The Third Realm: Suburban Identity through the Transformation of the Main Street

Alberto Rodriguez

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The Third Realm:
Suburban Identity through the Transformation of the Main Street

by

Alberto Rodriguez

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Architecture
School of Architecture and Community Design
College of The Arts
University of South Florida

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DEDICATION

To my parents and friends that have helped through the journey.
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ABSTRACT

When one researches the city, the neighborhood appears as an indispensable building block. Kevin Lynch, In The Image of a City, suggests that neighborhoods are “the basic element of the city” and the main way “most people structure their city”.1 Furthering the idea of the neighborhood as a building block of the city, Sidney Brower discusses the need for different types of neighborhoods to allow for a diverse social setting to create diversity in the city. The research put forward by Lynch and Brower shows the idea of the neighborhood as a strong concept in older cities. However, the concept of the neighborhood has become less apparent in the modern cities and should be revisited in order for the neighborhood to once again be a substantial entity in the city.

In The Great Good Place, Ray Oldenburg discusses the idea of three realms of life and the balance needed to live a fulfilling life. The first realm centers on the domestic, the second on the productive, and most significantly, the third realm centers on the social aspect.2 In modern neighborhoods, the idea and the architecture that make the social realm has been lost and must be reintroduced. The significance of reintroducing the third realm is the creation of a strong socially defined neighborhood and one that becomes a more identifiable part of the city.

With the concept of the third realm in mind, this thesis posits the introduction of a fully integral layer of social programming that responds to a specific neighborhood condition. This way of conceiving the neighborhood and building upon the existing Main Street, the third realm will serve to facilitate a greater sense of neighborhood place.

2. Oldenburg, Ray. The Great Good Place: Cafes, coffee shops, community centers, beauty parlors, general stores, bars, hangouts, and how they get you through the day. Paragon House, New York, NY.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Throughout history there have been various opinions regarding the city. Author of *The Image of a City*, Kevin Lynch, poses that the city has five main elements consisting of path, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. Lynch identifies that the district is the main element and the way “most people structure their city.”1 The idea of neighborhoods as the basic building block of the city has been presented by other researcher such as in *Good Neighborhoods*, by Sidney Brower. Brower states the “basics” for a city are varying types of neighborhoods.” Furthermore, Brower defines neighborhoods as four types based on social and physical characteristics: Center city, small town, residential partnership and retreat. For example, San Francisco, Boston and New York feature the various types of social settings, but also create a holistic city.

Having identified the neighborhood as the main structural element of the city, one must revisit the concept by looking within its context for a solution, one can remake the modern city.

First, let us explore the idea of the city by reviewing Kevin Lynch’s research. In *The Image of the City*, Lynch refers to his studies as a “visual quality of the American city by studying the mental image of that city which is held by its citizens.”2 This concept allows the research to become a study on how an individual personally perceive a city. Further, Lynch follows by stating that “We are not simply observers of this spectacle, but are ourselves a part of it, on the stage with the other participants. Most often, our perception of the city is not sustained, but rather partial, fragmentary, mixed with other concerns. Nearly every sense is in operation, and the image is the composite of them all.”3 With the perception
as a basis of Lynch’s research on the city, Lynch formulates two main research methods, interviews and observations. The methods allowed lynch to research three main cities: Boston, Los Angeles, and Jersey City. Lynch’s research identifies these components of a city:

1. Paths: Paths are the channels along which the observer customarily, occasionally, or potentially moves. They may be streets, walkways, transit lines, canals, railroads. For many people, these are the predominant elements in their image. People observe the city while moving through it, and along these paths the other environmental elements are arranged and related.

2. Edges: Edges are the linear elements not used or considered as paths by the observer. They are the boundaries between two phases, linear breaks in continuity: shores, railroad cuts, edges of development, walls...

