECTION COURTESY MOULE & POLYZOIDES, ARCHITECTS AND URBANISTS.
Stone Avenue

Project: Stone Avenue Corridor Design
Location: Tucson, Arizona
Classification: Infill
Designer: Moule & Polyzoides
Consultants: TND Engineering, Parsons Brinkerhoff
Client: City of Tucson
Design Date: Fall 2001
Status: Under review
Site Area: 2 linear miles
Residential: Townhouse, courtyard, live work (total unknown)
Commercial: Unknown
Public & Civic Program: Addition of University main street

From page 18

POLYZOIDES AND DENNIS/Streets and Buildings

Corridor: Stone Avenue, Tucson, Ariz.

This small one and a half day exercise looked at a very common situation of trying to fix a corridor that had become dangerous and depressing. The existing conditions consisted of Speedway, a 60,000-car-per-day thoroughfare that connected west to the highway, and Stone Avenue, a north/south corridor carrying 20,000 cars per day that went to and from downtown Tucson. This intersection represents an inflection in the development of Tucson from the more historic neighborhood to conventional development. Surrounding the intersection is a park, a community college (with no public face), and various motels and run-down retail. This replaces is common throughout the West, where the continuous square mile grid creates corridors with unlimited commercial development. This results in buildings that are one-third vibrant, one-third tired, and one-third really crummy. Both the nature of the road and the building types along it prevent its changing to other, more appropriate and needed uses, such as higher density housing.

Initially, we were asked to take a “band-aid” approach to the intersection, a 100-foot swath of angry asphalt. We quickly realized no amount of painted walkways or public art would help — the intersection itself needed to be radically changed into a place. We again looked at precedents for road and places, and as this part of the West has little but roads, we were forced to import examples. The first idea was a Dupont Circle (Washington, D.C.)-type of intersection. This creates a place, but would not be defined enough by the surrounding two-to-three-story buildings (as well as being hampered by the excessive level of traffic) to be a usable pedestrian space.

The second example was the New England Green. This would create shaped green spaces off of the main flow of traffic. The negative feature of this solution is the gap created by the corridors. The final idea was also borrowed from Washington, D.C. This consisted of an underpass of two lanes each way acting as an unimpeded thoroughfare along Speedway to serve the highway traffic. The cost of this is comparable to overpasses that the city engineers are building at other intersections, with much less disruption to the fabric of surrounding neighborhoods.

The most important advantage to this solution is that it turns Stone Avenue into more of a local street that can be cranked at a 45-degree angle to create a “university mainstreet” where before there was only a vacant intersection. This provides terminates vistas from all roads and a new front door for the community college. New building types that can be appropriate to higher-density housing create a mediating edge from the corridors to the neighborhoods. Motion is balanced by buildings in a particular pattern.

Corridors in the West (and elsewhere) often have the appearance of continual blight. We must effect a total transformation of these corridors, from the centerline of the pavement to deep within the neighborhood, to create real estate and civic positives instead of the wasteland that presently exists. This can only be done through placemaking, not engineering.
At the connection with the old boundary, M&P inserted a parkway aimed at knitting the new and old pieces of the town together, one that "introduced a mediating space to soften the horrid condition of backs." By creating distance with the parkway, the unglamorous wall of backs would recede and their offending character would be softened.

Within neighborhoods, M&P developed a palette of building types and of appropriate materials and styles. These included the Monterey and Spanish Colonial Revival styles, and prescriptions on how these styles might go together in the different building types within the various neighborhoods.

Think Henry David Thoreau.

Arboleda engages neither the bad points nor the good points of the cul-de-sac. Rather, Arboleda distances itself from these neighborhoods. Despite Stief's contention that "it is terribly important for this street (the parkway) that you see separating the two places to be understood as a connecting street, not a separating street, and that has to do entirely with the design of the street itself," it must be stated that a lane is a better connector than a parkway, as M&P themselves pointed out in their fortys through Arboleda Drive and other lanes at the beginning of their presentation. The notion of a parkway as greater convenience to cars through widened vistas. The widened vista of the parkway distances the two sides from one another and makes the line of back walls, and their ugliness, more prominent.

Rather than a parkway, one might consider a lane in this location, with the parkway, if it's desirable, inserted a block away. M&P's obvious skill with lanes could have produced an exquisitely intricate meander, erasing all memory of boundary. In addition, a lane's acceptance and embrace of individuality and peculiarity might shed light on the more positive virtues of the cul-de-sac neighborhoods.

Bill and Stef talked enthusiastically about including the school in the design, citing the successes elsewhere in King City where schools cemented double neighborhoods. However, the school is out of scale with the Arboleda plan, despite Bill's contention that it "...is a smaller school than it looks." Compared to the intimacy of the surrounding neighborhoods designed by M&P, it is difficult to imagine how it could possibly cement any double neighborhoods. Instead it seems to disrupt neighborhoods, driving a large wedge between them.

Editor's note: The project manager writes, "This layout was an illustration to show the school board their scheme could fit on the site, although we intended to revise the school layout after the overall plan was approved (which is why the final version of the regulating plan does not show a school layout)."

Much of the incompatibility of the school with the project probably could not be helped. Schools today carry enormous space requirements, even for "small" schools, and M&P did an admirable job in keeping the project probably could not be helped. Schools today carry enormous space requirements, even for "small" schools, and M&P did an admirable job in keeping the school building to one side to allow the potential for a precinct with the adjacent neighborhood, and in grouping the fields so they might be used as open space by residents when the children aren't using them. However, the total assemblage taken together comes off as monotonic and insensitive, as confirmed in several of the reviewers' comments. The space to structure ratio is far lower than other areas of the design, and the playing fields bear no resemblance to recognizable urban space, let alone a town green. Despite valiant efforts, the complex comes off looking pretty much like a modern-day school with prescribed playing fields.

Schools today offer a real challenge to the new urban town planner, more formidable than that presented by traffic engineering and fire operations. Schools are traffic engineering/guiding, fire and safety, environmental, accessibility and socially conscious issues all rolled into one, with each of those interest groups hotly in pursuit of any who might challenge their domains. In addition, besides being based on the same myopic visions of each of those specialties, school requirements carry high moral imperatives. If one questions any of their precepts, parents and the politically conscious leap in from all quarters to mark the designer with inescapable label of anti-education, or worse, anti-children.

To date there are but fledging efforts to challenge school requirements or seek alternatives. These come mostly from preservationists, who see historic school...
**Style Discussion**

With Andrés Duany and Dan Solomon

Dan Solomon: I understood this as a conversation — not as an address. So I don’t have an address prepared, but I will enter the conversation.

I can’t dissociate the experience of before and the experience of getting here. I left my office in the very complex and politically-fraught neighborhood of South Market in San Francisco, went through the generally uninteresting plane rides — to Philadelphia, and then to Charlotte and here — and traversed a set of experiences and landscapes — rooms and places and non-places — that were, I thought, what the movement of the new urbanism was to address. And then I came here and ascended the steps of the Daughters of the Confederacy, to a beautiful room where we have a breakfast of red herring, in a conversation that seems to me largely delusional.

I joined with colleagues 10 years ago because the limits of my architectural practice did not address the set of rooms and landscapes and experiences that I moved through, getting here. And to be circumscribed in this beautiful room and concerned about its relevance or potential relevance to that world, seems a very, very circumscribed and self-circumscribing view for us new urbanists who banded together to deal with the journey — not with the destination. I’m really interested in that journey, and only to the degree that that room and the traditions it represents serves what that journey has been, is this room interesting.

Otherwise, it’s uninteresting and irrelevant to a much larger set of concerns, which, I think, have liberated me, personally, from a very circumscribed architectural practice to one that is really grappling with something much larger.

I think the attempt to repeat the 20th century is so fundamentally doomed that it marginalizes those who subscribe to it. We looked yesterday at a project that I think is extraordinary — well, extraordinary, but not unique — and that is Paul Mertan’s Melrose Arch, which seems to me in every way a healthy project, and one that joins a whole series of other things around the world, which I’ll like to cite, and to which I think the conversation about style becomes irrelevant. It seems to me that every conceivable nuance of a cogent statement on this subject has been said and repeated in the place where we should simply move on, because the examples are powerful ones — Melrose Arch is certainly one. Addison Circle and the other Post Properties properties of Paxton and Leggat and Town Center outside Dallas — are moving experiences to me in the same way, as is the new fabric of Vancouver.

I think that all of these places show that the deficiencies of the modern move- and the higher morality of urbanism. That’s why we all make sense. Although I do disagree with Dan in one major way: It is not that we are irrelevant to modernity because we’re concerned about traditional architecture, but that modernist architecture is, unfortunately, irrelevant to our mission. It does not serve our needs in certain ways.

I have begun a list of what I believe architecture needs to become. It can serve as a kind of proto charter for New Urban Architecture. [Editor’s note: This was further developed since this Charleston Council, and appears in the column to the right.]

First, architecture needs to work off an open system of construction. By that I mean that it needs to be made by something that you can find in a lumberyard, brickyard or Home Depot. There were two projects presented yesterday that did that, while Paul Mertan’s did not. Everything about the buildings in Paul’s project seemed to require special fabrication. There are very few areas of the United States where you can get special fabrication well done at a decent cost. Now, as it happens in this country, classicism is an open system. You can get everything you need — the windows, doors, doorknobs, claddings, gutters, columns — off the shelf from multiple manufacturers. And they interlock visually and tectonically. I would personally love it if modernist architecture was to gradually become available as standard stock.

Dan Solomon: And here I join with colleagues 10 years ago, because I think we’re concerned about traditional architecture and the inevitable, unalterable human impulses it generates in us.

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Dan Solomon: And here I join with colleagues 10 years ago, because I think we’re concerned about traditional architecture and the inevitable, unalterable human impulses it generates in us.
In response to an age ripe with ecological and social crises, many would argue that both the urban and the natural are decisively affected by the pattern of human dwelling, for a design profession hankering by a conceptual construct consumed by the aesthetic and the transient, we set forth those principles.

It is essential that the discipline of architecture take the transformativeot and not be subjected to artistic and intellectual fashions.

It is essential that the discipline of architecture engages the discipline of engineering and sociocultural studies.

It is essential that the discipline of architecture intersects with the imperatives of economics and marketing but not be consumed by them.

It is essential that the language of architecture be in continual evolution but not in the thrill of the moment.

It is essential that certain self-designated critics, those who do not possess the craft and experience of building, should not be granted undue influence on the reputation of architecture and architects.

It is essential that architecture take an unemotional voice in the press to explain and defend their work themselves. Architects should affect this demand by canceling subscriptions to those publications that do not comply.

It is essential that the design schools accept the responsibility of teaching a body of knowledge, and not just to instill creative and artistic disciplines. Students should be exposed to the general vernacular and not just to the very few geniuses that each generation produces. Educators, architects and critics do not provide a model for general education.

It is essential that students be exposed to the realities of design practice, not excluding the application of diverse mediations, as there has been a more effective and realistic method of education. Most of the fine buildings of all time were the result of one person’s or a few people’s genius.

It is essential that architectural expression simulate the culture and climate of its region, and the urban context of the building, no less than the style.

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It is essential that architecture should be practiced as a collective endeavor and not as an academic or individual undertaking.

It is essential that the architectural styles be considered to have equal standing and judge it, we must be aware if it was

It is essential to state that aesthetic review boards must retain the authority to require architects to subject their work to the scrutiny of the building code, and judge it, we must be aware if it was

It is essential that the techniques of graphic depiction may not be native to a place, architecture does not mean that it should be constructed.

