PERMANENCE AND TEMPORALITY
BETTER URBAN LIVING THROUGH PROVISION OF NATURAL LIGHT, NATURAL VENTILATION, GREEN SPACE, AND A PLACE FOR COMMUNITY

R. David Chambers
Matched photographs, or “rephotographs,” are one or more photographs of the same subject which are made specifically to repeat an existing image. Examples are commonplace and often used to illustrate the effects of time and change, such as parents’ snapshot albums of growing children posed in front of the same familiar backdrop (the house), repeated year after year. The peculiar ability of photo pairs such as these to refer to unseen periods of time and intervening events became an important factor in the creation of the Rephotographic Survey Project.

Mark Klett, Second View: The Rephotographic Survey Project

This duality is fundamental to our understanding of photography. As an image, the photograph can be both document and picture, artifact and art, visual map and carrier of cultural meaning. Although some photographers may place their concern at one extreme or the other, all photographs are necessarily situated somewhere along the continuum between the two poles. But where a viewer “locates” any particular photograph along this continuum, that is, how he understands it, is determined by more than one photograph itself.

Paul Berger, Second View: The Rephotographic Survey Project

Whether the photographer wondered what the site would look like a century later, the question is not raised by his photograph. . . . In the century between their work and ours, natural and manmade changes had left marks on the sites.

JoAnn Verburg, Second View: The Rephotographic Survey Project

This thesis is an exercise in ideas of two realms, theoretical and practical, and an effort to mix the two to create architecture.

The theoretical thesis is exemplified in the pairings of photos seen on the bottom of each page, taken from Second View: The Rephotographic Survey Project. As the reader examines the pairs of photos changes over time can be seen in each. Typically the greatest changes are manifestations of man’s existence. I have treated this as a point of departure for the technical thesis of Permanence and Temporality. Man’s temporal existence creates permanent reminders in the permanent structure of the earth. This thesis explores the nature of permanence and temporality in materials and uses them to express the classic dichotomy of service and served.

As a practical thesis the project focuses on providing better urban living through natural light, natural ventilation, and the provisions for community and interaction with nature. A modification of Le Corbusier’s Unite d’Habitation was explored by narrowing the building to bring natural light further into the unit while widening the unit to get natural light and ventilation even to the service spaces.
my thanks and love go to all those who supported me through this process - through the three thesis projects that finally culminated in this one - through the years of school - and through the process of finally attacking and completing this document

pencil pushers:
steve hagman, muzahid ali, bruno carvallo, isabelle curnyn, rosie cuartelon, richard zubic, and lester escobal

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kit & gary putnam (surrogate)

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scott hean and lester escobal
book buddies:
gap & dedeane parents:
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

section       page
cover          i
abstract       ii
acknowledgements iii
table of contents iv
introduction   1
design         2-20
plans          2-8
elevations     9-10
sections       11-14
apartment plans 15-19
details        20
summary        21
bibliography   22
vita           23
The scheme of the design is regularized by the permanent ribs of the earth into which service spaces are carved. Then the temporal existence of man is stretched across this framework of permanent members to create a mixed use project. The lower two levels of the project are developed into retail and office space while the upper five levels are developed into two styles of apartments: single-level units and two-level 'skip-stop' units.

A central entry for the residential levels brings all residents in through a common path passing through an interior garden atrium and beside the large courtyard. On the lowest residential level at either side of the courtyard are a reading library and a recital hall. Every residential unit is provided with at least one balcony.

The courtyard is placed over the central parking so that the interior court of the residential wings continuously provides the opportunity to commune with nature with large balconies overlooking and giving residents a space of their own to plant a small garden overlooking the larger lawn below.
Design Proposal

Legend
1 - Vehicle Entry/Exit
2 - Parking
3 - Loading Dock
4 - Office Space
5 - Retail Space
6 - Retail Storage
7 - Apartment Entry
8 - Apartment Vehicle Entry/Exit
9 - Atrium
10 - Recital Hall
11 - Reading Library
12 - Courtyard
13 - Flat Studio
14 - Flat 1-Bedroom
15 - Flat 2-Bedroom
16 - Skip-Stop Bottom Entry
17 - Skip-Stop Top Entry
18 - Skip-Stop Corridor
commercial level 2 - office + retail

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legend
1 - vehicle entry/exit
2 - parking
3 - loading dock
4 - office space
5 - retail space
6 - retail storage
7 - apartment entry
8 - apartment vehicle entry/exit
9 - atrium
10 - recital hall
11 - reading library
12 - courtyard
13 - flat studio
14 - flat 1-bedroom
15 - flat 2-bedroom
16 - skip-stop bottom entry
17 - skip-stop top entry
18 - skip-stop corridor
north-south section a

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Legend
1 - Unit Entry
2 - Powder Room
3 - Living Room
4 - Dining Area
5 - Kitchen
6 - Bathroom
7 - Bedroom
8 - Closet
9 - Balcony
10 - Utility/Laundry
11 - Sitting Room
Legend
1 - Unit Entry
2 - Powder Room
3 - Living Room
4 - Dining Area
5 - Kitchen
6 - Bathroom
7 - Bedroom
8 - Closet
9 - Balcony
10 - Utility/Laundry
11 - Sitting Room
two bedroom apartment

Legend
1 - Unit Entry
2 - Powder Room
3 - Living Room
4 - Dining Area
5 - Kitchen
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7 - Bedroom
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11 - Sitting Room
Better urban living can be developed and is in fact occurring today. Balconies, natural light, natural ventilation, incorporation of elements of nature are all a part and are successful aspects of this project. The overall effect of these as driving influence for a project is something that should be included in any residential design. The notion of providing for a sense of community in a residential development is a noble ambition, I do not think architecture by itself can ever create a sense of community; however, this project exemplifies one solution for providing spaces that can enhance that opportunity and the experience of building a community with your neighbors and friends.

The tectonic thesis of permanence and temporality proved to be an important part of the expression of this project and I believe it was an integral part of the project’s success. I believe this theoretical premise provides a great deal of room for exploration and this beginning of that exploration is the true success of this thesis project.


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