3. Districts: Districts are the medium-to-large sections of the city, conceived of as having two-dimensional extent, which the observer mentally enters “inside of,” and which are recognizable as having some common, identifying character. Always identifiable from the inside, they are also used for exterior reference if visible from the outside. Most people structure their city to some extent in this way, with individual difference as to whether paths or district are the dominant elements. It seems to depend not only upon the individual but also the given city.
4. Nodes: Nodes are points, the strategic spots in a city into which an observer can enter, and which are the intensive foci to and from which he is traveling... Some of these concentration nodes are the focus and epitome of districts, over which their influence radiates and of which they stand as a symbol.

5. Landmarks: Landmarks another type of point-reference, but in this case the observer does not enter within them, they are external. They are usually a rather simply defined physical object: building, sign, store, or mountain...  

In particular, Lynch describes path and district as the main two elements which create “public image.” Later stating paths as the “key influence as a network” and “where major paths lacked identity... the entire city image was in difficulty,” creating the sense that the path is a major organizing factor in most cities, as far as people’s perception. The path being the main organizing factor, Lynch states that districts or neighborhoods are “the main structural” element of the city image. Moreover stating districts as “homogeneous zones...” “primary reference areas...” and “useful organizing concepts...” which allow the person to perceive the city at a smaller scale and construct a city image from the neighborhood scale. Taking San Francisco as an example, there are 13 districts which one can perceive. At the same time the districts assemble the city image, which further emphasizes the concept of neighborhoods as the structural element of the city. Therefore, even as an old concept, the idea of neighborhood should be revisited for adaptation in the modern city.

Analysis of the district or neighborhood should start researching the history and background of different typologies of neighborhoods. In *Good Neighborhoods*, Sidney
Brower gives a brief history of the creation of different neighborhood types. Brower starts by stating the norm at the time. “Most houses served as stores, offices, and workshops… Artisans lived in one-story or two-story house or shacks; typically, their workshop were in the back, there were offered for sale in the front, and the family lived upstairs.” These ideals however started to change due to overcrowding. Creating a social view of the center as “… an underground city, so sluggish is the air, so profound the obscurity. And the thousands of people live, bustle, throng in the liquid darkness, like reptiles in the marsh.”

Causing the wealthier society to move away from the grim reality that was the inner-core to the outskirts of the cities, creating new types of neighborhoods. The outer neighborhoods were not different from other past civilizations such as in Rome where the wealthy had their villas in the countryside to escape the hustle of the city life. But the main difference was that the wealthy in the United States saw suburbs as their main living location and commuted daily to the center city. Brower Identified the four main neighborhood types too foster different social climates as well as physical characteristics.

1. Center City: A part of the city that is lively and busy, with lots to see and do. It has a mix of many different people and uses, and it attracts visitors from other parts of the city and beyond.
2. Small Town: A part of the city that has the feeling of a small town, with its own institutions and meeting places. People who live here know one another and are able to recognize those who do not live there.
3. Residential Partnership: A separate residential part of the city, a place for family and home life. Residents go to other parts of the city for work, shopping, and entertainment.
4. Retreat: A part of the city where one feels removed from other people and their activities. People who live here tend to be independent and go their
Having looked at research behind city design and identifying neighborhoods as the building block of the city, there should be a better solution for the problem of the modern city. Rather than going back to the urban center or “reviving the idea of the business center,” the solution is to look at neighborhoods and how to reinstate them as the building block of the city.

In recent times neighborhoods appear to have become a closed series of boxes, leaving dwellers with no sense of relationship architecturally or socially. Losing the neighborhood may be a result of demand for rapid construction and affordable housing which creates the so called “sprawling effect.” However, the loss of the neighborhood is not only because of the economic aspect, but loss of the social aspect as well. Furthermore, within the modern neighborhood the idea and the architectural element which made the social realm have been lost. In part, the social change was due to the shifting views of the house from a work place to a refuge, reducing the need for a social life. With the social changes in the demographic of the city, Brower posed the argument that creating a good city is having various neighborhoods. Further explaining the loss of the social realm is Ray Oldenburg in *The Great Good Place* where he states “...The problem of place in America has not been resolved and life has become more jangled and fragmented. No new form of integral community has been found...” hence Oldenburg’s three realms of life. The first being the domestic; second is the productive; and most importantly, the third realm being inclusively social. Oldenburg states by creating balance in the three realms, one is “fulfilled and relaxed.” Adding to Oldenburg’s argument are examples of past civilizations such as the Greeks and the Romans where in the third realm is cherished asset (unfortunately, diminishing in favor in modern times). In addition, the physical constructs the third realm stated by Oldenburg as “The third place is a generic designation for a great variety of public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of
individuals beyond the realms of home and work.”