It is essential to understand that it is a humilation for architects to accept the standard of design for the opinion of an absent man.

It is essential that the design schools accept the star system wherein architects are consumed by the creation of architectural styles and not invested in the character of their cities.

It is essential that architectural expression is the responsibility of the architect.

It is essential to understand that it is a humiliation for architects to accept the standard of design for the opinion of an absent man.

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It is essential that the design schools accept the star system wherein architects are consumed by the creation of architectural styles and not invested in the character of their cities.

It is essential that architects endeavor to publish their work in popular periodicals. How else will the people learn.

It is essential that the techniques of mass production affect the process of design, but not necessarily that it determine the form of the building.

It is essential that the techniques of graphic depiction, whether actual or virtual, not determine the design of the buildings. The capabilities of computer-aided design must remain as an instrument for the liberation of labor and not a determinant of architecture because it is a process rather than a product.

It is essential to understand that there is a confluence between creativity, which we accept as a necessary element of design, and originality, which is a false ideal that when pursued at all costs degrades to architecture. The worship of originality continues to be a utilitarian exercise, and the architect’s life’s work to unaremos obedience.

It is essential that, because so much of the craft of building has been lost, architects allocate a portion of their time to research and recovery. It is essential to understand that there is a confluence between creativity, which we accept as a necessary element of design, and originality, which is a false ideal that when pursued at all costs degrades to architecture. The worship of originality continues to be a utilitarian exercise, and the architect’s life’s work to unaremos obedience.

It is essential that buildings at the very least incorporate a passive environmentalism in siting, materials and the performance of mechanical elements.

It is essential that the analysis of current every day building not result in the conclusion that the people are automatically prone to kitsch, is to be done so as to give them only what they already know. It is essential that architectural history present role models not just the form-givers but the masters of architecture. But this would mean that Frank, Mies, Behrens, Stimm, and Miesdahl would be well known to architects in Valkèi, who would have a new and different response to the creative environment.

It is essential that architects collaborate with landscape architects in the process of design. Landscape architects in turn must respond to buildings rather than impose their autonomous value judgments. The process of design and its consequences are not material for an installation piece.

It is essential that architects, like attorneys, dedicate a portion of their time without compensation to helping the quality of design available to those who do not otherwise have access to professional designs.

It is essential that architects should participate in the political arena so that those who affect the built world at the largest scale may have their advice. It is improbable to have practical decisions made by those without an adequate design education.

It is essential that architects work to support each other against those who, through subtle argument, undermine architecture’s potential as a social and ecological instrument for the good. Time and effort spent weakening and degrading architecture benefits no one.

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Style
By Daniel Solomon

The combined effects of the denial of style (architecture is truth) and the harsh realities of media culture have precluded the possibility of a stable canon. The most metoric architectural careers are based upon a particular form of nilminess; that is, the ability to produce work that simultaneously is news and truth. The combination of both phenomena is essential. For the publicans and exhibi-
tion opportunities that careers depend upon, the news part is crucial, but by itself insufficient; it has to be news about social and political issues that are of the moment. The means that the social and technological impera-
tives of the age have to change all the time. Of course, not all architects are adept at creating new imperatives as the occasion demands, and an important function that architectural imperatives have to come to extrinsic sources farther and farther afield — linguistics, post-structuralism, airplane design software, feminist literary criticism, global consumerism and so on. Soon architectural discourse will require its own channel, like C-Span, where tenure candidates and others whose livelihood is involved can keep abreast of fast-breaking events in the realm of zeitgeist. To be fair, it must be said that there is resistance to all this within the modernist establishment. Some of the world's most gifted contemporary architects claim that if the original canons of modernism were as true and stable as they claimed to be. Richard Meier's relentless excellence assumes that the formal language of Le Corbusier is an inexhaustible and sufficient resource of its denial to be what it is. It just talk to some of the subcontractors for Meier's Getty Museum about how hard and demanding it was to build, about how much every detail cost, and then make some claims about the technological imperatives it is based upon. The refinement of Meier's architecture is anything but the automatic by-product of the technology of the times.

Since the development of mainstream modernism, there have been two fiercely held ideas about style: First, that it doesn't exist; second, that it is inexorably linked to time. Both of these ideas have been crippling to the ability of architects to respond stylistically to the demands of place, which is in fact specifically what the most creative architects do. This view of diversity causes most peddaged architects to think of much of that potential source of patronage as hope-
fully philistine and kitsch, and it causes significant segments of society to run as far and fast from peddaged architects as it possibly can.

It is possible to accept the existence of style in a way that it is not in fact a phe-

nomenon related to time. I think it was no less Diana Vreeland, the legendary editor of Vogue and Four Minutes, who made the distinction between style and fashion, claiming that style, unlike fash-

tion, has a timeless component to it, and the truly stylish are frequently somewhat indifferent to fashion. Style in fact can be all sorts of things. It can be related to place, as in the buildings of Charleson, related to time, as in Art Deco, or it can be personological like Frank Gehry's style or Picasso's.

In the 19th century and the first third of the 20th century, the architectural world's concept of style was a bit more like Diana Vreeland's and less like the Zeitgeist ideologies of today's academy. One sees this phenomenon clearly in Northern California. From the late 1890's until the end of the 1920's, the public institutions of Northern California were built for the most part by a small group immensely gifted and superbly well-trained architects, educated at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. For the whole of their incredible prolific careers, this little group that included Bernard Maybeck, John Galen Howard, Willis Fisk, Arthur Brown and Julia Morgan built a world that was in urbanistic terms a very satisfactory place. They built city fabric, public monu-
ments, rural retreats, grand campus plans, and retail streets of great vitality, and they did it all without any theory of style (they were too busy for theories), but with virtuoso skill, unabashed eclecticism and a complete absence of Zeitgeist hang-ups and ideological proscriptions. Julia Morgan had no problem at all, leaping from the from Renaissance Florence as a source for the Fairmont Hotel on top of Nob Hill in San Fran-
cisco, to rustic timber vernacular for the Ahwahnee in Yosemite. It was exactly this eclectic skill that was considered so out of date after WWII that she was denied all further opportunity to build.

Unlike Gropius and his generations of progeny, Julia Morgan's contemporaries did not pretend that style did not exist, or that it was a bad word denoting a bad thing like mamstrust. The Gropius dogma had effects not unlike those of the Cultural Rev-
olution in China, another instance of crass pieties run amok. Architects systematically unlearned how to do architecture. For 40 years there has hardly been an architect

The Case for Traditional Architecture and Urbanism

By Michael Lykoudis, AIA

Architecture is the art of building shelter and the essential ingredi-
ents of the physical fabric of com-

munities. Traditional architectural form comes from nature and are represented in the many regions of the world through the rustic, vernacular and classical ways of building. Place has much to do with the character of architecture. Climate, culture, geography and time have much to do with the image or character. Similarly the knowledge of place, which is in fact specifically what the most creative architects do.

Most traditional architectural form has its origins in two bodies of knowledge: tectonics (the idealization and representa-
tion of the physical fabric of con-
munities), and urbanism (the idealization and represen-
tation of the public and private aspects of life). More simply put, is how we build and how we live together. The idea is essential to make and understand the ex-
tricable link between urban design (which includes the patterns of circulation, the proximities of civic, commercial and pri-

vate life, formal hierarchies of public and private space) and architecture (which is the confluence of urbanism and tectonics).

The validity of the traditional city of today rests on its polycentric organiza-
tion, pedestrian scale and integration of multiple uses. These criteria are a response to the environmental, socio-economic and political issues that have been raised as sprawl endangers more than our aesthetic sensibilities. With respect to architec-
ture, many believe that the construction industry is one of the largest contributors to global warming. The extraordinarily poor quality of construc-
tion throughout the world in the post-war period has led to an enormous hidden deficit when it comes time to renovate or replace obsolete crumbling buildings.

The process of architectural design unfortunately is still being considered as a personal project or as perhaps one personal "style" or the "style" of a period. One can know many styles but that still does not allow for broader principles to be extracted and applied to new problems. The emphasis on style limits our perceptions on how knowledge

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There are three interdependent and incorporeal typological levels for establish-
ing environmentally sustainable criteria for building architecture: urban, architec-
tural and tectonic. (I would exclude those structures that may be built for temporary entertainment value or specific utilitarian uses). What is offered here is a starting point. It is understood that the problem

See LYKOADIS, next page
Remarks on Style
By Milton Grenfell

Let us agree, at the outset, that style is inevitable. The word means something by which we are moved, a principle, an influence, a force, or a quality, something that holds together a pair of opposites — in this case, the paradox of predestination and free will. I believe that to the point, are there some style decision that one has a right to make? Is there a style that involves choice? How does an architect, or any artist, consciously decide in questions of style? With most decisions in life there are good ones, bad ones, and the whole range of degrees between these extremes. I submit that design decisions about style can be judged to have been good or bad or something in between because they are the result of the principles and practice of new urbanism. But alas, we discover in the CNU Charter that: “Individual architectural projects should be measured against the principles and practices of new urbanism.” This issue transcends style.* I believe this statement is both true and false. It is true that for two starving people, the issue of obtaining food transcends matters of culinary style. But false, in that once beyond the desperate state of starvation, whether one eats pizza or French haute cuisine is no longer transcended, but rather a decision of central importance to that moment. I would argue that 10 years ago when new urbanists were desperate and starved for the right ideas and techniques necessary to recreate good urbanism, questions of style were transcended. But 10 years later, when new urbanism is secure and intellectually well fed, I believe it is false that issues of style can continue to be transcended. I believe it is central to this moment that questions of style should not be addressed project by project, building by building. Back to the Charter. Just three paragraphs down, the authors of this seminal document, we find that “Streets, and squares should be safe, comfortable and interesting to the pedestrian.” The question I believe before us now is, are there styles more appropriate for a particular new urbanism project than others, and more than to the point, are there some style decisions which might be inappropriate for our time? I say “less good” for new urbanism in general, due to evidence that these decisions render places less “comfortable and interesting.” I would contend that the style of architecture marked by its radical rejection of all historical styles, namely Modernism, is a style inadequately marked by creating “comfortable and interesting” places because it is deficient in three aspects which are crucial to such places, namely: 1) intelligibility, 2) complexity within order, 3) connectivity.

First intelligibility. There are three ways of understanding buildings intelligible has, until the modern movement, been inseparable from architecture. The totemic devices painted and carved into the wooden posts of even the most primitive shelter proclaimed the owner’s lineage. His powers in battle or the hunt. Before typology or tectonics, when we lived in mere holes in the earth, mankind adorned the walls of his caves with frescoes that depicted us. Indeed, delight, that third proud of Viracocha’s timeless Triad — Commodity, Firmness and Delight — is inseparable from ornament. If we are ornament where we live, where we are buried and even our own bodies, man might well be described as the ornamenting animal.* Such behavior is peculiarly inextricable and human.

Finally, that term beloved of architect, tectonics, which might be defined as a building’s expression of the craft of building. This expression often operates on the level of actuality and metaphor. For instance, a cornice projection actually shelters a building’s facade and occupants from sun and rain, but also creates a metaphor for shelter. Whereas the swelling, or entasis, of a column shaft is purely a metaphorical representation of the column’s load bearing. Nevertheless, such metaphors speak of truths about building that transcended mere fact.

The second crucial deficiency is modernism’s lack of complexity within order. Recent Russian neurological research on perception suggests that we are hard-wired to seek out ordered complexity. Deprived of it, children become autistic, and adults prone to enmi and violence. Modernism’s reduction of architecture to a mere assembly of industrial components has left us with buildings of numbing simplicity. A doorway in I. M. Pei’s East Wing of the National Gallery is simply a rectangular hole in a limestone veneer wall. In contrast, just the door casing of John Russell Pope’s West Wing changes plane and shape a dozen times or so in the space of 1 foot. It is complex organized to sculpt light for specific aesthetic effects all within the ordered language of high classicism.

See GRENCELL, page 39

*”The Mind of the Maker,” by the English metaphysician David Brain comments on the issue of style. The word ‘style’ is used here in the way that is familiar to some of you, say rather like the paradox of predestination and free will, I would suggest that this reflection of this theological in the earthly is no more coincidence. This parallel between divine and human creativity is the subject of another much longer article, but for those interested, I would simply recommend the excellent book on the subject, “The Mind of the Maker,” by the English mystery writer and sometime theologian, Duns Scotus.

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LYKOUDIS/Architecture and Urbanism from previous page

1. Urban Typologies: Streets, Squares and Blocks – Durability of the city fabric is essential to a sustainable environment and building communities. The traditional city’s pedestrian environment, with its proximity to life’s basic necessities, allowed people to intermingle with commercial and civic centers, thus ensuring that all are included in the life of the city (for example, the young and the old who do not have access to transportation). The networks of streets allow citizens access to the spaces of 1 foot. It is complexity organized to sculpt light for specific aesthetic effects all within the ordered language of high classicism.

2. Architectural Typologies: Public and Private Buildings – The organization and spatial qualities of a building should be able to accept successive adaptive uses. Using a typological design process as opposed to a functionalist or stylistic approach can ensure flexibility to accommodate diverse future occupancies. In this manner, both embodied and expended energy are conserved as fewer resources are used to rehabilitate building instead of demolition and replacement construction. Fabulous buildings should be as durable as public buildings. Building with the typological approach facilitates a shared understanding of the physical environment by the citizens of a city while at the same time offering many possibilities with respect to architectural character and maintaining an open creative process.

Tectonic Typologies: Walls, Openings and Roofs — Traditional architecture uses the most durable materials and methods in the most vulnerable places of a building, but modernists and methodologists appropriate to each aspects of construction. In wet climates, pitched roofs keep water and snow off. Trabeated and arcuated construction has proven to be durable for generations and will continue to be the most cost-effective building method. By using durable materials and methods appropriate to each aspects of construction. In wet climates, pitched roofs keep water and snow off. Trabeated and arcuated construction has proven to be durable for generations and will continue to be the most cost-effective building method.

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See GRENCELL, page 39.

All images in this section by the Town Paper.

Julie Colter remaining in his style during the style directed at the Charleston Market Hall.
The Great Style Debate

Over the spring and summer of 2002, an online discussion surrounded the themes broached at the Charleston Council. On the TradArch listserv, an exchange titled “The Great Style Debate” began with Steve Mouzon’s declaration on style, and ranged from the particulars of individual buildings to abstractions of broad principles. While the participants held differing views on the merits of specific styles, there was overall agreement that architectural style is indeed highly relevant to urbanism. There was, however, a declaration on style, and ranged from the par
ticularties of individual buildings to abstractions of broad principles. While the participants held differing views on the merits of specific styles, there was overall agreement that architectural style is indeed highly relevant to urbanism.

Laurence Aurbach
Editor, Great Style Debate

From: Steve Mouzon
Date: April 25, 2002

Here are a few follow-up thoughts on the architectural style discussion at the Charleston Council Sunday: The core question is, “Should architecture matter to an urbanist?” The debate, as anyone may imagine from similar debates on this listserv, ranged from the notion that style is totally irrelevant to the idea that it is momentous. My one-liner response is: “Dare anyone to try to make the case that Charleston would be as wonderful if all of the buildings were done by architects of the Missian school?”

My (hopefully) more thoughtful response is: Let’s take two items out of the discussion at the outset. Virtu, I do not believe in the primacy of any single style for all places and all buildings. So this will not be an attempt to sell a particular style as a panacea. Second, I do not believe in the architecture of nostalgia. If we advocate construction of cities as architectural history museums, we become nothing more than relics ourselves.

With those two common objections to style discussions out of the way, let’s move forward. One of the most common complaints about NU projects from within our own ranks is the regrettability of the architectural quality of the buildings. I would suggest that the architecture clearly matters to a large number of people.

The proposition that the fabric of the city is immaterial to the urbanism is about as regrettable a quality of the architecture. So the urbanism is caused by the fact that the movement is an imperialistic state. The fact that they themselves stand up and make a case for the notion of a new urbanism is caused by the fact that the movement is an imperialistic state.

The modernist architects have left a very significant contribution to the built environment. They said, “Yes, but we had no choice at the time, we were commissioned to do it for our patrons. If we had had a choice or opportunity, we would have built more of what we had in the past — vernacular-inspired architecture — and maybe we would have evolved in perfection and economy.” Ironically, modern buildings are now seen as a symbol of prosperity and national pride. The courtyard compound’s resurrection in China is not easily sold as a viable concept from which to work. This building configuration was for another period of history, we have been told!

To Steve: I believe that if modern architecture deals with the appropriate meeting of the building with the ground to help outline the premise of the public and private spaces, a contribution could not be sold easily as a public language (especially traditional ones) when they try to make the case that Charleston would be as wonderful if all of the buildings were done by architects of the Missian school!

I should add that I certainly favor the evolutionary approach to architectural languages that traditional architecture usually followed for millennia. I do believe, however, that it is possible to develop a new language in a relatively short period of time that relies heavily on some of the aesthetic devices of modernism. The key to the success of this new “vernacular modernism” will be recognition of the legions of patterns in the four realms of architecture mentioned above.

What standard or criteria do we use to determine that an architecture is better from that point on? One of the criteria of determination might run something like: “A building’s ability to communicate with its users is a measure of its worth.” It seems to me that to provide a more complete criteria for that building, it is not simply a question of thing like: “A building’s ability to communicate beautifully or well with its users is a measure of its worth.” To make an argument on that basis would not be sufficient. To Steve: I believe that if modern architecture deals with the appropriate meeting of the building with the ground to help outline the premise of the public and private spaces, a contribution could not be sold easily as a public language (especially traditional ones) when they try to make the case that Charleston would be as wonderful if all of the buildings were done by architects of the Missian school!

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From: Dino Marcantonio
Date: April 25, 2002

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From: Michael Franck

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From: Oscar Machado
Date: April 25, 2002

I completely disagree with this point. Cities are not diagrams. Cities must be understood as places that are about a perspec-
tive experience that can never be achieved only by creating edges. Mies’ Seagram building in New York is a prime example of a building that outlines the public and private spaces, but is a clear diagram, but it is a complete urban failure.

Modernist thought does not allow for buildings to interact with each other, and there-fore the building can not relate to the city as part of the whole. The machine aesthetic is just that, a wrapper for a function. Mies would roll in his grave to hear that his architecture is nothing more then the wrapping of the spaces and not the thing through which we fail. I ain’t Shakespeare.

As for your suggestion that a modern[ist] language might be developed if it took into account the universal, the national, the re-
gional and the local, in my humble opinion modernism’s aesthetic devices are as doomed as Esperanto. Imagine Esperanto tailored to suit national, red and it that difference will. I am compelled to ask, what is the point? What’s wrong with the languages we have? Unless of course the point is to make as complete a break with the past as possible...
admit to admiring the Seagram Building, just as I (again secretly) admire Johnson's Glass House. Some have argued that modernist buildings could be reserved for the most important edifices in the community. Those still carrying the banner for modernism seem to have forgotten that one of the most important aspects of much modernist architecture is that every building must be an idiographic expression of the architect and his or her private ideas. Designing a building that is appropriate to its site, and among other buildings, is impossible, since each modernist building is a self-contained and closed system. Modernist architecture, incapable of making a significant contribution to the historic fabric, is quite contrary to the distinction of hierarchy in new urban plans, where some streets, urban spaces and building sites are more important than others.

Since both modernism and revivialism, in part, originate from an art historical designation of stylistic categories, the results of which are not particularly desirable, then the usefulness of those categories should be in question. Removing the parentheses surrounding particular artistic and architectural periods would have significant implications for the practice of architecture. Rather than judging the merits of a particular building based on the closeness to which it approximates some preconceived ideal representation of a stylistic period, its usefulness as a precedent would be determined by how well it does certain other things. For example, is the building constructed in an engaging manner of appropriate materials, is it distinguishable from other buildings as a consequence of its programmatic content and character, does it delineate urban space, etc. Since buildings from different times do similar things (with varying degrees of success), comparison of buildings across the imagined bookends of stylistic periods is possible. Particular buildings and their unique configuration of materials can exemplify examples of things that architecture concerns itself with: structural types (types of walls, roofs, and openings), building types, urban types, types of urban spaces and modification by existing buildings, and so on.

When historical examples are understood and used this way, precedents can appropriately inform any new set of design requirements. Style becomes simply an unavoidable product of the manner in which an architect employs these types, and not a self-conscious, all-determining goal. Both new urbanists and traditional architects have embraced some of these ideas.

New urbanists have demonstrated the need to reclaim traditional examples of urban typologies (streets, blocks, and urban types) and adapted socially and environmentally appropriate examples to relevant contexts. However, some seem to confuse the example with the type, being a bit overzealous in their attempts to standardize the exact measure of these types. For every type, there are innumerable examples that differ in dimension and character as a response to a myriad of variables, ranging from client to climate. It is these unique expressions, results of actual contingencies, that have enriched the finest urban spaces and sequences and helped render cultural distinctiveness to particular places. Over time, urbanization, and adaptation to social and environmental needs, has rendered architecture a bit overzealous in its attempts to standardize the exact measure of these types. For every type, there are innumerable examples that differ in dimension and character as a response to a myriad of variables, ranging from client to climate. It is these unique expressions, results of actual contingencies, that have enriched the finest urban spaces and sequences and helped render cultural distinctiveness to particular places.

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over-articulated and disinterested in regional characteristics.

The contemporary preoccupations with style have caused both groups to neglect to some extent the methods and materials of which buildings are built: structural typologies. The lack of attention to this category has resulted in some of the most lamentable aspects of some contemporary traditional architecture. Structural typologies, as Richard Eichenbaum has remarked, "emerge from traditional constructional techniques and constitute the basic vocabulary of forms that comprise building traditions. When one speaks of architectural details, stylistic and decorative elements and embellishments, etc., it is important to remember that these invariably have a constructional or symbolic origin." When architects and new urbanists indiscriminately apply or require these motifs, the effect is often kitsch.

Without some consensus on the subject of style and some effort to distinguish themselves in theory and practice from modernism and revivalism, traditional architects and new urbanists could restrict the capacity of their movement to influence anything but the most superficial aspects of architectural appearance. Eckhard Yost, a "structured" architecture could suffer the same fate it did in the first half of the 20th century, and being intellectually indefensible, could contribute an ever dwindling percentage of the built world. Possibly, it could be completely supplanted by another form of historical relativism, an architecturally regional architecture. Regional distinctions in architecture would continue to evaporate and distinctions among types of buildings would be increasingly nonexistent. Alternatively, the percentage of revivalist veneer architecture (aided by an industrial complex providing products that make possible any style, anywhere, anytime) might continue to rise. Either way, both scenarios would continue to contribute to the erosion of any semblance to tradition of the crafting and constructing of buildings, any real distinction of place and subsequently any possibility of real local or regional culture.