With such a strong historic precedence on neighborhood, the focus should be reviving the neighborhood through the third realm. Viewing the third realm as a new connective tissue that builds upon the existing construct of the third place, rather than a traditional view of the social space would create a new social realm fitting to the modern neighborhood. Additionally, by utilizing the unique qualities of an individual neighborhood creates the potential for a set of ideals that might lead to a system for strengthening the main street in each specific neighborhood ultimately leading to the creation of a unique set of rules that transforms a neighborhood to an “urban village.” These urban villages will have the third realm embedded as an essential layer of programing that can be added as called for by the neighborhoods and mold to each individual district’s unique characteristics.

The loss of the third realm within the neighborhood has amplified the problem of modern city in recent times. However, instead of looking at the center city to create the social image we look at the bulk of the city which are the other neighborhoods identified by Brower. By addressing the problem at that scale, it might lead us to a solution that reinterprets the modern city. This thesis posits the introduction of a new or more fully integral layer of social programming that responds to a specific type of neighborhood condition where the sense of “third place” exists. A neighborhood-specific will encourage the creation proper social conditions for each neighborhood. Ultimately becoming more than a project for one neighborhood, the intervention can become a prototype reshaping the sense of neighborhoods throughout modern cities.
10. Oldenburg, Ray. The Great Good Place: Cafes, coffee shops, community centers, beauty parlors, general stores, bars, hangouts, and how they get you thought the day. Paragon House, New York, NY. p.3
11. Oldenburg, Ray. The Great Good Place: Cafes, coffee shops, community centers, beauty parlors, general stores, bars, hangouts, and how they get you thought the day. Paragon House, New York, NY. p.16
CHAPTER 2: SITE SELECTION

Having the site selection process based off of the specific idea of a “generic city” is best described by Rem Koolhaas, “as the city lying in the skirts of the city centers.” ¹ Tampa, Florida is the best example of the “generic city” and location of the site. Tampa is a city rich in historic suburban neighborhoods which provides a canvas for the intervention of the third realm. Some of the historic neighborhoods are Sulfur Springs, Ybor City, Tampa Heights, Forest Hills, and Seminole Heights. With the great diversity of neighborhoods a thorough study of each neighborhood typology was required.

Sydney Brower in Good Neighborhoods breaks the neighborhood typology into social and physical analysis leading to four typologies which are: The center city, the small town, residential partnership, and retreat. ² Moreover, using Brower’s criteria of analyses, the research focuses on one particular type of neighborhood that best fits the exploration of the third realm as a social place. The research focuses on a small town typology, identifying Seminole Heights and Forest Hills as best fit for the criteria of a small town. Narrowing the site selection to the two neighborhoods led to the analysis on the historic and social foundations of the neighborhoods.

Seminole Heights’ social conditions showed a greater communal setting. The communal setting was enhanced by the garden centers, a central street, and its historic setting, creating opportunities for a social “place” to occur. Also, there are neighborhood held events in the communal places allowing for a stronger creation of “place” as a social aspect. However, the analysis of Forest Hills, uncovered the presence strong communal
aspects. But, the deficit of communal space creates a lack of identity and sense of social “place.” Forest Hills was in need of a connective element to bring its great asset to the forefront of the neighborhood and reclaim some of its original rural “community” setting. Here the lack of social “place” led to the selection Forest Hills as the site for the implementation of “The Third Realm.” My research then turn to social analysis and specific site investigation which will be further be expanded below.

Finally, Chapter 2 will navigate through research on site selection, as well as site analysis. It will elaborate on Sidney Brower’s criteria for analyzing neighborhoods and will emphasizing the small town. Following Sidney Brower’s analysis, the chapter documents the neighborhood selected through history, as well as specific site analysis. These supplements will further identify the site and bring a new level of understanding of the social needs for the connective social element called “The Third Realm.”