From: Steven Semes
Date: April 29, 2002

In reply to Michael Mesko: I'm not sure I understand your proposed architecture beyond style based primarily on "structural types." Are you suggesting something like Christopher Alexander's Pattern language? The problem with borrowing elements from vernacular building independent of place or period and regardless of ornament etc., is useful, but in practice seems to result in a kind of architectural Esperanto.

My (limited) knowledge of the history of the issue leads me to conclude that architects have for at least the last two centuries tried to sidestep style, or invent new styles, or avoid style, and have not succeeded. Style keeps establishing itself in spite of our attempts to disimit it. As a card-carrying revivalist, I see no alternative to creating a new architecture out of what we can understand of historical and vernacular architecture.

If we are diligent in trying to understand why things were made the way they were and apply elements and forms with sympathy for their rationally and origins, I think some modicum of success is possible.

I like what Sir John Soane said. We need to understand not only what the architects of the past did, but what they would have done. If I am adding to a historical (or "period") building, I try to think what the original architect might have done and how to return to make the addition sympathetic. Another way of putting it is to try to read the DNA that produced the building and let the building grow according to its own rules and identify for the neighborhood what it did as well as a new building. The style of a work grows out of defining the rules of growth that apply to that place and building task. These rules would include not only structural elements but the ornamental, proportional and decorative aspects.

Why can't the buildings that occupy an NU town plan grow in the same way out of streets and squares? It seems to me that the best NU communities do this. Comments welcome.

From: John Massengale
Date: May 8, 2002

To Michael Mesko:

It is difficult to reply to your post because A) it is long and make no good points, and B) when it comes to new urbanism it is clearly an outsider's view, thereby also requiring a lot of discussion. I hope you have something interesting to say coming to CNU X in Miami to get a wider view.

Some quick notes:

"Lack of consensus regarding the new urban debate on style makes the traditional architectural and urbanism movement less defensible and less influential than it might otherwise be." Springfield.

One can not deal with all the various consequences the CNU deals with if the only arrows in your quiver are classicism and traditionalism. Notre Dame's and the New School for Traditional Architecture, I think, have the more specialized positions, as good as they hope

ally are, still automatically write off a very large portion of the country, particularly those responsible for building and making places. They even work off a significant percentage of the original six founders of the CNU.

Private offices can work with that, because they can be selective in a way the CNU can not, needing only to appeal to enough clients to do good work and make a living. The CNU is more like a politician who needs majorities. It is architecture that is the most easily grasped for the mediocrity of their architecture, not NU strategy.

Eighty percent of America has been built since World War II, most of it by people who Instantly smell out academics and idealists and simply ignore them. You may be right, and they wrong, but if you want them to respect your ideas, you have to be more accommodating. Many of your potential clients, as well as their potential buyers, simply will not agree with you.

It is no knock on university professors of classical architecture to say, I am sure they will agree that they could not build the practice if it was with over 200 cities and towns designed behind them. Everyone has their goals, and theirs has never to work with Toll Brothers or the Hawaiian planners. Since 2002 we are indeed a pluralist country, and any organization which aims to have the broadest possible effect on the way America develops at this point in time must have pluralist positions.

At the last Council meeting new urbanists tried to discuss architectural style, detail and construction and didn't succeed very well. My take on why comes down to two points: The CNU founders tacitly or otherwise agreed not to discuss issues such as traditionalism versus modernism because it was divisive and/or not in the best interests of the new urban developments. My argument for traditionalism have not been as well debated in public and need more development for our current situation. There are outstanding publications like The Classics, but there is no contemporary equivalent of the New Urban Charter, which is essentially a public policy book.

I agree completely with you that we now need to get all the voices into the debate. One of the best voices at the Council was Michael Lykoudis's. His points, although pragmatically based, were very different than those that had been made previously. In a later discussion, the speaker reflected the differing demands of where and how they work.

Not too long ago, the New York Times had a story about the advisers to Bush's advisers. These were people like Myron Magnet, editor of the conservative City Journal (who has recently published work by Frank Lohman McGregor and Robert Adam), and various Harvard government professors. Ultimately, Myron is responsible for this idea. Many architects have significantly popularized them before selling them to the public, and it usually takes something like that to get a majority of the public vote. As presented by the Harvard professors, the idea might get 10 percent, but through this trickle-down process of adviser to adviser to Bush, the idea gets majority acceptance.

You wrote: "The new urbanist debate regarding style suggests that strong differences in opinion exist that echo these two approaches among some practitioners. "

There are many more positions than those of the card-carrying revivalist, I see no alternative to oversimplifying, however, a major difference is between those who code for style and those who code by region and typology. Celebration is an example of one of the few DUF towns of the second, although there are exceptions. "Charleston" is not a style, but a regional typology. In Charleston itself, it was done in many styles and sizes of level and complexity.

But the latter part of your statement makes it clear that you've never studied new urban codes. The criteria you discuss have little or nothing to do with the criteria used by new urban codes. The first concern of the UDA codes for Celebration is precisely the streetscape and its shaping. To get private developers of Florida to do what they did is a major accomplishment.

Historically, many American and European cities such as Williamsburg, Siena, and Paris have had much more restrictive codes than most new urban developments have.

It seems strange for a traditionalist to take the position that in the work to that tradition of the Greek Revival would be limiting. Greek Thompson never found it so, although every third-rate modernist would.

From: John Massengale
Date: May 8, 2002

I, John, I think that you and Michael have very good points, as do the preceding posts on the topic! What I find the most disturbing among new urbanists is not their refusal to look into traditional architecture primarily, but their rejection of architecture as an integral part of urban design task. To apply architecture as a secondary ingredient, either as final imagery or labeling, or as a casual circumstance of the environment or choice of architects, etc., is an attitude which, I agree with Mesko, ultimately weakens the whole NU strategy.

NU projects have so far mostly been critized for the mediocrity of their architecture, not for the mediocrity of their urbanism: I think that what has to pass into the NU ranks is the necessary organic complexity of architecture and urbanism. Despite what new urbanists often say, it is architecture that is the most easily grasped and experienced factor of urbanism, rather than urbanists to do good work and make a living. The CNU is more like a politician who needs majorities. It is architecture that is the most easily grasped for the mediocrity of their architecture, not NU strategy.

NF projects have so far mostly been critized for the mediocrity of their architecture, not for the mediocrity of their urbanism: I think that what has to pass into the NU ranks is the necessary organic complexity of architecture and urbanism. Despite what new urbanists often say, it is architecture that is the most easily grasped and experienced factor of urbanism, rather than urbanists to do good work and make a living. The CNU is more like a politician who needs majorities. It is architecture that is the most easily grasped for the mediocrity of their architecture, not NU strategy.

From: Lucien Steil
Date: May 08, 2002

Locien, on the whole, you are quite persuasive. The question in my mind is how to move not only the debate but the quality of the NU towns of the second, all urban projects ahead. And thereby the quality of the urbanism.

Many CNU members, including Board Members like Liz Pater-Zyberk and Stefanas

From: John Massengale
Date: May 08, 2002

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Polyzoa, would agree wholeheartedly about the importance of design. This was a founding principle of the CNU, but the struggle to get good architecture into the architecture of the most difficult sides of new urbanism.

After one of the recent congresses, I went to visit six NU projects in three days with Rob Steuteville, the editor of the New Urban News. At the third project, he said, “You know this sometimes gets really depressing. When I started the New Urban News eight years ago, I thought we’d be a lot farther along than we are now. On a scale of one to ten, I can’t give this more than a two.”

At the fourth project, the next day, he said, “New urbanists think that they’ve been an urban tourist to the Cape. I remember a long, serious debate about chimneys, load-bearing construction and honesty. The question was this: A brick chimney disappears into the house under the roof, did the brick have to continue all the way to the foundation, or was it acceptable to substitute load-bearing concrete block?

Within a few years, DPZ’s town architect for Kentlands was designing his own house at Kentlands with a gas fireplace vented by a little button on the side of the house. In between had been many discussions about architects and developers who would accept, what could be built for $85 a lawn, and what the market demanded.

Nobody is more critical of the architecture of Kentlands than John and Andrés, but to make new urbanism succeed on a national scale, they had to accept many compromises. Which is not to say that they didn’t fight for better quality every step of the way, or learn how to do it better the next time.

What I find the most disturbing among new urbanists is their refusal to look into tradition as an architectural primary, but their absolute rejection of architecture as an integral part of a urban design task.

So let’s move the debate to the next level. What, specifically, should have been done better? How do we do better in the future, working with the limitations of the American development and regulatory systems as they exist today? And don’t forget that over 1,000 of the 3,500 members of the CNU don’t care as much about design as you do.

One answer, obviously, is programs like the ICAS AIBD classes. Another is the CNU’s Hope VI program. Another is the work going on at Notre Dame, the University of Miami and Viseu. But where do we go from here?

“NU projects have so far mostly been criticized for the mediocrity of their architecture, not for the mediocrity of their urbanism. I think that what has to pass into the NU ranks is the necessary organic complicity of architecture and urbanism.”

This is very abstract. What does it mean? How does one, specifically, apply it in NU projects?

A lot of my response to Mezo was not disagreeing with him. If we’re going to improve the level of conversation, we have to remind ourselves of the limitations of polemics, and try to learn how to indulge in the eloquent and the vivid, and how to perform the art of persuasion.

What do you think?

From: Oscar Machado
Sent: May 10, 2002

John asks: “Where do we go from here?” My pes -
dominant fear is that we make too much progress too fast for now. Unfortunately we have not made much prog-
ress in the past 20 years with respect to architecture. In
fact, we have succumbed to the obnoxious suburban stereotypes invading new urban territory. I agree with John’s critical assessment of his
tour of new urban projects. I have seen these projects also and the most noticeable problem they have in the implementation of architecture. When the architectural scale that new urbanism is failing, in 95 percent of the cases. This is the fault of the implementers and architects without a doubt. Amazingly, in some cases it is even the fault of the urban “master” planners that just don’t know how buildings work within the urban fabric.

In the architecture I notice the lack of understanding of scale, composition, balance, rhythm, authenticity, function, materials, site disposition, room arrangements, patterns, elements, attachments, characterstics, style. In my book I called the book to what I don’t have to teach architecture to the implementers of urban projects. The best we can do now is to set traditions. Usually the process of architecture provides the better ones.

I think it is going to take another 20 years at least, with perhaps another generation of archi-

tects, for architecture and urbanism to work in synchrony. I accept mediocre architecture (to my dismay and that of many others, I am sure) but have no tolerance for bad urbanism. The immediate solution to this problem is simple. Have both urban and architectural designers learn more about building types as they relate to the triad of constants: site disposition, configuration and function. And with more descriptive urban and architectural standards, these three critical constants that define building types can hopefully guarantee better urbanism.

The immediate solution is to teach architec-
ture in context with urbanism in architecture schools. This is for the longer haul, for we have unfortunately begun with a clean slate as a result of modernism/denial of tradition.

Then, some other day, we can debate style. From: Lucien Steil
Date: May 09, 2002

Bravo Monsieur Os-
car. I hoped you would say it!

Where do we go from there?

Architectural edu-
cation of course is a priority, and you give the call. Architectural style is not only a general fact in the academies, but it is also a quite common practice in NU. The reason is not an ignorance of the importance of architecture, but the belief that architecture is a discipline which is autonomous of the larger scale of the city. Some classicists think that a good building creates, by its excellence, its own context, and some modernists think that excellent urbanism can take any architecture. Both are fallacies! Oscar, you are very pessimistic and slightly disillusioned. My experience with first and second-hand sources is so encouraging, because the argument is so limp that there can be no lack of resistance. When learning urban architecture in context and with clearly articulated civic re-

From: Sandy Richtum
Date: May 27, 2002/Revised December 3, 2002

I am interested in a de-

sign philosophy that avoids assumptions of modern-
ism, and a major one is the separation between art and his art. This can be seen in the comparison of art and kitsch (Demetri Por-
phyris) or art/myth and symbols/signs (Roland Barthes). In one mode of creation, the architect is not concerned with the essence of a relationship, and the product has infinite interpretations (like poetry), and in the other mode one reduces interpretations to ensure that a message is communicated.