“GOOD NEIGHBORHOOD”
Sidney Brower Neighborhood Classification Methods
   --Ambience- “The nature, mix and intensity of land uses and the appearance and
   form of the physical environment.”
   --Engagement- “The nature and extent of the interaction among residents and
   the presence of the facilities and features that foster or in habit these interaction.”
   --Choicefulness- “opportunity fir residents to choose alternative location, life
   styles, and living arrangements.”

Defining a Neighborhood
   --Kid on a bike test
   --Compact
   --Convenient
   --Coherent

4 Categories for Suburban Neighborhood
   “Neighborhood is a unit and building block”
   --Center City
   --Small town
   --Residentail Parternship
   --Retreat

Characteristic of a Small Town
   “It seems that some residents look for a places of
   engagement represented by the third place”

Physical                      People
   -Social center (main street or plaza)   -Family-oriented
   -Locally owned business                -Friendlier
   -Small and bounded                     -Down to Earth
- Amenities within Neighborhood
- Legible
- Imageable
- Walkability
- Connected to public Transit
- Local institution
- Settled
- Secure jobs
- Community created
- Sheltered
- Focused on local issues
- Low Density

3 Setting Small town needs
- Local attitude
- Small Venues (hang out, store, and so on)
- Ease of travel

Application
- Location: Readily accessible to roads
- Land Use: Concentration of non-residential uses
- Housing: Home ownership and mix housing
- Economic Developments: Local-serving institutions
- Transportation: Easy access, walking environment, and reduced use of private cars in the neighborhood

Urban Design: Manage of public space

History

Forest Hills is a neighborhood designed around the Babe Zaharias Golf Course, creating a very calm, quiet and family oriented neighborhood in the north quadrant of Tampa with a original population of 10,000 residents in 1926. Having been designed around a golf course the organic nature of the course is evident in the block pattern, as well as the influence of Tampa’s existing grid, posing a formal distinction within the neighborhood. The distinction was further developed through the addition of the North Boulevard and Linebaugh Avenue bringing further amenities to the neighborhood. Having the amenities within North Boulevard and Linebaugh Avenue, allows the creation of third places and a social connection along the physical boundary. Some of the third places are the Forest Hills Grocery store; the CJ’s Tavern, Gino’s Bar and Restaurant, Adam’s Middle School and Forest Hills Elementary School. All of which add to a low scale interaction and calmness within the neighborhood. Also, the schools and the store are the most valued third places in the neighborhood creating a stationary community which embraces neighborhood aging as a multi-generational community. By adding the third realm to the existing third places (social value spaces) one can further stitch together the physi-
cal barrier of the roads. Also enhancing the community aspect of the neighborhood.
Interviews

As a resident of Forest Hills neighborhood, I focused part of my site analysis on interviewing neighbors, as well as people that work at the third places supplying amenities in the neighborhood. This research tool was chosen as it allowed for more of an insight into the neighborhood from the perspective of its occupants and their needs. Creating a dialogue between the design and people, the analysis of these interviews through writing and observation began to establish a good sense of the social characteristic of the neighborhood.

The interviews took place at a gathering of about 10 people in Forest Hills at a neighbor’s house. Some subject have lived in Forest Hills for more than 50 years creating a certain bond with the neighborhood and its residents. While discussing the character of Forest Hills, it was apparent that the neighbor’s definition of the neighborhood’s character within recent years was one of transition due to transients and vacant housing, but mainly due to the loss of the public nature of the golf course. Once the public course was privatized, the neighborhood was no longer able to use it for its communal and social needs. They remembered the club house as an asset; a beautiful building that held community events. However, when it burned vandals, it was not rebuilt and the community lost an icon and a architectural element which brought identity to the vicinity. Furthermore, in regards to the discussion of character, there was a consensus that Forest Hills had the feel of a multi-generational community. For example there were people that left after high school graduation and returned to Forest Hills to bring up their families. Also there are individuals
that have not left the neighborhood and reside in their former parent’s house. A third kind that was present at the gathering were new residents that have moved into the community because of its welcoming sense. This characteristic could be strengthened with of traffic calming including reduced traffic speed along North Boulevard and Linebaugh Avenue, the neighborhood’s thoroughfares, to allow for more walkability and play areas along the streets by the schools for the children. The importance of the school was also discussed, a place of great memory and connection. All that had attend there had children who also attend there. For example one mother stated “my kids walk to Adam’s and they played there after hours because there was not much traffic.” These resident placed a great deal of importance on the school as a social place and a setting for neighborhood interaction.
Site Analysis