Barthes explains this difference with a great example: “If I walk in theBusque country, I may well notice in the houses an architectural unity, a common style, which leads me to acknowledge the Busque house as a definite ethnic product. ... I see only too well it was here before me, without me. ... It does not call out to me or provoke me into naming it. ... But if I am in Paris and I catch a glimpse of a natty white chalet with red tiles, dark brown half-timbering, and asymmetrical roof and a wattle-and-daub front, I feel as I were personally receiving an imperious injunction to name this object a Busque chalet. ... It is a real call the owners send out to me, and it has agreed to and has been approved by me. ...”

The making of art there can be no separation of the artist from his work; in kitsch there must be a separation on one hand, but well the design communicates its preconceived message. This distance has been written about in many other fields — literature, painting, etc. — and it is often called the distance of irony.

It seems to me the major distinction of the modern condition is a separation of the artist from his work. As I see it, modern (for the last 200-plus years) designers use the term “style” to classify rich traditions into more easily manipulated languages. The designs may be poetic, but they are not the means to an end. The designer sends out direct, clear messages about the owners, the designer or the modern condition. They are kitsch ... and I try not to think of that as a negative term since it includes so many great classicists’ work.

A traditional architect in the midst of the modern era cannot use this language. He must instead search for the richness and meaning in the place where he is designing with respect to the character of the building’s program, its users, and its context (spiritual, political, and physical). That is what I mean when I say a fresh reading of style is a reading of the perfection of form (and where nothing may be added or subtracted, so that it becomes a larger whole) works for me. That powerful definition was co-opted by modernists and romanticized by post-modernists, but it continues to be relevant if you define function for yourself. From: Steven Semes

The Great Style Debate

From: Sandy Richtum

Persian, Ottoman and Moghul ones; and also early Corbu; Islamic architecture in its many of practitioners. It are acceptable to my best traditionalist friends, disagree is in the very limited range of styles that into our written and built propositions. Where I known as Swedish Grace; and I even have use for al entity would not be better were the modernist have been celebrated and given awards, but I can Many modernist buildings in historical contexts with traditional architecture without conflict. Modernist architecture cannot coexist historical settings that do not, in fact, diminish the. The point I will debate is whether they distinction is met with blank incomprehension, and that that the proposals for Rome, i.e., since the materials is what one of the quoted speakers says about traditions here never died, but have just been in In any case, our task should be to revive the architectural heritage of mankind (much less the architectural pollination, which has happened since traditions within the architectural community that resonate with the people to the point of a living language. I consider, I would consider it my duty to learn everything possible about them so that my building or place could communicate with the people that traditional architecture is best expressed as a culture or region) in favor of heretofore-unseen exclusivity. Daniel Libeskind probably achieved an ultimate exclusivity of sorts when he proclaimed 20 years ago at a lecture I was attending that "If you even think of sitting down to try and to draw in a drawing type that someone else has, you have sold your soul..." or words to that effect. A tradition is not something held closely by a genius and their chosen initiates. A tradition by definition is a shared thing, repeated over and over and handed down from one generation to the next. To have meaning as a traditional language of architecture, it must come from the people and be of the people. Where, then, is the place of the architect? Is this incoherent? Not at all. The role of the architect is to insightfully take the needs, the hopes, the memories and the aspirations of people and express them in the place they are making. "Whenever I explain why I value them, my case is met with blank incomprehension, and that deadly, superficial stuff of the style snobs. Why? Speaking again just for myself, I hope that's not the case. We hope it's all literate enough in the history of the past hundred years that incomprehension is not our response. Nonetheless, architecture should not just speak about what I value or what you value. If we hope to do things which resonate with average citizens, then we've got to engage them. Can we expand their minds? Or are we being avoidant? We shouldn't do it with dynamite, which is what the avant-garde appears to be about all the time. A new aesthetic has arisen amongst average people for Decon and its derivatives: "It looks like the wreckage of the WTC." Why? If these styles can travel (and they have, all of them, covering half the world), why are they not acceptable styles for us? Precisely because they do travel. Styles have traveled in the past with a culture, such as the several styles inherited by the British, French and Spanish. That's legitimate, in my opinion. But to import an entire style (or language) with no ties to a local culture is about as foreign an idea as the concept of Decon. But why if we allow any style that is loved by less than perceive it as valuable.

From: Andrés Duany
Date: May 29, 2002

Most of the general arguments regarding style and tradition within the CNU have been addressed here, very insightfully in my opinion. They have been, as they say, nailed. Now allow me to personalize the issue: I have absolutely no problem discussing or incorporating the concept of style or tradition into our written and built propositions. Where I disagree is in the very limited range of styles that are acceptable to my best traditionalist friends, who also happen to be among the most skillful of practitioners. These gentlemen exclude from tradition some of my preferred styles: the Prairie school, early Modern, Islamic architecture in its many geographic manifestations; particularly the Persian, Ottoman and Moghul ones; and also the Style Moderne as well as the elastic Scandi navy, both of which are now in a period known as Swedish Grace; and I even have use for the beautiful, popular, and forgiving Barragán-Legorreta school. For me, not styles, each with its own grammar. Why are they not also considered traditions worthy of being further developed? Whenever I explain why I value them, my case is met with blank incomprehension, and that deadly, superficial stuff of the style snobs. Why? Thats speaking again just for myself, I hope that's not the case. We hope it's all literate enough in the history of the past hundred years that incomprehension is not our response. Nonetheless, architecture should not just speak about what I value or what you value. If we hope to do things which resonate with average citizens, then we've got to engage them. Can we expand their minds? Or are we being avoidant? We shouldn't do it with dynamite, which is what the avant-garde appears to be about all the time. A new aesthetic has arisen amongst average people for Decon and its derivatives: "It looks like the
My dear colleagues,

In the last few weeks I have been reading many contributions to the TradArch listserv. I have not said anything, up until now, because I have simply been enjoying the community, the joy expressed in ancient things, and ancient wisdom, the renewal of the right to be careful with buildings and to take pleasure with details of buildings. Above all, I have enjoyed seeing the way many of you talk to each other, respect each other, and are surprisingly, to talk.

However, I have been genuinely puzzled by one thing, enough for me to want to speak about it, at least mention it. So here are my thoughts.

Some of you take seriously the idea of classicism (not merely classicism in the sense of something “classic,” a different use of the word, but in the sense that is anchored in the architecture of ancient Greece and Rome, the Florentine renaissance, and the English and European styles from the 17th to the 19th century, that specifically used these details: egg and dart, Doric columns, Palladian windows, and so on) as a model for our building activities in the 21st century.

This became clear in recent TradArch discussions about classicism versus Gothic, whether Gothic could be admitted to the “canon,” and the idea that Byzantine, any way could not.

The point of paying serious attention to traditional architecture is something very much larger, it is not! All traditional architecture is something very much larger, is it not? All traditional architecture— that is, almost all the architecture built in Indonesia, Japan, Russia, Africa, Turkey, Iran, India, China— this dazzling wealth of forms, representing building, and art, and design for several millennia, is our heritage; and it is important because, regardless of its particular style, nearly all these buildings exemplify, in one way or another, a deeper structure, the presence of living structure. It is this living quality which inspires us, and which we, rightly, must consider.

That it seems to me is our common ground, our converging situation, the times of total architectural emergency, the times of total architectural crisis, the times of total architectural need to expand our scope, however.

I deeply love and understand the beauties of the classical tradition. I learnt Latin and Greek when I was 8 years old, and nurtured in the classic European tradition in England and Austria. My parents were both classical archaeologists, and I grew up with respect for all these things. But I learnt anthropological, too, and have lived all over the world, and I have joy in the paintings of aborigines in Australia, and in the starry friezes of Islamic buildings, and in the beasts of Persepolis, and the long houses of Borneo, and the mud houses of the Cameroun.

We, as the architects of the new millennium, need to broaden our scope. Otherwise the fire that exists among the people who write to this listserv might be extinguished, because other people (at least five billion of the six billion on Earth) in the larger parts of the world will pay no attention, and might resent what is implied.

That would be a tragic misunderstanding. Of course, what classical classicism is not meant to be slighting. It is meant to celebrate the reality of living structure as it has been observed, and loved, by many of us. It is meant to advocate that living structure, and the living nature of what it is, and how it must be produced, that is what ought to guide us and lead us on.

It would perhaps be helpful for us to spend a little more time discussing the idea of deep structure which create life in buildings in general.

This is positive in intent, and will hopefully broaden our base.

From: Oscar Machado
Sent: May 29, 2002

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From: Lucien Steil
Date: May 29, 2002

Steve, let me react to some of your points, as much as I agree with most of what you have said. 1) The styles Andris mentioned are not person-related styles uniquely, not even F.L. Wright and Barragan. They draw from the ambient popular culture and its historical foundations and develop an eventually personal style. 2) There are many worthwhile examples of traditional works after the twenties, even if generally we can consider Art Deco the last consistent style period. However, there are numerous local and architect-related influences into regional and neo-regional styles, and neo-vernacular and classical schools of local dimension that should not be rejected, as they offer so much more in the way of invention and true originality in a well-understood tradition.

3) Introducing (as Dinos does) the concept of “relativism” into these explorations seems to set our objectives into an excessive and largely uncritical terrain. It seems also to misinterpret the truly vicious nature of relativism: To acknowledge variety and diversity does not contradict the unity of form. The folly is to consider that beauty in its true perfection can only be achieved within a limited range of historically established styles.

4) Coming back to person-related styles and their validity within the contemporary, I would like to again mention Geoffrey Bawa, whose Sri Lanka work is perfectly adapted to...
Great Style Debate

Lucien, you have a good sense of humor. In a perverse way, I actually enjoy being asked about issues that fall unwittingly into a more subtle relativist trap.

I must ask: How can it be possible to have a discussion at all if we don’t rule out relativism? Such an exchange would amount to nothing more than a series of monologues as each of us describes life in his own universe (and that’s assuming aside the language/communication problem). To avoid relativism is not overly to restrict the terrain of the debate — au contraire, it is to establish that there is a terrain.

I do think that beauty can only be achieved within a limited range of historically established styles, though I prefer to use the term tradition instead of style. The phrase you use suggests that the existing canons are closed, and I don’t believe that’s true. However, it is unavoidable that we work within the context of a tradition, otherwise our forms simply will not be valid.

I value variety, and I even accept (in theory) that two traditions may be equal about certain aspects of beauty/sophistication of their conventions. I simply say that question is in the area of personal tastes, or cultures, or ones that for whatever reason do not develop a very sophisticated architecture, won’t have traditions with as much to offer as those which come from cultures that have made a successful concerted effort to perfect their traditions.

So the following questions remain for us, it seems to me.

1. What forms achieve their end best, in terms of the beauty/sophistication of their conventions? I simply ask the question, are all forms equally valid? Personally, I think not. Had you asked me 10 years ago to design you a door surround, I can assure you it would have been hideous by any measure. Likewise, younger generations, or ones that for whatever reason do not develop a very sophisticated architecture, won’t have traditions with as much to offer as those which come from cultures that have made a successfully concerted effort to perfect their traditions.