Two Neighborhoods that fit the criteria of a small town suburban neighborhood:

1. Old Seminole Heights: 1911 founded as street car suburb
   - Historic neighborhood creating strong community presence.
   - Local community association
   - Multi-generational
   - A settled community
   - Local clubs and events
   - The garden center serves as a public center for the community
   - Walkable surfaces
   - Gathering zone other than center

Area needed to create the small town
- Connection between Florida

2. Forest Hills: 1924 founded as re-subdivision of north side country club. Later renamed Forest Hills:
- Historic neighborhood creating strong community presence
- Local community association
- Multi-generational
- A settled community

Area needed to create the small town
- Needed a center social space
- Walkable surfaces
- Gathering zones other than center
Neighborhood Analysis

Classifying the neighborhood:

Small Town:
- Small and bound: Forest Hills is bound by main streets on all sides. It is further divided inside by interior main streets and associations.
  1. Outer:
     Busch Boulevard
     Florida Avenue
     Armenia Avenue
     Fletcher Avenue
  2. Interior Street:
     West Country Club
     North Boulevard.
     West Linebaugh Avenue
  3. Association:
     Forest Hills Neighborhood Association
     Lower Forest Hills Association

Fig. 8. Boundary Diagram
Ease of access: Having a grid pattern along the major streets creates various access points. Three streets serve as the main access into Forest Hills and other secondary points of access.

1. Main Access:
   - West Country Club Drive
   - North Boulevard
   - West Linebaugh Avenue

Fig. 9. Access diagram
- Institution within neighborhood: The neighborhood’s schools include a connected elementary and middle school and a high school located five blocks away. However, the neighborhood’s connection to the schools has not been fully established even though most of the community’s residents have graduated from all three schools.

1. Elementary:
Forest Hills School elementary

2. Middle:
John Quincy Adam’s Middle School

3. High:
George D. Chamberlain High School
-Amenities within Neighborhood: Most amenities are located within a five minute walk from each other. Also these amenities are located along the two main access roads which are Linebaugh Avenue and North Boulevard. All amenities are sustained by the neighborhood and owned by the neighborhood.

1. Amenities:
   - Forest Hills Grocery
   - CJ’s Tavern
   - Gino’s Bar and Restaurant
   - A day care center
   - 7-Eleven store
   - Post Office
   - Colombian restaurant

Fig. 11. Amenities Diagram
- Strong social activity: Churches have a strong presence in the neighborhood and create strong social pockets in a semi-public space.
- Main icon: There are two main iconic churches at the corner of Linebaugh avenue and Boulevard.
Third places are the social gathering place for informal public life.¹

1. Third places in Forest Hills:
   - Gino’s Bar and Restaurant
   - Forest Hills Grocery
   - Adam’s Middle School track
   - School pick up spaces
   - Danny Del Rio Pool
   - YMCA
   - CJ’s Bar
   - Cardinal’s fields
   - Chamberlain High School

1. Oldenburg, Ray. The Great Good Place: Cafes, coffee shops, community centers, beauty parlors, general stores, bars, hang-outs, and how they get you through the day. Paragon House, New York, NY.

Fig. 13. Third place diagram
Fig. 14. Physical boundary diagram
Fig. 15. Social reconfiguration diagram
Design Thought

Design Thought #1:

Widening the sidewalk on the main streets and creating new sidewalks where recreational activities occur.