From: Milton Grenfell
Date: May 30, 2002

First let me say that I do “acknowledge my prejudices,” or as I would rather say, I bring to the question, are all forms equally valid? Personally, I think not. Had you asked me 10 years ago to design you a door surround, I can assure you it would have been hideous by any measure. Likewise, younger generations, or ones that for whatever reason do not develop a very sophisticated architecture, won’t have traditions with as much to offer as those which come from cultures that have made a successfully concerted effort to perfect their traditions.

Here are the questions generated by architects before us have asked, and their answers comprise the terrain upon which we work.

2. Which forms achieve their end best, considering not only the form’s innate properties, but as cultural context?

These are the questions generations of architects before us have asked, and their answers comprise the terrain upon which we work.

From: From: Milton Grenfell
Date: May 30, 2002

I’m leery of the way you put the argument (or charter of traditionalism). Nor am I framed right now. “An Architecture” and “A New Urbanity” imply that a single language can do everything, at least in a single locality. It’s one of modernism’s original sins: One style fits all. The charter should recognize that there are at least three primary dimensions of the meaning of traditional architecture: the urban to rural transect, the classical to vernacular spectrum and the great third dimension of location, which encompasses culture, environment and available building materials. There are some constants, to be sure, that do not change but are common to the human condition anywhere. These include the yearnings for architecture that delights me, that reflects me, and that puts me in harmony with my world. My suggested charter follows the format of the CNU charter in that it includes a preamble stating the problem and the framework of the solution, then breaks the guiding principles down according to degrees of scale (as opposed to three for the CNU). It also takes more concern for the community (after the Charleston Council). It is as follows: The Congress for the New Urbanism (or whatever group introduces this charter) views the pervasiveness of disposable buildings, placeless buildings, forgettable buildings and unlovable buildings as the natural end-product of any theory of architecture that is not based primarily on human beings.

A century of experimentation has shown that such architecture will never have the popular support of the majority in the population. Without widespread support, it must scream for attention at the expense of its neighbors. Without widespread support, there is no comprehensive engagement of the architecture by non-architects, condemnation it is surely a private language cated for by few and understood by even fewer. Private languages cannot evolve in a natural manner and die with their creators.

Human-based architecture, on the other hand, has always evolved with time. It embraces the variety of the human as a whole, but for what they can do for human beings. Because it engages the public at large, human-based architecture has the power to make technological advances available to all in an affordable manner, mass-produced and therefore affordable. Human-based architecture is, therefore, the only truly modern architecture.

Human-based architecture has the ability to touch be styled Modern and Neo-Classical but also the spirits of those who use it because it is able to communicate with them. It communicates through a language of architectural patterns that advance the heritage of the culture or as simple as how to find the front door. These patterns have power precisely because they are commonly-held and widely understood. They are always subtle and dignified, and the languages occur at the full range of scales. Some are universal, reflecting deep-seated human needs that do not change over time.

Vernacular languages are built up of the simplest human-based patterns and are eminently suited to meet the most basic human habitational needs. Vernacular languages have the capability of creating thoroughly sensible, very beautiful buildings and places with little or no involvement by dedicated designers. Vernacular languages include both the vernacular patterns and the higher patterns and must be employed by a skilled hand. Together, the vernacular, the classical and all gradations in between make up the entire spectrum of traditional architecture.

Traditional architectural languages have existed since the dawn of civilization, but died a slow death over the course of little more than a generation beginning about 1900. They were replaced with a series of private, elitist languages that failed miserably in a legion of ways, creating a landscape worse than what our ancestors’ worst nightmares. We believe it is not possible to revive the traditional languages, but that it is imperative to revive them now. The last generation to touch adulthood in an immensly traditional environment is now dying. The next generation visited immensly traditional places as children, but did not often live there. Each successive generation knows less and less of places created by living human-based languages. We therefore dedicate ourselves to reclaiming the traditional languages of ages, or at least the very best of them.

We assert the following principles to guide public policy, development practice, and design of the new traditional architecture:

The Universal
1. Architecture should be visually and factually in harmony with unalterable natural beings.

2. The proportions of architecture should be visually and factually in harmony with the proportions of appropriate elements and the higher patterns and must be employed.

3. The elements within architecture should also reflect the proportions of appropriate elements within the human body, such as doors proportioned to the standing human body and...
window panes proportioned to the human face.  
4. Architecture should reflect the foot/ body/head form of the human body in both massing and detail.  
5. Architecture should reflect both the bilateral symmetry of the human face and the variable symmetry of the rest of the body.  More formal buildings may reflect the more rigid symmetry of the human body standing at attention, whereas less formal buildings may reflect the countless informal or relaxed poses the human body may take.  
6. Architecture should be sensitive to human needs for the basic sensual delights associated with light, sound, temperature and tactile comfort.  

The National (or Cultural)  
7. Architecture should tell the history of the origins of the culture in which it is found.  Much of this history is very ancient, leading all the way back to antiquity.  These patterns are often shared with neighboring cultures that developed out of the same mother culture.  Ancient cultural history is read most eloquently in buildings at the classical end of the traditional spectrum.  
8. Architecture should also tell of the history that is more recent and that serves to differentiate the culture from those around it.  Recent cultural history is still found at the classical end of the traditional spectrum, but is spread further down the spectrum.  
9. Architecture should tell the story of cultural or national aspirations.  It should uphold the values the culture holds most dear and should embody the dreams that give it hope.  
10. Architecture also has the more utilitarian responsibility of telling the story of the city.  One should not have to read a sign to know whether a building is the city hall, fire station, place of worship, post office, school or private home.  There will be some regional variations, but buildings of a particular type in a particular culture at a particular time should generally be built from a very similar language of patterns.  

The Regional (or Subcultural)  
11. Available building materials should often be the most formative influence on an architectural language at a regional level.  Available materials include specially manufactured items at major retail chains, but preference should be given to locally manufactured materials of a massive nature in order to reduce dependence on heavy interstate freight.  
12. The sun should have a great regional influence on architecture.  Natural light should be incorporated into daytime building lighting.  Solar heat should be used and/or excluded in passive manners appropriate to the region.  
13. Architecture should be shaped by prevailing winds, both to admit them during seasons requiring cooling, exclude them during seasons requiring heating, and to protect from them in places where they are often violent.  
14. Architecture should be shaped by the precipitation of a region and its many effects, particularly in conjunction with extremes of temperature.  

15. Respect for all of the naturally-occurring influences above will create an architecture that is environmentally responsible, particularly if all of these influences are incorporated in such a manner as to reduce waste of energy and other natural resources.  Traditional architecture was once enormously conservative of natural resources because they were obtained with such great effort.  It is sensible to build that way now, because our current resource glut cannot last forever.  
16. Tyrannical mass-production tends to gloss over regional differences in the interest of finding a single product that can be produced an enormous number of times.  This can work to the advantage of an architect in the case of building components that truly do not need to change from region to region.  It cannot work to its advantage, however, for the building as a whole if the building has any hope of responding to regional influences.  Building crafts particular to a region should be encouraged, because they are primarily responsible for elevating the level of execution of the architecture of the entire region.  

The Local  
17. Architecture should be shaped by powerful local influences such as a mountainside, a sea shore or the shape of a peninsula.  
18. Because traditional architecture is eminently practical, it adjusts itself naturally according to its location on the transect of urban core to rural preserve.  
19. Because traditional architecture is eminently practical, it shapes itself closely according to the contours and confines of particular sites.  

20. Traditional architecture is not just responsible to its particular site, however, but to the public realm beyond.  Traditional languages of architecture have always informed individual buildings concerning their own level of vigor and their responsibilities for enclosure based on that of their neighbors and the public spaces they border upon.  

21. Traditional architecture is education.  We cannot build better than our ancestors until we learn to build as well as our ancestors.  Only then will the languages become alive again, able to advance in step with the cultures and technologies of mankind.  The first step is to create ourselves thoroughly concerning human-based architectural patterns.  The next step is to create an argument so compelling that the architectural academies begin to understand the imperativeness of our mission and begin again to teach based on these time-less principles.  We hereby commit ourselves to these noble tasks.  

Contributors  

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Tradarch Listserv  

Richard John runs an electronic mailing list from the University of Miami devoted to the discussion of the theory and practice of traditional architecture.  The list is an open forum for all topics related to this area, including the posting of images of historic buildings and photographs of list members’ own work.  It is affiliated with the New School for Traditional Architecture & Urbanism (TAU) and the International Network for Traditional Building Arts and Urbanism (INTBAU).  If you are interested in subscribing to this list please send an e-mail to Richard John at rjohn@umiami.edu.  

Pro-Urb Listserv  

The Pro-Urb listserv is a moderated discussion of new urbanism.  It is aimed at practicing professionals and has no official connection to the Congress for the New Urbanism.  Subscribe by sending a note to listserv@listserv.uga.edu with a message body reading: SUBSCRIBE PRO-URB (your first name) (your last name).  

CU Listserv  

The CNU Listserv is a free-ranging discussion of all aspects of new urbanism.  It is aimed at a general audience and has no official connection to the Congress for the New Urbanism.  Subscribe by sending a note to LISTSERV@LSV.EDU, with the words “SUBSCRIBE CNU” in the body of the message.
Over 80 percent of America has been built since World War II, and it’s not pretty. (Actually it’s unsustainable and ugly; unless we do something, it’s going to get worse.

Saving a few neighborhoods isn’t enough, and building a good house in the no-placesthat whole regions like Northern Virginia have become isn’t enough. What good is it to have an exquisitely house on a terrible street surrounded by ghettos and malls and highways? On a good neighborhood adjoining a dead downtown, so that you have to drive to City to work or shop?

At the same time, you can not build a good town or city without good buildings. Urbanism without good architecture is no better than architecture without good urbanism.

Dana Beach, the creator of the South Carolina Coastal Conservation League, often says the future will be a few pockets for billionaires — Manhattan, Charleston, Santa Fe — surrounded by Kunster’s 3,000-mile parking lot.

I don’t think it will happen quite that way, but to be as effective as possible, classicists, traditionalists, new urbanists, old urbanists, preservationists and environmentalists all have to work together.

Preservationists have to stop insisting that traditionalism ended a hundred years ago, and environmentalists have to stop passing regulations that make it impossible to build a new Manhattan, Charleston or Santa Fe.

Architects have to stop making the perfect the enemy of the good, and urbanists have to better learn how to raise more clients to the level of the good.

It’s interesting that CNU X and ICA X came only a year apart. It’s indicative of the history of the two that while both were held in New York, one attracted 12,000 architects, planners, environmentalists, activists, government employees and elected officials, and the other attracted 250 (!) architects and lovers of beauty, much like the first CNU.

That is NOT (!) a criticism of the ICA, which is a great organization that has accomplished an enormous amount in 10 years and that put on a great show.

So far, there is no polemical architecture book with the power and popularity of "The Geography of Nowhere" or "Suburban Nation." And as essential as they are, Vitruvius and Normand will never be those books. Witold Rybczynski’s books sell as well as Kunstler’s, but Wittol's Doesn't attempt to sell traditionalism the way that Kunstler promotes new urbanism. And Wittol’s book sells are the exception for traditionalists. On the whole, the traditionalists don’t try to capture the public fancy in the same way the new urbanists do. To oversimplify for the purpose of discussion, they can be compared to the knight who raises his beautiful banner over his castle on the hill and says, “Come admire my beautiful sanctuary.” Some will be blown away, but most of the population are too busy looking it out on the plains below the castle, where there's so much dust that they can't see the distant banners.

The new urbanist rushes out to engage the battle, where he or she inevitably suffers some losses. And people

said that Kentlands helped to open his eyes to what smart growth could be, and that led to his creation of the smart growth department and regulations.

The average American has very little expectation for new development — with good reason, since they say that almost every change is for the worse. When they see a better vision, they respond enthusiastically. Traditional architecture needs more examples the public can see, which is one of the weaknesses of all the house commissions: On the whole, they can not be seen. (And all their custom work doesn’t lead to much industry reform.) Leon Krier says we need “our own Bilbao,” i.e., a public building that will cause as much excitement as that of Guggenheim.

New urbanism is a personal creation than urbanism, and therefore more difficult to talk about. We talked about architecture at the third new urbanism, with promising but mixed results. It became clear during the later Council discussion that some of the consensus and advancement in new urbanism might have been most of the time up until now. Andrés agreed to work on the upcoming conference for classicists and traditionalists, and he is one of the best to open a conversation on this. Part of the conference will be a discussion on how to broaden our successes.

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Classicism, Traditionalism and Urbanism
By John Massengale

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The new urbanist rushes out to engage the battle, where he or she inevitably suffers some losses. And people

is better than 90 percent of all the towns in Florida, new or old.

These are accomplishments. All these places could be better if we better worked together.

Cooperation & Success
Classicists could learn to be more effective on the bigger stage if they studied some of the lessons of new urbanism. And new urbanism and classicism could be better if they better allied with the preservation and the environmental movements, which have numbers in the hundreds of thousands. All the readers of all the new urban books in all their printings combined don’t equal an eighth of the number of viewers who see Martha Stewart in a single appearance on the “Today” show.

The preservationists get an exposure with “This Old House” on cable and public television, and the environmentalists are the epitome of the successful grass roots movement. For the new urbanists, Guggenheim has had such a campaign: Once the first good project gets built in an area, new urbanism takes off in that area. DIZ goes through compromised processes like Kentlands to find the door to more. Seaside, which is indeed just a resort (as its critics say), led to regional plans and meetings with the governor. Which led to more regional and city plans in the state, and more than 20 large projects currently under way in Florida. The governor of Maryland has

The purpose of the EuroCouncil is three-fold:
1) To bring together the leading American new urbanists, the European traditional and new urbanists. 
2) To share the experiences and knowledge of successfully building urban projects in Europe and America. 
3) To foster the establishment of new urban projects in Europe and America.

For more information: 
http://iacouncil.tripod.com/eu-rocouncil2003/
buildings brought about the wreckers ball by school standards, and from financial watchdogs, who see taxpayer waste in the excessive cost of tearing down/rebuilding new schools when compared to the lesser cost of renovating old buildings to bring them into code compliance. These efforts are causing a closer look at the relative compactness of older schools and cataloguing the positive contributions these schools offer to the neighborhoods as ammunition to support historic preservation and tax relief.

But no one is addressing how new school standards are ruining neighborhoods, whether they ruin existing neighborhoods, or new ones. The assumptions expressed by M&P, for example, though admirable, align more with old school formats than new ones. It would be great if a school could become the heart of a neighborhood, or even the community, such that children would be within a five minute walk of the countryside, that actually, think we should make the proposal that people should be away. Andrés offered that, “Just as we’re concerned that proximity of open space. Arboleda will radically trans- forming fields to seem like parks and town squares led to the for change has formed.

with parallel parking. Perhaps one needs to approach boys at that point. These early efforts saw great success of service areas, and create intrigue.

are articulated to block long views and create spaces that are interpreting within the parameters of sprawl codes in traffic requirements. One may recall the early days of and taking a creative view on parking, buses and other even if they are joined so the internal program can act as an one, to create a streetscape of school buildings; and taking a creative view on parking, buses and other traffic requirements. One may recall the early days of TND design in which one was forced to invent clever interpretations within the parameters of sprawl codes in order to create recognizable streets and neighborhoods countrieside. “Countryside” must be seen as metaphorical countrysidel, realized in city parks and town squares.

Perhaps the program assigned to the school playing fields could become the metaphorical opening of a city park or town square, or perhaps there could be an old Nolan-type “park streets,” as described by Milton Grenfell, which could introduce open space rivulets seeping in to the development from the agricultural countryside just beyond the border. Such a link would become a memory totem of the outside world. Neither of these approaches, town squares or rivulets of open space, would take away appreciable land available to development (understandably hard-in-the-20-year political battle to get it) and either one would add significantly to the value of lands and property within.

Arboleda is a well researched and finely designed project that achieves genuine empathy with its context and responds well to the patterns of use and settlement of the surrounding area. M&P identified marvelous inspirational examples, and used their lessons to great effect, especially in the design of lanes. One looks for- ward to the prospect of exploring all the sensitive detail located on the neighborhoods and discovering all the quirky anomalies found hidden in the lane-ways. It will be a project that will reward close inspection.

Successful for its smart observance and clever ap- plications of new urbanist planning principals, Arboleda turns out to also reverse the current trend with controversy for their challenge to new urbanist principals. M&P clearly focuses on solving the dilemma of connecting to such a large border of cauterized cul-de-sacs, but falls short in truly creating a handshake with its type of planning. Perhaps cul-de-sac planning is so regnant to new urbanists that M&P just couldn’t bring themselves to it, but whatever the reason, they manage to drop distance- from the school and connect to these neighborhoods. In this failing they shed light on the need for new urbanists to embrace a privacy oriented lifestyle, which is as prevalent and well liked on the American landscape as it is ignored and avoided in new urbanist practice. Rather than try to change (or blot out) every last cul-de-sac, it might be better to explore how to identify and incorporate their assets into new urbanist planning. And M&P clearly seeks to visualize their project for its subordination to the whole city of King City. Calling up the spirit of ensanche, they seek “enlarge- ment that addresses the structure of a whole place, not only the mechanical act of addition.” However, despite their conscientiousness in connecting to the existing street grid, and despite their masterful and sympathetic design of neighborhoods that reflect successful proto- types in the vicinity, M&P appears to really concentrate on how their addition, which is no small piece by comparison, might shed influence back and alter the city to which it connects. Once connected, M&P seems to leave King City behind. Though respectful to its host, Arboleda is just as self-contained as an isolated Seaside or Cravon. It does not seem dependent on King City nor poised to offer amenities to the neighbors it abuts. As identified by the reviewers’ comments, M&P clearly articulates the value of abutting neighborhoods by removing the open space that used to adjourn them. M&P’s failing in this regard sheds light on the need for new urbanists to take a more honest look at the challenge of connecting to or altering existing cities or towns, and to the challenge of this word “ensanche.”

Colored pencils (or markers in the case of M&P) need to bleed out into the surrounding community and not only soak up inspiration, but also inflect back into the whole region in their thinking. Ideally a transition should be seamless and indistinguishable, but everything around is somehow magically made better. One should never see so clear a break, the new with the old, as new urban projects so often display in their site plans (even if M&P’s area plan didn’t identify Arboleda with color, it would still stand out as distinct from anywhere around). In distilling itself from white-man ways, a Native Ameri- can parole implies, “In one’s walks through life, it is important to watch where you’re going, but also to watch where you’ve been.”

The Lasting Effect
By Robert Orr

Anyone who has tried to lose weight or get in shape knows what an ordeal it is. Fasting or unceasing repetition of the same repetitive acts is much more important than oc- curring only once a week or not at all. What you need is a regimen of friends, who can parable implores, “In one’s walks through life, it is still stand out as distinct from anything around). In this failing they shed light on the need for new urbanists to embrace a privacy oriented lifestyle, which is somehow magically made better. One should never see so clear a break, the new with the old, as new urban projects so often display in their site plans (even if M&P’s area plan didn’t identify Arboleda with color, it would still stand out as distinct from anywhere around). In distilling itself from white-man ways, a Native Ameri- can parole implies, “In one’s walks through life, it is important to watch where you’re going, but also to watch where you’ve been.”

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As urbanists, we strive to build whole places, with the quality and richness of our most beloved urban spaces, in which all the parts of the space work together to create an urban room. The system within which we work tends to tear apart our urban rooms and divide them up into separate parts as defined by separate fiefdoms — the traffic department, the arpirtor, the park board, the school board, the zoning officer, the assessor, the surveyor, the civil engineer, the "department of the underdog," the real estate agent, individual architects, the builder, and the developers.

In order to more effectively work within this system and to be able to build "whole places," we have developed a concept we call the urban assembly kit. It is a means of visualizing the separate elements that must be designed, approved, funded and built by these separate fiefdoms, and then putting them together as a kit of parts. The process begins with an understanding of the whole, and then the parts are identified and separated.

Our analyses of traditional neighborhoods and cities have helped us to develop the concept of an "assembly kit." For example, Ghent, a neighborhood in Norfolk, Va., is a complex structure with many neighborhood streets, each with its own character, a seemingly endless variety of houses with no two exactly alike, and a series of grand and elegant public spaces.

Complex though it is, Ghent, like all American neighborhoods, was built in a short period of time in a remarkably systematic way. Understand that the neighborhood consists of a series of elements, each under control of different entities, but coordinated by the way they are put together.

We think of these elements as an "Urban Assembly Kit" that can be applied to strengthen the fabric of existing neighborhoods or to create new ones. Understanding the separate parts of the neighborhood enables you to both design it and implement it. Through analysis of the individual elements, you gain a full appreciation of the interrelationships among them as well as a foundation for addressing the specific goals in appropriate, achievable ways based on the needs and concerns of the different implementers.

Let's take an overall look at the elements that make up our Urban Assembly Kit:

- A framework of streets, public open space, blocks, lots, and buildings.

  The most general element is the framework of streets and public open spaces. The overall hierarchy of streets and parks can be seen clearly when illustrated in the form of a diagrammatic perspective drawing (Figure 1). Institutions and civic buildings find their place (with dignity) in the public open spaces. For example, in Ghent, the art museum is placed at one end of the canal-like space called the Hague. A botanical garden is at the other end of the canal — and a series of churches occupies spaces along its length.

  Schools are in the middle, in public spaces.

  Within this larger framework, blocks of housing and individual streets are placed. A hierarchy exists from house to street to block to neighborhood. While the character, shape and size of these parts vary with each local condition and in response to our separate parts, the elements as elements are constants across the nation. It is that commonality of generic form and function that makes UDA's Urban Assembly Kit a valuable tool for urban design.

  The revitalization plan for the Park DuValle neighborhood in Louisville, Ky., provides an example of how this urban assembly kit is applied. The diagram on the next page (Figure 4) illustrates how this relatively simple set of parts is assembled. The result is an urban environment as complex and rich as the traditional neighborhoods from which it gains its inspiration.

As an example of how this relatively simple set of parts is assembled, the framework of streets and parks extends through all parts of the new development and connects them to adjacent neighborhoods. The geometry of the street plan was influenced by Frederick Law Olmsted, whose historic work can be found in so many streets and parks across neighborhoods throughout Louisville. As a result, a range of different street patterns exists — from small-scale neighborhood streets with a 28-foot carriage to 36-foot wide community-scale streets, to gracious parkways with landscaped parks separating the two-lane streets.

Cross Sections (Figure 4b)

A full inventory of public space can be achieved with only six or seven different cross sections. But this inventory must have elements that are relevant and correct for the specific town. Therefore, the proposals needed to be based on research of local models, and then described as a set of standards — here, a wide parkway; there, a small-scale street. For Park DuValle, we measured many of the most beloved streets and spaces in Louisivlle, which became the model for the different types of streets proposed in the plan.