Rationale:

The main street having more pedestrian movement needs sidewalks to be widened. In addition, widening the sidewalk will create interaction at the street level allowing for moment. Giving more space to the pedestrian takes away from the car space which helps retain calm ambiance. Secondly, adding sidewalks around the recreational spaces creates a safe, walkable surface to the park in the neighborhood, negating the need to drive.

Fig. 16. Street Analysis
Design Thought #2:
Create a central focus space where the residents can come together for different community activities.

Rationale:
The golf course has become a more restricted location in the neighborhood where only a select crowd can enjoy the recreational activity. This has taken away the neighborhood focal point. The neighborhood needs a central space that for the general public, molded by the users, but flexible enough to allow a diversity of activities. A central space become a place where the community can show its character and change as the neighborhood changes. This uniqueness gives a great sense of place for the neighborhood. Then the central space can becomes a primary focus and meld into the identity of the neighborhood.

Fig. 17. Public space analysis
Design Thought #3:
Create a schools that are more open to the neighborhood and its activities.

Rationale:
The schools in Forest Hills are an elementary school connected by lunch room a middle and five blocks away from a high school. Community connection to the schools has not been fully establish even though most of the residents have attend all three. Architecturally opening the school to the neighborhood may bring residents together for social interaction, carrying the ambiance of the neighborhood through therefore establishing a greater connection.

Fig. 18. Public vs. semi-public analysis
Design Principle #4:
Create a main street that give less right of way to vehicular traffic.

Rationale:
During interviews the main concern was the traffic at the main street intersection of Linebaugh Avenue and Armenia Avenue. This traffic acts as deterrent to pedestrian activity. Also the character of these two streets have changed due to the traffic. By adding more pedestrian space along these streets and reducing the right of way, the scale change will in turn reduce the traffic. This will induce more street activity and be less dangerous for the school children in the area.

Fig. 19. Overlaid street analysis
Design Principle #5:

Introduce a public use to the ponds and retention ponds in the neighborhood.

Rationale:

Along the main street there are various ponds to which the residents have no access because they are fenced off and/or bank area. The natural and man-made features should have some surface such as bank or shoreline where neighbors gather. For example, such urban chalkboard bench and bike rack for a residents' use. Moreover, having restored retention ponds on the main street add to the beauty of the street neighborhood.
CHAPTER 3: PROGRAMMING

Brief

“The Third Realm” acts as a connective feature which builds upon the existing construct of the third place. The programming would go hand in hand with the site analysis and would be more of a circulatory process where the site analysis influences the programming and vice versa. In other words, both analyses would be completed simultaneously.

Due to its connection to the outside neighborhoods and its existing third place, the site research concludes that Forest Hills has two main streets, North Boulevard and Linebaugh Avenue, chosen to be the location for “The Third Realm” intervention. Furthermore, the investigation focuses on the section of the street fronting Adam’s Middle School. The intervention will be an investigation of redefining the neighborhood streets and plazas to respond to new social demographics. The investigation identified the Adam’s Middle and Forest Hills Elementary school as the main third place. Analyses led to the discovery of programs common to the school and neighborhood. These commonalities will provide a foundation for more focused investigation into integrated space usage.

Following the analysis of both programs, there were common programmatic elements between the school and the neighborhood. The elements shared between schools and neighborhood could be combined into one program of “flex” spaces, rather than single use spaces. Flex-spaces are spaces that are programmed for one function, but adapt to vary others. Therefore, comprising the program into flex-spaces would mean bringing out these programmatic elements from the school and aligning them where the residents can easily access them—along the street. The spaces can serve as sustainable spaces.
while inducing community growth and involvement. Furthermore, the program elements directly relate to community context and not just the existing schools. Programmatic elements will consequently be used throughout the day rather than only during school hours. This will create an increased pedestrian usage of the street, lessening vehicular traffic.

This chapter will list the common programs that the school and the community shares. The list will be two sections: The private (school) and the parochial space (common program) that can be taken out of the school confines and used as flex-spaces for the school and neighborhood contexts.
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CHAPTER 4: CASE STUDIES

Brief

Case studies and analyses have been a significant component to the development of the urban design strategies and project concepts. Criteria for the case studies were developed to uniquely meld urban design and architectural design into one common field. By looking at architectural design in the urban design aspects, and vice versa, the creation of one cohesive plan can be devised. With urban design and architecture in a common field as a basis of the research, the case study would have to be scaled from the macro to the micro in order to include involve processes and ideas of urban design as well as architecture.