Public Open Space and Civic Buildings (Figure 4c)

This framework is then augmented by public open spaces and institutions — parks, playing fields, and greens that provide dignified settings for civic buildings such as schools, churches, and other public buildings. This interconnected network of streets and public open spaces establishes the character and scale of the neighborhood.

In Park DuValle, the land was primarily publicly owned and therefore administered by various public agencies. Being able to see the area as a three-dimensional framework facilitated the process by which these agencies collaborated to turn the plan for Park DuValle into reality.

Block Patterns (Figure 4d)

The framework of streets and open space establishes the addresses for development sites. The streets define blocks for development; blocks are targeted for particular types of development — such as residential or commercial. Within those general categories, other distinctions exist: for example, some blocks may have alleys, others may be served from the street. Appropriate dimensions for blocks are also identified. Each block has its own specific criteria.

At Park DuValle, for example, we included commercial blocks, mixed-use blocks, alley-loaded residential blocks, front-loaded residential blocks, and single-sided blocks.

Commercial Blocks (Figure 4e)

Commercial blocks tend to be larger in order to accommodate the footprints of larger buildings and to provide adequate service and parking behind the buildings. In successful traditional urbanism, parking is available both in front and in the rear of buildings.

Commercial Buildings

In Park DuValle's town center, there is a mix of buildings, some single-use and some with residential over retail.

Residential Blocks (Figure 4f)

Typically, residential block sizes vary depending on the type of development they carry. In addition, block sizes should be compatible with the existing patterns in the community. At Park DuValle, residential block sizes range from 200 feet by 300 feet to 250 feet by 500 feet. The block designs include provisions, such as setbacks for buildings, to further define the character of the public spaces.

Lot Types (Figure 4g)

In our Urban Assembly Kit, residential blocks are divided into individual lots. Each block type may have...
Figure 4, including figures 4a-4k: The Urban Assembly Kit.

THE URBAN ASSEMBLY KIT

Commercial Blocks
The commercial district has a mixture of uses and building types. Mixed-use buildings with apartments over retail stores line the public space square.

A mixed-use building is placed along the formal part of the Paveley square in zones commercial and residential.

The commercial lot is dimensioned to be able to accommodate street parking in front and a large parking area in the rear. The building zone is configured to create good street frontage on both streets.

The town center contains commercial, civic, and residential uses. It is located along a major route in the intersection with the Paveley square.

Grove Sections
There are a variety of possible cross sections for the framework of streets. Each of which contains different types of traffic and carriageways. The site displays six different cross sections.

Public Open Space and Civic Buildings
The blocks are served by a framework of streets and public open space. Different designs for streets and land uses create a variety of urban spaces, each with its own character. The plan includes eight open space and public open space areas. These include parks, institutional campuses, park ways, and neighborhood parks.

Framework of Streets
The framework is established by the pattern of streets. These intersections fit into a grid and connect to the adjacent patterns of streets, public open space and blocks.

Residential Blocks
Some of the first phase residential blocks are examined in more detail.

Lot Types
Lot types include a corner lot mid-block types of varying width. The street areas are indicated in dark green and establishes the building zone, within which buildings will be placed.

Block Patterns
The urban assembly kit provides a choice of developments block types. Some are sky-facing, others front honored. Deep blocks can accommodate commercial and multifamily development, while standard to 600 feet deep blocks accommodate houses. The plan illustrates six block types.

Building Types
Each lot type can accommodate one of several building types. The corner lot could have a large single-family house, a duplex, or an apartment building illustrated. The building zone is defined within the block zone of each lot.

Architectural Styles and Pattern Book
These architectural styles are codified in a Pattern Book, which provides patterns for housing, vinden, stores and shops, garages and other special elements, materials, and color.

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six or seven different lot types. Each lot type might have any one of a number of setback or masions provisions. These provide for variety while preserving the overall aesthetic integrity of the block and the neighborhood. The illustration shows four of the options developed for Park DuValle.

Building Types (Figure 4d)

Each lot type can accommodate any one of several building types. For example, one illustration for Park DuValle depicts a small apartment building on the corner lot. However, that lot could, alternatively, be used to accommodate a two-unit corner building or a large, single-family house. The illustration also shows how duplexes and single-family houses might be deployed on a single block to help give a mixed-income character to the neighborhood.

Architectural Style (Figure 4e)

Architectural style is another important element in the drawing. On the finest characteristics of regional architectural styles and traditions ensures that the new or revitalized neighborhood can claim a place of "belonging" in its larger context. For Park DuValle, this meant creating three architectural styles for each building type. For example, the small apartment building on the corner lot that was mentioned previously was illustrated in three distinct styles: Louisville Classical, Victorian, and Arts & Crafts.

Block Types (4c & 4f)

This assembly kit of simple elements has the power and flexibility to produce a rich and complex environment. The potential for different combinations is practically limitless. Consider Park DuValle. We have three architectural styles for seven building types on seven different lot types, for seven block types that are defined by seven district types of street space. The block aerial view only begins to show the incredible breadth of possibilities within the design parameters that we have chosen for Park DuValle. But it is a testament to the ultimate functionality of the Urban Assembly Kit that it serves as a kit of parts that can be assembled in various ways to respond to local conditions.

Overall Environment (Figure 4h)

When all this relatively simple set of parts is assembled, the result is an environment as complex and rich as the traditional neighborhoods from which it gains its inspiration. Eleven hundred units of distressed public housing have been replaced by this new mixed-income neighborhood. House (Figure 6)

The "houses" in this photo are, in fact, rental units with a mix of one-third public housing, one-third moderate subsidy, and one-third market rate. Their character is reassuringly Louisville. Their diversity — and the complexity of the neighborhood character — makes these differences invisible and contributes to the overall strength and cohesiveness of the neighborhood.

Figure 5: Park DuValle.

Figure 6: An ensemble of houses in Park DuValle combines market rate, partially-subsidized and public housing.

HERRMANN/PsychoSociology

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the entire district as their home. Camp and his family apply this attitude to the neighborhood. Conversely, the attitude that the majority of Camp's workers conveyed was no different from that found at many construction sites. They lacked this "ownership connection." While they displayed individual pride in their work, the fact that it occurred in the Cotton District seemed to have little impact.

Design and Age Diversity

The Cotton District is a mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhood in which structures demonstrate a variety of architectural styles and types. Diversity takes on an added dimension because of the large student population and students' varied routines. Students' interests, routines, and levels of spontaneity can be critical in flux. A neighborhood containing a large student population will have more diversity (daily routines of its inhabitants) than a neighborhood void of such a population. In the Cotton District I found age rather than economic diversity — and the complexity of the neighborhood can claim a place of "belonging" in its larger context. For Park DuValle, this meant creating three architectural styles for each building type. For example, the small apartment building on the corner lot that was mentioned previously was illustrated in three distinct styles: Louisville Classical, Victorian, and Arts & Crafts.

The Cotton District was built with students in mind. Interior and exterior circulation patterns demonstrate this. So too do the higher than normal density levels (over 20 dwelling units per acre) and fewer square feet per individual unit. Students and young professionals gravitate to these efficient, friendly and aesthetically pleasing designs that are geared toward their lifestyle. This observation furthered the need to explore critical questions concerning behavioral attachment and design influence. Design can influence choice, but does it have the ability to affect behavior? Is the same type of pride in one's neighborhood that the Camp family demonstrates also found in the general population, and does it translate to changes in behavior?

Many students indicated that they feel and act as if their behavior impacts their own neighborhood. They view the district as a neighborhood rather than a large housing complex. I believe that this particular neighborhood carries with it a sense of pride dictated by surroundings.

It arises from the design and architecture of the district. These feelings have the power to impact behavior, and in the Cotton District they do influence behavior.

A number of well-rounded and highly successful (older) adults who also live in the Cotton District or have a second home there espoused similar views. These adults love the vitality that the students offer, but it is the quirky architectural, layout and pedestrian-conducive location that promotes the feeling that those living elsewhere in Starkville are missing out on something special.

All residents seem to agree that the "student-oriented" design and resulting age diversity make the Cotton District a truly unique "functioning neighborhood."

The Economic Generator

Camp's business will not run if his obligations and duties as a landlord cease to exist. Despite the presence of a number of privately owned structures, it is the rental units that make up the Cotton District's economic nervous system. These provide Camp's district with a constant economic generator. As with the towns of yesteryear, Camp's approach to building is market driven. Time provides stability and allows him the opportunity to finesse certain variables. Time lines are not essential to Camp. He is surrounded by his life's work. The next project will only add another dimension to the main project.

Traditional design principles extend beyond the built environment and into Camp's philosophy on growth as a whole. He has established a situation — much like pre-automotive towns — where the next closest lot is the most logical for development (for any use). This is rare. Even rarer is the type of control and patience necessary to see such an approach to growth through.

Dan realized many years ago that students, faculty and certain professionals were willing to pay a little more to live in an environment that was not only conducive to their lifestyle, but also beautiful. This approach puts his buildings in high demand, constantly generates a monthly return, and allows him to have the majority of projects paid for in seven years.

Two typically non-economic factors prove to be essential. Design influences both demand and price point, and Camp is able to foster a design advantage because of his accumulated knowledge in many building related activities. He knows how and where to be creative so as to cut overall costs. The money that is saved is devoted to design. Eventually it is returned in the form of higher payments from higher price points than those found in the surrounding market.

The "All American" Ideals of an Authoritarian

My impressions of the district as a whole are vast. The related and intrinsic elements that are often relevant to forming such impressions almost always trace their genesis to some aspect of the Camps' private life. The family is the creator and primary force behind Cotton District life. Their actions stimulate or suppress how life in the Cotton District will initially tend beyond the built environment and into Camp's philosophy on growth as a whole. He has established a situation — much like pre-automotive towns — where the next closest lot is the most logical for development (for any use). This is rare. Even rarer is the type of control and patience necessary to see such an approach to growth through.

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with a fraction of the sheer skill of the master art of our time, cinema. And finally, there is the win/loss ratio. Dan, you and I know that there are very few futures prior to modernism. Architects and builders could rely on tradition to give them a base below which quality would not drop while not preventing masterpieces. The problem with modernism is that without acknowledging tradition there is no bottom it does not reach. Too many architects, unsupplied with genius, are asked to emulate the design methods of Wright, Mies, Le Corbusier, and the few geniuses there have been. And the result has been a comprehensive, world-girdling disaster. We can't imagine, as architects, for the sake of the occasional masterpiece, tolerate such an abysmal win/loss ratio. No one could ever find that small part of the project, for the sake of a “good” building, while there is evidence that other fields don't fail at such a rate because they all build on tradition — and incidentally this does not exclude the use of new art forms and new technology.

The plea that I'm making is to create a modernist architecture, based on the tradition of modernism. Because this does not appear to be difficult any more, but rather to be the restoration of the vernacular tradition of architecture. So let's get modernism going, so that it does not perform. In the rural areas, with the metropolitan end — the concrete or asphalt sprawl — people are quite sensitive. Imagining a great-grandfather architect left loose, that would do to the consensus required for real live architecture. There's efficiency of design. There is also the attitude of the modernist architects. The genius model that is requisite with the style. When we recommend a modernist architect to one of our developer clients, it goes like this: "Please pay me a higher-than-usual fee because I can take your project, for a real long time to agonize over it, and when I bring it back to "defend" it don't try to point out that there are not enough closets-sort-of-thing, and when it busts the budget just come up with more dough because it cannot be changed."

What an agony it is for us to look at such architecture — buildings that are unbuildable, unbuildable, unbuildable. Since modernism has severed itself from the "prevision" of other fields, by the deflation of the model of...