Following initial analysis, the criteria for the case studies developed into investigation of design projects of production rather than consumption. Through the process, research separates design characteristics that were based on the idea economic consumption. Instead the focus would subsequently be geared toward social production. Furthermore, the idea of social production would base itself on social benefit rather than economic benefit. As a response to the change in the modern cultural standards, which is currently based on consumptive developments, the criteria research and analysis will be mainly focused on public space, building as social catalyst, street design, and how it relates to the modern social demographics. With these two

Fig. 20. Slussen (Bjarke Ingels. Yes is More An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution. Copenhagen, Denmark: BIG A/S, 2009.)

Fig. 21. City Hall (Bjarke Ingels. Yes is More An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution. Copenhagen, Denmark: BIG A/S, 2009.)

Fig. 22. Mars (Bjarke Ingels. Yes is More An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution. Copenhagen, Denmark: BIG A/S, 2009.)
main criteria, the primary focus was precedence were: B.I.G Architects and Prags boulevard projects.
This case study involving B.I.G Architects and their understanding of process development of various scaled urban projects. Three main projects were chosen for the study which included Slussen, City Hall and Mars. The investigation looked at how the traditional plaza or street could be manipulated into forms of social spaces. One principal common to all B.I.G. Architects' projects was used as a basis for the conceptual design. The aspect was interweaving of various layer of programing. Allowing the social layer to be dominant, creating a common connection throughout all spaces.
In the urban design plan of slussen B.I.G. looks at the different levels of the program and divides them into three layers. These layers are: the Urban plaza-cars-bikes-pedestrians; metro-cars-shops; and being boats-busses-metro-water-shops. These elements further intertwine the layers where the program is comparable, creating a multi-level plaza. Also by intertwining the layers of the program, B.I.G. Architects creates a common ground between all three layers rather than a separation of function. Furthermore, creating a flexible public realm rather than a tight semi public space, permits the social realm to be dominant at this intersection.
Fig. 25. Slussen’s overall design (Bjarke Ingels. Yes is More An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution. Copenhagen, Denmark: BIG A/S, 2009.)
City Hall

The idea of a layer of social programming covering the squares adds an importance to the social aspect rather than the economical aspect. The programs as proposed by B.I.G. Architects would be a small outdoor amphitheater and space for other social activities. Furthermore, current temporary program would be placed at the street’s edge under the "flying carpet" creating a more dynamic life on the edge of the street. Moreover, having the surface curved up to cover the spaces forms a unique surface and activity zones.

Having the town hall being the only standing structure on the square allows for it to become the main focus on the site. Adding a verticality to a very horizontal square creates a visual landmark. Also the new square design becomes a secondary structure to the social function and the town hall become the main aspect of the square.

Fig. 26. City Hall Diagram (Bjarke Ingels. Yes is More An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution. Copenhagen, Denmark: BIG A/S, 2009.)
Fig. 27. City Hall overall conceptual model (Bjarke Ingels. Yes is More An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution. Copenhagen, Denmark: BIG A/S, 2009.)
Mars

B.I.G uses a horizontal matrix as the ground plane and identifying points where the program would change this plane creating a dynamic surface. This surface allows a cohesive union between public and functional space. The roof of the building becomes a usable social platform.

Fig. 28. Mars conceptual diagraming (Bjarke Ingels. Yes is More An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution. Copenhagen, Denmark: BIG A/S, 2009.)
Fig. 29. Mars view (Bjarke Ingels. Yes is More An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution. Copenhagen, Denmark: BIG A/S, 2009.)
Kristine Jensens Tegnestue: Prags Boulevard

The Prags Boulevard case study was generally a street typology study. Located in Copenhagen Denmark, the architect, Kristine Jensens Tegnestue selected a rundown street and created a social street with various outdoor programs. Further converting the social street by adding major nodes, or as Tegnestue called it “outdoor rooms” along the street she created pedestrian connection. The Prags Boulevard shows how apply various surfaces fosters a division of space may be created. These spaces began to add a greater level of rightaway to the pedestrian rather than to the car.

Fig. 30. Prag Boulevard side walk (Tegnestue, Kristine Jensens. «Prag’s Boulevard Copenhagen,2005.» A+T In common 3 Collective Spaces, Spring 2006: 42-55)

Fig. 31. Prag Boulevard outdoor room (Tegnestue, Kristine Jensens. «Prag’s Boulevard Copenhagen,2005.» A+T In common 3 Collective Spaces, Spring 2006: 42-55)
Fig. 32. Prag Boulevard, Stage Room (Tegnestue, Kristine Jensens. «Prag's Boulevard Copenhagen, 2005.» A+T In common 3 Collective Spaces, Spring 2006: 42-55)

Fig. 33. Prag Boulevard layer diagram (Tegnestue, Kristine Jensens. «Prag's Boulevard Copenhagen, 2005.» A+T In common 3 Collective
Fig. 34. Overall social value diagram [north is east]
Fig. 35. West Linebaugh Avenue overall social value diagram [north is south]
Fig. 36. North Boulevard overall social value diagram
Fig. 37. Corner social value diagram [north is west]
Fig. 38. Adams Middle School social value diagram
Concept

Layers

1. Value Pockets
2. Routes
3. Third Place [Existing construct]
CONCEPT-Third Place

Pool
Adams Middle
Forest Hills Elementary
Forest Hills Store
CJ’s Tavern
CONCEPT- Paths

1. Ped.
2. Bike
3. Bus
4. Car

Fig. 41. The paths concept diagram
CONCEPT - Value Pockets

1. The Wall - urban chalk broads, bus pavilion
2. The Wait - bus pavilion, waiting area
3. The Park - rec. pavilion
4. The corner - dining pavilion, reading pavilion
5. The stage - amphitheater
6. The Daycare

Fig. 42: The pockets concept diagram
Conceptual Model

Fig. 43. Overall concept model
Fig. 44. North Boulevard overall view of concept model
Fig. 46. The Park view of concept model
Fig. 47. The Wall view of concept model
CHAPTER 5: GRAPHICS

Process

Fig. 48. Master plan of North Boulevard
Fig. 49. Corner perspective street studies
Fig. 50. North Bvld. perspective street study
Fig. 51. Areas of interest for further study
Fig. 52. The Wall preliminary design of social place
Fig. 53. The Park preliminary design of social place
Fig. 54. The Corner preliminary design of social place
Fig. 55. Final Master plan of North Boulevard.
Fig. 57. Final Park schematic floor plan
Fig. 58. Final Corner plan [main design gesture, points where rendering are taken r shown as well as sections]
Sections

Fig. 59. Final Section A-A

Fig. 60. Final Section A-B

Fig. 61. Final Section A-C
Fig. 65. Holistic model view
Fig. 66. Corner plaza view
Fig. 67. Holistic corner view
Fig. 68. Linebaugh Avenue axonometric view
Fig. 69. North Boulevard axonometric view
Fig. 70. Section axonometric 1
Fig. 72. Section axonometric 3
Fig. 73. Corner plaza
Fig. 74. Stage and amphitheater view
Fig. 75. Dining circulation view
Fig. 76. Inside dining servery space
Rendering neighborhood walk through

Fig. 77. Street view of redesigned pool
Fig. 78. View of fountain on edge of plaza
Fig. 79. Outside dining area view
Fig. 80. Entry for neighborhood view
Fig. 81. Market area view
Fig. 83. Church view of plaza
Fig. 84. Children's bridge to dining
Fig. 85. Children’s entry to dining area and plaza
Fig. 86. Children’s view of plaza from entry
Fig. 87. Inside dining area
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

The focus of the thesis was not the particular design but the idea of using the third realm as a catalyze for design. Moreover, taking the social aspects rather than the physical aspects of neighborhood to further enhance an ordinary neighborhood spaces.
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